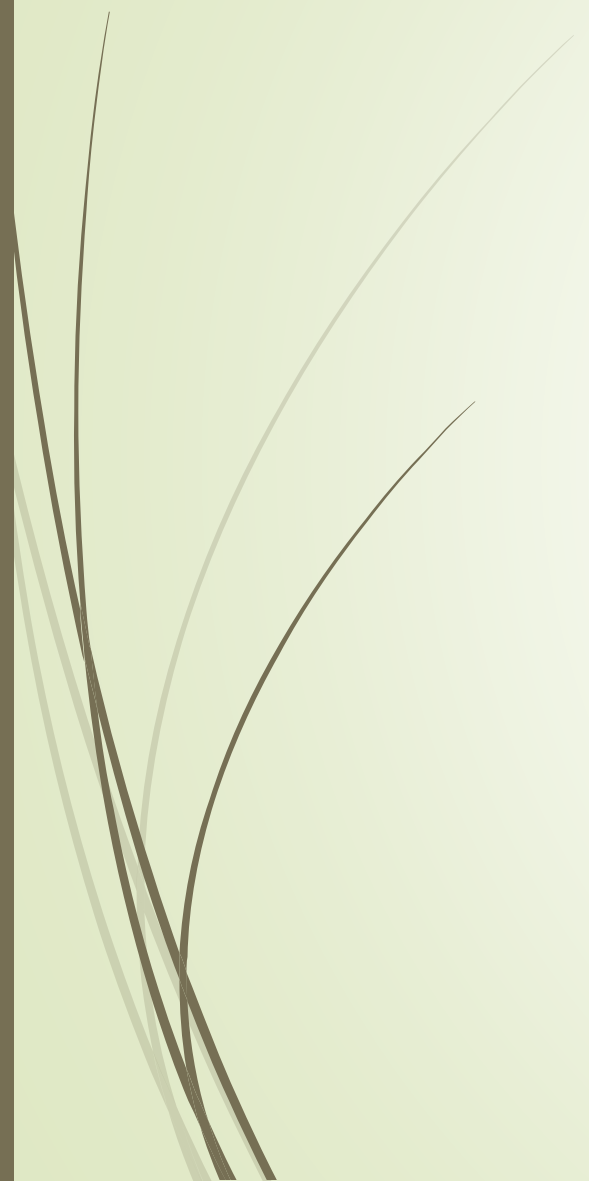






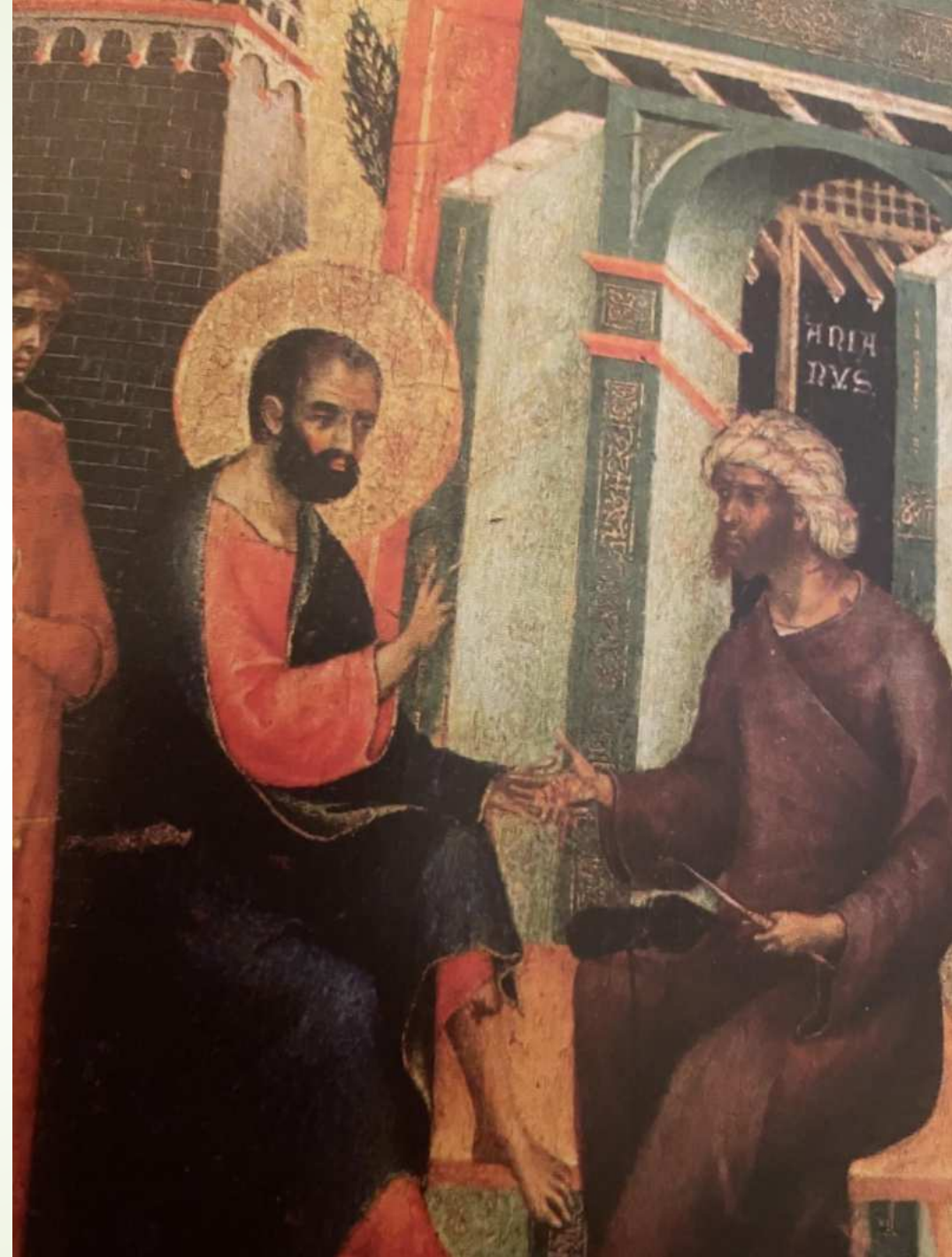
The first three centuries



- 
- ➔ St Barnabas and St Mark left to evangelise Cyprus
 - ➔ St Mark then left to Alexandria

- 
- It is likely that St Mark started at the Jewish quarter, around **43 AD**, Inianos (**Ananias**) was a Jew
 - St Mark established the first church in the Jewish quarter, then went to North Africa
 - He came back to celebrate Easter with the growing number of believers

St Inianos mending
St Mark's sandals
The story is known to the
whole Christian world
This is an icon in a Spanish
Cathedral



St. Mark

CHURCH OF ALEXANDRIA



c. 5 AD - 68 AD

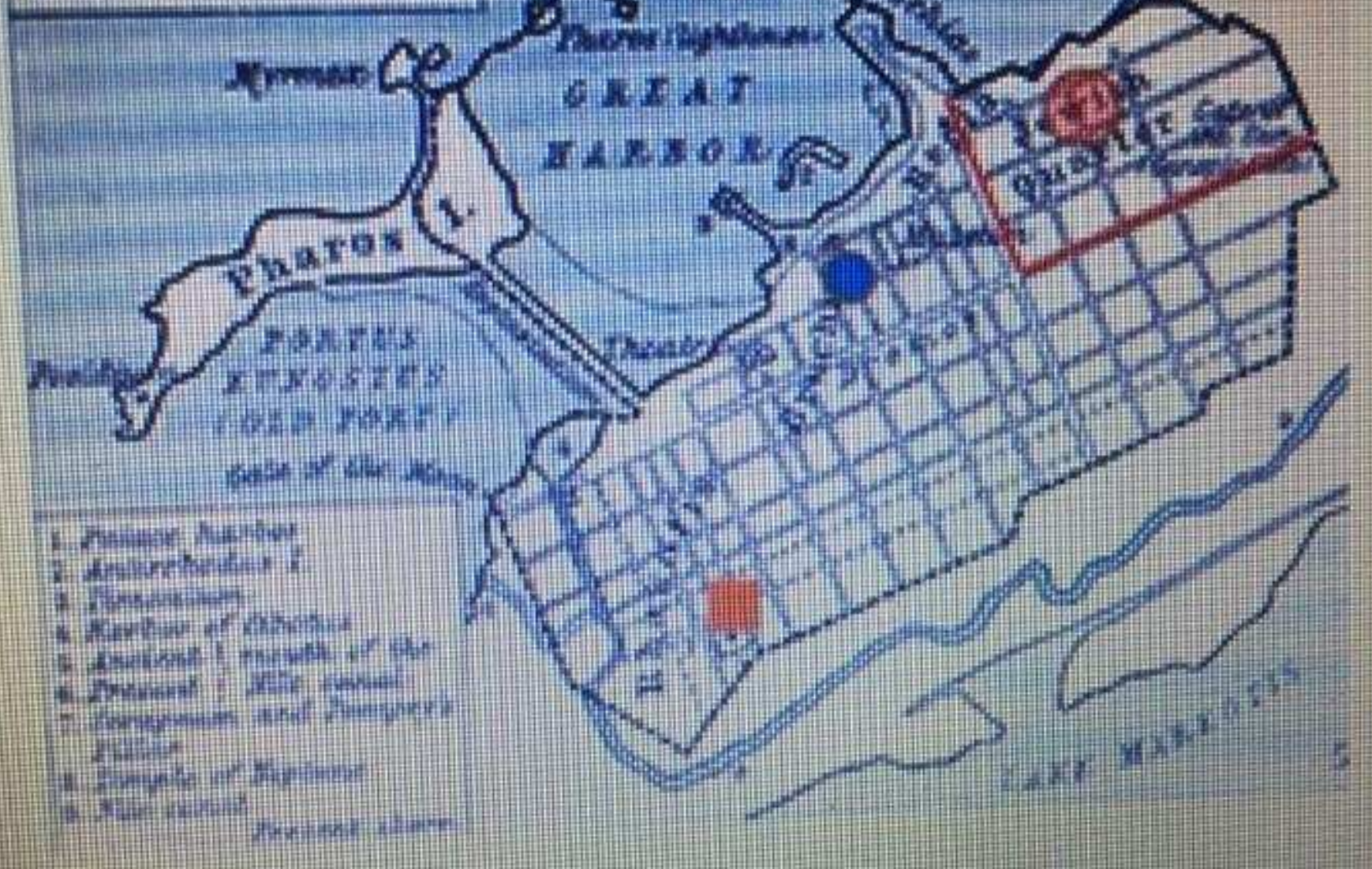



Plan of Alexandria


according to Ptolemy

Scale 1:100 000

10 Miles



- 
- It was the feast of the **Serapis** god on the same day
 - In 68 AD, the pagans incited the crowd, he was arrested and dragged through the streets of Alexandria, **from the first church to the Serapis temple south west, his blood covered the streets of Alexandria**

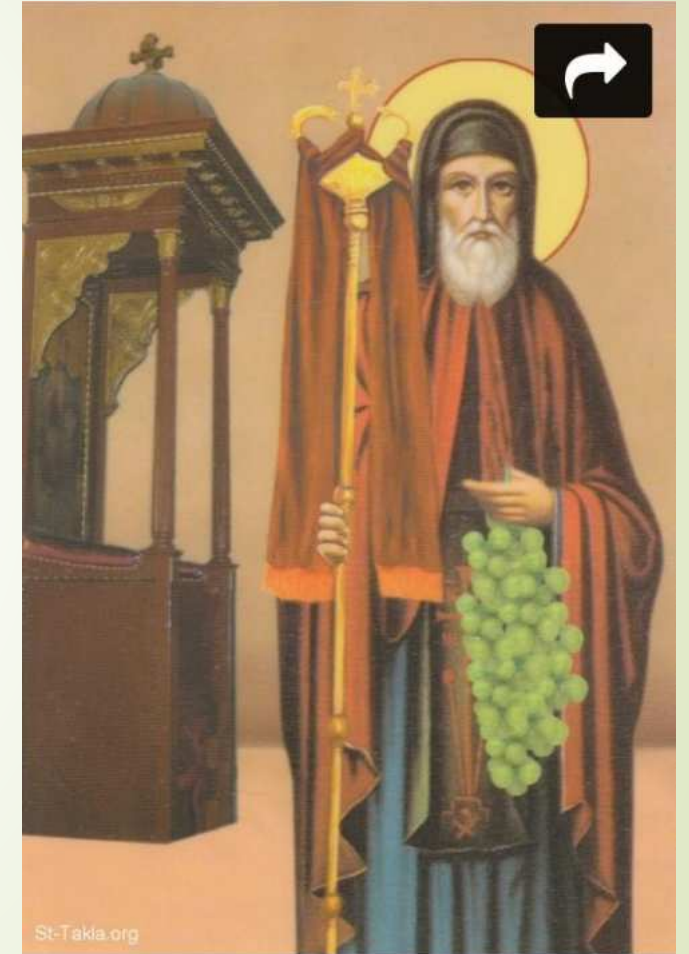
- 
- Nero , the emperor who signed the execution order of St Paul, St Peter. History stated that he tried St Luke himself, who was also martyred in the 68
 - The Roman Senate was a powerful body who had a lot of say in running the empire
 - By the yr 68 , the senate had enough of Nero due to his eccentric behaviour, they declared him “ the enemy of state “, Nero was give the choice either they kill him or he kills himself, he chose the latter
 - That was how his life ended , he was 33 yrs of age





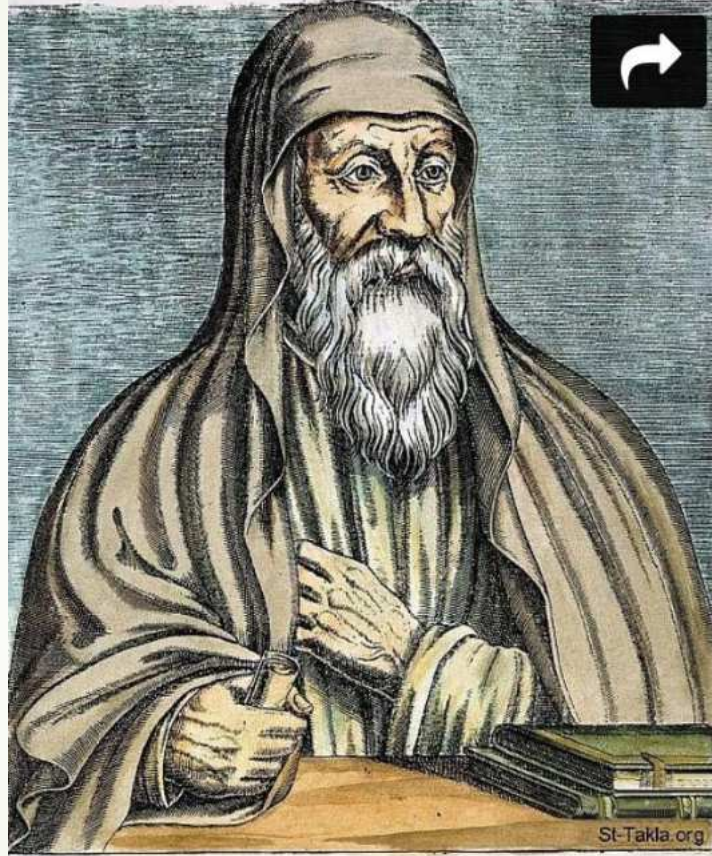
- Kept in the **Louvre**, carving in ivory
- Probably Coptic Egypt on the eve of the Arab conquest
- Showing how the church should be, St Mark is in the middle, **35 Popes around him**, **St Mark raises his Right hand to give the blessing**, they do the same
- Holding in his left hand, his gospel, they all do the same

St Demetrios the Vine grower
The bunch of grapes
was a sign
Mentioned in every Mass
Organised fasts in the church
A Holy Man




St-Takla.org Image: His Holiness Saint Pope
Dimetrios the Vinevardist (vinegrower)


The great Origen- the Scholar- A true genius





St-Takla.org Image: Origen Adamantius, Origenos
(184-253)


صورة في موقع الأبا تكلا: العلامة أوريجانوس أدامانتيوس
(أوريجينوس، أوريجين) (184-253 م.)


- 
- Born in 185. Large family. Father was put in prison and the wealth of the family was confiscated by the authorities because they were Christians
 - Origen was the eldest son, he knew his Dad will be martyred, He wanted to be martyred too
 - He had one good set of clothes, his Mum hid the clothes and stopped him arguing he had to help her bring up his siblings
 - He wrote instead to his father “ take heed not to change your mind on our account “- solid faith


- 
- He was described as “ man of steel in his faith and strict ascetism “
 - He taught mathematics, physics, astronomy, later passed this to his pupils and concentrated on Theology and Philosophy
 - He wrote hundreds of thousands of words with the help of large staff
 - He left Alexandria because of persecution, he taught St Gregory the wonder worker,
 - Was imprisoned and tortured for his faith, died aged 69 , so he was a confessor

- 
- His mother **hid his clothes**, arguing, you have 7 brothers and sisters, I need you to raise them up
 - With financial help, he started a school of philosophy, (at 17 , he was very knowledgeable already), but preached Christianity too. One of his students, became the next Pope

- 
- St Gregory , the miracle worker , invited him to teach for 5 yrs. St Basil read his teachings but did not agree with everything he wrote
 - An authority on explaining the bible but...
 - **He taught wrong teaching sometimes**
 - **Every body will be saved eventually , including Satan , the church refused this**

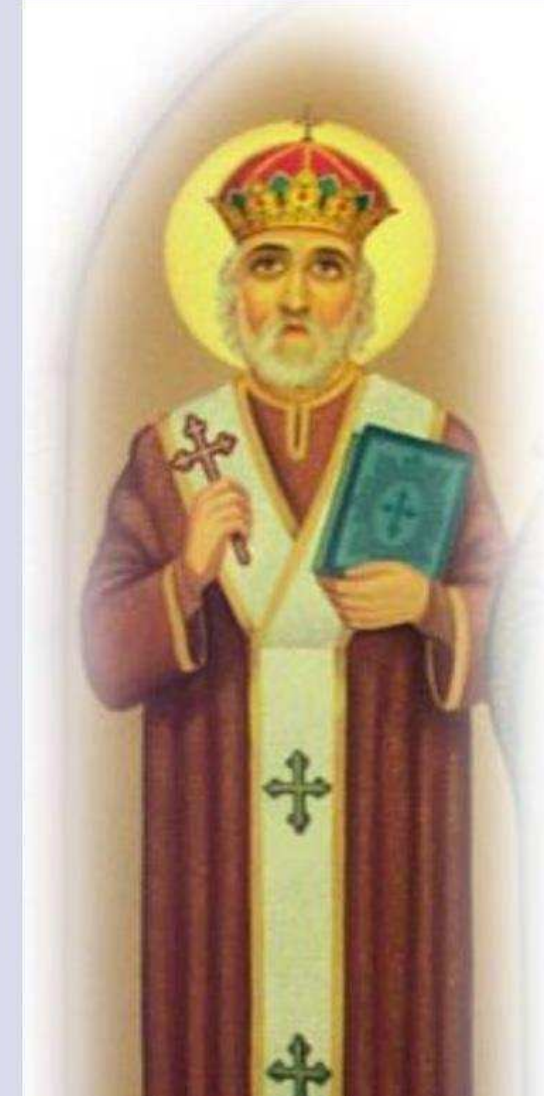
- 
- Yet remained a great teacher
 - He was arrested for being a Christian, was tortured severely and died because of the torture
 - **A great man , with unfortunate mistakes,- Beware !,** in every century there are brilliant people who may give wrong teaching


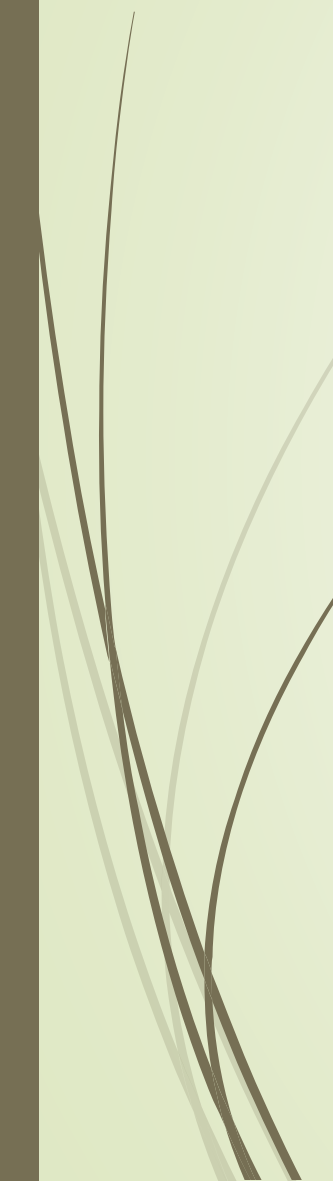
- 
- Waves of persecution from the yr 180 onwards
 - **ID cards** were issued, this person sacrificed for the idols, you lose benefits/ no jobs if you have no ID card
 - Some had their flesh dissolved in **quicklime**, or burnt alive. Others denied the faith



- 
- A challenge, what does the church do with the believers who renounced the faith , then repented ?
 - The hard liners said, if they renounced , they should remain cut off from the church
 - **Melitius** , a hardliner bishop, decided to split from the church, and ordain priests


St Peter , the Patriarch
and the seal of
the martyrs


استشهاد البابا بطرس خاتم
الشهداء 17 (29 هاتور)




- 
- 
- ➔ St Peter, the seal of the martyrs, disagreed. He said , if a person renounces the faith because of the persecution, and repents, he should be accepted in the church, after a period of testing
 - ➔ There were still Meletius followers for years to come

- 
- 
- **Nicea** ruled that priests who were ordained by a Meletian bishop remain, but no new priests to be ordained. So when the current ones die, no more, it took a generation to calm this down
 - Keep the oneness of the church
 - So **Pope Peter** faced problems from heresies, but also from the hardliners. Arius's was a terrible heresy reaching to the core of Christian belief


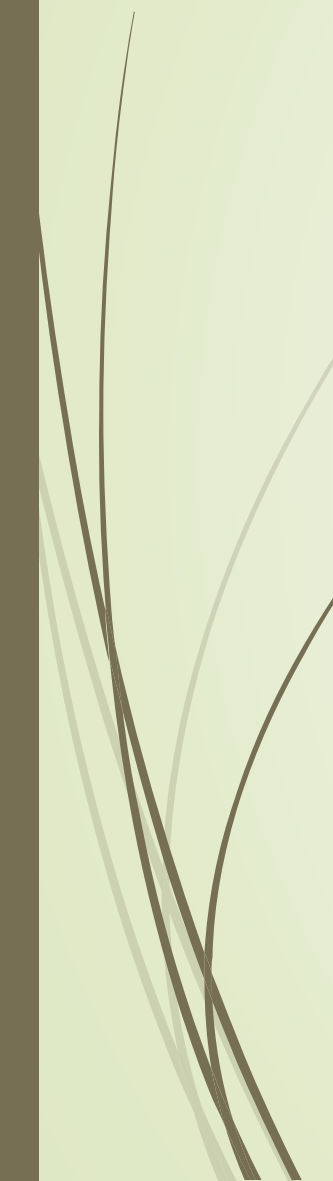
- 
- ➔ It came to a head in 284 AD when **Diocletian** launched the worse persecution ever
 - ➔ He destroyed churches, burnt bibles, around 800,000 people were martyred, truly rivers of blood

- 
- How did Dioclitian come into power
 - The Synexarium tells us about his predecessor, emperor Nomarios, a pagan emperor
 - He went to fight the enemy and his son was Eustus who led the army
 - He announced that he has become a Christian, His wife was Theoklea : God's Glory, his son was Apali, wisdom. To announce Christin faith, as the son of the emperor was too much for the Roman Senate
 - No internet or telephones at the time !

- 
- So, there was a coup, Numerian had to be killed, they plotted and killed him while he was away fighting
 - They hurriedly got St Eustasius's sister to marry one of the generals, Diocletian, so he was made an emperor
 - By the time St Eustasius came back from the war, it was too late, he was arrested
 - He, his wife and Apollonia the 15 yr old son, were sent to Egypt to 3 different areas, so as not to support each other
 - The three of them were martyred and they are mentioned in the commemoration of saints in the Psalms
 - The bravery of announcing your Christian faith in an officially pagan ruling society
 - All this happened 30 yrs before Constantine who followed Diocletian

So, Dioclitian came to power with a very clear agenda : eradicate Christianity with a carrot and a very heavy stick
He was authorised to do so by the powerful ruling senate



- 
- 
- ➔ Pope Peter was arrested. There was an uprising
 - ➔ The Pope knew that there will be a lot of trouble ahead
 - ➔ He very wisely, asked the guard to knock a hole in the back wall of the prison, left to St Mark's grave, was martyred there
 - ➔ **He prayed , let my blood be the end of persecution,** Constantine took over - Peace

WAVES OF PERSECUTION

MAXIMINUS
THRAX



235 AD

DECIUS



250 AD

VALERIAN



257 AD

THE GREAT
PERSECUTION
UNDER
DIOCLETIAN



302 AD



IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH



EPISTLE TO THE
EPHESIANS
EPISTLE TO THE
MAGNESIANS
EPISTLE TO THE
TRALLIANS
EPISTLE TO THE
ROMANS
EPISTLE TO THE
PHILADELPHIANS
EPISTLE TO THE
SMYRNAEANS
EPISTLE TO POLYCARP
BISHOP OF SMYRNA



TERTULLIAN



C. 155 - 220 AD

“THE MORE YOU
MOW US DOWN,
THE MORE WE
GROW. THE **BLOOD**
OF THE MARTYRS
IS THE **SEED** OF
THE CHURCH.”

