



Valentines Day



Valentine's Day - a day that celebrates love, romance, passion in every way, the world over. It is also a holiday where people honor friendship, affection, and love for others. Valentine's Day is named after Saint Valentine, the patron saint of love, celebrated on February 14th every year.

Valentine's Day is named in the memory of St. Valentine of Rome. What we call Valentine's Day was the **Feast of St. Valentine** a religious holiday. According to church tradition St. Valentine was a priest near Rome in about the year 270 A.D. At that time the Roman Emperor was imprisoning Christians for not worshipping the Roman gods. During this persecution Valentine was arrested for refusing to give up Christianity.

Valentine continued to pray to Jesus and spread the **love** of Christianity, while he was in prison. He was said to have restored the sight of a jailor's blind daughter, when the emperor heard about this he was furious that Valentine was still making converts even in prison, so he had Valentine killed.

He died on February 14, 269 A.D. Legend also says that St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine".

The 14th of February was one day before the Roman feast of **Lupercalia**, a pagan love festival. In 496 A.D. Pope Gelasius changed Lupercalia from the 15th to the 14th to try and stop the pagan celebration. The church realized that there was nothing wrong with celebrating love, only the pagan elements insulted God. Lupercalia was done away with, but it had left its mark on Saint Valentine's Day. Valentine had become known as the patron of lovers.

Part of the Roman festival of **Lupercalia** was the putting of girl's names in a box and letting the boys draw them out. These couples were supposedly paired off for the whole year. A similar practice was began in the fourteenth century. A **sweetheart** was chosen for a day by lot. This was done to correspond with the belief that the springtime mating of birds took place on Valentine's Day. Messages sent between these randomly chosen pair were a forerunner of the modern **Valentine's Day Card**. These cards were a big hit in Germany where they were called Freundschaftskarten, or "*friendship cards*."

References:

1. *Britannica CD 98 @ Multimedia Edition, "Saint Valentine", (Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1994 - 1997), © 1994 - 1997 Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.*
2. *Saint Germain, 1967, Pearls of Wisdom®, Volume 10 Number 7 (The Summit Lighthouse®, 1967) © Copyright 1997 Church Universal and Triumphant®*
3. *Sandak, Cass R., Valentine's Day, (New York, New York: Crestwood House, 1990)*