

Chapter 3

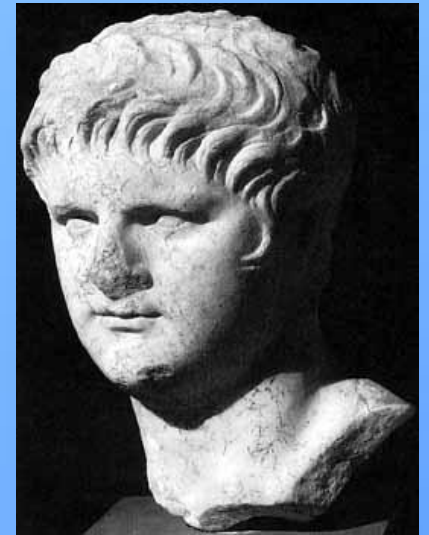
Persecutions



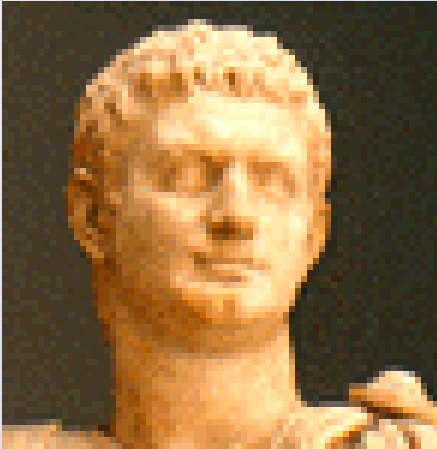
First Roman Persecutions

Nero

- Persecutions begin 64 AD-accused Christians of starting the fire in Rome
 - Persecutions limited to Rome
 - First to outlaw Christianity-
- ”Christiani non sint” (“Let the Christians be exterminated”)

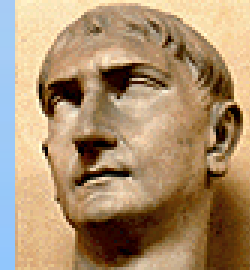


Early persecutions (2)



- Domitian (81-96AD)
 - Tax on Christians and Jews
 - Pope Clement I wrote about his persecution

“Good” Roman Emperors (96-180 AD)



- Trajan (98-117)
 - Organized last major conquest of the Roman Empire to the East
 - Trajan’s Rescript (response)
 - Upheld Nero’s principles about Christians
 - Choice was apostasy or death
 - Ignatius of Antioch died under him-first to use the term “Catholic Church”

“Good emperors” (2)

- Hadrian (117-138)
 - Advocate of Hellenism
 - Built Hadrian’s wall in England
 - Christians were tolerated



“Good emperors” (2)

- Antoninus Pius (138-161)
 - Persecutions allowed in provinces
 - St. Polycarp martyred during this period
- Marcus Aurelius (161-180)
 - Ardent Stoic
 - Reinstated persecutions-Justin Martyr killed
 - Dealt with Germanic invasions

Later Persecutions

- Septimus Severus (193-211)
 - Forbade circumcisions and baptisms
 - Persecutions in Syria and N. Africa
 - Prominent martyrs-Sts. Perpetua and Felicity and Irenaeus
- Alexander Severus (222-235)
 - Persecutions ceased-Christians could own property and build churches



Later persecutions (2)

- Decius (249-251)
 - First empire-wide persecution of Christians-edict of extermination of Christians
 - Christians who offered sacrifices were given certificates which protected them from persecution

Problem of apostasy (denial of faith) for church-
"lapsi"

Later persecutions (3)

- Valerian (253-260)
 - Rescript of 257-Christians could not meet in public places or celebrate Eucharist in the Catacombs
 - Rescript of 258-Clergy executed and Christians with rank lost offices and became slaves
 - Pope St. Sixtus II
 - Deacon St. Lawrence

Diocletian (284-305)

The Great Persecution (303+)

- 4 Edicts
 1. Churches destroyed, books burned ,
Christian meetings banned
 2. Imprisonment of clergy
 3. Pagan sacrifice demanded from
clergy
 4. Pagan sacrifice demanded from
every Christian-1000s died



Constantine and the Edict of Milan (313)



- Battle at Milvian Bridge-Constantine sees cross with words “in hoc signo vinces” (in this sign you will conquer)
- Edict restored property and freedom of religion



Constantine baptized on his deathbed