

Four Crowned Saints

SAINT OF THE DAY

08_11_2023



Mindful of the example of St Peter and the apostles before the synedrium, they knew they had to obey God rather than men, beginning with the exercise of their profession. Thus it was that the stonemasons Simphorianus, Claudius, Nicostratus and Castorius, known as the Four Crowned Saints (†304), suffered martyrdom during Diocletian's persecutions. Since ancient times they have been venerated by the Catholic Church, which together with them in the Roman Martyrology remembers a fifth martyr and companion, Simplicius, executed for having recovered their remains. According to the

tradition reported in the *Gregorian Sacramentary*, the four practised the Christian religion clandestinely.

They lived in the ancient Roman city of Sirmio, in Pannonia, and here Diocletian asked them to sculpt a statue of the pagan god Aesculapius. The four of them had already created other works of a purely decorative nature for the emperor and were appreciated for this. But they refused to create the image of an idol like Aesculapius and confessed that they were Christians. They were scourged by the military tribune Lampedio. Then, when they refused to deny Jesus Christ, they were locked up in lead crates and thrown into the waters of the River Danube. The Roman church of the Santi Quattro Coronati (in the photo) was soon dedicated to the martyrs of Sirmio, attested in documents starting from the VI century but probably already existing since the IV century. Later it was made a titular church and subsequently elevated to basilica by St Leo IV (†855).

Patrons of: stonemasons, sculptors, bricklayers