

Saint Felix of Como

SAINT OF THE DAY

08_10_2020



Saint Felix (†391) was the first bishop of Como. He was consecrated by Saint Ambrose, who sent him to evangelise the *municipium* of Como, as a testimony to the great missionary drive of the Church of Milan in that particular historical phase. After the persecutions of the first three centuries and the freedom of worship obtained with the edicts of 311 and 313, Christianity had been declared official religion of the Empire by the edict of Thessalonica in 380. It is possible that when Felix began his mission a community of Christians was already present, since Saint Fidelis had been sent to Como

at the end of the previous century, suffering martyrdom during Diocletian's persecutions.

Two letters from Ambrose to Felix show the comforting spread of the faith in Como, even though the problem of the shortage of deacons and priests remained: “I thank the Lord very much”, wrote the Bishop of Milan, “and I cordially congratulate you, feeling that many of these citizens of Como have already accepted the Catholic faith. He who has favoured you in the conversion of these souls will also favour you with ministers necessary for your need”. Felix worked hard for the education of Christian ministers and for the construction of a basilica later dedicated to Saint Carpophorus [above, a photo of the crypt], in which he had entombed the remains of the Roman soldier of the same name and his companions Exanthus, Cassius, Severinus, Secundus and Licinius of the Theban Legion, martyred in Como around 303. Felix himself wanted to be entombed next to them.

Besides the consolidation of Christianity in the city, the saint also contributed to the evangelization of the surrounding countryside and territories. With this in mind he donated to the small community of Griante the relics of two other martyrs, **Nabor and Felix**, which had been entrusted to him by Ambrose.