

They are mentioned with distinction in all western Martyrologies from the sacramentary of Saint Gregory. Their feast day (as indicated in the Roman Martyrology) is on 19 January. In the Tridentine Roman Missal the names and the order of the names is the same, except that the name of Abacum is spelled "Abachum". In some sources, Marius is called "Maris" and Audifax is placed last. They were included in the Roman Catholic calendar of saints from the ninth century until 1969, when they were excluded because nothing is really known of these saints except their names.

These saints suffered for the faith without fearing their persecutors. They underwent many torments with prayers of thanksgiving on their lips, for in them they saw like "the sparrow liberated from the bird-catcher's net and who escapes towards heaven" (Offertory), the means of going to enjoy God for evermore (Introit).

*(excerpted from: liturgialatina.blogspot.com; saintsshallarise.blogspot.com; en.wikipedia.org)

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SS. Marius, Martha, Audifax and Abachum **Martyrs**

Feast Day: January 19



..."they were tortured and put to death"...
(Gospel)

SS. Marius, Martha, Audifax and Abachum

*Marius and Martha his wife were Persian nobles, who with their two sons Audifax and Abachum came to Rome to worship God in the reign of Claudius II, after having been converted to the faith and distributing their fortune to the poor, as the primitive Christians did at that time in Jerusalem. In Rome, they visited Christians cast into prison for their faith: "You had compassion on prisoners," says the Epistle. According to their largely legendary *passio* of the sixth century, four saints of the same family who came from Persia to Rome, and were martyred in 270 for sympathizing with and burying the bodies of Christians.

A great many Christians' were ordered by the emperor to be shut up in the amphitheater, and shot to death with arrows, and their bodies burnt. Our saints gathered and buried their ashes with respect; but soon they themselves were apprehended, and after many torments under the governor Marcianus, Maris and his two sons were beheaded on the Via Cornelia, and their bodies were burnt. Martha meanwhile was killed at a place called *in Nimpha* or

Nymphae Catabassi (later called Santa Ninfa), thirteen miles from Rome. Tradition states that Martha was cast into a well.

According to tradition, a Roman lady named Felicitas secured the half-consumed remains of the father and sons and also the mother's body from the well, and had the sacred relics secretly interred on her estate at *Buxus*, today Boccea. This is said to have occurred on January 20. A church arose at Boccea, and during the Middle Ages, it became a place of pilgrimage.

Their relics were found at Rome in 1590 after suffering various vicissitudes. Their relics are kept principally at Rome; part in the church of Saint Adrian, part in that of Saint Charles, and that of Saint John of Calybite. Eginhart, son-in-law and secretary of Charlemagne, deposited a portion of these relics, which had been sent to him from Rome, in the abbey of Selghenstadt, of which he was the founder, in the diocese of Mentz.