

69// HERE FOLLOWETH THE HISTORY OF ST. JOHN PORT LATIN

When St. John the apostle and evangelist preached in a city of Greece named Ephesus, he was taken of the judge, which commanded him that he should make sacrifice to the false idols, and when he would not do it he put him in prison. And after, he sent a letter to Domitian the emperor which said that he held an enchanter in prison which had despised their gods and worshipped him that was crucified. Then commanded Domitian that he should be brought to Rome, and when he was there they did do shave off all the hairs of his head in derision, and after, they brought him tofore the gate called Port Latin, and put him in a ton [barrel] full of burning oil. But he never felt harm ne pain, and without suffering any harm he issued out.

In that place Christian men did do make a fair church, and this day made a solemn feast, as it were the day of his martyrdom. And when the emperor saw that he ceased not of preaching for the commandment that he had made, he sent him in exile into an isle named Patmos.

It ought not to be believed that the emperor did these persecutions unto Christian people because they believed in God, for they refused none, but it was a displeasure to them that they worshipped God without authority of the senators. Another reason there was, and that was that the service of their other gods was lessed and minished thereby. The third reason was that he preached to despise the worship, the honour, and the avoir [wealth] of the world, and that was the thing principal that the Romans loved. But Jesu Christ would no thing permit it lest they held that it was done by puissance human. Another cause there was, as Master John Beleth saith, why that the emperor and the senate pursued Christ and his apostles, and that was that them seemed that God was over proud and envious, because he deigned not to have a fellow. Another cause allegeth Orosius, and saith that the senate had despite of this, that Pilate had written the miracles of Jesu Christ to the emperor only, and not to the senators, wherefore they would not accord that he should be admitted to be worshipped among the gods. Therefore Tiberius the emperor did do slay some of the senators and some he sent in exile.

The mother of St. John hearing that her son was prisoner, moved with motherly compassion, came to Rome; and when she came she found that he was sent in exile, she went then into the champain [countryside] to a city named Vorulana, and there died and yielded her soul to Christ. Whose body was buried in a cave where it long rested, but after, by St. James her other son, it was showed, which then was taken up and found sweet smelling, and many miracles showed in her translation in [the moving of her body to] the said city. Then let us pray to St. John that he pray for us.

The [iconography of St. John the Evangelist](#) is available at the [Christian iconography website](#).

For other saints, see the [index to this Golden Legend website](#).

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