



The Story Of Saint Valentine

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Priest Valentine lived in Rome many thousands of years ago. He was a very kind and wonderful man and had a happy life within the church marrying couples in love, teaching the way of the church and blessing children.

One day the ruler of Rome Emperor Claudius declared that every man in his Kingdom should become a soldier to protect the people of Rome against foreign armies who may attack. Many thousands of men fought as soldiers, and many sadly lost their lives. Over the years Emperor Claudius paid close attention to how his men fought and soon realised that the best soldiers were the ones who were not married, as they fought without loss and had no fear of dying; whereas those who were married didn't want to die because their loved ones were waiting for their safe return, and so they were careful about how they fought in order to avoid injury.

The Emperor didn't like his soldiers being careful in war, he wanted them all to be fearless and brave to protect his Kingdom and so he ruled that no single man would be allowed to marry and therefore his army would grow stronger.

Priest Valentine couldn't believe how heartless Emperor Claudius had become, and going against his will he still performed marriage ceremonies to young couples in secret to keep the faith and spirit of marriage alive. As the fighting continued Priest Valentine did all that he could to help the people, he often helped prisoners escape from Roman guards where they had been beaten and tortured and led them to safety. He worked day and night to bring goodness to the people and do what was right, despite the attempts of Cruel Emperor Claudius.

But Priest Valentine's good doings were not to continue as Emperor Claudius heard of what he had been doing, how he had broken the law, his law, and he would be punished. Emperor Claudius ordered Priest Valentine to be sentenced to death and he was held in a prison whilst preparations were made.

Priest Valentine did as he was asked and was taken away to the prison where he would remain for a few weeks before his sentencing. A young lady came to visit him in secret and thank him for all of the wonderful things that he had done for the people, she came to see him as often as she could, but sneaking into the prison was dangerous and held a severe punishment if she was caught. Priest Valentine admired her spirit and commitment and fell in love with this wonderful young lady. From behind bars his heart melted for her.

But sadly the time trickled away and it was soon ordered that Priest Valentine be put to death at sunrise and the young lady saw him one last time when he handed her a letter before he was taken away. It was a very sad and terrible day and the young lady cried for Priest Valentine for a long time after. He had done such good in his life and helped others so selflessly, but in going against the Emperor he had broken the law and had to face the ultimate punishment of death which he did so graciously.

The young lady sat under the sun breathing in the morning breeze as tears tumbled down her face. Holding the letter in her hands she carefully and slowly unfolded the pages and read them aloud. The beautiful words that Priest Valentine had written to her danced in her heart and she felt butterflies within, and he signed his final gentle goodbye to her "From your Valentine" which we still use for our loved ones today.

Today we send beautiful decorative cards made from lace and ribbons and pictures of loved ones to remember the wonderful Saint Valentine and celebrate the kind things he did to keep love alive.

