



**Saint of the Day for January 19**  
**Saint Fabian**  
(c. 200 – January 20, 250)

*Image:* Detail from Saint John the Baptist, Saint Fabian and Saint Sebastian | Miguel Ximénez

### **Saint Fabian's Story**

Fabian was a Roman layman who came into the city from his farm one day as clergy and people were preparing to elect a new pope. Eusebius, a Church historian, says a dove flew in and settled on the head of Fabian. This sign united the votes of clergy and laity, and he was chosen unanimously.

He led the Church for 14 years and died a martyr's death during the persecution of Decius in 250 A.D. Saint Cyprian wrote to his successor that Fabian was an "incomparable" man whose glory in death matched the holiness and purity of his life.

In the catacombs of Saint Callistus, the stone that covered Fabian's grave may still be seen, broken into four pieces, bearing the Greek words, "Fabian, bishop, martyr." St. Fabian shares the celebration of his liturgical feast with St. Sebastian on January 20.

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### **Reflection**

We can go confidently into the future and accept the change that growth demands only if we have firm roots in the past, in a living tradition. A few pieces of stone in Rome are a reminder to us that we are bearers of more than 20 centuries of a living tradition of faith and courage in living the life of Christ and showing it to the world. We have brothers and sisters who have "gone before us with the sign of faith," as the First Eucharistic Prayer puts it, to light the way for us.