

June – St. Justine Martyr



St. Justin is considered one of the most famous writers and Apologists of the Second Century. He was born in Palestine to non-Christian Greek parents. As a young person he had a passion to find out how a human could know God. He pursued the thought among the great scholars, even attending famous Philosophical schools like Platonism and Pythagorean.

In his travels in Ephesus, he met a stranger who introduced him to the Hebrew Prophets and Christianity. Justin reflected on this and eventually bought Scripture books, filling himself with information.

He finally was converted and wrote masterfully about Christianity. He aimed his writings for the Jews and pagans, to think about Christ, arguing that God puts in everyone an understanding of good and evil. He is especially famous for his two Apologetics, which he wrote in Rome. These writings were aimed at the emperor and his sons who were persecuting Christians. By his vigorous debates and dogged controversy, Justin managed to prevent the slaughter of some Christians.

He condemned the wicked life of fellow philosopher Crescens the Cynic, who however falsely accused him of being a traitor.

Justin was arrested, brought before the court, questioned about his religious beliefs and told to make a public confession. He stated that he believed in the one God who is the Creator and Judge of all mankind. He refused to offer a sacrifice to other gods. With six of his followers, he was scourged and then beheaded at age 65 in the year 165. The faithful stole his body and buried it. Some of St Justin's relics came to rest 160 years later in Maryland, USA, and some of his bones are in Rome. St. Justin's symbol are a pen and sword, as a patron of writers and philosophers and lecturers. The sword a symbol of his martyrdom.