

## Black Saints: Victor, Melchiades, Gelasius

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Black Saints

### Introduction

Blacks in Catholic Christianity have a long and vibrant history.

Much of that history is generally unknown to Black Catholics as well as to the rest of the faithful. On July 24, 1990, the National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus of the United States designated November as Black Catholic History Month to celebrate this long history and proud heritage of Black Catholics. During this month we celebrate the presence of our ancestors who kept the faith and are models of living the Gospel life.

### Nov. 2 Saints Victor, Melchiades, Gelasius

Did you know that among the 265 popes of the Catholic Church, between Saint Peter and the current pope Benedict the XVI, are three popes known to be of African descent?

Saint Victor was a deacon when he became the first black and the 14<sup>th</sup> pope in 189 A.D. He established a set date for the yearly celebration of Easter. Saint Victor died a martyr for the faith in 199.

Saint Melchiades (mel-KY-uh-des) reigned as the Church's second black and 32<sup>nd</sup> pope, from 311 to 314. He signed the Emperor Constantine's laws that ended persecutions and made Christianity the established religion of the Roman Empire.

Saint Gelasius the First was the Church's third black and 49<sup>th</sup> pope from 492 to 496. He was known then for saving Rome from famine, composing a book of hymns, and clarifying Church teaching on the Eucharist.

November is Black Catholic History Month, [read more about it](#) [1].

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### Links:

[1] <http://site.adw.org/Black-Catholic-History-Month>