



Valentine's Day



Valentine's Day is celebrated every year on 14th February. It's the day when people show their affection for another person by sending anonymous cards, flowers or chocolates with messages of love.

Why Valentine's Day?



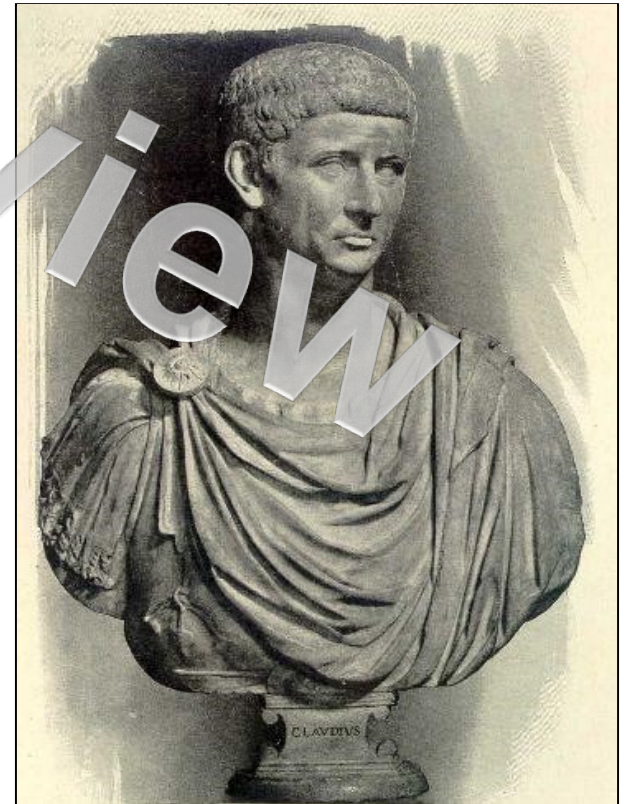
The most popular belief about St Valentine is that he was a priest from Rome in the third century AD. Emperor Claudius II had banned marriage because he thought married men were bad soldiers. Valentine thought this was unfair, so he broke the rules and arranged marriages in secret.



Why Valentine's Day?

When Claudius found out, Valentine was sentenced to death and thrown in jail.

There, he fell in love with the jailor's blind daughter. His love and belief in God cured her blindness, and when he was taken to be killed on 14th February he sent her a love letter signed "From your Valentine".





The First Message



The first Valentine message is thought to be a poem from Charles, Duke of Orleans to his wife in 1415. He was captured at the Battle of Agincourt and was imprisoned in the Tower of London to await execution.



The First Cards

But Valentine's Day didn't become popular in the UK until the 17th century. By the 18th century it was traditional for people to swap handwritten messages of affection.

Printed cards soon replaced these, making it easier for people to say "I love you" secretly.





Becoming a Celebration



St. Valentine

The church decided they wanted to turn this festival into a Christian celebration and decided to use it to remember the death of St Valentine too. Gradually, St Valentine's name started to be used mainly by men to express their feelings to those they loved.



Valentine's Day Today

Today Valentine's Day is huge all over the world. In the UK, a massive amount of money is spent the most romantic day of the year:

- £22 million spent on flowers
- Seven million red roses are sent
- 12 million cards are sent
- Millions of text messages are sent.

