



# THE STORY BEHIND Valentine's day

While Valentine's Day might be associated with romantic love, the real story behind its name is full of bloodshed and heartbreak. On February 14, around the year 270 A.D., Valentine, a holy priest in Rome in the days of Emperor Claudius II, is said to have been executed.

Under the rule of Claudius the Cruel, Rome was involved in many unpopular and bloody campaigns. The emperor had to maintain a strong army, but was having a difficult time getting soldiers to join his military leagues. Claudius believed that Roman men were unwilling to join the army because of their strong attachment to their wives and families.

To get rid of the problem, Claudius banned all marriages and engagements in Rome. Valentine, realizing the injustice of the decree, defied Claudius and continued to perform marriages for young lovers in secret.

When Valentine's actions were discovered, Claudius ordered that he be put to death. Valentine was arrested and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who condemned him to be beaten to death with clubs and to have his head cut off. The sentence was carried out on February 14, on or about the year 270.

Legend also has it that while in jail, St. Valentine left a farewell note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine."

For his great service, Valentine was named a saint after his death.

Despite its romantic fame, it is wrong to say that Valentine's Day is just meant for couples. It's a day for celebrating love in all its forms, from self-love to love between friends and family members. Whether you are single or in a relationship, there are many ways to celebrate this special day.

Many countries celebrate Valentine's Day on February 14th, but Brazil differs from these countries for a few reasons. Our version of Valentine's Day is called Dia dos Namorados (which can be translated to "Lover's Day"). Although it is celebrated in a similar way as the American and European traditions, we don't celebrate it because of Saint Valentine.

Dia dos Namorados is celebrated on June 12th because of its proximity to Saint Anthony's Day on June 13th. This Saint is very known in Brazil as they believe he blessed young couples with a prosperous marriage. During the occasion, people exchange gifts, chocolates and flowers.

The main reason why Valentine's Day is not celebrated in Brazil on February 14th is because its proximity to Carnival week, which happens to be one of the biggest events in the country.

# QUESTIONS

- 1) Why does Brazil celebrate Valentine's Day on a different date?
- 2) Explain the origin of the name "Valentine's Day".
- 3) How can we translate "Dia dos Namorados" to English?
- 4) Is Valentine's Day only for couples and romantic love?
- 5) Why was Valentine named a Saint?

