EVENTS
(Names with an asterisk are of martyrs who later came to be venerated as saints by the Catholic Church)

- **c. 33** Jesus is crucified in Judea by Roman authorities wanting to pacify unrest among Jewish population.

- **64–68** Persecutions of Nero. Emperor Nero blames devastating fire in Rome on Christians and begins first organized persecutions. Many Christians executed; the apostles *Peter* and *Paul* are executed in Rome.

- **c. 70** *Andrew*, the first of 12 apostles and brother of Peter, is executed in Greece.

- **112** Emperor Trajan sends a lawyer called Pliny to investigate unrest in Black Sea region. Pliny blames disturbances on Christians and has several executed.

- **c. 167** During reign of Marcus Aurelius, public distrust of Christians becomes acute. Christians are blamed for misfortune and disaster. Mob violence directed against Christians erupts in Asia Minor where Christian communities are common. *Polycarp*, bishop of Smyrna, is burned in one incident.

- **177** Anti-Christian riots spread to Greece, Macedonia, and Gaul. In Lyons, a mob kills and burns 48 Christians, including the bishop, *Pothinus*. Roman authorities are reluctant to intervene.

- **249–251** Persecutions of Decius. Emperor Decius begins first general persecution of Christians. He orders that all households of the empire make a sacrifice to the Roman gods; those who fail to comply are imprisoned, banished, or executed. Fabian, bishop of Rome, Babylas of Antioch, and Alexander of Jerusalem are all executed in this period.

- **257–260** Persecutions of Valerian. Emperor Valerian conducts the second general persecution of Christians, directed particularly at the leadership of the church. Pope *Sixtus* II of Rome, *Lawrence* (dean of Rome), and *Cyprian* (bishop of Carthage) are all executed.

- **288** *Sebastian*, a Roman soldier, is executed when he is discovered to be a Christian.

- **305–311** Persecutions of coemperors Diocletian and Galerius. Four edicts issued systematically attack Christians. Priests in Asia Minor and then whole empire are imprisoned and ordered to sacrifice to Roman gods; those who do not are executed. Churches and copies of Christian scriptures are burned. Christian clergy and Christian families, including women and children, are subject to imprisonment and execution. *Lucian* of Antioch, a celebrated priest and scholar, is executed.

- **313** Emperor Constantine issues the Edict of Milan, granting freedom of worship to all Christians. Christianity spreads rapidly throughout the empire.

- **361–363** Emperor Julian attempts to reinstate paganism as the religion of the empire. He rebuilds pagan temples and attacks Christians' civil rights, but dies in battle before he can implement more radical plans.