HIGHLIGHTS OF THE THIRD CENTURY

THE CHURCH AT THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD CENTURY:
Church in Rome: Zephyrinus the bishop; Kallistos (Callistus)
The deacon; Hippolytus the presbyter and head of the
catechetical school.
Adoptionist Monarchians: Theodotus the Banker
Modalistic Monarchians: Praxeas and Noetus
Marcionites
Montanists
Gnostics
Alogoi
Quartodecimians

The Church in North Africa: Tertullian in Carthage
The Church in Alexandria: Demetrius the bishop and Clement
of Alexandria a presbyter and head of the catechetical
school; Leonidas a layman and Origen a pupil in the
school.

THE EMPIRE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE THIRD CENTURY:

Septimius Severus, A.D. 193-211
Married to Julia Domna, daughter of priest of El Gabal
at Emesa.
Proclamation against changing religion led to persecution
of A.D. 202-203.
Philostratus' Life of Apollonius of Tyana

Caracalla, A.D. 211-217
Closed schools in Alexandria
Macrinus, A.D. 217-218
Elagabalus, A.D. 218-222
Alexander Severus, A.D. 222-235
Origen preached to his mother, Julia Mamea in Antioch,
Awarded ground in Rome to church rather than to a bakery.
Julius Africanus supervised the building of his library.
Maximin the Thracian, A.D. 235-238.
Renewed persecution
Gordian, A.D. 238-244
Philip the Arabian, A.D. 244-249
Correspondence with Origen
Decius, A.D. 249-251 Celebration of the Thousandth Anniver-
sary of the founding of Rome. The Senator Valerius
pushed Decius to persecute the leadership of the church.
OUTSTANDING HERETICS OF THE FIRST HALF OF THE THIRD CENTURY:

Modalistic Monarchianism:
Epigonus and Cleomenes opened a school in Rome
Sabellius came to Rome (c. A.D. 215) and became greatest
leader of Modalists. Excommunicated by Kallistos
c. A.D. 217.
Adoptionist Monarchians:
Natalius paid a set salary to be bishop of Adoptionists.
Restored to the church under Zephyrinus.
Artemon led a revival of Adoptionism in Rome c. A.D. 240.

AFTERMATH OF THE PERSECUTION OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS IN ROME:

Bishop of Zephyrinus and Deacon Kallistos favor leniency toward
apostates; Hippolytus demanded a church of saints.
Split in the Roman Church: Majority chose Deacon Kallistos
as bishop at death of Zephyrinus in A.D. 217. Minority
chose Hippolytus as bishop.
The Rule of Kallistos:
Forgiveness of all sins
Concupinage and charges of moral laxity.
Martyrdom of Kallistos by a mob in A.D. 222
Schism continued under bishops Urban and Pontian.
The words of Hippolytus:
Two works against all heresies: Syntagma andPhilosophoumena
Table for calculating Easter
Commentaries on most of Scripture: Commentary on Daniel
and Commentary on Song of Songs most famous.
The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus
Hippolytus defended the logos theology and Kallistos
charged him with ditheyism and subordinationism.
Maximin the Thracian condemned both Pontian and Hippolytus to
the salt mines of Sardinia (c. A.D. 235). The bishops
were reconciled and the schism healed. Both died as martyrs.
Bishop Fabian united the church and brought back bodies
of both bishops for burial in Rome.

AFTERMATH OF THE PERSECUTION IN AFRICA:

Tertullian left the church and joined the Montanists c. A.D. 207.
Tertullian left the Montanists and formed a puritanical sect of
his own, c. 213 A.D.
Some of the important works of Tertullian in the Third Century:
The Prescriptions Against the Heretics, c. A.D. 200
Against Marcion, c. A.D. 207.
Against Praxeas, c. 203.
Against Hermogenes
On Baptism
On Prayer
On Penance
On Penitence
On Purity
To His Wife
The Adornment of Women
The Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas
AFTERMATH OF THE PERSECUTION OF SEPTIMIUS SEVERUS IN ALEXANDRIA:

Clement the head of the school and Demetrius the bishop fled. Leonidas the layman and father of Origen was martyred.

Origen's work in Alexandria:
The School of Martyrs
Origen studied philosophy with Ammonius Saccas and Hebrew with the Jews. The Hexalpa.
Origen makes a Eunuch of himself.
Origen visits Rome
Origen lectures to Julia Mamaia in Antioch and teaches a Roman Governor in Arabia
Origen preaches in Caesarea and Jerusalem
Heracleas joins Origen in the school
Origen converts Ambrose who becomes his patron
Origen's early works: Commentaries on Song of Songs, Genesis, Psalms; On Prayer; First Principles
On Free Will
Origen was ordained by John of Jerusalem and Theoctistus of Caesarea on way to Athens
Origen put out of the school, excommunicated from church and expelled from Egypt by Bishop Demetrius.

Origen's work in Caesarea:
Preaches daily
School of Bishops: Gregory Thaumaturgus
Commentaries: two more commentaries on Song of Songs, Commentary on Romans and Commentary on Matthew best known
Visit to Cappadocia: On Martyrdom during persecution of Maximin of Thrace, c. 235-236
Another visit to Athens and two more visits to Arabia
Against Celsus
The Torture of Origen under Decius
Origen's Theology: Trinity, Free Will, the resurrection body, Scripture as authority; the apocatastasis.

The Results of the Persecution in Rome:
Bishop Fabian was martyred.
The second split in the Roman church: Cornelius vs. Novatian
Novatian's: On the Trinity

Cyprian in Carthage:
Conversion of Cyprian and his rise to bishop
Cyprian hides during the Decian persecution but gives church able leadership
Opposition of Novatus, Felicissimus and the Confessors
Three bishops in Carthage: Fortunatus, Cyprian and Maximus
Cyprian comes out of hiding and restores order in Carthage
Cyprian offered full pardon to apostates at threat of another persecution by Emperor Gallus in 253.
Cyprian's battle with bishop Stephen of Rome:
The problem of the apostate bishops of Spain
The problem of the puritan bishop of Gaul
The problem of accepting the sacraments of heretics and schismatics

Cyprian's writings:
Three Biblical manuals: To Donatus (explanation of his conversion); To Quirinius (a manual of proof-texts for Christian workers); To Fornatus (against idolatry and exhortation to martyrdom).

On the Praise of Virginity
On the Lapsed (c. A.D. 251)
On the Unity of the Catholic Church (c. 251)
On Almsgiving
On Prayer
A Corpus of 81 letters (65 by Cyprian and 16 to him)

Cyprin's martyrdom in the persecution of Valerius, A.D. 258.

THE GREAT PEACE, A.D. 259-303.

The Edict of Gallienus, A.D. 260
The rapid growth of the church and the changes in its lifestyle
The development of Christian art and architecture
Christians in army and government service
The changed role of bishops

Rival Religious Forces:
The State Religion
Mithraism
Neo-Platonism
Manichaeism

Some Individuals who stand out in the period of Peace:
Dionysius of Rome and Dionsius of Alexandria
Paul of Samosata the Adoptionist Bishop of Antioch
Lucian the scholar of Antioch
Anthony the father of Monasticism

Aurelian's threat of persecution in A.D. 275
Diocletian becomes Emperor in A.D. 284

Reorganization of the empire:
Diocletian emperor in East and Maximian emperor in West
Galerius as caesar on the Danube and Constantius Chlorus as caesar on the Rhine

Diocletian's family: his mother a pagan; his wife, Prisca, and his daughter, Valeria, were Christians

The capital of the empire moved from Rome to Nicomedia
Edict against the Manicheans in A.D. 295. The Revival of the Old Roman Religion
Galerius and the pagan mother poison Diocletian's mind against the Christians.
THIRD CENTURY

Topics:
Tertullian:
   A Treatise on the Soul
   Against Marcion
   Against Praxeas
   On Baptism
Calixtus (Kallistos)
Hippolytus: The Apostolic Tradition
Clement of Alexandria:
   Exhortation to the Greeks
   The Instructor
   The Stromata
Origen:
   Contra Celsus, or Against Celsus
   First Principles
Cyprian:
   On the Unity of the Church
Novation:
   Concerning the Trinity
Monarchianism: Paul of Samosata
Dionysius of Rome and Dionysius of Alexandria
Persecutions:
   Persecution under Septimius Severus
   Persecution under Maximin
   The Decian Persecution
The Era of Peace and Diocletian
Lucian of Antioch and His School
Anthony and the beginnings of Monasticism

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THE BEGINNING OF THE THIRD CENTURY--THE SEVERAN PERSECUTION

THE OPENING OF THE THIRD CENTURY:
At the opening of the third century the church was enjoying a period of comparative peace— for almost twenty years the only persecutions had been local and sporadic. The old laws had not been abrogated. At any time and anywhere private denunciations could set the wheels of justice in motion against the Christians.

In the early years of the reign of Septimius Severus (emperor from 193-211) the Christians enjoyed toleration. Christians had access to the palace. Caracalla, the son of Septimius Severus, had a Christian nurse and tutor. Procullus, a Christian physician whom Septimius Severus credited with saving his life was invited to the palace and kept till his death. Prosenes, a Christian, who had served as a high minister of finance under Commodus, continued to serve under Septimius Severus. Men and women of senatorial rank were known to be Christians, yet were praised and protected from the more conservative Romans who were pagans. He protected the Christians from the mobs. He had no quarrel with Christians or any one else who lived peaceably and did not meddle with sedition. There were local breaches of the peace in places removed from Rome—as in North Africa in 197. These local persecutions were strongly denounced by Tertullian.

In the church there was a growing division of feeling about the empire. Among the better educated, like Clement of Alexandria, and among church leaders like Bishop Zephyrinus of Rome and his deacon, Kallistos, there was the feeling that the empire was a power ordained of God, and that if the church would show moderation, good sense, and tact, the church and the empire could exist together. There were others like many of the Montanists who considered the empire the kingdom of the Antichrist and Caesar-worship the very spirit of the Antichrist. They breathed defiance against the empire. Hippolytus, presbyter of Rome and head of the catechetical school, did not consider Rome the Antichrist, but it was the fourth beast of Daniel and the restraining power of Paul (II Thess. 2).

THE EDICT OF SEPTIMIUS SERVERUS, A.D. 202

Septimius Severus was disturbed by the extremists and fanatics among the Christians such as Encratites and Montanists with their hostility to the empire and the pagan society and culture in general. The agitation of the millennial question was at a high point. There was widespread belief that the appearance of the Antichrist and the second coming of the Lord were imminent. More than one leader even set the time of the coming and gathered his flock to wait. Encratites and Montanists not only condemned pagan dress, food, and amusements, but even spoke against marriage and begetting children.

Fearing the spread of the fanaticism the emperor issued his edict against further conversions in religion. The edict was aimed at both Jews and Christians—heavy penalties were enacted against teachers who proselyted and their converts. The edict was more successful amongst the Jews who were not so anxious to proselyte. The Christians could not accept the decree against further mission work. When the Christians defied the edict the emperor had no choice but to persecute. The persecution was bitter and widespread. It was not confined to teachers and converts. The records are imperfect. Many were killed—these were the martyrs. Many were tortured and turned loose—these were called "confessors". The
idea arose that confessors automatically received the rank of presbyter without ordination and that they could forgive sins. Natalius was a confessor at Rome and Asclepiades at Antioch. The better known martyrs belonged to Carthage and Alexandria. But everywhere there were many who out of fear apostatized. Some rushed to renounce Christ and to sacrifice to the emperor and the gods of Rome and received and certificate (libellus) of their loyalty to Rome. Some broke under torture and sacrificed to the gods. Some of the rich bribed officials to give them a libellus. Some sent pagan servants to offer the sacrifice, signing the master's name and receiving the libellus with the name of the master, who would deny before Christians that he worshipped the gods.

When the persecution was over many of those who had apostatized were smitten in conscience and flocked to the church begging for forgiveness. The church faced a great discipline problem—could apostacy be forgiven or was it an unpardonable sin? Great splits resulted in the church. We can follow the controversy in Rome, in Carthage and in Alexandria.

JULIA DOMNA AND PHILOSTRATUS' LIFE OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA

One of the most memorable features of the age of Septimius Severan was the change in paganism brought about by his wife, Julia Domna. She exercised great influence over her husband and her power reached its height under her son, Caracalla. She was the daughter of the old royal family of priests of El Gabal, the sun-god of Emesa in Syria. She was beautiful, cultured and ambitious. She surrounded herself with Syrian counsellors and an elite literary circle of Romans. The chief ornament of her circle was the sophist philosopher, Philostratus, whom she commissioned to write THE LIFE OF APOLLONIUS OF TYANA. This work made Apollonius a sort of pagan Christ. The intention was to show that he was greater than the Nazarene.

Apollonius was a religious reformer of the time of Domitian who preached one Supreme God to be worshipped above and through the lower gods. Sacrifices were to be offered to the lower gods but not to the Supreme God who needs nothing. He advocated a moral life to clear the sight for the mystical ecstasy. Apollonius was a well-born Greek who learned wisdom from the wise men of India and Ethiopia. He was able to predict the future and the fortunes of men. He worked great miracles. His story is written in elegant rhetoric. Apollonius was not betrayed by a disciple but accused like Socrates. He was imprisoned but rebuked the emperor Domitian and vanished from his sight only to reappear at an appointed place to his friend, Damnis. A little later he mysteriously disappeared from earth.

THE EFFECT OF THE SEVERAN PERSECUTION ON THE CHURCH AT ROME: THE CONFLICT OF KALLISTOS AND HIPPOLYTUS.

The background of the conflict: Hippolytus was the preaching presbyter of the Roman church. He was a scholar and an aristocrat of the older Greek element of the Church. He had been a pupil of Irenaeus. Kallistos represented the Latin element that had become dominant under Bishop Victor. Kallistos had been a slave who had been put over a bank. He let the Jews slick him out of the cemetery funds of the church. When he tried to collect the funds at the synagogue on the Sabbath the Jews denounced him as a Christian disturbing their worship. He was sentenced to the salt mines. When Marcia persuaded Commodus to free the Christian prisoners Kallistos' name was not on the list supplied by Bishop Victor. Kallistos
persuaded the keeper of the mines that his name had been omitted by mistake. He returned posing as a confessor. Victor gave him a pension and a place on his estate. He spent his time studying and became a deacon in the church. When Zephyrinus became bishop, the deacon Kallistus was his chief adviser to the great displeasure of Hippolytus who knew his history. Hippolytus had a very low view of the ability of both the bishop and his deacon. He looked on them as middle-heads in theology. He accused the bishop of becoming the tool of the deacon.

They clashed over the Trinity. Hippolytus championed the Logos theology. Zephyrinus and Kallistos had misgivings about the Epiponus and Cleomenes, followers of Praxeas and Noetus, and allowed them to open and conduct a school in Rome. Zephyrinus and Kallistos accused Hippolytus of ditheism and subordinationism. Zephyrinus was a good old man but more administrator than acute theologian. He wanted to uphold the traditional position of the church. Both Adoptionists and Modalists claimed to hold to the original position of the church. Kallistos was trying to find a middle course between Patrification and the Logos theology. Hippolytus accuses Zephyrinus of saying, "I know one God only, Jesus Christ, and besides Him no other, who has died or suffered... It was not the Father who died, it was the Son."

Hippolytus saw Modalism in this.

Hippolytus accused Zephyrinus and Kallistos of tolerating fornicators and adulterers in the church. Hippolytus maintained these were unforgivable sins. Also they tolerated concubinage.

They clashed over what to do with the apostates who came after the persecution begging for forgiveness. Hippolytus maintained that apostasy was unpardonable. He demanded a church of the pure. Zephyrinus and Kallistos maintained it was the mission of the church to seek the lost. Confessors could forgive. Hippolytus was denying the power of confessors. At the heart of the clash was the idea of the nature of the church—should it be a church of the saints or a church of redeemed sinners. Kallistos appealed to Noah's ark with clean and unclean and to the parable of the tares with wheat and tares growing together.

THE SPLIT IN THE ROMAN CHURCH:

When Zephyrinus died in 217 the church had to chose a new bishop. Hippolytus felt he was in line to be the bishop—saint, scholar, presbyter, head of the school. The people chose Kallistos. Kallistos was one of them and understood them. Hippolytus was too perfect, too aloof.

Hippolytus and his followers pulled away and formed a new church with Hippolytus as bishop. They maintained they were the true church. The majority followed Kallistos. Rome had two churches—bishop and anti-bishop—Hippolytus the first of the anti-popes of Rome.

KALLISTOS AS BISHOP OF ROME:
The excommunication of Sabellius
Kallistos and the pardoning of sin: "I absolve thee!"
He declared there were no unpardonable sins.
Kallistos allowed clergy who had married, divorced and remarried to continue to function in the church.
Hippolytus and Tertullian accused him of having a church of adulterers.

Kallistos on concubinage.
Kallistos was killed by a mob on the street as he was about his work. He was buried near his church. The church of his day believed the baptism of blood removed all sins.