

# The Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs

Translated from Latin by Alexander Smarius

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which also contains the original Latin text and some commentary.

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During the consulship of Praesens (second term) and Condianus, on 17 July, in Carthage, there were led into the governor's office: Speratus, Nartzalus and Cittinus; Donata, Secunda, Vestia.

Saturninus the governor said: "You can have mercy from our lord the emperor, if you return to your senses."

Speratus said: "We have never done wrong. We have stayed clear of treating people unfairly. We have never spoken ill of anyone. Instead, when treated badly, we have offered thanks, because we obey our own ruler."

Saturninus the governor said: "We too are religious and our religion is simple: we swear by the birth spirit of our lord the emperor and offer sacrifice for his health, which you must do as well."

Speratus said: "If you are prepared to listen to me, I will tell you a mystery of simplicity."

Saturninus said: "If you're going to tell bad things about our sacred rituals, I will not listen to you. Rather, swear by the birth spirit of our lord the emperor."

Speratus said: "I do not acknowledge the authority of this world, but I rather serve that God whom no one has seen or can see with these eyes. I have never been guilty of theft, but whenever I buy, I pay the tax, because I acknowledge my lord, the king of kings and ruler of all peoples."

Saturninus the governor said to the others: "Stop being of this persuasion!"

Speratus said: "Bad is the persuasion to commit murder, to bear false testimony."

Saturninus the governor said: "Stop being part of this madness!"

Cittinus said: "We have no other to fear but the Lord our God, who is in heaven."

Donata said: "Honor to Caesar in his capacity as Caesar, but fear to God."

Vestia said: "I am a Christian."

Secunda said: "What I am is exactly what I want to be."

Saturninus the governor said to Speratus: "Do you persevere in being a Christian?"

Speratus said: "I am a Christian", and all uttered their agreement with him.

Saturninus the governor said: "Do you want some time to consider the matter carefully?"

Speratus said: "In such a just cause there is no need for careful consideration."

Saturninus the governor said: "What sort of things do you have in that case of yours?"

Speratus said: "Books and letters of Paul, a righteous man."

Saturninus the governor said: "Have a delay of 30 days and think things over!"

Again Speratus said: "I am a Christian", and all uttered their agreement with him.

Saturninus the governor read aloud the sentence from a tablet: "Concerning Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Donata, Vestia, Secunda and the others who have confessed that they live according to the Christian religion: because in spite of the opportunity given to them to return to the Roman way of life, they have stubbornly persisted in maintaining theirs, I have decided that they be put to the sword."

Speratus said: "We offer thanks to God."

Nartzalus said: "Today we are martyrs in heaven. Thanks to God."

Saturninus the governor ordered a herald to declare his sentence: "I have ordered Speratus, Nartzalus, Cittinus, Veturius, Felix, Aquilinus, Laetantius, Januaria, Generosa, Vestia, Donata and Secunda, to be executed."

All said: "Thanks to God."

And immediately they were decapitated for the name of Christ.

Amen.