

## St. Mark & Marcellian



Mark and Marcellian were twin brothers from a noble Roman family. They had converted to Christianity when they were young and were now deacons in the Roman Church. Although the boys had converted in their youth, their parents remained unconverted. Each brother had a wife and children. When the persecutions of Emperor Diocletian began, the brothers were arrested and thrown into prison. They were threatened with the loss of their lives, unless they offered sacrifices to the Roman gods. Friends intervened and obtained a thirty-day reprieve, in the hope of being able to persuade the two brothers to renounce their faith and make the required sacrifices. Their wives and little children, along with their unconverted parents, begged them with tears and pleading, to make the sacrifices to the Roman gods.

Although they had been released from the prison on a thirty-day reprieve, they were still kept under guard and basically prisoners in the home of the public registrar Nicostratus. St. Sebastian (pg. 34 Building the Family Cookbook Feast Day: January 20th) was a Roman officer in the emperor's household. St. Sebastian visited Mark and Marcellian every day and gave them encouragement to persevere. These discussions, before relatives and friends, caused many conversions to take place, even Nicostratus. Another man, Chromatius, who kept the prisoners under guard, also converted. He set the prisoners free, resigned his post and left to live in the country. After their release, Mark and Marcellian were hidden by a Christian official in the imperial household. They were betrayed by a spy and arrested again. Fabian (who had

replaced Chromatius after his conversion) condemned Mark and Marcellian to death. The tombs of the two martyrs were discovered in the Catacomb of St. Balbina.

Their tombs were surmounted by a painting representing the “coronation of themselves and their companions.” The relics of St. Mark and St. Marcellian are found in Rome in the Basilica of St. Praxedes.

This recipe is named for St. Mark and St. Marcellian because they were very close as brothers, but even closer because they were twins. I can just imagine how they must have loved to get together with their families and share a meal. To ponder in our hearts, that the grace from the Holy Spirit was so great and they were so open to it, that their faith did not waiver. They gave up all the time they would have spent with their children and wives, for God! What a witness to us all! This recipe is Italian in nature and fun for families. It is an alternative to pizza. When you gather with your family to enjoy this dish, talk to them about St. Mark and St. Marcellian. Talk to them about the great God we serve and the great Faith we have in the Roman Catholic Church. We have the Catholic Faith today, because of men like these Saints, who chose God over everything else! Keep the Faith!