



Roman martyrology: In Antinoe of Thebes (Egypt today), Julian and Vasilissa are saints and martyrs (S. IV).

Etymology: From the Roman name *Iulianus*, meaning “One who belongs to the family”.

St. Julian and St. Basilissa were husband and wife who lived in the early part of the fourth century.

We have no historically certain data relating to these two holy personages, but we do know that their love for their faith led them to do something heroic: they turned their home into a hospital. This way, they could take care of the sick and the poor who had no one to help them.

Forced by his family to marry, he agreed with his spouse, Basilissa, that they should both preserve their virginity, and further encouraged her to found a convent for women, of which she became the superior. While Julian himself gathered a large number of monks and undertook their direction.

The couple found Jesus in the people they served. And they did what they did because of love, not for money or any kind of reward. Regardless the lack of information, we also know that St. Basilissa died after suffering great persecutions for the faith while Julian lived much longer. He continued his generous service to sick people even after his wife had died. Later, Julian, too, died a martyr at Antioch or, more probably, at Antinoe, in the reign of Diocletian, early in the fourth century, on 9 January, according to the Roman Martyrology.

Basilissa and Julian spent their whole lives helping others and serving God. They planted the seed of faith by living in a holy way. They watered that faith and made it grow with their blood shed for Jesus crucified.