

There have been three African popes in the Roman Catholic Church

[**Pope Victor I**](#) (died 199) was the [bishop of Rome](#) in the late second century (189–199 A.D.), the 14th pope. He was of [Berber](#) origin. The dates of his tenure are uncertain, but one source states he became pope in 189 and gives the year of his death as 199. He was the first bishop of [Rome](#) born in the Roman Province of [Africa](#)—probably in [Leptis Magna](#) (or [Tripolitania](#)). He was later considered a saint. His [feast day](#) was celebrated on 28 July as "St Victor I, Pope and Martyr". He was the first to speak Latin in the church at that time when Greek was the language of the liturgy. [More information](#)

[**Pope Miltiades**](#) ([Greek](#): Μιλτιάδης, *Miltiádēs*), also known as **Melchiades the African** (Μελχιάδης ὁ Ἀφρικανός *Melkhiádēs ho Aphrikanós*), was the [bishop of Rome](#) from 311 to his death on 10 or 11 January 314. He was the 32nd pope. It was during his pontificate that Emperor [Constantine the Great](#) issued the [Edict of Milan](#) (313), giving [Christianity](#) legal status within the [Roman Empire](#).

[**Pope Gelasius I**](#) was the [bishop of Rome](#) from 1 March AD 492 to his death on 19 November 496. He was the 49th pope and probably the third and final [bishop of Rome](#) of [Berber](#) descent. Gelasius was a prolific author whose style placed him on the cusp between [Late Antiquity](#) and the [Early Middle Ages](#).