

## PAGAN PRACTICES INTRODUCED INTO THE CHURCH

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The influence of paganism on the Church increased over the years step by step. The Church began to shroud itself in "mystery" and ritualism that had a strong resemblance to Babylonian mysticism. The Chaldean tau, which was the elevation of a large "T" on the end of a pole, was changed to the sign of a cross. The rosary of pagan origin was introduced. Celibacy of priests and nuns, which has no scriptural verification but finds a counterpart in the vestal virgins of paganism, was conceived. The following is a partial list of unscriptural changes introduced during this age. Gradually these changes became more prominent than the original teachings of Christianity:

- A.D. 300 - - Prayers for the dead.
- A.D. 300 - - Making sign of the cross.
- A.D. 375 - - Worship of saints and angels.
- A.D. 394 - - Mass first instituted.
- A.D. 431 - - Worship of Mary begun.
- A.D. 500 - - Priests began dressing differently than laypeople.
- A.D. 526 - - Extreme unction.
- A.D. 593 - - Doctrine of purgatory introduced.
- A.D. 600 - - Worship services conducted in Latin.
- A.D. 600 - - Prayers directed to Mary.

From A.D. 312 on, the Church became more Roman & less Christian in its practices. The Roman Catholic Church of today is hard put to trace its ancestry beyond A. D. 312. Until that time the Church was an independent collection of local churches, working together whenever possible but not dominated by central authority. The name Pergamum literally means "marriage" or "elevation." As the Church became married to governmental authority and elevated to a place of acceptance, it declined in spiritual blessing and power.

*Uction = 1. the act of anointing as a rite of consecration or healing  
2. exaggerated or insincere earnestness of language or manner*