

Justinian I (482-565, age 83, reign, 38)

- 482 Born in Tauresium, present-day Macedonia to a peasant family; mother was Vigilantia, sister to his uncle Justin, who adopted him, took him to Constantinople, saw to his thorough education; served for a time in the imperial guard
- 518 Justin named emperor; nephew Justinian was his closest advisor
- 521 Justinian appointed consul; later, commander of the army of the east.
- 525 Married Theodora (500-548), a courtesan, 20 years his junior; the marriage made possible by Justin's law allowing intermarriage between social classes
- 527 Appointed as an associate emperor (April 1), although may have been *de facto* ruler prior to this, due to Justin's advancing frailty.
- 527 Justin died (August 1); Justinian made sole emperor; last Roman emperor to speak **Latin** as his first language. Last emperor to control both east and west of empire.
- 529 Completely revised all of Roman law, known today as *Corpus juris civilis*, forms the basis of Latin jurisprudence, including Canon Law, followed by the *Digesta* and, in 533, the *Institutiones*, a textbook containing the principles of law; remains influential today. These documents are basis of whole 12thC revival of Roman law in Med. Europe.
- 532 Concluded the "Eternal Peace", ending the five-year war with the Sassanid Empire.
- 532 Nika Riots, attempt to overthrow Justinian; put down in two days, 30,000 civilians killed.
- 533 Two-year conquest of North Africa; General Belisarius defeated the Vandals; recovered Carthage, Sardinia, Corsica, the Balearic Islands, and Septum near Gibraltar.
- 535 Belisarius invaded Sicily, took Naples and captured Rome without a fight from the Ostrogoths, welcomed by Romans and Vatican.
- 537 Thirteen-month siege of Rome by Ostrogothic king Vitigis; Rome held.
- 540 Ostrogothic capital Ravenna reclaimed for Rome; Vitigis and his wife captured
- 540 Sassanid king Khosrau broke the "Eternal Peace," invaded Roman territory, sacking Beroea and Antioch.
- 542 Ostrogothic gains in Italy, holding nearly the entire peninsula.
- 543 Justinian struck with the plague that rages in empire, Justinian survives.
- 544 King Khosrau defeated 30,000 Byzantine troops.
- 546-550 Rome changed hands three times. Worst devastation of Italy ever (540-560 twenty years of war, "Gothic Wars" Procopius writes the book about it. Italy does not recover til the Renaissance.
- 548 Theodora died.
- 552 Ostrogoth defeat at Ravenna.
- 552 Cartagena and other southern Spanish towns taken by the Byzantines; apogee of Byzantine expansion, Spain divided, Visigothic regime north, south coast Byzantine.
- 554 Large-scale Frankish invasion into Gaul and expanding.
- 557 Truce with the Sassanid Empire
- 559 Invasion of the Balkans by Slavs and Bulgars; repulsed by general Belisarius.
- 562 Fifty Years' Peace ended the Sassanid wars in Iran/Iraq.
- 565 (Nov. 14) Justinian died age 83 without an heir, succeeded by Justin II, his nephew.