

THE CATACOMBS

They are known with two names: the oldest one is *Bassilla*, as per the identification there are still doubts if it is addressed to the owner of the area or the martyr who died here under Roman emperor Diocleziano in 304.

Therefore on the site four martyrs are buried in what is called the cemetery of the Salaria Vetus: Hermes, Proto, Hyacint and Bassilla.

The cemetery, which of the first half of the 3rd century, is built on three levels.

From an historical artistic point of view three locations of the cemetery are very important: the Basilica of Saint Hermes, the medieval oratory and the crypt of Protus and Hyacint.

The floor of the church was later elevated by the Pope Damasus hiding the tomb of Hyacinth that was discovered in 1845, still perfectly intact, with the presence of bones and relics.