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## CONVENTION OR ORIGINALITY?: THE ATTRIBUTES OF CHRISTIAN CHILDREN IN LATIN EPIGRAPHY

### ¿CONVENCIÓN U ORIGINALIDAD?: LOS ATRIBUTOS DE NIÑOS CRISTIANOS EN EPIGRAFÍA LATINA

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#### RESUMEN

The Latin tomb inscriptions of Christian children show surprising variety in the phrases and epithets used to describe the deceased. While some are conventional attributes expressing the innocence or piety of the child, others are more imaginative, original and even unique. The inscriptions record qualities such as smallness of the child; modesty; intelligence; devotion to God. They lament the child's premature death, but foresee its future in heaven. The inscriptions also reflect the grief and love of bereaved parents, suggesting genuine emotions.

**Palabras clave:** Children, Christianity, Emotion, Epithets, Fate, Latin Epigraphy.

#### ABSTRACT

Las inscripciones funerarias latinas de niños cristianos muestran una variedad sorprendente en las frases y los epítetos utilizados para describir los muertos. Unos son atributos convencionales que expresan la inocencia o la piedad del niño; otros son más imaginativos, más originales, e incluso únicos. Las inscripciones registran cualidades tales como la pequeñez del niño; modestia; inteligencia; devoción a Dios. Se lamenta la muerte prematura del niño, pero se prevé su futuro en el cielo. Las inscripciones reflejan también el dolor y el amor de los padres desolados, y con eso sugieren emociones genuinas.

**Keywords:** Cristiandad, Destino, Emoción, Epigrafiía latina, Epítetos, Niños.

## SUMARIO

1. Introduction 2. Identification of the Deceased. 3. Description of the Deceased. 4. The Dedicans 5. Contextualizing the Epithets 6. Epithets and Emotions. 7. Conclusions. Annex: Selected Epitaphs of Christian Children.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Children were an important component of early Christian society, as we can see from their frequent mention in the New Testament, patristic literature and canon law (Strange 1996; Nathan 2000, 133-159; Leyerle 2013; Betsworth 2015; Nathan 2021). Early Christian children have indeed been the subject of several books, again relying heavily on textual evidence (Osiek 2003; Bakke 2005; Horn and Martens 2009; Horn and Phenix 2009; MacDonald 2014). Enlightening as these writings are, they mostly deal with Christian children in general, not with specific individuals. A more personal view of actual children might be expected in funerary art, but here again the results are disappointing. While portraits of children are often found on Roman tomb monuments (Hutchinson 1999; Mander 2012), they are rare in Christian contexts. When they do appear, for instance on sarcophagi, they are stylized representations of generic children, rather than actual children drawn from life (Jastrzebowska 1989; Studer-Karlen 2008)<sup>1</sup>. More often, the visual language of Christian children's tombstones comprises less personal illustrations. A study of children's funerary plaques in the catacombs of Rome found that the commonest decorations are birds, *orantes*, toys, or the ubiquitous chi-rho, rather than a portrait of the deceased (Kreiger 2013).

Therefore, our fullest and most reliable source of information on "real" children in early Christian society is neither literature nor art, but the extensive archive of surviving Latin epitaphs. However, there are two reasons why these have not been adequately utilized to shed light on Christian children. One is

<sup>1</sup> Children account for only a low percentage of known Christian sarcophagi (Rawson 2003b, 284).

the sheer mass of material. There are more than 40.000 Christian inscriptions from Rome, and thousands more in Italy and the provinces, making it difficult to isolate only those that mention children<sup>2</sup>. Another reason is the uninformative content of many of these inscriptions, which often contain only the child's name (usually mononymous), age at death, date of burial, and one or more stock formulas such as *hic requiescit* or *in pace*. If there is an epithet describing the deceased, it is usually a conventional one such as *fidelis* or *benemerens*. Even when a more unusual epithet is used, it can easily be discounted as an exception to the rule, as it pertains only to one child and tells us nothing about children in general. Yet these personalized epithets are precisely what is needed to gain an insight into the memorialized perception of individual children<sup>3</sup>. Since the purpose of funerary inscriptions was to preserve the memory of the deceased and provide information on their lives (Carroll 2011b, 65), it was important that epithets and other descriptive phrases should give an accurate reflection of the character or attributes of the deceased child.

It may be useful to explain the characteristics, provenance and accessibility of the evidence. Latin inscriptions comprise the largest body of Christian epigraphic texts. Christian sepulchral inscriptions, including those of children, are usually carved on a stone slab covering the grave, though occasionally the epitaph appears on a sarcophagus or mosaic. The inscription is often decorated with Christian symbols. It

<sup>2</sup> There are no surviving epitaphs of Christian children in Raetia, Noricum or Corsica.

<sup>3</sup> Some useful remarks on epithets in the pagan and Christian epitaphs in the city of Rome have already been made by Sigismund Nielsen 1997 (dealing with the population as a whole) and Sigismund Nielsen 2019 (dealing specifically with infants).

frequently gives the precise age of the deceased in years, months and days, as well as the date of deposition. Most epitaphs are brief, though some include additional content such as a lament, prayer or expression of faith. A few that begin misleadingly with the traditional pagan formula “D(is) M(anibus)” contain other words or symbols indicating that they are in fact Christian. The largest single source of children’s epitaphs is the catacombs of Rome. There are also numerous examples from the remainder of Italy, with Regiones I (Latium-Campania) and X (Venetia-Histria) being by far the most productive. A large body of children’s inscriptions comes from Africa Proconsularis, with smaller quantities from Numidia and the two Mauretaniae. The Gallic, Germanic and Hispanic provinces have also yielded a sizeable tally of children’s epitaphs in Latin, as have Sicily and Sardinia, though there are relatively few from the Danube region. Less than half the epigraphic texts include epithets or attributes, which are the focus of the present article. All of the inscriptions date from the second to the sixth century, though chiefly to the fourth and fifth. The inscriptions from the city of Rome can be found in *ICUR*, while Latin inscriptions from the entire Roman world (including Rome) are collected in *ILCV*, subsuming the fruits of local and regional *corpora*. These inscriptions are also conveniently available online (but without commentary) in the Epigraphik Datenbank Claus-Slaby<sup>4</sup>.

The present paper will examine the verbal attributes of Christian children in epitaphs from Rome, Italy and the provinces, and what they tell us about the characteristics that were valued in a child. The main topics to be discussed are, first, how to define the age of childhood and how young age at death is emphasized in the inscriptions. We will next look at the epithets and phrases that are used to describe individual children, including not only their personal characteristics but also their religious devotion and their premature

decease. Then we will consider how the dedicants (usually parents) are described, with emphasis on love and mourning. Next, we will examine how descriptions of children in Christian epigraphy compare with their pagan counterparts and with descriptions of children in Christian literature, and how they vary from one part of the Empire to another. Then we will discuss the problem of whether the terms of affection applied to children express real emotion or are merely formulaic. Finally we will consider whether the attributes in these inscriptions should be seen as original or merely conventional.

## 2. IDENTIFICATION OF THE DECEASED

To begin with, we must define what is meant by “children”. Biologically, a child is a human being in the period between birth and puberty, but the end of this period is interpreted variously in different cultures. Roman law allowed girls and boys to marry at ages 12 and 14 respectively, though these were minimum ages and most people married several years later (Saller 1987; Shaw 1987)<sup>5</sup>. The toga of manhood (*toga virilis*) was given to Roman boys in a ceremony, usually around the age of 15, but in practice anywhere between 13 and 18, depending on when the parents considered him ready (Rawson 2003a, 142). Even among the early Christians there was confusion about the boundaries between infancy, childhood, and adolescence; in one inscription, an 11-year old is called *infans* (Annex, no. 1), while in another, a 4-year old is *adolescens* (2)<sup>6</sup>. This is hardly surprising, since infancy, childhood and adolescence are social constructs lacking scientific definition. Any choice of terminal point for childhood is therefore arbitrary. Also, while children may not have changed much biologically since ancient times, socially there is a conspicuous difference between Roman children and those of today, in that many

<sup>5</sup> One Christian epitaph (*ICUR* VII, 19291) records a girl who died at age 15 after 3 years of marriage.

<sup>6</sup> Christian inscriptions record *lectores* as young as 6 (3) and *clerici* as young as 4 (4).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.manfredclaus.de>

children (at least of the lower classes) entered the workforce at a relatively young age (Bradley 1991, 112-116; Sigismund Nielsen 2013, 289-290). According to Horn and Martens (2009, 18), childhood in early Christian times ended for girls around the age of 12-15, and for boys around 17-18. However, even granted that girls may mature faster than boys, this seems an extreme age differential. A more reasonable position is taken by McWilliam (2001, 74), who in a study of children's tombstones from Roman Italy counted only persons who died before age 14<sup>7</sup>. McWilliam's upper limit seems a sensible cutoff point and has been adopted here.

The deceased child is often referred to as *infans*, *puer*, *puella* or *virgo*. A diminutive adjective may be used to emphasize that the child was small<sup>8</sup>. Children as young as 2 are sometimes called *dominus* or *domina* (10-14). Some children are celebrated as the first-born or only child<sup>9</sup>. The birth of a 1-year old had been "sought with prayers for many years"<sup>10</sup>. In rare instances, epitaphs are set up to babies less than a day old (Carroll 2006, 277). Although Roman literary references (Cic., *Tusc.*, 1,93; Plut., *Mor.*, 612A) claim that young infants should not be mourned, these sources reflect the Stoic attitude of self-restrained aristocrats rather than the outlook of the general populace (Carroll 2011a, 99-100). Even so, pagan tombstones of the very young are woefully scarce. At Rome, for example, despite an undoubtedly high rate of infant mortality, only 0,35% of pagan epitaphs are dedicated to children under the age of 1, though the proportion is somewhat higher in the provinces (Carroll 2018, 208). The Christians, however, believed that the soul was infused into the body at the time of conception. Therefore babies, including those

unborn, were entitled to Christian burial<sup>11</sup>. In parts of the Iberian Peninsula, for instance, deceased babies were buried in amphoras (Pereira and Albuquerque 2018, 102-107). In Egypt, fetuses were carefully wrapped in the same manner as adults and placed in graves on an east-west orientation (Kitat 2021). However, relatively few Christian babies are honoured with funerary inscriptions.

In some cases, two siblings are buried together, e.g., a pair of 5-year old sisters (19); brothers aged 1 and 4 (20); a 1 year old boy and his 3-year old sister (21); an 11-year old boy and his 2-year old sister (22); two brothers aged 8 and 7 (23). An 8-year old girl and her 4-year old brother who died at sea are described as *infelicissimis infantibus* (24). Unusually, a 9-year old girl was buried with her grandfather (25). In one instance, tragically, sisters aged 6 and 2 died on the same day<sup>12</sup>. It is unclear whether these concomitant deaths were caused by disease, accident or violence. Even the timing of a single death could be poignant, as in the case of a 13-year old girl who died on her birthday<sup>13</sup>.

### 3. DESCRIPTION OF THE DECEASED

The epithets most frequently found in Christian children's tomb inscriptions are *dulcissimus*, *carissimus*, *benemerens* and *innocentissimus*<sup>14</sup>; less often, we find *amantissimus*, *incomparabilis* and *pientissimus*. Superlative adjectives are far more common than those in the positive degree. The phrase "of good memory" (*bonae memoriae*) occurs frequently in some places. These are conventional descriptors, in some cases probably chosen by the stonemason rather than the family. Some other attributes occur rarely,

<sup>11</sup> Those who were unbaptized would suffer condemnation, but of the mildest sort, because of original sin: Augustine, *De peccatorum meritis*, 21 (16).

<sup>12</sup> *sorores una die obitae sunt* (26). An inscription recording the deaths of 3 children in 27 days (27) is possibly Christian.

<sup>13</sup> *die natali suo* (28).

<sup>14</sup> On the application of the idealized concept of innocence to Christian children, see Pietri 1997, 1534.

<sup>7</sup> Mander 2012, by contrast, included children up to the age of 16.

<sup>8</sup> *parvula* (5); *pitinnus*, i.e. *pisinnus* (6); *pisintula* (7); *infantula* (8). A 1-year old girl is called *annic(u)la* (9).

<sup>9</sup> *filiae primae nat(a)e* (15); *filio unico* (16); *unicus matri su(a)e* (17).

<sup>10</sup> *plurimis annis orationibus petitus natus* (18).

and because of their originality are more likely to reflect individual qualities appropriate to the deceased, at least in the opinion of the dedicant. These include words meaning “most delightful” (*iucundissimus*: 29), “honey-sweet” (*mellitus*: 30) and “praiseworthy” (*laudabilis*: 31-32).

Children of both sexes are praised for their virtues. Sons and daughters are commended for goodness (*bonitas*)<sup>15</sup>. Girls are described as “honorable” (*honesta*: 38-39), “of innocence and kindness” (*[integr]itatis ac benignitatis*: 40) and “of wonderful modesty” (*mir(a)e pudiciti(a)e*: 41). A 13-year old girl is an “unsullied maiden” (*virgo intaminata*: 42)<sup>16</sup>. Boys are “of honorable memory” (*hon(estae) mem(oriae)*: 43), “pure of flesh” (*i(n)tegre carnis*: 2), “of excellent character” (*optimae indolis*: 44), or a “lamb without stain” (*agnus sine macula*: 45-46)<sup>17</sup>. Goodness, purity and virtue were highly prized among the early Christians. For instance, Athanasius of Alexandria (fourth century) writes that “a good life and a pure soul and Christian virtue” are necessary if one wishes to understand the word of God<sup>18</sup>.

Some children were conspicuous for love or friendship. One girl was “loved by all” (*omnibus amata*: 48); another was someone “whose friendship everyone desired” (*queius amicitiam omnes desiderabant*: 49). Intelligence and skill were highly prized. A 7-year old boy, described as “full of intellect and wisdom” (*totius ingeniositatis ac sapientiae*), studied Greek literature and was self-taught in Latin (50), while a deceased 10-year old was “a bright girl trained in letters” (*inlustris puella instructa litteris*: 51). A 9-year old girl was a maker of gold cloth (*aurinetrix*: 52), a surprising occupation in view of Christian writers’ disdain of gold cloth<sup>19</sup>. Other children, who died away from their home province, are remembered as

citizens of Gaul, Pannonia, Thrace, Judaea or Africa<sup>20</sup>.

Religion played a dominant role in Christian life, and it is in this realm that the attributes differ the most from their pagan counterparts (Sigismund Nielsen 2001, 174). Thus children, like adults, are called “servant of God” (*Dei/Domini famula; Dei/Christi servus*: 58-59, 70, 78), “adoring Christ” (*C(h)risticolus*: 60), or “blessed” (*beatus/beatissimus*: 61-62). The adjective *sanctissimus* (63) may mean “most pious”, though it is also used in pagan epitaphs to signify moral goodness. One girl “died in Christ” (*obiit in Chr(ist)o*; 64); of other girls it is said, “God has ordered her to be in peace” (*Deus iussit in pace fi(eri)*: 65) and “May you sleep in the peace of the Lord” (*in pace Domini dormias*: 10). In some inscriptions, children are identified as a new convert (*neofytus/a*: 12, 21, 66-68) or a pilgrim (*peregrinus*: 69-71). When the adjective *pius* (72) or *pietissimus* (73-74) is used, it is not always clear whether it means that the child was respectful of its parents, or of God (possibly both). The epithet *fidelis* “faithful” is particularly common in Africa but also occurs elsewhere. The deceased child is now in heaven (*in caelis habetur*: 75), abiding in the glory of God (*manet in Dei gloria*: 57) and among the saints and martyrs<sup>21</sup>. This may reflect in part the saying of Jesus that the kingdom of God belongs to little children (*Mark* 10:13). Despite the official doctrine that the dead would not be raised until the final Day of Judgment (*Acts* 17:31), the inscriptions reflect a popular belief that good Christians were admitted to heaven immediately (Foxhall Forbes 2020, 154-155).

Children’s epitaphs sometimes bemoan their premature fate. The child “died suddenly” (*subito obita/rapta est*: 79, 93), “snatched at an unripe age” (*cruda aetate raptus*: 44), and

15 *bonus/a* (33-35); *virgo totius bonitatis* (36); *anima bona* (12); *mir(a)e bonitatis* (37).

16 Cf. Hoyo 2016, 53-55.

17 Cf. *dulcis agna* (47).

18 Athanasius, *De incarn.* 57.

19 Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2, 11; Jerome, *Ep.* 107, 4.

20 *civi Gall(a)e* (53); *civis Pan(nonica)* (54); *e provincia T(h)racia* (55); *Iudaea* (56); *natione Afra* (57).

21 *in pace cum san(c)t<i>s* (76); *digna inter sanctos* (65); *sociata m(artyribus)* (77); *posita mart[y]riis in gremio* (78). On Christian ideas of the afterlife, see Dresken-Weiland 2021.



is now “irrecoverable” (*irreparabilis*: 80)<sup>22</sup>. Alternatively, the child was “undeservedly and cruelly removed by God” (*indig(ne) ac cru(deliter) a De(o) sublatum*: 81), or “summoned by the angels (*accersitus ab angelis*: 82). Such expressions, which sometimes seem a little dramatic, emphasize the loss that must have been felt by parents unfairly deprived of children who died before their time. The tragedy of the premature death of children and the sorrow of their bereaved parents was addressed by Christian writers such as John Chrysostom, who consoled parents with the promise of heaven for their innocent offspring (Wang 2019).

#### 4. THE DEDICANTS

The persons erecting the epitaph, when specified, are most often *pater*, *mater* or *parentes* (in Gaul, *patres*)<sup>23</sup>. In other cases the dedicant is a *frater* or *soror*; less often, caregivers or a grandparent<sup>24</sup>. In one instance, a baby is commemorated by *mater et mam(m)a* (85)<sup>25</sup>. Parents are variously described as grieving (*dolentes*: 16, 28, 86-88); bitter and unhappy (*acerbi et infelicissimi*: 89); very dutiful (*pietissimi*: 90); very loving (*amantissimi*: 91); very dear (*car[issimi]*: 92). A father lamenting his loss is called “mourning” (*m(a)estus*: 93), a mother “miserable” (*[mi]serabilis*: 94). An epitaph of a 5-year old boy states that “through his refinement and wisdom he gave his parents everlasting grief” (*qui per elegantia et sapientia sua parent[i]bus suis remisit dolore perpetuo*: 95), while the remembrance of a 2-year old boy “has brought grief to his parents” (*qui rememoratio dolum parentibus demisit*: 96)<sup>26</sup>. Particularly interesting are the epitaphs of

three 6-year old girls. Of one it is said, “you left me and abandoned me alone” (*mi reliquisti sola(u)e me desolasti*: 97); of another, “your affection, charm and dearness left me grief and sorrow” (*cuius affectus et blandities et caritas qui me dolorem et luctum reliquit*: 98); while the death of the third girl “broke her parents’ hearts” (*par[en]tibus suis cordo[lium] misit*: 99). The death of a child was upsetting, not only because the child was loved, but because such a death violated the natural order, in which children are expected to outlive (and bury) their parents. Although the Church discouraged mourning for loved ones, since they were merely asleep and would be resurrected in Christ (I *Thess.* 4:13; Cyprian, *De mortalitate*, 21), this rationalization would have been of little comfort to parents traumatized by the loss of their child. One evidently affluent couple was so upset at the loss of their child that they acquired and preserved a basilica in his honour (18).

#### 5. CONTEXTUALING THE EPITHETS

To appreciate the significance of funerary descriptors, it is necessary to view them in their religious, literary and geographic contexts. How do Christian epithets differ from pagan ones? How do Christian descriptions of children compare with those in patristic literature? How do epithets vary from one part of the Empire to another?

If we look at pagan epithets, we can see that they fall into four categories: affective epithets (e.g., *carissimus*, *amantissimus*); laudatory epithets (e.g., *benemerens*, *incomparabilis*); epithets of character (e.g., *dulcissimus*, *innocentissimus*); epithets of virtues (e.g., *dignus*, *pietissimus*) (Díaz López 2015, 55). All these types continue to be found in Christian epitaphs, showing that both societies valued many of the same characteristics. However, there are also some differences. First, attributes in Christian inscriptions are often expressed not by a single epithet but by a phrase of two or more words. Second, Christian epitaphs often

22 Cf. Sigismund Nielsen 1997, 198-202 on premature death in pagan epitaphs.

23 A count of epitaphs of Christian children at Rome found that 99 percent were set up by one or both parents (Sigismund Nielsen 2019, Table 3).

24 *nutri[c]ion<e>s* (83); *pater (e)t avus* (84).

25 On *mamma* and *tata* in Christian epitaphs, see Stawoska-Jundziłł 2003.

26 On the relationship of remembrance and grief see Hope and Huskinson 2011.

include words alluding to the piety or devotion of the deceased. Third, Christian inscriptions have their own distinctive, non-pagan vocabulary, not only in verbal expressions of death (*dormias, discessit*) and burial (*depositus*), but also in epithets. The use of innovative or rare descriptors such as *pisintula, intaminata, integre carnis* or *optimae indolis* enriches the standard funerary repertoire<sup>27</sup>. The devotional locution *Domini famulus* is of course confined to Christianity, while the phrase *bonae memoriae*, though sometimes found in pagan epitaphs, more frequently occurs in Christian contexts<sup>28</sup>.

Characterizations of children sometimes occur in Christian literature, yet these sources have little relevance to how children are described in the inscriptions. Christian writers are generally more concerned with the upbringing and education of children, and their potential role in the Church, than with individual qualities. Also, patristic texts do not seem noticeably to influence the funerary epigraphy. In fact it is doubtful that most of the families setting up the inscriptions had access to such texts, many of them in Greek rather than Latin, though they may have heard echos of some of them in church sermons. But a more important point is that the perspectives of the literary sources are not the same as those of the epigraphic sources. For instance, Augustine (*Conf.* 1, 7, 11) states that the minds of infants, unlike the weakness of their limbs, are far from innocent; yet *innocens* or *innocentissimus* is among the commonest adjectives applied to infants in Christian inscriptions. Clement of Alexandria (*Paed.* 1, 5) expatiates on the simplicity of children, yet this is not a quality as yet documented in children's epitaphs<sup>29</sup>. John Chrysostom (*Hom. in Coloss.* 4, 4) describes children as vengeful and tyrannized by vanity,

desire, anger and envy; needless to say, these negative traits are not mentioned in sepulchral inscriptions, which are invariably laudatory. A number of other Christian texts describe children as being naturally suited to monastic life<sup>30</sup>, a qualification unlikely to be mentioned on their tombstones. In short, the attitudes of the Church Fathers towards children bear little relation to the ways children were viewed by their own families.

The number of children's tombstones with epithets varies greatly from one province to another (and, in Italy, from one *regio* to another), with some geographic areas being very weakly represented, so that we do not have adequate samples for comparison. None the less, some regional preferences can be detected. For instance, the phrase *fidelis in pace* is particularly common in Africa Proconsularis, while *bonae memoriae* is very frequent in Gaul and Sardinia. The adjective *innocens* occurs often in Africa but is rare in the Hispanic provinces. But all regions offer a variety of different attributes, some of them original or unusual, so that it is sometimes difficult to avoid the conclusion that they were chosen to fit the character or personality of the individual child. Many of the inscriptions cannot be dated, but in any event there is no apparent chronological preference for one epithet over another.

## 6. EPITHETS AND EMOTIONS

Latin funerary monuments, both pagan and Christian, often contain epithets referring to the deceased, but their significance is debated. Knapp (1992, 391) and Edmondson (2014, 571) see the terms of affection appearing on tombstones as "formulaic" expressions, rather than true indications of family feelings. Shaw (1987, 34) considers the setting up of funerary inscriptions "a distinctly artificial and cultural act" reflecting "social and cultural attitudes to death" rather than true

27 *Pisintula* (7) and *integre carnis* (2) are unique. *Intaminata* (42) and *optimae indolis* (44) each occur in a pagan epitaph (*CIL* VI, 5817, 35622).

28 Knott 1956, 75-76.

29 The epithet *simplex* occurs in the epitaph of an 18-year old (*ILCV* 1196) and in others where the age of the deceased is unfortunately lost.

30 Leyerle 2013, 568-569.

emotion<sup>31</sup>. Kreiger (2013), in an analysis of Christian children's memorials in Rome, does not even use the words "emotion", "feelings" or "affection". Another study (Curchin 1982) offers a different vision, in which epithets were specifically chosen to describe qualities of the deceased (and sometimes the feelings of grieving relatives) and often expressed genuine sentiments. Recent specialized studies have given some support to this view. Sigismund Nielsen (1997, 169-175) argues that no information on an inscription is given haphazardly or without reason, and that although most of the epithets are conventional, they are not used indiscriminantly. Carlsen (2020, 477) concludes that "there were surely considerable emotions and sentiments behind most epitaphs", and that some of the epithets "reflect the strong feelings between the deceased and the commemorator". Even such overworked endearment terms as *dulcissimus*, *amantissimus* and *carissimus*, which may appear redundant since most youngsters are sweet, loving or dear, may nevertheless have reflected the affection felt by bereaved relatives. A parallel can be found in modern obituary notices containing such formulaic epithets as "beloved", "cherished" and "deeply missed": the use of these stereotyped expressions does not negate the likelihood that the deceased was indeed beloved and missed.

The epigraphic testimony may corroborate literary sources and other indications of parental grief at the premature loss of a child. Both Seneca (*Ep.* 99) and Plutarch (*Cons. ad uxorem* 6) refer to the excessive grief of mothers over their child's death. Fernández Corral (2021, 287) points to the careful layout and grave goods of children's tombs as evidence of the care lavished by parents on their deceased children, and notes that the absence of a tombstone need not mean that parents were insensitive to their child's death. Carroll (2011a, 115) speaks of "the emotional trauma felt when those [children] died too young." However, caution must be

exercised in associating epithets with emotion. The choice of an epithet cannot really tell us how much a child was loved or missed, and extravagant expressions of parental grief may or may not be sincere. Also, given the limited rate of literacy among the lower classes, some families may have let the stonemason choose an appropriate wording for the epitaph. In view of this uncertainty, the subjectiveness of the evidence, and the variability of human nature, it is difficult to know which expressions of sentiment should be taken at face value, and which ones are merely ornamental. However, it is important to recognize this duality. It would be as serious a mistake to accept all epithets as true and emotive, as it would be to dismiss them all as formulaic and meaningless. Whether a given epithet is to be understood literally will vary from one inscription to the next. Nevertheless, since most parents would naturally have been devastated by the death of a child, I consider it likely that the affectionate epithets on children's tombstones do reflect genuine sentiments in the majority of cases.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

The extensive corpus of Latin epitaphs from Rome and elsewhere provides a revealing perspective on how early Christian children were viewed. The subjects of these inscriptions range in age from tiny infants to youths in their early teens. Some children are praised for their loving nature or admirable qualities, others for their devotion to God or their prospects in the next world. Emphasis may be laid on the child's intelligence, innocence, or purity. Dismay is sometimes expressed at the child's premature demise, or at the sorrow the child's death has occasioned. The setting up of these laudatory epitaphs suggests that these children, who had shown so much promise while alive, were genuinely missed by their grieving parents.

Although the commonest epithets found in these inscriptions are stereotypical expressions, other descriptions are more colourful and personalized, clearly tailored to the individual.

<sup>31</sup> See also King 2000, 120.



This was important to preserve an authentic memory of the deceased child. Some epithets and phrases are found only once, confirming their originality. In general, the more unusual the epithet, the greater the likelihood that it was chosen specially to suit the character of the child. Moreover, unlike pagan tombstones that were intended to be read by passersby, the numerous Christian epitaphs of Rome were located underground, out of public view. The choice of words was therefore less constrained by societal expectations and could express original and affective remembrances of the departed child. However, there is no scholarly consensus as to whether affectionate epithets should be accepted literally as reflecting emotional responses to the death of a child, or dismissed as merely formulaic. Some epithets are conventional and bland, while others are original and meaningful; yet even the conventional ones, typically stressing that the child is dear, sweet or innocent, may have been purposely chosen by the grieving family as appropriate to the deceased. It is ultimately impossible to divine the motives and emotions of the parents who set up each epitaph. What is clear, though, is the individualism and creativity that is often used in describing these dead children.

#### ANNEX: SELECTED EPITAPHS OF CHRISTIAN CHILDREN

The following representative samples have been specially chosen to illustrate points made in this paper.

1. *ILCV* 2734 (Syracusa, Sicilia; undated)  
Hic requiescit in p/acaef infa(n)s Bonipatia qyi yixit in sec/ecylo annys p(lus)m(inus) XI. R/ecesit sub die Kal(endis) Nove/mb(ribus) cons(ulatu) d(omi)n(i) Theodosi A(ugusti).
2. *ILCV* 1747 = *RICG* 15, 278 (Vicis Augusti, Gallia Narbonensis; undated)  
Hic requiescit in pace / bone memoriae adoles/cens / itegres carnis nomine Leu/domari, qui

vixit annus / numero IIII et dies VIII / Obiit in Chr(ist)o // XV K(alendas) Ma(rtrias?) // sex/sies post con(sulatum) Basili vv(iri) / c(larissimi) CSS cons(ulis).

3. *AE* 1946, 26a (Ammaedara, Africa Proconsularis; undated)  
Iohannes lector / quiebit in pace, vixit / annis sex die(bu)s VIII. / D(e)p(o)s(i)t(u)s su(b) d(ie) Idus Iulias.
4. *AE* 1975, 922 (Ammaedara, Africa Proconsularis; undated)  
Marcinus clericus / requiebit in pace, / bixi(t) annos IIII menses V. / Depositus / est III Id(us) Maias.
5. *CIL* V, 6589 = *ILCV* 2740 (Novaria, Gallia Transpadana; AD 519)  
D(is) [M(anibus?)]. / Hic requiesci[t in pace] / Augusta parvu[la, quae] / vixit in saeculo a[nno] / uno et me(n)ses X et die(s) / XXIII, et deposeta est sub di(e) / Idus Iulias ind(ictione) XII / Fl(avio) Ehuderico v(iro) c(larissimo) c(onsule).
6. *ICUR* I, 3678 = *ILCV* 2713b (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Nicephorus / pitinnus, / qui vixit / annus duo / et dies viginti. / Armacane in pace.
7. *ICUR* III, 8592 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Filie dulcissime Victorine / innocenti pisintule, / que vixit ann(os) sex m(enses) V / d(ies) III. D(e)p(osita) XVIII K(alendas) Feb(ruarias) in pace. / Mater Maurentia fecit.
8. *CIL* XIII, 2413 = *ILCV* 3128 (Lugdunum, Lugdunensis; undated)  
Hic requiescit infa[n]/tula innox nomine / Elarina, filia Muri, / qui vixit annus III / [---].
9. *ICUR* VI, 15526 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Ianuaria infa(n)s / defuncta annic/la mesoru(m) VIII zeru(m) XXIII.
10. *ICUR* III, 7819 = *ILCV* 2288 (Roma; AD 301-350)  
Domina dulcisima / Stercoria filia, qui / bixit an(nos) II mens(es) IIII, in / pace Domini dormias.
11. *ICUR* IV, 10889 = *ILCV* 3902 (Roma; AD 301-400)

- D(is) M(anibus). / Parentes fiii(ae) (= filiae) dulcissime / domi(n)ia fecerunt n(atae) V Idus Mai(as), / que bix(it) (a)n(n)os IIII et m(enses) X et d(ies) VII. Kal(endas) Mar(tias).
12. *ICUR* VI, 15742 (Roma; AD 326-350)  
Domine Bitallio annoru(m) XII / anima bona, cito de se/culo discesset. Domne / Bitallio pie zes(es).
13. *ICUR* IX, 24410 (Roma; AD 291-325)  
Domine filie incomparabili Galatae, / que vixit annis VI mensibus X dies XXVIII. / Eusebius et Ierentia filiae dulcissime in pace.
14. *AE* 1975, 279 (Potentia, Regio III; AD 401-500)  
Rueo bone / memorie, qui / vixit annis sex / diebus XV. Paren(tes) domino filio. // Rueo bonae memo(riae), qui vixit / annis sex diebus quindecim. Parenies domi(no) eilio dulcissimo.
15. *RICG* 1, 73 (Augusta Treverorum, Belgica; undated)  
Hic quiescit in pace / Ursicina, qui vixit / annos V et mensis / XI et dies III. Elpidius / et Ursula filiae primae na(te) posuerunt.
16. *ICUR* III, 7788 (Roma; AD 301-350)  
Sabino filio uni/co ben(e) merenti, / q(ui) vixit ann(os) XII / et m(enses) V d(ies) VIII, / q(ui) abet de(positio)em / XVI Kal(endas) Septembres. / Parentes dolentes / Sabino in pa[c](e).
17. *AE* 1968, 635 (Ammaedara, Africa Proconsularis; undated)  
Faustinus qui / erat uni/cus matri sue / [[vidue]], vixit an(no)s / VIII. R(e)q(ui)evit i(n) p(a)c(e) s(u)b d(ie) XII / K(a)l(endas) Se(p)te(m)bres ind(ictione) / VIII.
18. *CIL* X, 3310 = *ILCV* 1789 (Puteoli, Regio I; AD 301-430)  
C(aius) Nonius Flavianus / plurimis annis orationibus petitus natus, vixit anno uno / m(ensibus) XI. In cuius honorem basilica haec a parentibus adquisita / contacta quae est. Requievit in pace XVIII Kal(endas) Ian(uarias).
19. *CIL* XIII, 3868 = *RICG* 1, 222 (Augusta Treverorum, Belgica; undated)  
[Hi]c quiescunt [---] / [et] Nonusa so[ro]res, quae vixerunt / [a]n(n)os V et m[en]sis [---] / [po]su[er]unt.
20. *AE* 2016, 1286 (Sirmium, Pannonia; AD 301-400)  
Hic duo innocentes / quiescunt Petrus et / Victorinianus fide/les. vixit Petrus an(no) uno / mense(m) dies VIII, Victori(nianus) vixit an(nos) IIII m(enses) VII / dies XV.
21. *CIL* X, 4492 = *ILCV* 1491 (Casilinum, Regio I; AD 392)  
Hic sunt positi duo / fratres innocen(tes) neofiti, qui vixi(runt) Dionisius annu(m) / unu(m) menses duo(s), dep(ositus) / pri(die) Kal(endas) Aug(ustas), Marina/na annis tribus men(sibus) / III, dep(osita) VIII Kal(endas) Noben(bres) / d(omino) [n(ostro)] Eugenio Aug(usto) primi.
22. *CIL* XIII, 2417 = *ILCV* 3489 (Lugdunum, Lugdunensis; undated)  
Hic eacit germanitas fratris adque / sororis, quorum amabilitas iusta meruit coniuncta(que) / sanctae abitationi morari / lecit braevis, eorum(que) vita / fuisse dicatur innocentiae. / Mprimum abent apud Deum. / Anima perpetua vita / firmata Maximius, / q(ui) vixit an(nos) XI et m(ensem) et d(iem). / Porcaria vixit an(nos) II et m(enses) VI / et d(iem). Optam(us) vobis fil(i)cissimi / valeatis q(ui) innocentium n(omina) memoriam recensites.
23. *CIL* XI, 802 = *ILCV* 1494 (Bononia, Regio VIII; AD 394)  
B(onae) m(emoriae). / Hic requiescent / duo fratres inno(centes), Constantius / niofitus qui vixit / annis octo m(ensibus) II d(iebus) VI, / depositus III Id(us) Nob(embres) / cons(ulatu) dd(ominorum) nn(ostorum) Arcadi / et Honori Augg(ustorum), / Iustus fidelis qui / vixit annis VII.
24. *CIL* III, 3107 = *ILCV* 4360 (Brattia, Dalmatia; AD 201-300)  
Infelicissimis infanti/bus Etilarioni et Revocate fra(tribus), qui vixerunt puella an(nos)

- / p(lus) m(inus) VIII, pue(r) an(nos) p(lus) m(inus) IIII, qui in se i[n] / mare perierunt. Maximus pater pos(uit).
25. *CIL* III, 13962 = *ILCV* 307 (Salona, Dalmatia; AD 435)  
Hic requiescet in pace Alvia, quae vixit / annos novem et sep(ulta) e(s)t cum Luciano h(onestae) m(emoriae) / avo suo, et deposi[t]a est sub d(ie) X Ka[l(endas)] / Decembr(es) dd(ominis) nn(ostris) Th[eo]dosio XV et Pla/cido Valentina[no II]II p(er)p(etuis) Augg(ustis) [co] n[s(ulibus)].
26. *CIL* VI, 17633 = *ILCV* 759 (Roma; undated)  
D(is) M(anibus). / Fabiae Urbicae q(uae) ann(os) VI m(enses) III / d(ies) X, et Fabiae Sa[e]berae q(uae) ann(os) II / m(enses) II d(ies) IX, sorores una die obitae sunt. / Fl(avius) Crescentianus alumni/bus fecit.
27. *CIL* XII, 2033 = *RICG* 15, \*6 (Vienna, Narbonensis; undated)  
Ego pater Vitalinus et mater / Martina scripsimus non gran/dem gloriam sed dolum filio/rum. Tres filios in diebus XXVII / hic posuimus, Sapaudum filium / qui vixit annos VII et dies XXVI, / Rusticam filiam qui vixit annos / IIII et dies XX, et Rusticula filia qui / vixit annos III et dies XXXIII.
28. *ICUR* III, 9140 = *ILCV* 2806 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Septimia Romana quae vixit annis / XIII. Vita functa est XIII Kal(endas) Octob(res) / die natali suo, virgo. Demetria mater / dolens posuit b(ene) m(erenti) in D(eo).
29. *ICUR* I, 2323 = *ILCV* 4666 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Marcellino iu/cundissimo fi/lío Splendoni/us et Marcelli/na fecerunt, qui / vixit ann(is) V et me/nsibus III d(iebus) VIIII. / D(e)p(ositus) pri(die) Nonas Marti/[as].
30. *ICUR* I, 3528 = *ILCV* 4510a (Roma; AD 301-500)  
Gerontio infanti mellitae ac dulcissim[ae], / q(ui) v(ixit) ann(os) II d(ies) IIII h(orae) IX. Gerontius pater / contra votum.
31. *ICUR* IV, 12050 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Vibio Felici bone memoriae laudabili puero, qui [v]ix(it) ann(os) VI / m(enses) VI. Dormienti in domino in pace, XI Kal(endas) Aug(ustas).
32. *CIL* XI, 2534 = *ILCV* 263 (Clusium, Regio VII; AD 201-300)  
D(is) M(anibus). / Aurelio Florentio / laudabili memoria / infas, qui vixit annos / duo menses sex / et dies VI. Bene / merenti paren/tes posuerunt.
33. *ICUR* I, 1714 = *ILCV* 1611a (Roma; AD 291-325)  
Bono ei innocenti eilio / Pasiore, q(ui) v(i)x(it) an(nos) IIII / m(enses) V d(ies) XXVI. Vitalio / et Marcellina parent(es).
34. *ICUR* V, 14360 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Bono atque dulcissimo Iovino filio, qui vixit / an(n)is duo(bu)s mensibus septem. D(e)positus) IIII Non(as) No(vembre)s. / Parentes bene merenti in pace.
35. *ICUR* VII, 18653 = *ILCV* 4188 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Diogenia filiae / bonae, quae vixit / annos sexs m(enses) X. / Diogenes pater infelix.
36. *CIL* X, 4538 = *ILCV* 4329a (Roma; undated)  
Hic est posita Ursa virgo / totius bonitatis, quae / vixit ann(os) XIII m(enses) V d(ies) V / in pace. H(oc) m(onumentum) s(upra) s(criptum) e(xterum) h(eredem) n(on) s(equetur). / In f(ronte) p(edes) XII, in agr(o) p(edes) XII.
37. *ICUR* IV, 9564 = *ILCV* 4328 (Roma; AD 376-400)  
Mire bonitatis et / totius innocenties / Libera, quae vixit / annos quinque / mensis V. Dep(osita) / X Kal(endas) Iulias d(omino) n(ostro) / Valnitiniano III / n(umero?) VI.
38. *CIL* XI, 1724 = *ILCV* 337 (Florentia, Regio VII; AD 401-600)

- Hic requi/escit in pa/ce Curredia / Iunia h(onesta) p(uella), que / vixit annus / VIII et dies V. / Deposita sub d(ie) / [---].
39. *CIL* IX, 2076a-b = *ILCV* 341a-b (Beneventum, Regio II; undated)  
[Hic re]pui/[escit in p]ac[e Fe]/lic[i]tas honesta / birco, qui bixit in/ter plus et minu/s ann(o)s VI mensis [I?] / dies XXII. Deposit/a V Idus Febru(arias) / XII p(ost) c(onsulatum) Basili v(iri) c(larissimi) i/ndi(ctione) prima.
40. *ICUR* X, 27014 = *ILCV* 4343a (Roma; AD 301-400)  
[Integr]itatis ac benignitatis Appius / [et --- p]arentes dulcissime filie / [--- quae vi]xit annis VIII me(n)s(e) uno / quescenti in pace.
41. *ICUR* III, 8738 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Mire pudice casteq(ue) / compari Aelianeti, / que vix(it) an(nos) X m(enses) VIII d(iem) I.
42. *ILCV* 1726 (Hispalis, Baetica; undated)  
Marturia vir/go intaminata / vixit ani(s) XIII men(sibus) / V. Recepta in pace pr[i]/die Kal(endas) Ianua[ri]as / era [---].
43. *AE* 1977, 211 (Nola, Regio I; AD 557)  
Hic requiescit i[n pace] / Laurentius ho[n(estae) mem(oriae)] / puer, qui vixit a[nnos de]/cem et menenses plus / minus tres. D(e)p(ositus) IIII Id(us) Mart(ias) / ind(ictione) V, XVI p(ost) c(onsulatum) Basili.
44. *CIL* VIII, 11433 (Sufes, Africa Proconsularis; undated)  
D(is) M(anibus) s(acrum). / Q(uintus) Iulius Cris/pinus signum Ce/lerius puer optimae / indolis, cruda ae/tate raptus. Vixit / annis XIII mens(ibus) / XI dies XII.
45. *AE* 1981, 373 (Arretium, Regio VII; AD 447)  
Hic quiescet agnus / sine macula Carterius, / qui vixit an(n)os III m(enses) VI et / dies XV. Depositus in pace / con(sulatu) Calepi et Artabure III Kal(endas) Ian(uarias).
46. *ICUR* III, 8922 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
[---] cun Gemellu / [---] quae visit anos III / [et cum] ea agno sine ma/[cula]. Gemellus qui vixit / [anno]s numero VIII.
47. *ICUR* VII, 19187 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
[--- Phil]ippe dulcis agne in / [pace], vixit an(nos) IIII m(enses) IIII d(ies) [---].
48. *CIL* V, 1746 = *ILCV* 4621 (Aquileia, Regio X; undated)  
[---]ianioii[---] paren]/tibus pientis[simis] / omnibus amata [---] / annos IIII d(ies) IXXX / horas IIII in p[ace].
49. *ICUR* V, 14370 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Iul(ia) Maria depp(osita) XIII Kal(endas) Sept(embres), / que vixit annos duos mens(es) / septem, queius amicitiam / omnes desidera[ba]nt. Cesquet in pa[ce].
50. *ICUR* I, 1978 = *ILCV* 742 (Roma; AD 301-400)  
Dalmatio filio dulcissimo toti/us ingeniositatis ac sapienti/ae puero, quem plenis septem an/nis perfrui patri infelici non licu/it. Qui studens litteras Graecas non / monstratas sibi Latinas adripuit et in / triduo ereptus est rebus humanis III Id(us) Fer(uarias), / natus VIII Kal(endas) Apr(iles). Dalmatius pater fec(it).
51. *ILCV* 223 = *AE* 2009, 399 (Verona, Regio X; AD 530-531)  
Hic requiescit / in pace Placidia / inlustris puella / instructa litte/ris, qui vixit ann(os) X / octo et mens(es) XI / et sepulta est / sub d(ie) V Id(us) Octu(br(es) pater p(ost) c(onsulatum) Lampadi / e[t O]res[tis].
52. *ICUR* IV, 12503 = *ILCV* 633 (Roma; AD 351-400)  
Viccentia dul/cissima filia / aurinetrix, qae / vixit an(nos) VIII m(enses) VIII.
53. *ICUR* VIII, 22694 = *ILCV* 4441 (Roma; AD 326-375)

Victore birgini civi Galle, / que vixit annis VIII mesis X / dies XI.

54. *CIL* VIII, 19866 = *ILCV* 4456a (Rusicade, Numidia; undated)

[Hi]c requiescit Fl(avia) / Amanda civis Pan(nonica), / vixit anno(s) VIII / IAICTSC[---] / XII[---].

55. *ICUR* VIII, 23627 (Roma; AD 301-400)

Valerius Dalat[ralis e pro]/vincia Tracia vicu, [--- vixi]/t ann(os) o[cto] m(enses) dece(m) o[---]/olica.

56. *CIL* II, 1982 = *ILCV* 4920 (Abdera, Baetica; AD 151-200)

Annia Salo/monula an(ni) I / mens(ium) IIII die(i) I / Iudaea.

57. *ILCV* 3386 (Malaca, Baetica; undated)

Aurelius Iu/lianus na/tionem Af/ram, qui vi/xit ann(os) VI / m(enses) X dies / XI. Manet / in Dei gloria.

58. *AE* 2003, 1961 (Thagumata, Africa Proconsularis; undated)

[---]ius innocens / [vix]it in pace fidelis men/[ses] XXV, reddit XI K(a)l(endas) Iunias / [---] Dei famulus / [in pa]ce fidelis annis / [--- di]e Kal(endas) Octobres.

59. *ICUR* II, 6324 (Roma; AD 351-400)

Serbus Dei qui bicsit / annus (d)uo(s) et m(enses) tr(e)s, / beni(merenti) in pace.

60. *HEp* 2001, 632 (locus incertus, Hispania Citerior; undated)

Ic umatum es[t] / corpus Zacarie / Cristicoli. vix/it tres annos et o/bit s(ub) d(ie) IV C(alendas) No(vembres), Ar/vanio siniente, / Ianuarius in as[t]/ra nill est. / Maxima.

61. *ILCV* 4828 = Galsterer 2010, 761 (Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium, Germania Inferior; AD 401-530)

Leontius hic iacit fedelis / puer dulcissimus patri pientis/simus matri, qui vixit annus / VII et mensis III et dies VI. In/nocens funere raptus, / beatus mente, felix / et in pace recces/sit.

62. *ICUR* VIII, 23488 = *ILCV* 4632 (Roma; AD 391-425)

Beatissimo Bon/o qui v(i)xit annos / IIII et mensis III / et d(ies) XXV. D(e)f(unctus) est / V Kal(endas) Octob(res) et h[o]/ra nona.

63. *CIL* XI, 323 = *ILCV* 242a (Ravenna, Regio VIII; AD 401-420)

Fl(avio) Anastasio / sanctissimo filio, / qui vixit ann(o)s VII m(enses) III. / Fl(avius) Felix ex pre(fecto) ann(onae) Afr(icae) pr(ovinciae).

64. *CIL* XII, 2407 = *ILCV* 3283 (Vicus Augusti, Narbonensis; undated)

Hic requiescit in / pace bonae memoriae / Teoptecunde, qui / vixit annos nume/ro X. obiit in Chr(isto) / VI K(a)l(endas) Decem(b)r(e)s no/vies pos(t) con(s)o(latum) / Iohannis v(iri) c(larissimi) VSS.

65. *ICUR* VI, 17086 = *ILCV* 3362 (Roma; AD 401-500)

Maurentius Maurentiae / f(i)d(eli), que vixit annis V menses / XI die(bu)s duo(bu)s, digna inter san(ctos). Deus iussit in pace fi(eri).

66. *ICUR* I, 1799 = *ILCV* 1487 (Roma; AD 351-400)

Zosimo q(ui) vixit ann(os) / V m(enses) VIII d(ies) XIII neof(yto) in Chr(isto). / Donatus p(ater) f(ecit) b(ene) m(erenti) / et Iusta m(ater).

67. *CIL* V, 6271 = *ILCV* 1502 (Mediolanum, Regio XI; AD 301-500)

Silvino neofito / qui vixit in saeculo ann(os) / XI mens(es) V dies X. / Virilianus et La(m)padius / alumno suo innocenti / memoria(m) posuerunt.

68. *AE* 1975, 120 (Roma; AD 301-400)

Const[an]t[ius et] Abundan(tia) Asel[licae f(iliae) c]arissi(m)ae neofit(ae) / ONNA[---]SSECSID annos / VIII et m(e)n(ses) II[---] depos]ita die Non(arum) Sept(embrium) in pace.

69. *CIL* XI, 2551 = *ILCV* 1334 (Clusium, Regio VII; AD 343-376)



- Aurelius Melitius / infans Cristaeanus, / fidelis peregrinus hic / positus est, qui vixit / annis III die(bu)s duo(bus), qui / defunctus est diae / Saturni pascae noctis / ipsius pervigilatio(ne) ora/tione quinta vita privatus / est, et sepultus diae Solis / VI Kal(endas) April(es) p(ater) p(osuit) f(ilio) k(arissimo).
70. *CIL* XIII, 500 = *ILCV* 1475 (Eliumberrum, Aquitania; AD 301-600)  
Hic ad inno/centem et pere/grinum / Ursinicum / an(norum) VIII m(ensium) II d(ierum) X. // Chr(isti) / serv(u)s.
71. *AE* 1928, 35 (Hippo Regius, Africa Proconsularis; AD 587-602)  
T(h)ehodosius / fidelis hic qui/escit, peregrinu(s) / patriq(ue) relinqui / doloris nomine, / funus ann(os) X / vixi(t). Mauricio imp(erante) / Id(ib)us Dec(em)b(ribus) ind(ictione) / sexta quieb(it).
72. *AE* 1975, 368 (Urvinum Mataurense, Regio VI; AD 301-500)  
Cara mihi genita, mea / Carice hic. pius infas. / Annis vixi sex totidemque / et mensibus octo. / Reddita bis ternis post / hos aptata diebus. / Infernas pia sancta te/net sapientia sedes, / contraque maestorum / quae mersa est vota parentu(m), / erigitur titulo. Lectori / scripta repone. / Pictius Ib(e)r et Ianuaria fil(iae).
73. *ICUR* V, 15360 = *ILCV* 4650 (Roma; AD 191-225)  
A(ulus) Egrilius / Bottus / Philades/potus dul/cissimus / et pientis/simus. Sui / parentes / fecerunt. / Vixit an(nos) / VIII d(ies) XL / m(enses) sex // Chr(isti) Ie(su).
74. *ICUR* IX, 23949 (Roma; AD 291-225)  
Floridi filiae dulci / pientissime, que vixit / annis III me(nsibus) IIII di(ebus) XXI.
75. Galsterer 2010, 756 (Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium, Germania Inferior; AD 401-600)  
Concordia hic iac[et] / pia paren(t)ib(us), vixi[t] / annum semis. Inno/cens in caelis habetur.
76. *ICUR* VI, 15900 = *ILCV* 3358 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Cleme(n)tianeti bene merenti parentes fecerunt, / que vixit annus n(umero) VI mesis VI dies VIII. In pace cum santus.
77. *ILCV* 2178 = Galsterer 2010, 764 (Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium, Germania Inferior; AD 501-600)  
Si quis dignatu[r] / rescire meo no[m]en], / Rusufula dicor [q]/ui vix(it) annis / IIII et me(nsibus) XI, / sociata m(artyribus).
78. Lambert 2004, 21 (Nola, Regio I; undated)  
Paula unicum parentum sacra d(omi)ni famula in aula / hic sibi perpetuam elegit habere domum bicinisque iacet gaudens altaribus hospita Felicis posita martiris in gremio, qu(a) vixit ann(os) VI d(e)p(ositio) [eius] / [d(e)p(osita) est] sub d(ie) XII K(a)l(endas) Novembris p(ost) c(onsulatum) Basili.
79. *ICUR* III, 7768d (Roma; AD 301-350)  
Dig[na] dulcis bo/na quies subito obita / est, an(nis) V men(sibus) VIII / diebus XVII, te in pace.
80. *ICUR* VIII, 22684 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Vere filiae dulcissime / inreparabili, ouae vi/xit ann(is) II m(ensibus) X dieb(us) XIII. / D(e) f(uncta) IIII N(onas) Oct(obres) // in / pa/ce.
81. *ILCV* 191 = *AE* 1966, 66 (Roma; AD 201-300)  
D(is) M(anibus). // L(ucio) Tettio Nonio / Caeciio Lysiae / c(larissimo) p(uero) ineanti dul/cissimo paren(tes), / indic(ne) ac cru(deliter) a De(o) sublatum nam non amplius licuit ei vivere // nisi ann(is) duobus men(sibus) VIII die(bus) XVIII. / L(ucius) Tet(ius) Non(ius) Rufus pater et Ceci[lia].
82. *ICUR* III, 9155 = *ILCV* 3354 (Roma; AD 326-375)

- Severo filio dul/cissimo Laurentius / pater bene merenti, qui bi/xit ann(os) IIII me(nses) VII dies V, / accersitus ab angelis VII Idus Ianua(rias).
83. *RICG* 1, 67 = *AE* 1936, 130 (Augusta Treverorum, Belgica; AD 371-500)  
[Hic quie]scit Vi/[talis in] pace fi/[delis], qui vixit / [annos] III minus / [die]s XXXVIII. Nutri/[c]ionis pro caritate titu/lum posuerunt.
84. *CIL* VI, 35790 = *ICUR* VII, 17921 (Roma; AD 391-425)  
Marcella vixit annis VIII / mensibus duobus. Fecit / pater (e)t avus eiliae bene / merenti.
85. *ICUR* IV, 11935 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Mater et mam(m)a fecit d(e)p(osito) / filio suo dulcis(s)imo viix(it), / qui bixit anno I et Calendas Febr(uar)i(as) / me(n)se(bu)s IIII. Laurenti in pace.
86. *ICUR* I, 1760 = *ILCV* 2266d (Roma; AD 351-400)  
Pater dolens filio Severo / dulcissimo, qui vixit / ann(os) duo m(enses) XI et die[s ---] / te in pace.
87. *CIL* V, 1686 = *ILCV* 3361 (Aquileia, Regio X; AD 301-400)  
Maximus et Masc/lina Maxentiae / filiae animae / innocenti titu/lu(m) posuerunt, / qui vixit annis / III me(nsibu)s VI dies XIII, / qui est accepta / ad spirita(m) san(cta(m)). Parentis / ex dolentiae / posuerunt fil/iae inpiae.
88. *ICUR* 8, 22557 = *ILCV* 4172 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
Parentes dolentes filiabus / sororibus, Maxime que vixit / annis XI me(n)se(bu)s X die(bus) XXVIII, Ma/ximine vixit annis V diebus / XVI, b(ene) m(erentibus) in pace.
89. *CIL* VI, 20462 = *ILCV* 3402 (Roma; AD 101-300)  
D(is) M(anibus). / Iuliae C(ai) fil(iae) / Felicitati, / spiritu dulcissimo / defuncto acervo, / quae vixit anno uno / mensibus XI dieb(us) tribus. / Fecerunt Iuli Verna / et Felicitas parentes / similiter acervi et / infelicissimi.
90. *ILCV* 3590a = *RICG* 1, 36 (Augusta Treverorum, Belgica; undated)  
Marus ic quiescet in / pace, qui vixit an(nos) IIII me(nses) III / die(s) XV. Patris pietissi/mi titulum pos[u]erun[t].
91. *ICUR* VIII, 22983 = *ILCV* 3395a (Ficulea, Regio I; AD 301-500)  
Sexto Acerrae Lupo / dulcissimo fi/lio, qui vixit ann/is VII mens(ibus) VIII. / Urbanus et Ius/tina parentes / amantissimi.
92. *RICG* 1, 53 (Augusta Treverorum, Belgica; undated)  
[Hic in] pace q[ui]escit / [---]ce Revoca[tus, q]/[ui vix]it ann(os) V et [---] / [---] patris car[is]/[simi tit]ulum posu/[e]runt.
93. *CIL* XIII, 1655 = *ILCV* 3488 (Asa Paulini, Lugdunensis; undated)  
Germine sublimi, Proba nomine, mente provata, / quae subito rapta est, hic tumulata iacet. / In qua q(ui)dquit habent cunctorum vota parentum / contulerat tribuens omnia pulchra D(eu)s. / Hinc mestus pater est, aviae matriq(u)e perennis / [tris]titia, heu facinus causa, perit pietas. / Accipe qui lacr(i)mis perfundis iugeter ora: / Mors nihil est, vitam respice perpetuam. / Quae vixit atnis V et minsi(bu)s VIII. / Obiit s(ub) d(ie) III Id(u)s Octubris Paulino v(iro) k(larissimo) / co(n)s(ule).
94. *CIL* V, 7409 = *ILCV* 4193 (Dertona, Regio IX; AD 301-600)  
[Hoc tumulo(?)] / [tegit]ur Saev[erinus] / [---]am[---] / [inno]centi[ssimus] / infa(n)s, qu[i vix(it)] / ann(os) VIII m(enses) [---] / d(ies) XVIII que[m ---] / tulit inpulit [---] / acervitas. Sae[verinus] / pater et Dzidzia / mate[r mi]serabi/lis. (h)e[u(?)] cru]delis ne/fa[rius(?)] [---] q(ue) suo / [---]nerent.
95. *AE* 1975, 124 (Roma; AD 351-400)  
Refrigerius qui bixit annos V mensis VIII / [et] dies V, qui per elegantia(m) et sapientia(m) sua(m) parent/[i]bus suis remisit dolore perpetuo et coe/bit in pace.

96. *CIL* X, 4510 = *ILCV* 4183 (Casilinum, Regio I; AD 563)  
 Hic requiescit / in somn(i)um pacis / Paulinus innocis, / qui vixit annus duo(s) / et mensis II,  
 quius / rememoratio dolum / parentibus demisit. / Depositus est IIII / Nonas Novembris  
 ind(ictione) / XII p(ost) c(onsulatum) Basili v(iri) c(larissimi) anno / XXII
97. *CIL* VI, 10703 = *ICUR* II, 4229 (Roma; AD 301-500)  
 Dom(us) aeternal(is). / Ael(ius) Felicianus Aeli(ae) / Romane filiae pater / non merenti feci /  
 super tale clavum, / q(u)em mi reliquisti / solaq(u)e me desola(vi)s/ti. Vale virgo dulcis(sima)  
 / q(uae) v(ixit) a(nnos) VI m(enses) III d(ies) V / bene quiescitae.
98. *CIL* VI, 11511 = *ILCV* 3887 (Roma; undated)  
 D(is) M(anibus). Pater domino / filio Amantio caro dul/cissimo, cuius affectus et blandities / et  
 caritas qui mi dolorem et / luctum reliquit unicus / in diem vite meae, / qui vix(it) an(nos) VI  
 m(enses) II d(ies) XV, mor(tuus) / hor(a) noct(is) X.
99. *ICUR* V, 14392 (Roma; AD 326-375)  
 Laurent[ia] in (p)ace, quae/e vixit a[nno]s VI et dies XL, / que par[en]tibus suis cordol[ium]  
 misit.

#### ABREVIATIONS

- AE* *L'Année Épigraphique*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.  
*CIL* *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, Berlin: Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie  
 der Wissenschaften.  
*HEp* *Hispania Epigraphica*, Madrid: Universidad Complutense.  
*ICUR* *Inscriptiones christianae urbis Romae*, nova series, Roma: Pontificium  
 Institutum Archaeologiae Christianae.  
*ILCV* *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres*, Berlin: Weidmann.  
*RICG* *Recueil des Inscriptions Chrétiennes de la Gaule*, Paris: CNRS.

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