

The Romans borrowed and adapted many aspects of Greek religion suiting Roman life.

Five prominent Greek gods embraced by Roman religion were:

- a) Jupiter the supreme ruler of gods - the sky and thunder deity mirroring Zeus.
- b) Juno the queen of gods and Jupiter's wife - the goddess of marriage childbirth and family akin to Hera.
- c) Neptune the god of sea and earthquakes modeled after Poseidon.
- d) Venus the love beauty and fertility goddess resembling Aphrodite.
- e) Mars the war god inspired by Ares.

Roman religion evolved distinctly rather than exactly replicating Greek beliefs. Romans emphasized practicalities of daily living like agriculture commerce and family over Greek philosophical and artistic pursuits. They added unique deities like Janus the god of beginnings and transitions and Vesta the hearth and home goddess. Romans adapted Greek myths to suit their cultural and political narratives portraying ancestors as descendants of Greek heroes and gods (Grant, 1999).

A fascinating Roman ritual was the ancient Lupercalia fertility festival in mid-February. It involved sacrificing goats and dogs then young men running through Rome's streets striking people with animal hide strips believed to promote fertility and purification. This pagan festival gave way to Christianity's St. Valentine's Day celebration. The Lupercalia offers insight into Roman fertility purification and human-nature connection beliefs highlighting their unique blend of traditions over time.

Reference:

Grant, M. (1999, July 26). Roman religion | History, Gods, Beliefs, Practices, & Facts.

Encyclopedia Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Roman-religion>