

DIVINE REVELATION

“By Word of Mouth”

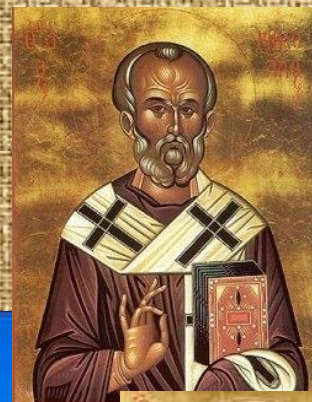
(2 Thessalonians 2:15):

Handing On

Part IIIc:

The Apostolic Fathers;

The Post-Apostolic Fathers;



Apostolic Fathers of the Church

Catholic Christians believe that the promise of the Spirit of Truth to guide believers in truth is found in the constant faith of the Church preserved in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers. The term “Apostolic Fathers” applies to **certain disciples and successors of the twelve apostles**. In a more restricted sense, the term is applied to a group of **Greek-language writers** who were among the martyrs and major figures of the 1st and 2nd centuries in the Christian Church.



Clement I, St. (Clement of Rome)

Personal

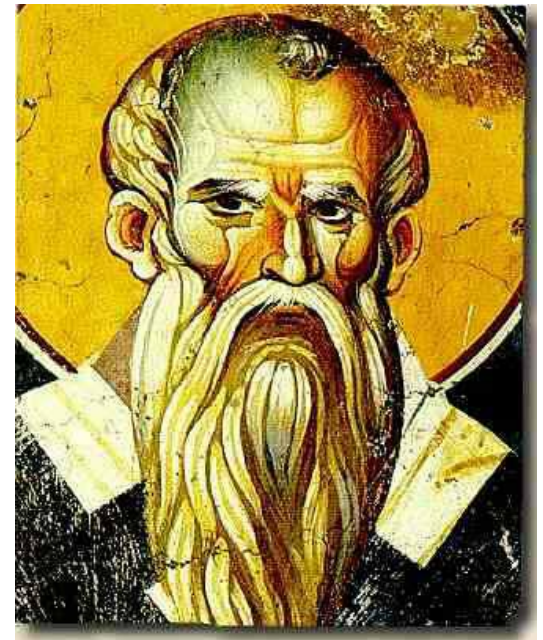
4th Bishop of Rome

Place and dates

r. 92 - 101

Writings

I Clement or *Letter to the Corinthians* (c. 96):
earliest piece of literature outside the NT
historically attested;
addressed disputes in the Church at Corinth;
II Clement (a sermon)(c. 140): Clementine
authorship disputed



Ignatius of Antioch, St.

Personal

Martyr for the faith

Disciple of John the Evangelist

Condemned to die by wild beasts in Rome

Brought from Antioch to Rome and wrote seven letters to churches and individuals along the way

Place and dates

d. 110

Writings

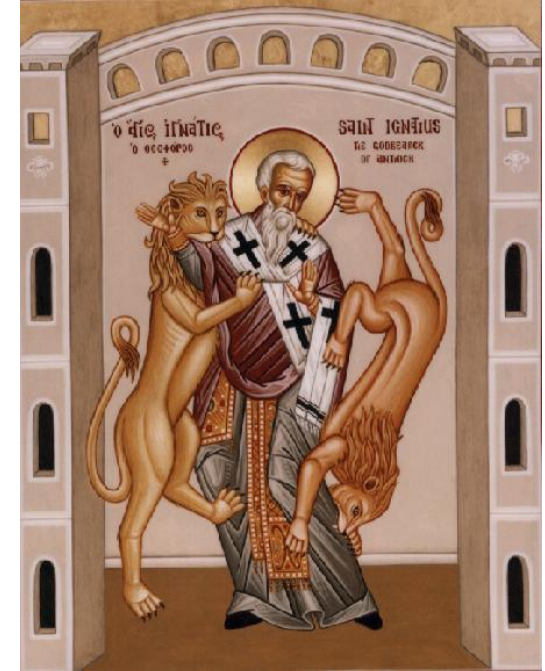
Letter to Ephesians; Letter to Magnesians;

Letter to Tralles; Letter to Philadelphians;

*Letter to Smyrnans; Letter to Polycarp
of Smyrna; Letter to Romans*

These contain warnings against heretical doctrines; contain detailed summaries of doctrines; and a picture of Church organization with bishops, presbyters (elders) and deacons;

First to stress Virgin Birth and to use the term “catholic church.”



Polycarp of Symrna, St.

Personal

Received a visit and letter from Ignatius

Represented the Church of Asia Minor in meetings with Pope Anicetus

Dating of Easter

A teacher of Irenaeus

Knew John the Evangelist and other apostles

Was a disciple of John the Evangelist

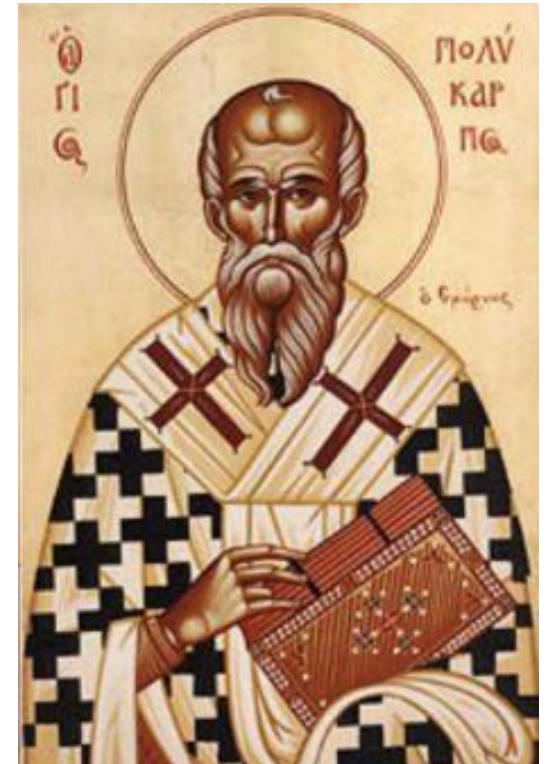
Place and dates

69-155

Writings

Polycarp to the Philipians

Martyrdom of Polycarp (about him)



Unknown Author of the *Didache*

Personal

Unknown

Place and dates

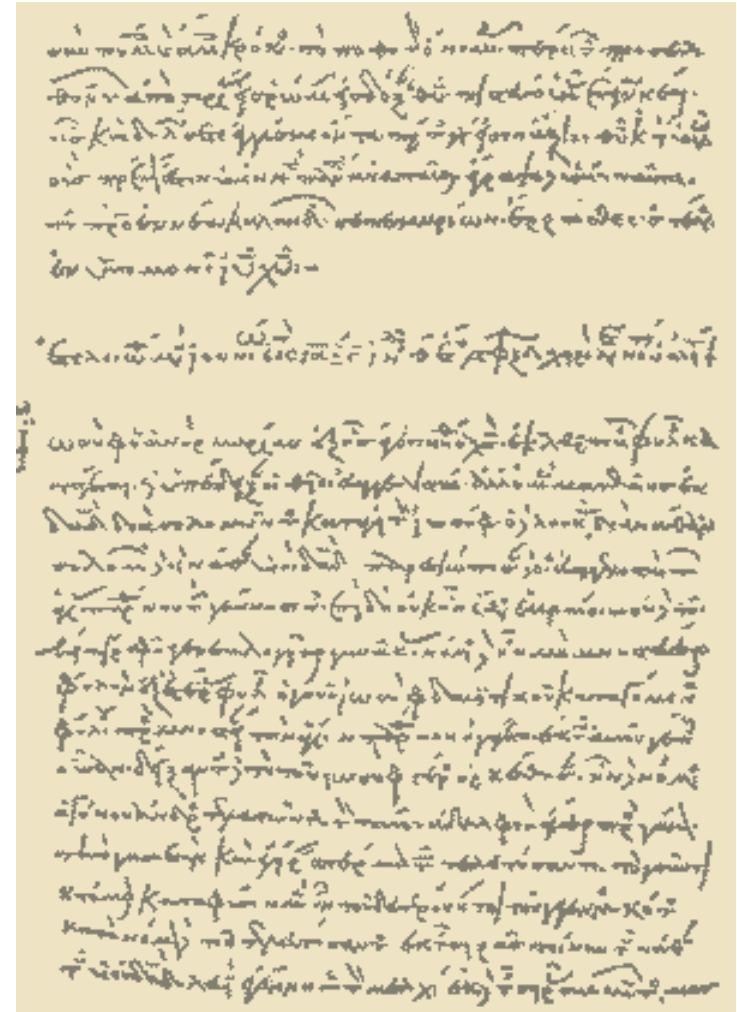
(Syria) 70-110?

Writings

Didache (“Teaching of the Apostles”):

A compendium of moral precepts, instructions on organization of church communities, liturgical worship and regulation.

It contains oldest Eucharistic prayer, directions on Baptism, fasting, prayer, treatment of bishops, deacons, prophets .



Barnabas

Personal

Surname of Joseph, a member of the early Christian Church in Jerusalem (Acts 4:36)

Companion of Paul

Did missionary work with Mark (Acts 15:39)

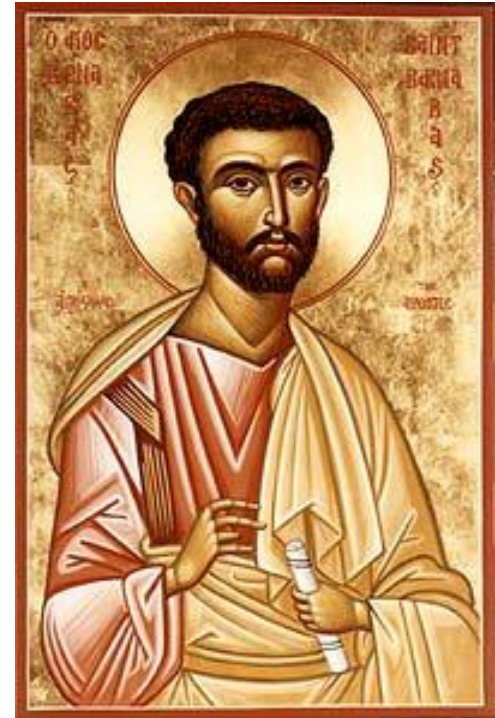
Place and dates

c. 130

Writings

Letter of Barnabas

Allegorical interpretation of the
Old Testament



Papias of Hierapolis

Personal

Contemporary of Polycarp

Knew of a collection of the “sayings of the Lord” to have been written in Aramaic or Hebrew by Matthew

Place and dates

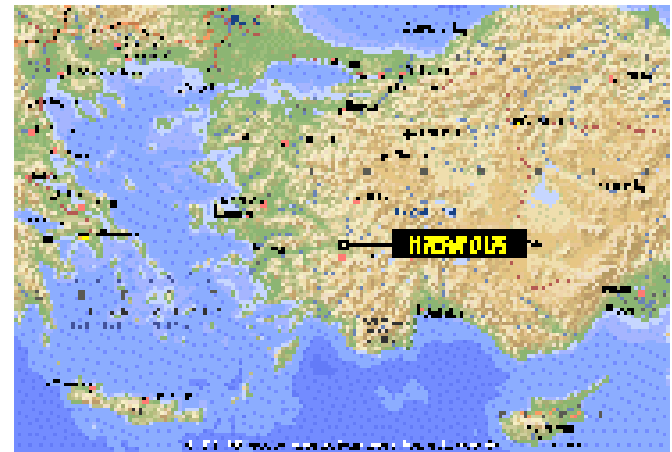
(Phrygia) 120?

Writings

Five Books of Exegeses of the Dominical Oracles:

Quoted by Irenaeus

Witness to the existence of Jewish Christianity



Hermas

Personal

Little known

Place and dates

(Rome) 140?

Writings

Mandates

Similitudes

The Shepherd: a vivid description of
early Christianity



Post-Apostolic Fathers of the Church

Paradosis or handing on or down of Divine Revelation is affirmed in Sacred Scripture. Hence, it must be found in some contiguous historical form from age to age. Catholic Christians believe that the promise of the Spirit of Truth to guide believers in truth is found in the constant faith of the Church as preserved in the writings of the Post-Apostolic Fathers.

The term “Post-Apostolic Fathers” is the name given by the Christian Church to the **writers who established Christian doctrine before the 8th century**. The writings of the Fathers or Patristic Literature synthesized Christian doctrine as found in the Bible, especially the gospels, the writings of the Apostolic Fathers, ecclesiastical dictums, and decisions of the Church councils.

Justin (Martyr), St.

Personal

Philosopher, theologian, early apologist, martyr

Convert to Christianity

Place and dates

(Rome) 100-165

Writings

Apologies for the Christians: erudite defense of Christians against charges of atheism and sedition;

Dialogue with Trypho the Jew: a record of an actual discussion at Ephesus; valuable information about 2nd century Christian Church .



Irenaeus, St.

Personal

Heard the preaching of Polycarp the disciple of John the Evangelist

Appointed the bishop of Lyon (177)

Place and dates

(Asia Minor) 140?-202?

Writings

Against the Heresies: written against the Gnostics; contributed to the knowledge of Gnosticism



Clement of Alexandria

Personal

Greek theologian
Converted from paganism
Ordained a presbyter
A teacher of Origen

Place and dates

(Athens) 150?-215?

Writings

Hortatory Address to the Greeks: a defense of the faith

The Tutor: instruction in manners and morals

The Miscellanies: a discussion of various points of doctrinal theology designed to guide the mature Christian to perfect knowledge .



Tertullian

Personal

Converted to Christianity between 190 and 195
Became a presbyter of the Church (197)
Zealous champion of Christianity
Profoundly influences later Church fathers
Embraced and became a leader of
the Montanists (207?) a sect later declared
heretical

Place and dates

(Rome) 160?-220?

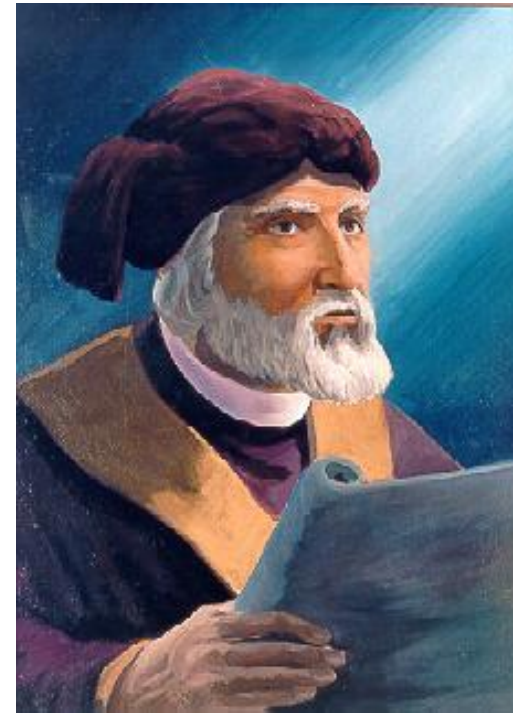
Writings

Apologeticus (c. 197): his most famous work; a defense of
Christians against pagan charges

On the Claims of Heretics: argues that the Church alone has
the authority to declare what is and is not orthodox Christianity

On Baptism

On Prayer: throws light on contemporary religious practices



Origen

Personal

A student of Clement
Ordained a presbyter
The most accomplished biblical scholar
of the early Church
Father of the allegorical method of s
cripture interpretation
He developed the idea of Christ as
Logos or *Incarnate Word*

Place and dates

(Alexandria) 185?-254?

Writings

Against Celsus: closely reasoned apologetic work refuting the arguments advanced by the Celsus, the first serious critic of Christianity



Cyprian, St.

Personal

Convert to Christianity c. 245

Bishop of Carthage, 248

One of the most authoritative Fathers
of the Church

Involved in controversy over treatment
of those who had left the Church, and
those who were baptized by heretics:

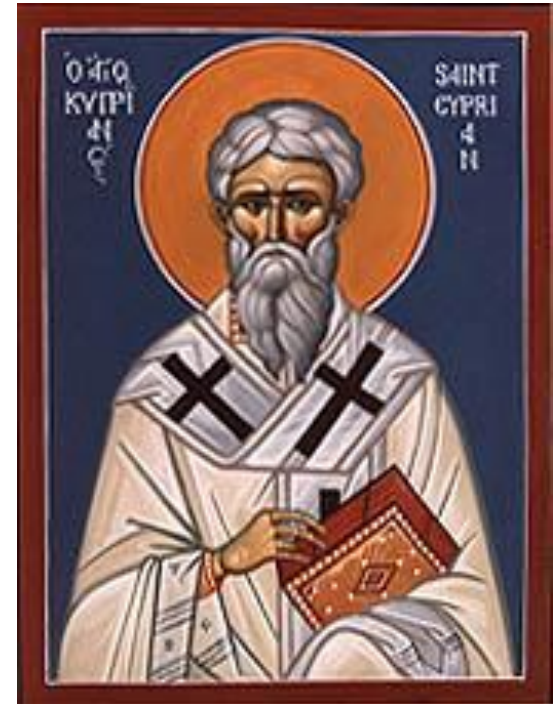
Accepted the teaching of Rome.

Place and dates

(Carthage) 200-258

Writings

On Unity of the Catholic Church: exposition of the hierarchical
organization of the Church



Athanasius, St.

Personal

Played a prominent role in the theological struggle in the Council of Nicea (325)

Opposed Arius (256-336) who maintained that the Son was of a different substance from that of the Father, and was merely a creature

Formulated the “homousian doctrine” that the Son of God is the same essence of substance of the Father

Became bishop of Alexandria (328)

Place and dates

(Alexandria) 293-373

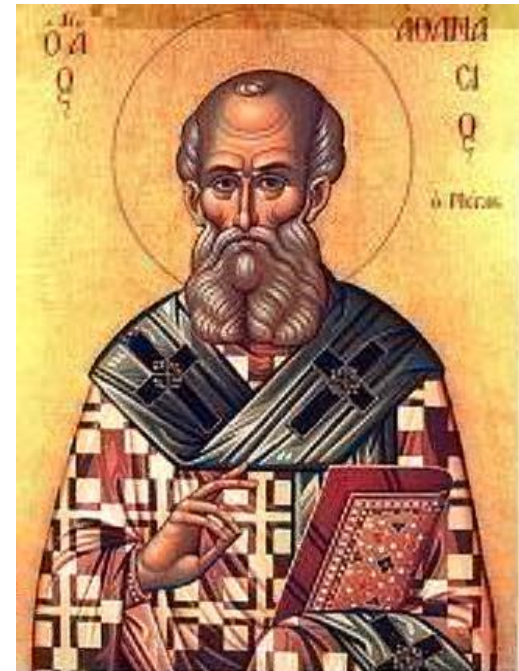
Writings

Discourses Against the Arians

History of the Arians

Apology Against the Arians

On the Decrees of the Nicene Synod



Cyril of Jerusalem

Personal

Bishop of Jerusalem in 351

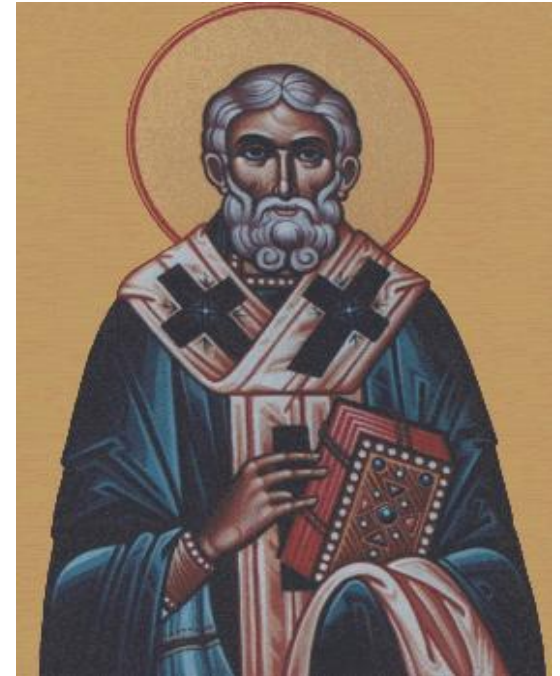
Embroided in controversy over episcopal duties

Place and dates

(Jerusalem) 315?-387?

Writings

23 Treatises: addressed to catechumens and newly baptized; some treatises are doctrinal and present the creed of the Church; some are concerned with ritual and present a detailed account of Baptism, Eucharist and chrism



Basil, St.

Personal

Brother of Gregory of Nyssa and a friend of Gregory of Nazianzus
Patriarch of Eastern monasticism
Wrote a rule of the monastic way of life
Founded the Basilian monks (360)
Bishop of Caesarea (370).

Place and dates

(Caesarea Mazaca) 329?-379

Writings

Against Eunomius: written against the Arian leader Eunomius

On the Holy Spirit: a doctrinal treatise

Moralia: an anthology of New Testament verses

Liturgy of St. Basil



Gregory of Nazianzus, St.

Personal

Bishop of Sasima (371)

Took charge of the Nicene congregation of Constantinople where he delivered five discourses on the Trinity that earned him fame as “The Theologian”

Place and dates

(Nazianzus in Capadocia, now Turkey) 329?-389

Writings

Philokalia (Love of the Beautiful):
an anthology of the writings of Origen



Gregory of Nyssa, St.

Personal

Bishop of Milan (374)

Fame is chiefly as a theologian

Place and dates

(Neocaesarea, now in Turkey) 335?-394

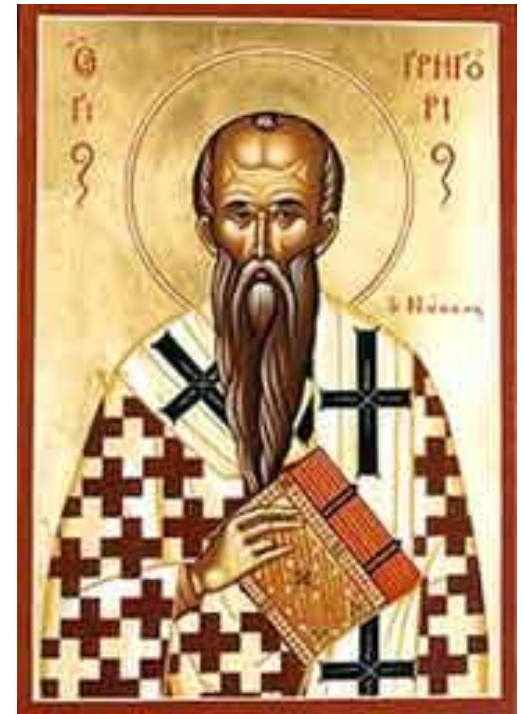
Writings

Against Eunomius: a defense of the Nicene Creed

Great Catechetical Discourse: a defense of the Christian faith against Jews and pagans

On Faith: a treatise against the Arians

Ten Syllogisms: directed against the Apollinarists



Ambrose, St.

Personal

Bishop of Milan (374)

Defended the churches of Milan against Arianism

Friend of Monica, mother of Augustine, and finally brought Augustine into the Church

Place and dates

(Tier, now in W. Germany) 340?-397

Writings

On Faith: a Christian morals manual

On the Sacraments: an exegetical treatise

On the Holy Spirit: an exegetical treatise

Composed many hymns



Jerome, St.

Personal

Biblical scholar

Ordained a priest in 386

Secretary to Pope Damasus I in 382

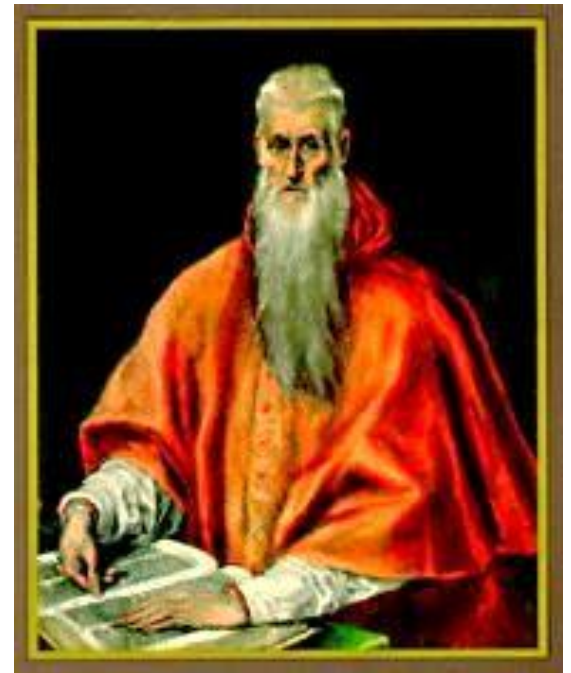
Confronted many heresies, especially Pelagianism

Place and dates

(Stridon, present day Yugoslavia) 345?-419

Writings

The Vulgate: translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, 383-384, in Rome



John Chrysostom, St.

Personal

Ordained a priest in 386

Greatest orator of the early Church

Patriarch of Constantinople in 398

Place and dates

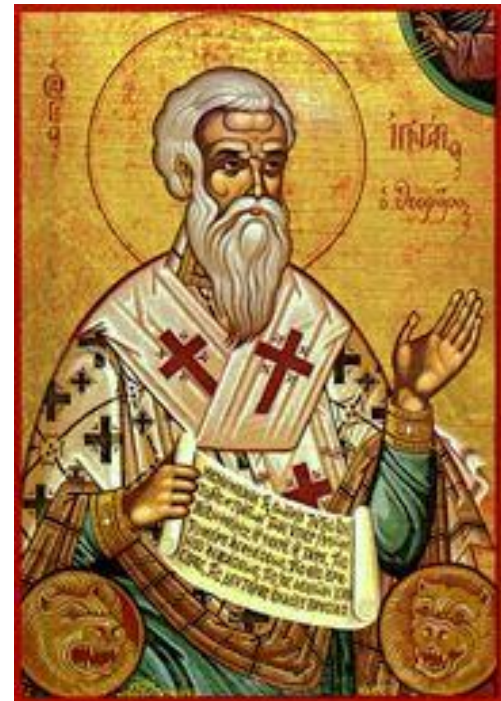
(Antioch, Syria) 349?-407

Writings

On the Priesthood

Homilies

Wrote commentaries, epistles, treatises,
and liturgies



Augustine, St.

Personal

Son of Monica (332?-387)

Born a pagan

Converted in 387 and baptized by St. Ambrose of Milan

Ordained a priest in 391

Bishop of Hippo (395)

Combated Manichean heresy (conflict of Good and Evil)

Martin Luther and John Calvin were students of the works of Augustine

Place and dates

(Numidia, now Algeria) 354-430

Writings

Confessions (c. 400): his autobiography

The City of God (413-426); *Retractions* (428);

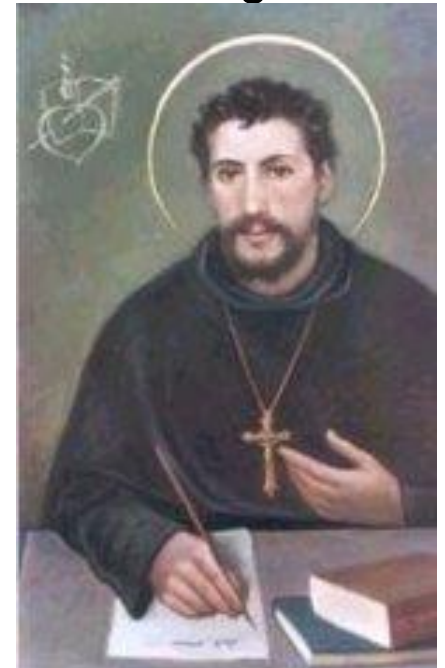
Epistles (386-429), *On Free Will* (388-395)

On Christian Doctrine (397)

On Baptism: Against the Donatists (400)

On the Trinity (400-416); *On Nature and Grace* (415)

Homilies



Cyril of Alexandria, St.

Personal

Patriarch of Alexandria in 412

Leader of the Council of Ephesus, 431

Instrumental in condemning Nestorianism

Place and dates

(Alexandria) 376-444

Writings

Against Nestorius

Against Julian the Apostate

Prolific writer



Gregory I, St. (“The Great”)

Personal

Prefect of Rome in 570

Became a monk in 575

Elected pope (r. 590-604)

Enhanced prestige of the papacy

Upheld Rome's traditional claims of church primacy over the patriarch of Constantinople

Introduced liturgical reforms and Gregorian chant

Extensive pastoral activity.

Place and dates

(Rome) 540?-604

Writings

Moralia: a commentary on the *Book of Job*

Pastoral Care: describes the ideal bishop; instruction on the practice and nature of preaching

Dialogues: legends of saints of his own time



John Damascene, St.

Personal

Financial officer to Saracen caliph

Resigned in 700

Entered a monastery and ordained a priest

Opposed the Iconoclasts

Place and dates

(Damascus, Syria) 675-749

Writings

Source of Knowledge: three part text of dogmatic theology in the early Greek church; contains a complete theological system based on the early Greek fathers and synods of 4th-7th centuries



End of
Divine Revelation by Mouth, Part IIIc
Go to
Divine Revelation by Mouth, Part IIId