



## Talk 1: Introduction to Patrology

1 Cor 4:15 *“For although you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you have not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel, I have begotten you.”*

# PATROLOGY I — THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS

Pre-Servants Program  
Ehab Roufail



## WHAT IS PATROLOGY

The word “Patrology” is derived from the Latin word “Pater” which means “Father.”

We are used to calling authors of the Early Christian writings the ‘Fathers of the Church’.

*“For although you have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you have not many fathers. For in Christ Jesus, through the Gospel, I have begotten you.” 1Cor 4:15*

When a man learns from the mouth of another, it is said that he is the son of the person who teaches him, and the latter is called his father. [**St. Irenaeus – Adv. Haer. 4,41,2**]

The speech is the son of the soul, therefore we call those who teach us our fathers. [**St. Clement of Alexandria – Strom 1,1, 2-2,1**]

# WHAT IS PATROLOGY

So patrology is the study of the life and teachings of the Church Father's dating back to the Apostolic Era and continuing unto the sixth century from the Lord Jesus Christ's Holy Birth.

Patrology includes doctrine, behaviour, and spiritual life. Patrology incorporates Church Fathers, Monasticism, and Desert Fathers.

The Church Fathers had certain characteristics in common which included:

- 1) **The Orthodox Doctrine** regarding the Holy Trinity, Christology, and the Lord Jesus Christ's penance through the Cross and all Holy Divine Mysteries.
- 2) **A holy and saintly life.** "Whoever obeys the law and teaches others to do the same will be great in the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5:19)
- 3) **Their acceptance** as "Fathers" by the Church.
- 4) **Antiquity** – Closeness to the Lord and His Apostles. In the Oriental Orthodox Churches this dates a little after the council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D.





# WHAT IS PATROLOGY

## Categories of Fathers:

- 1) **Apostolic Fathers:** were in direct connection with the chosen Apostles. Included St Clement the Romanian, St Ignatius, St Polycarp, and St Phipirius.
- 2) **Apologists/ Defenders:** defended Christianity against idolatry and Jews. Included Justin Martyr, St Athenodore and St Irenaeus.
- 3) **Ecumenical/ World's Teachers:** St Athanasius the Apostolic, St Basil the Great, St Cyril, St Gregory, St John from Damascus, St Kabryanous, St Ambrose, St Jerome, and St Augustine.
- 4) **Confessors:** defended Christianity against heresies. Confessors were St Dioscorus and St Severus of Antioch.
- 5) **Monastic Fathers:** St Antony, St Pachoum, St Macarius the Great, and Isidorus, St Shenouda the Archimandrite.



## HOW SHOULD WE READ THEIR WRITINGS

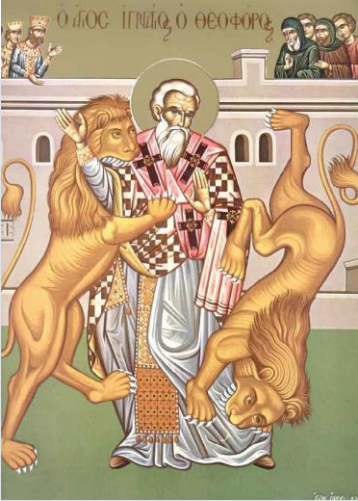
*“We must not rely on the writings of a **single Father**, because no one is capable of acknowledging the “truth” in its entirety. We only accept the opinion of a Father, if it is in **harmony** with the Bible and the church tradition. We must not rely on one or more separate quotation from the acts of any Father, but rather study all his thoughts and understand the quotations within his whole work. We must also consider the circumstances and the church environment, at that time. We must not single out one or more quotations to form our own opinion.*

*We must study the **meaning of the terms** which a Father had used. Sometimes they had certain contemporary philosophical or popular concepts of the era. Some Fathers used the same pagan or heretic terms of that time, especially when they wrote to certain worldly groups. They wrote to them, using their (pagan) own terms, language and concepts. It is very useful to study the meaning of some difficult terms by comparing them with the same terms used by their contemporary Fathers.”*

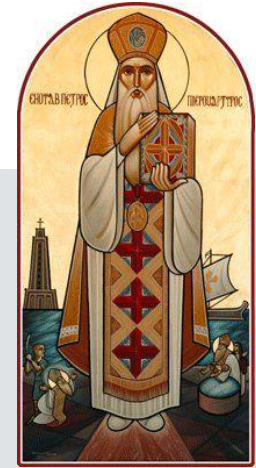
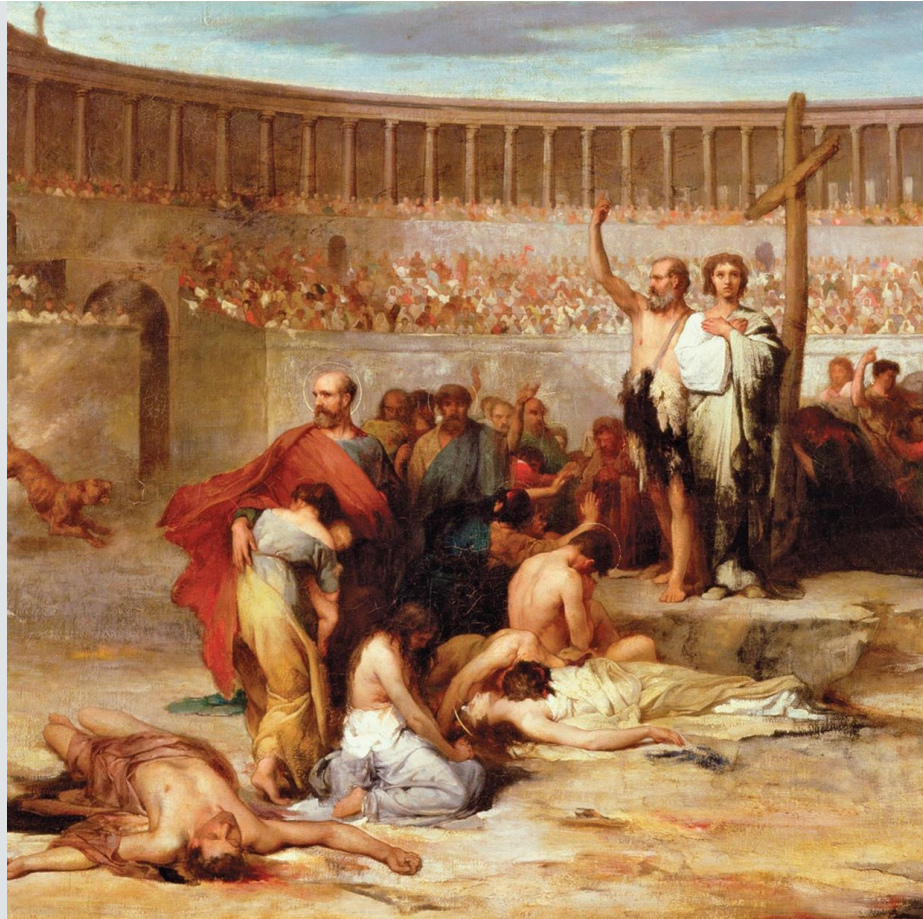
[Fr. T.Malaty The Apostolic Fathers]



# SETTING THE STAGE: THE 10 ROMAN PERSECUTIONS



- **Nero** – 64 AD St. Peter and St. Paul Martyred
- **Domitian** – Exiled St. John to Patmos
- **Trajan** – Christians to be killed – Ignatius Bishop of Antioch and Simeon Bishop of Jerusalem
- **Marcus Aurelius** – Actively killed Christians
- **Septimus Severus** – Syrian and African Martyrs



- **Caius Thrax** – evil in his persecution of Christians
- **Decius** – Desired complete extinction of Christians
- **Valerian** – Rome and Carthage lost their bishops and priests
- **Aurelian** – Continued a systematic persecution of Christians
- **Diocletian** – 284 AD his reign and our calendar of Martyrs starts – whole towns massacred till blood spills to the knees of the horses



# 1. FIRST CENTURY



## Where did the Apostles Evangelise?

- St. Peter (67AD): Asia Minor (Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia & Bithynia)
- St. Andrew (60AD): Scythia, Greece)
- St. Mathew (70AD): Ethiopia, Persia
- St. Bartholomew: Yemen, Armenia
- St. Thomas (72 AD): Judea, India & China
- St. Jude (65 AD): Iraq, Arabic & Persia
- St. Simon Zealot (65 AD): Syria & Persia
- St. John (100 AD): Jerusalem & Asia Minor
- St. Paul (67 AD): Judea, Asia Minor, Greece & Rome
- St. Mark (68 AD): Egypt, Libya



## Major Events

- 29/30 AD Day of Pentecost
- 36/37 AD Martyrdom of St. Stephan
- 43/44 AD Martyrdom of St. James son of Zebedee
- 49 AD Council of Jerusalem/ St Mark in Alexandria
- 62 AD Martyrdom of St. James bishop of Jerusalem
- 64 AD The First Persecution, Under Nero
- 66 AD Revolution in Judea
- 67 AD Martyrdom of St. Peter & St. Paul
- 70 AD Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus
- 81 AD The Second Persecution, Under Domitian
- 100 AD Death of St. John



## The Circumcisers

*“And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1)*

- Council of Jerusalem 49 AD

## Gnosticism (continued also in 2<sup>nd</sup> century)

- God lives in the world of spiritual light. Matter is evil. Thus many Gnostics denied the Incarnation, claiming that Christ's humanity was an illusion.
- Salvation of man by moving from the evil world to the spiritual world through Gnosis (knowledge). Some of them believed in 7 heavens.
- Spread in Judea, Greece & Egypt
- Simon Magus (thought to be 1<sup>st</sup> Christian Gnostic) (Acts 8:9-24)
- Menander the Samaritan

# 1. FIRST CENTURY

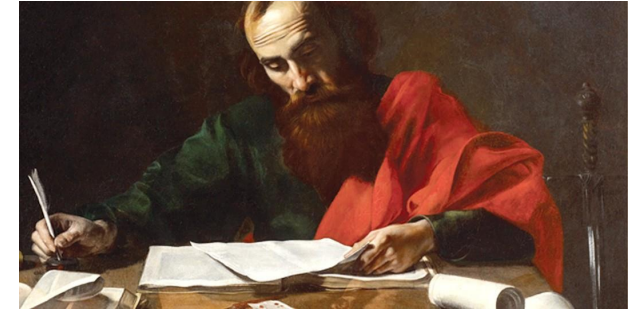


## The writings of the Apostles

St. Paul	St. Mark	St. Luke	St. Matthew	St. John
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 49-67 AD</li> <li>• 14 epistles</li> <li>• Church mentioned 63 times</li> <li>• Hebrews (4<sup>th</sup> century confirmed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many sources said 60 AD</li> <li>• Specific About Jesus the Son of Man</li> <li>• “Immediately”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gospel: around 70 AD</li> <li>• Book of Acts: around 75 AD and covers more than 30 years</li> <li>• Full of details</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Around 70 AD</li> <li>• Links to prophecies in OT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Gospel ~ 90 AD</li> <li>Was written to reply on the heresy of Gnosticism</li> <li>• The Revelation 95-96 AD</li> </ul>



# 1. FIRST CENTURY AND SECOND CENTURY TEACHING OF THE CHURCH



- **Christology & Trinity:**

- Affirmed Christ's divinity and humanity
- Early Trinitarian understanding (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)

- **Church Leadership & Structure:**

- Threefold ministry: Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons (Php 1:1, 1 Tim 3)
- Apostolic succession ensures doctrinal continuity

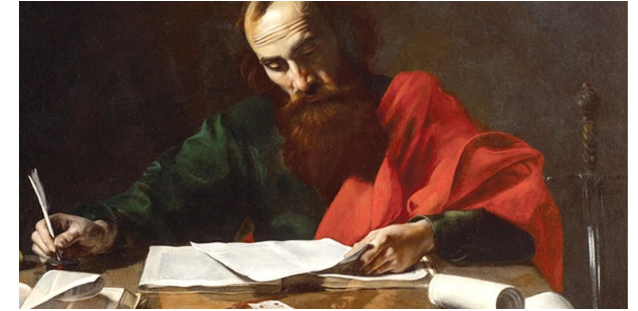
- **Sacraments:**

- **Eucharist:** Real Presence of Christ, central in worship
- **Baptism:** Essential for regeneration and forgiveness of sins

- **Liturgical Worship & Prayer:**

- Eucharistic liturgy central; daily structured prayers
- Use of formal Eucharistic prayers (e.g., from the *Didache*)

# 1. FIRST CENTURY AND SECOND CENTURY TEACHING OF THE CHURCH



## •Martyrdom & Suffering:

- Martyrdom viewed as ultimate witness to Christ
- Strong belief in resurrection and eternal life

## •Moral Teaching & Community:

- Emphasis on holiness, charity, and unity in the Church
- Ethical living based on the "Way of Life" from *The Didache*

## •Scripture & Tradition:

- Growing recognition of Apostolic writings (New Testament)
- Oral tradition held alongside Scripture for doctrinal preservation

# THE AUTHORITY OF THE FATHERS

In the Coptic Church, every Christian should comply with our Fathers' teachings as determined by Councils, the Creed, and the Council Laws.

It is also of importance that every Christian participates in the Divine Liturgy. Every Christian should commune with God and the saints who received and formulated the Divine Liturgy.

The Fathers have teaching authority upon all Christians, whether in the Church, on the entire earth and over all generations.

Our Fathers discussed and examined many problems dealing with church faith and discipline. Their opinions in the west and east were in agreement regardless of location or time.

So if there is an argument in the church regarding a particular issue it is prudent to turn back to the holy Fathers through their laws and teachings and through all the sources of our church's holy traditions and heritage for the solution.





# STAGES OF PATROLOGY

## ■ The Apostolic Fathers (1<sup>st</sup> – 2<sup>nd</sup> Century)

- The disciples of the Apostles
- St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, the Didache, The Shepherd

## ■ The Apologists (2<sup>nd</sup> Century)

- Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Hippolytus

## ■ The Pre-Nicene Fathers (2<sup>nd</sup> – early 4<sup>th</sup> Century)

- St. Irenaeus, Origen, Clement of Alexandria

## ■ The Nicene fathers (4<sup>th</sup> Century)

- St. Athanasius, St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Ephraim the Syrian, St. Gregory the Wonderworker

## ■ The Post-Nicene fathers

- St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Basil, St. Augustine, St. Gregory the Theologian

## ■ The Desert Fathers and Mothers (3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Century)

- St. Anthony, St. Pachomius, St. Macarius, St. Shenouti, Mary of Egypt



# THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS (AD 95 – 140)

**Didache “The End of the First Century” around 60-70 A.D. !**

**St Clement of Rome (102 AD)**

- Letter to Corinthians (90 AD)
- Second Letter to Corinthians Two Letters to Virgins

**St Ignatius of Antioch (107 AD)**

- Seven Letters

**St Polycarp, the Martyr (70-156 AD)**

- Letter to Philipians

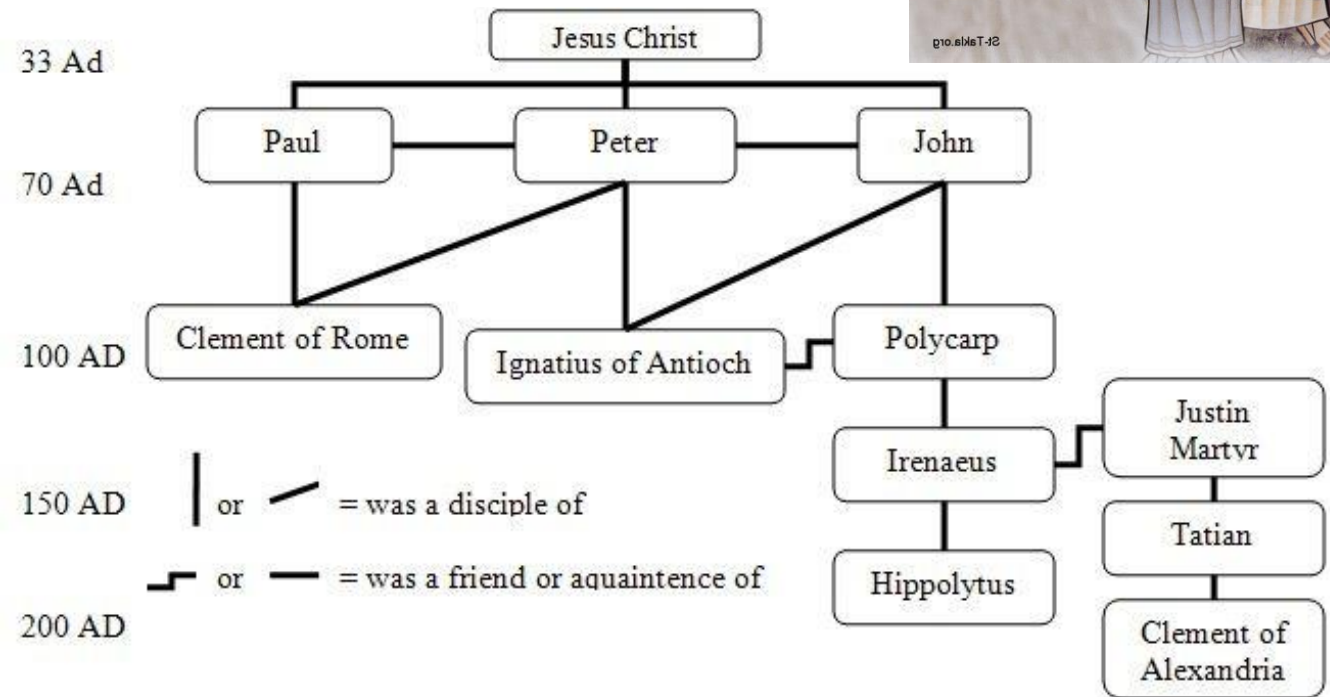
**Papias Bishop of Hierapolis (130 AD)**

- Explanation of our Lord's Sayings

**Letter of Barnabas Anti-Jewish Epistle,**

- “The End of First Century”

**The Shepherd of Hermas “The Second Century”**





## THE DIDACHE (~60 A.D.) TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES

### The Didache – The Teachings of the apostles

**Its Importance:** The Didache is, in all probability, the oldest surviving piece of non-canonical literature. It is not so much a letter as a handbook for new Christian converts, consisting of instructions derived directly from the teachings of Jesus.

The book can be divided into three sections.

- The first six chapters consist of Christian lessons;
- The next four give descriptions of the Christian ceremonies, including baptism, fasting and communion;
- The last six outline the church organization.

**Author:** The Didache claims to have been authored by the twelve apostles. While this is unlikely, similarities to the Apostolic Decree are apparent. Most scholars agree that the work, in its earliest form, may have circulated as early as the 60's C.E., though additions and modifications may have taken place well into the third century.



# BAPTISMAL CONFESSION – THE DIDACHE ~ 65 AD

## Didache: Chapter 7. Concerning Baptism.

*“And concerning baptism, baptize this way: Having first said all these things, baptize into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water.*

*But if you have no living water, baptize into other water; and if you cannot do so in cold water, do so in warm.*

*But if you have neither, pour out water three times upon the head into the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit.*

*But before the baptism let the baptizer fast, and the baptized, and whoever else can; but you shall order the baptized to fast one or two days before.”*





## APOSTOLIC FATHER ST. CLEMENT OF ROME

*Bishop of Rome – Consecrated by St. Peter*

### **Bishop and Martyr**

Saint Clement of Rome is commemorated in the Synaxarium on the 29<sup>th</sup> Hatour

It is said that he has suffered martyrdom in AD 100 during the reign of Emperor Trajan (98-117). He was martyred by tying his neck to an anchor and casting him into the sea.

Was born in Rome to an honorable father whose name was Fostinus; who was a member of the Roman Senate and that his father educated him and taught him Greek literature.

### **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

## APOSTOLIC FATHER — ST. CLEMENT BISHOP OF ROME — (92 AD — 100 AD)

### **Clement: Chapter 24. God Continually Shows Us in Nature that There Will Be a Resurrection.**

*Let us consider, beloved, how the Lord continually proves to us that there shall be a future resurrection, of which He has rendered the Lord Jesus Christ the first-fruits by raising Him from the dead.*

*Let us contemplate, beloved, the resurrection which is at all times taking place. Day and night declare to us a resurrection. The night sinks to sleep, and the day arises; the day [again] departs, and the night comes on. Let us behold the fruits [of the earth], how the sowing of grain takes place. The sower Luke 8:5 goes forth, and casts it into the ground, and the seed being thus scattered, though dry and naked when it fell upon the earth, is gradually dissolved. Then out of its dissolution the mighty power of the providence of the Lord raises it up again, and from one seed many arise and bring forth fruit.*







## APOSTOLIC FATHER — IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

St. Ignatius was Bishop of Antioch after Saint Peter.

It is reported that St. Peter himself appointed Ignatius to the see of Antioch.

Besides his Latin name, Ignatius, he also called himself Theophorus ("*God Bearer*"), and tradition says he was one of the children Jesus took in His arms and blessed.

St. Ignatius is one of the Apostolic Fathers (the earliest authoritative group of the Church Fathers).

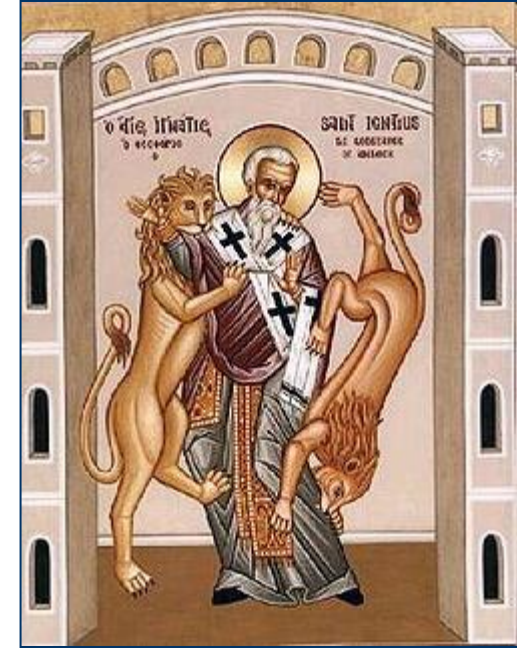
## ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH — MARTYRDOM AROUND 140 AD

In his letter to Rome, the city which looms ahead of him as the place where he is to die, st. Ignatius urges believers not to interfere with his sentence or seek his release.

If they show love to his body and he escapes his sentence, he will have to run his race again, he tells them. It is bad enough having to gear up for such a test once, let alone a second time.

Rather, the joy he expects after this ordeal will make it all worthwhile. It inspires him to write,

“Allow me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose means it will be granted me to reach God. **I am the wheat of God, and am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ.**”



## ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH - MARTYRDOM AROUND 140 AD

Epistles attributed to St. Ignatius report his arrest by the authorities and travel to Rome:

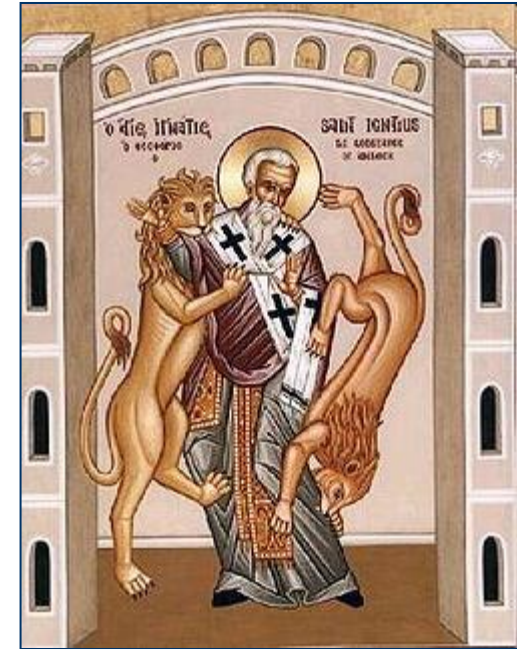
“From Syria even to Rome I fight with wild beasts, by land and sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, even a company of soldiers, who only grow worse when they are kindly treated. —*Ignatius to the Romans, 5.*”

Along the route he wrote six letters to the churches in the region and one to a fellow bishop.

He was sentenced to die in the Coliseum, to be eaten by lions.

In his *Chronicle*, Eusebius gives the date of his death 108 AD.

His body lies entombed under St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.





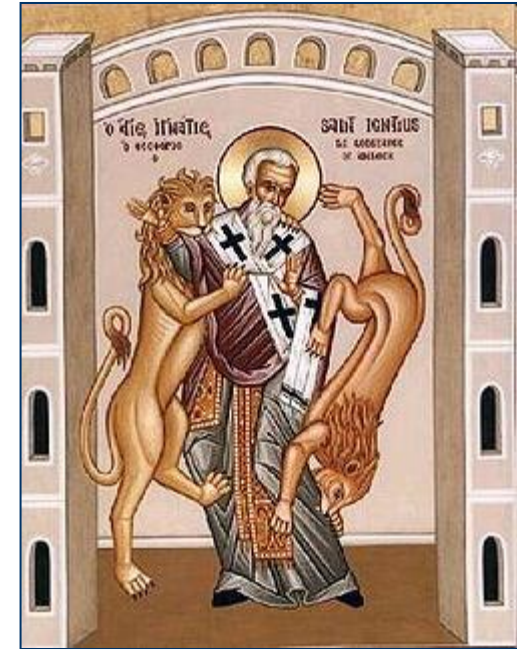
## IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH MARTYRDOM AROUND 140 AD

### Ignatius of Antioch – Letter to the Trallians

#### Chapter 9. Reference to the history of Christ

• *Close your ears, therefore, when anyone speaks to you at variance with Jesus Christ, who was descended from David, and was also of Mary; who was truly born and ate and drank. He was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate; He was truly crucified, and [truly] died, in the sight of beings in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth. He was also truly raised from the dead, His Father quickening Him, even as after the same manner His Father will so raise up us who believe in Him by Christ Jesus, apart from whom we do not possess the true life.*

[Christian Classics Ethereal Library](#)



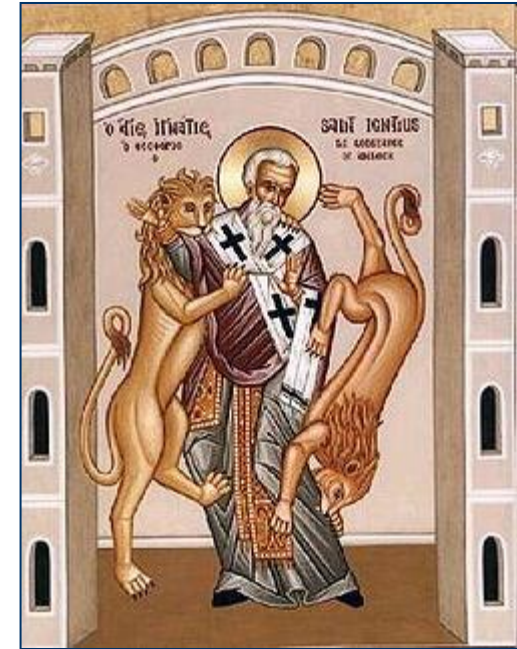
## IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH MARTYRDOM AROUND 140 AD

### Ignatius of Antioch – Letter to the Magnesians

#### **Chapter 13. Be established in faith and unity**

*Study, therefore, to be established in the doctrines of the Lord and the apostles, that so all things, whatsoever you do, may prosper both in the flesh and spirit; in faith and love; in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Spirit;*

### Restless Pilgrim

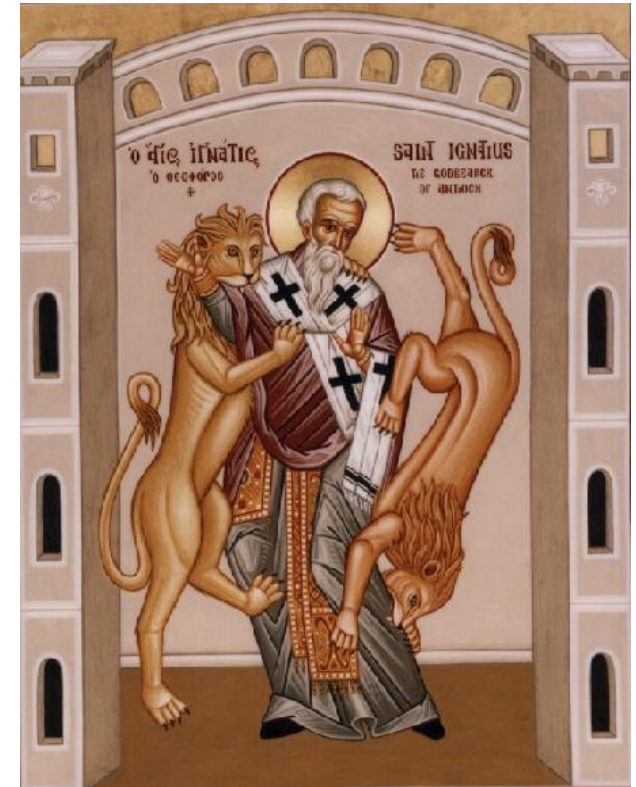


## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEEA - IGNATIUS

**Ignatius of Antioch** (died 98/117). Bishop of Antioch. He wrote much in defense of Christianity.

"In **Christ Jesus our Lord**, by whom and with whom be glory and power to **the Father** with the **Holy Spirit** for ever" (n. 7; PG 5.988).

"We have also as a Physician the Lord our God Jesus the Christ the only-begotten Son and Word, before time began, but who afterwards became also man, of Mary the virgin. For 'the Word was made flesh.' Being incorporeal, He was in the body; being impassible, He was in a passable body; being immortal, He was in a mortal body; being life, He became subject to corruption, that He might free our souls from death and corruption, and heal them, and might restore them to health, when they were diseased with ungodliness and wicked lusts." (Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *The ante-Nicene Fathers*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975 rpt., Vol. 1, p. 52, Ephesians 7.)





## ST. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA BISHOP OF SMYRNA (69-155 AD)

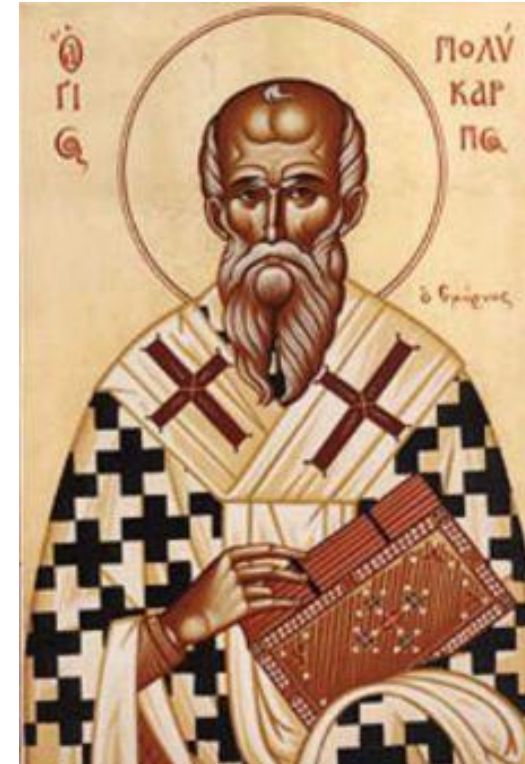
### Personal

Received a visit and letter from Ignatius, Represented the Church of Asia Minor in meetings with Pope Anicetus Dating of Easter. His pupil Irenaeus says he knew John the Evangelist and other apostles

### Interesting Events Leading to His Death

Three days before he was arrested the Lord revealed to him in a dream that he would be burned at the stake. When the soldiers came to get him, his friends insisted on hiding him. Polycarp made it clear that in the future, he would not allow himself to be hidden. Soon the soldiers discovered where he had been taken. When he saw them coming, he went out and greeted them warmly and offered them food.

As they were eating, he requested that he be allowed to pray before they took him away. His request was granted. For two hours he prayed fervently out loud, inasmuch that many of the soldiers began to repent, that they were come out against so godly an old man.

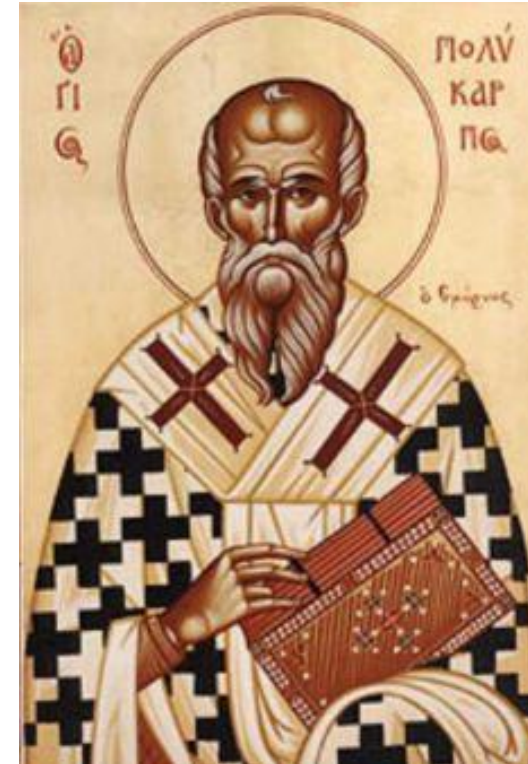


## ST. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA BISHOP OF SMYRNA (69-155 AD)

One of the judges tried to get him to deny his faith by saying, "Reverence thy old age Swear by Casear's Fortune. Repent, and say Take away the Wicked." Polycarp, looking with a stern countenance upon the whole multitude of wicked Gentiles, that was gathered together in the Lifts, and shaking his hand at them, looked up to Heaven, and groaning said, Take away the Wicked. But the judge was not satisfied with this. He said, Sware, and I will set thee at liberty reproach Christ!

Polycarp replies with this most famous statement:

*"Six and eighty years have I served him, and he has done me nothing but good and how could I curse him, my Lord and my Savior! How then can I blaspheme my King and Savior? You threaten me with a fire that burns for a season, and after a little while is quenched; but you are ignorant of the fire of everlasting punishment that is prepared for the wicked."*



## ST. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA BISHOP OF SMYRNA (69-155 AD)

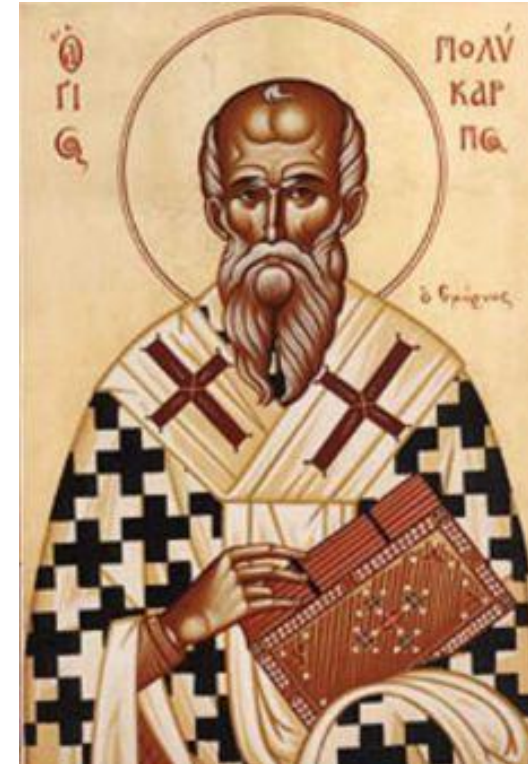
The judge continues to urge Polycarp to renounce the Lord by saying Caesar is Lord!

The judge then angrily urges him to, swear by the Genius of Caesar. Polycarp refuses but offered to share his faith in Christ.

The judge rejected the offer and threatened, I have wild beasts ready, to those I will cast thee except thou repent.

Polycarp responds calmly, Call for them then For we Christians are fixed in our minds not to change from good to evil But for me it will be good to be changed from Evil, to Good.

The furious judge said, Seeing that thou dispiseth the Wild Beasts, I will cause thee to be devoured by Fire, unless thou shall repent.





## ST. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA BISHOP OF SMYRNA (69-155 AD)

Polycarp answered, Thou threatenest me with Fire which burns for an hour, and so is extinguished but knowest not the Fire of the Future Judgment of that Eternal Punishment which is reserved for the Ungodly. But why tarriest thou? Bring forth what thou wilt!

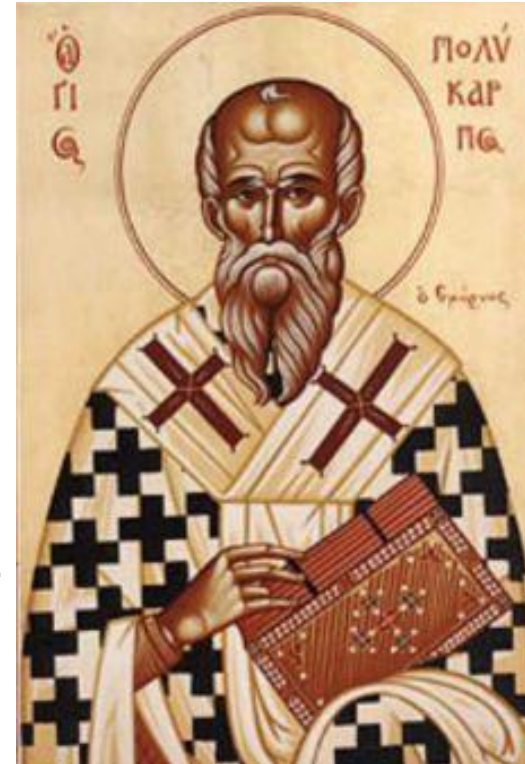
They took Polycarp to the stake and were going to nail him there. He spoke up and said, Let me alone as I am - for he who has given me strength to endure the Fire, will also enable me, without your securing me by nails, to stand without moving in the pile. They merely tied him to the stake.

Upon the AMEN the executioner lit the fire, but something strange happened. The flames arched around Polycarp like a sail of a ship filled with wind and he would not burn.

After some time, the command was given to the executioner to stab him with a sword, so he did.

The result was that so much blood flowed from the wound that it extinguished the fire.

The fire was rekindled, and Polycarp's body was burned to ashes.



## ST. POLYCARP OF SMYRNA BISHOP OF SMYRNA (69-155 AD)

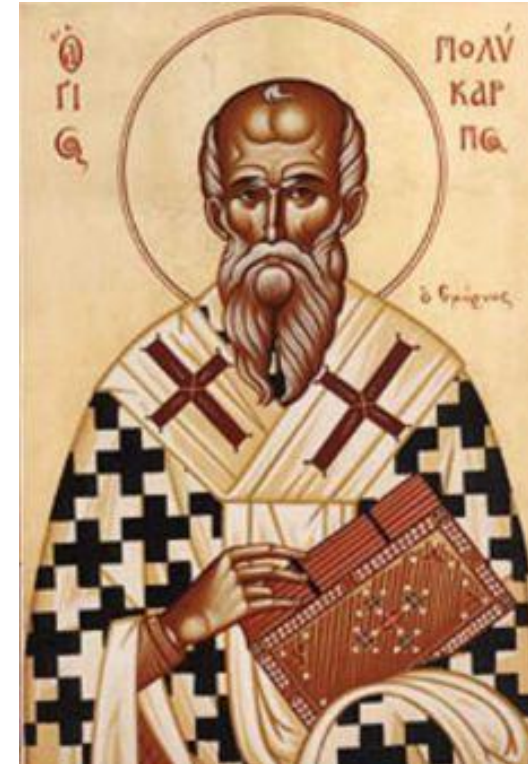
The only surviving writing is his [epistle to the Philippians](#).

### CHAPTER VI.--THE DUTIES OF PRESBYTERS AND OTHERS.

And let the presbyters be compassionate and merciful to all, bringing back those that wander, visiting all the sick, and not neglecting the widow, the orphan, or the poor, but always "providing for that which is becoming in the sight of God and man ; " abstaining from all wrath, respect of persons, and unjust judgment; keeping far off from all covetousness, not quickly crediting [an evil report] against anyone, not severe in judgment, as knowing that we are all under a debt of sin.

If then we entreat the Lord to forgive us, we ought also ourselves to forgive; for we are before the eyes of our Lord and God, and "we must all appear at the judgment-seat of Christ and must everyone give an account of himself."

Let us then serve Him in fear, and with all reverence, even as He Himself has commanded us, and as the apostles who preached the Gospel unto us, and the prophets who proclaimed beforehand the coming of the Lord [have alike taught us]. Let us be zealous in the pursuit of that which is good, keeping ourselves from causes of offence, from false brethren, and from those who in hypocrisy bear the name of the Lord, and draw away vain men into error.

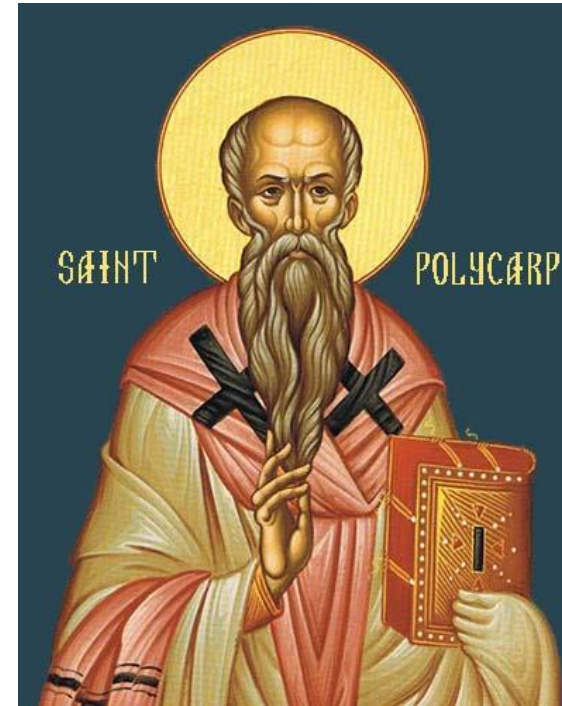


## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**Polycarp** (70-155/160). Bishop of Smyrna. Disciple of John the Apostle.

"O Lord God almighty . . . I bless you and glorify you through the eternal and heavenly high priest Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, through whom be glory to you, with Him and the Holy Spirit, both now and forever" (n. 14, ed. Funk; PG 5.1040).

Equality with the Trinity





# THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

**Introduction:** The Shepherd of Hermas is an ancient Christian text that holds significant historical and theological importance in early Christianity. It provides insights into the beliefs, practices, and moral teachings of early Christian communities.

**Authorship and Date:** Traditionally attributed to Hermas, a Christian living in Rome, the authorship and dating of the text are subjects of scholarly debate. It is commonly dated to the 2nd century AD, reflecting the early Christian period.

**Structure and Genre:** The Shepherd of Hermas is composed of several visions, mandates, and parables, structured in a narrative framework. It is categorized as apocalyptic literature, featuring elements of prophecy, visions, and moral exhortation.

**Themes and Symbolism:** Major themes in The Shepherd of Hermas include repentance, forgiveness, moral transformation, and the importance of righteous living. Symbolism is prevalent, with allegorical figures like the Shepherd representing Christ and the Church symbolized as a virtuous woman.

[The Shephard of Hermas](#)



## THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

**Reception and Influence:** The text was widely read and respected in early Christian communities, with some considering it for inclusion in the New Testament canon. It exerted influence on early Christian ethics and theology, contributing to discussions on sin, repentance, and the nature of the Church.

**Theological Significance:** The Shepherd of Hermas addresses theological themes central to early Christianity, such as the nature of sin, the process of repentance, and the role of the Church in guiding believers. It offers moral guidance and spiritual encouragement to its audience.

**Manuscript Tradition:** The manuscript tradition of The Shepherd of Hermas is rich, with various versions and translations existing in ancient manuscripts. Notable examples include the Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Alexandrinus.

The Shepherd of Hermas stands as a valuable testament to the beliefs and practices of early Christians. Its teachings on repentance, forgiveness, and righteous living continue to resonate with readers today, offering insights into the development of Christian thought and ethics.



## THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

**On Repentance and Forgiveness:** "Confess your sins that you may be justified. Since, therefore, you have the Master who enacts forgiveness for sins, do not turn your heart away again. **Vision 3, Chapter 8**

**On Perseverance in Trials:** "Remain steadfast, therefore, and be not double-minded, that you may have a share in life everlasting." **Vision 2, Chapter 4**

**On Spiritual Discernment:** "For the Lord has opened the gates of righteousness, and they may enter into the Kingdom of God." **Vision 3, Chapter 9**

**On the Importance of Righteous Living:** "Forsake your former evil ways, and the evil spirits will be subject to you, and all the dominion of Satan will be destroyed." **Vision 4, Chapter 3**

**On the Role of Faith:** "Faith, if it is strong, has great power. It saves souls that confess it, and who have already the Spirit of faith." **Mandate 12, Chapter 5**

**On the Shepherd's Counsel:** "Be steadfast and do not fear; for the Lord is your companion, and He will not forsake you." **Vision 2, Chapter 3**





## THE SHEPHERD OF HERMAS

**On the Importance of Prayer:** "Pray without ceasing on behalf of other men; for there is hope of repentance, that they may be counted worthy of God."  
**Mandate 10, Chapter 3**

**On the Unity of Believers:** "Love one another, and help one another, and do not covet one another's possessions." **Mandate 4, Chapter 1**

**On Overcoming Temptation:** "You are strong, and can overcome all things, and bear up under everything, if you do not despair, and put your trust in the Lord." **Vision 2, Chapter 3**

**On the Mercy of God:** "The Lord is full of compassion, and is merciful, and long-suffering, and has compassion on those who have been brought low in repentance." **Mandate 5, Chapter 3**

**On the Fruits of Righteousness:** "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace." **Mandate 9, Chapter 1**

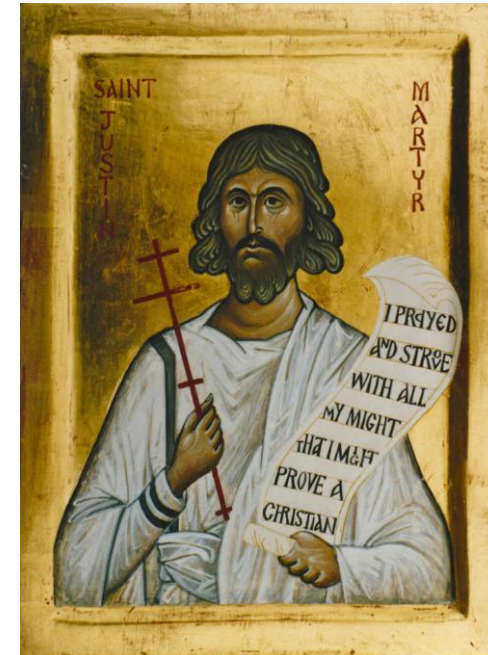


## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**Justin Martyr** (100-165). He was a Christian apologist and martyr friend of Irenaeus.

"For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water" (First Apol., LXI).

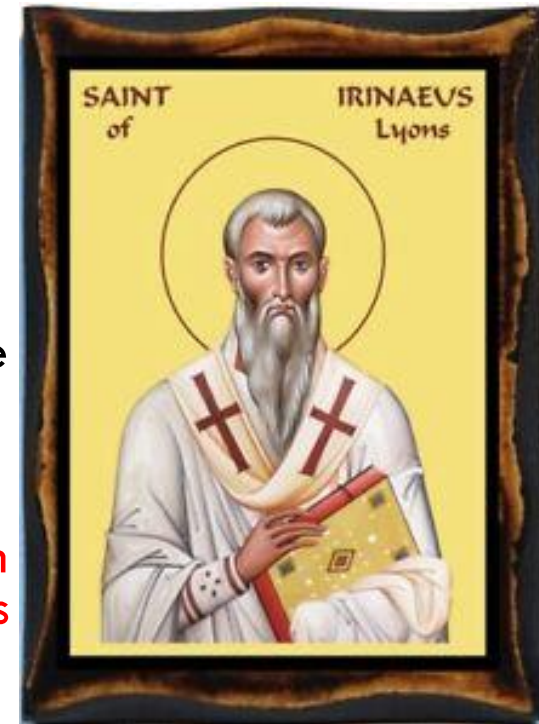
Again equality with the Trinity



## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**Irenaeus** (115-190). As a boy he listened to Polycarp, the disciple of John. He became Bishop of Lyons.

"The Church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: . . . **one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God,** and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father 'to gather all things in one,' and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole human race, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Savior, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, 'every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess; to him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all . . . '" (Against Heresies X.I)





## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEEA

Three questions asked to **those being baptized** in the 2nd century:

“When each of them to be baptized has gone down into the water, the one baptizing shall lay hands on each of them, asking, ‘Do you believe in **God the Father Almighty?**’ And the one being baptized shall answer, ‘I believe.’

Then he shall ask, ‘**Do you believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God** who was born of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose on the third day, living from the dead, and ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father, the one coming to judge the living and the dead?’ When each has answered, ‘I believe,’ he shall baptize a second time.

Then he shall ask, ‘**Do you believe in the Holy Spirit** and the Holy Church, and the resurrection of the flesh?’ Then each being baptized shall answer, ‘I believe.’ And thus let him be baptized the third time.”

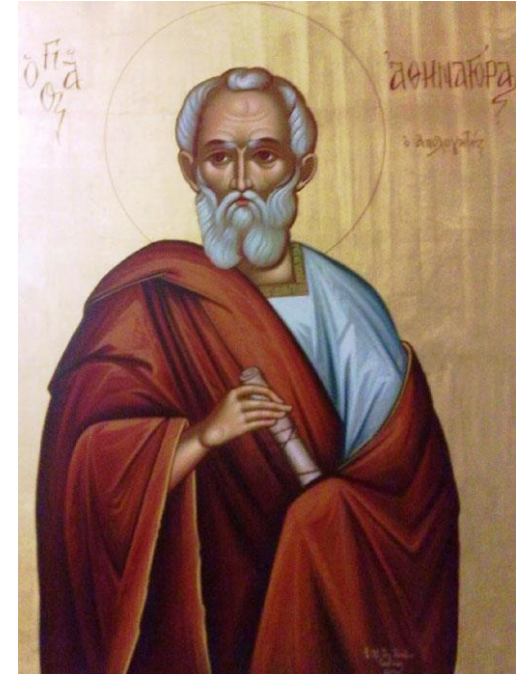
**The Apostolic Traditions of Hippolytus**



## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**Athenagoras** (133-190). Dean of the Catechetical School of Alexandria founded by St. Mark the Apostle.

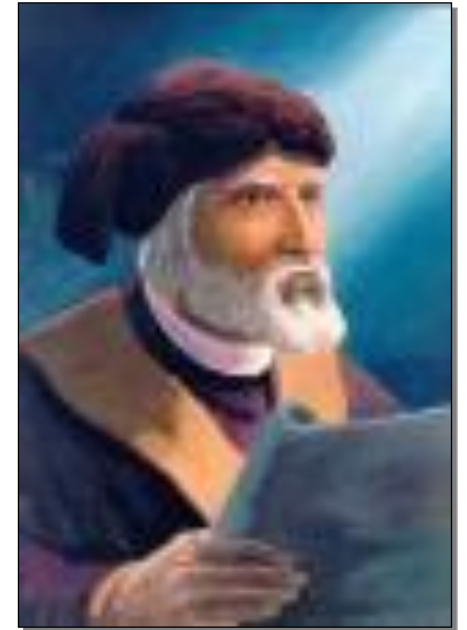
”...they (the Christians) **know God** and **His Logos**, what is the oneness of the Son with the Father, what the communion of the Father with the Son, **what is the Spirit**, what is the unity of these three, the Spirit, the Son, the Father, and their distinction in unity.”



## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**Tertullian** (160-215). African apologist and theologian. He wrote much in defense of Christianity.

"We define that there are two, **the Father** and **the Son**, and three with **the Holy Spirit**, and this number is made by the pattern of salvation...[which] brings about unity in trinity, interrelating the three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They are three, not in dignity, but in degree, not in substance but in form, not in power but in kind. They are of one substance and power, because there is one God from whom these degrees, forms and kinds devolve in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." (Adv. Prax. 23; PL 2.156-7).



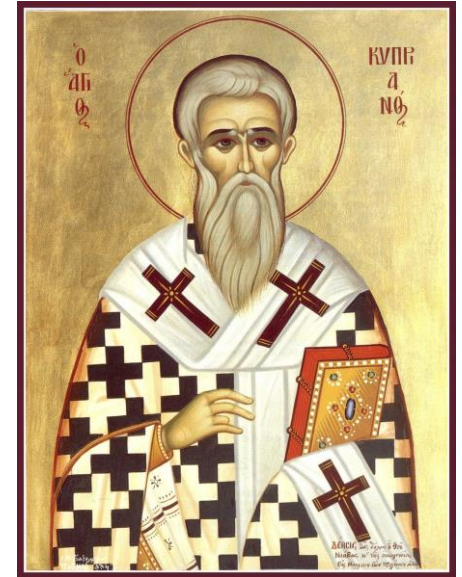


## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

### Cyprian of Carthage (c. 200 – 258 AD):

“The Lord says, I and the Father are one; John 10:30 and again it is written of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, **And these three are one.** **1 John 5:7** And does anyone believe that this unity which thus comes from the divine strength and coheres in celestial sacraments, can be divided in the Church, and can be separated by the parting asunder of opposing wills? He who does not hold this unity does not hold God's law, does not hold the faith of the Father and the Son, does not hold life and salvation.”

Cyprian references 1 John 5:7 in "**On the Unity of the Church**" (Chapter 6).



## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**Origen** (185-254). Alexandrian theologian. Defended Christianity and wrote much about Christianity.

"If anyone would say that the Word of God or the Wisdom of God had a beginning, let him beware lest he direct his impiety rather against **the unbegotten Father**, since he denies that he was **always Father**, and that he has **always begotten the Word**, and that he **always had wisdom** in all previous times or ages or whatever can be imagined in priority...**There can be no more ancient title of almighty God than that of Father**, and it is through the Son that he is Father" (De Princ. 1.2.; PG 11.132).



## HOLY TRINITY BEFORE NICAEA

**"For if [the Holy Spirit were not eternally as He is, and had received knowledge at some time and then became the Holy Spirit] this were the case, the Holy Spirit would never be reckoned in the unity of the Trinity, i.e., along with the unchangeable Father and His Son, unless He had always been the Holy Spirit."**

**"Moreover, nothing in the Trinity can be called greater or less, since the fountain of divinity alone contains all things by His word and reason, and by the Spirit of His mouth sanctifies all things which are worthy of sanctification..."**

