

### 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 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 Slovenia) 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 Ambrose

Ordained a priest in 391

Bishop of Hippo (395)

Combated Manichean heresy (conflict of Good and Evil)

Martin Luther and John Calvin were close 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): great Christian apologia; a theological philosophy of history, *Retractions* (428): final verdict of earlier works, *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

## The Evangelization Station

Hudson, Florida, USA

E-mail: [evangelization@earthlink.net](mailto:evangelization@earthlink.net)

[www.evangelizationstation.com](http://www.evangelizationstation.com)

Pamphlet 022

# Apostolic and post-Apostolic Fathers of the Church

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 Smyrna, 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");

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

**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*.

**Hermas (Author Unknown)**

**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*

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 scripture 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

Embroiled 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