

## **Annotated List of People in the Course:**

(All dates listed below are in the Common Era = CE)

**Lydia:** Early church leader, a seller of fine purple, who we meet in Acts 16.

### **Apostolic Fathers**

**Clement of Rome:** Bishop of Rome 88-99. Knew Peter. 2nd or 3rd bishop after Peter. One of his letters, known as 1 Clement, was used as Scripture by the western part of the church until the 3rd century.

**Ignatius of Antioch:** Martyred in 110. A disciple of the Apostle John. Bishop of Antioch. Known for 7 letters he wrote while traveling to Rome as a prisoner to be executed for his faith.

**Polycarp:** (69-155) Bishop of Smyrna. A disciple of the Apostle John and friend of Ignatius of Antioch. He was a vigorous defender of the Rule of Faith and opposed Marcionism. Martyred.

### **Greek Fathers**

**Athanasius of Alexandria:** ( 296–298 – 373) He was the 20th bishop of Alexandria, and famous for his 39th Festal Letter (367) which includes, for the first time, a list of the New Testament books that matches our 27 books exactly! His life's work was spent defending the orthodox understanding of the Trinity over against Arius and his followers.

**Basil of Caesarea:** (329-379) Basil of Caesarea was the bishop of Caesarea Mazaca in Cappadocia. A close friend of Gregory of Nazianzus, and brother to Macrina the Younger, he founded a monastery on his family estate, in order to live a more ascetic life. He was a champion of the orthodox position over against that of Arius, along with his brother, Gregory of Nyssa.

**Bishop Frumentius of Ethiopia:** (301-400?) The first bishop of the emerging Ethiopian Christian church, headquartered in the ancient capital of Akum, he championed orthodox Christianity against the spread of Arianism. Encouraged by Athanasius, he worked to adapt the Greek texts into Coptic.

**Clement of Alexandria:** (150-215) The second head of the catechetical school in Alexandria, Clement was steeped in classical Greek philosophy and used that knowledge as a Christian apologist. He championed orthodox Christianity over against the Gnostic view of Christ.

**Cyril of Alexandria:** (376 – 444) As Archbishop of Alexandria, he was the central defender of the orthodox position in the dispute over the two natures of Christ and their relationship to each other. His opponent was Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople. The flash point came when Cyril insisted that all use the term Theotokos (God bearer) to describe the virgin Mary, and Nestorius refused. It led to the Council at Ephesus in 431, which eventually led to the banishment of Nestorius as a heretic.

**Eusebius:** (260/265 – 339/340) He wrote a history of the Christian Church, known as The Ecclesiastical History. He taught at the famous school in Caesarea, where he also served as bishop. Origen's Hexapla resided there. Because of his close connection to Emperor Constantine, Eusebius was asked to provide 50 copies of the Sacred Scriptures for all the churches the emperor was building in his capital, Constantinople. He was embroiled in the Arian controversy, accused by both sides of incorrect teaching.

**Gregory of Nazianzus:** (329-390) Friend of both Gregory of Nyssa and his older brother Basil of Caesarea, he took over the mantle as one of the champions of Nicene orthodoxy, following the death of Basil. During this period, several Roman emperors attempted to promote the position of Arius, which Gregory resisted. One of his most famous students was Jerome.

**Gregory of Nyssa:** (335-395) A younger brother of Basil of Caesarea, and Macrina the Younger, he used his own philosophical training to support the orthodox position on the divinity of Christ over against the Arian point of view.

**Irenaeus of Lyons:** (115-200) A champion of the Apostolic tradition, also known as the rule of faith, Irenaeus was very important for the acceptance of a 4 Gospel canon in the emerging New Testament Scripture. Living in Lyon (in modern day France), he spent his life combatting the diverging interpretations of Jesus, now labelled heresies.

**John Chrysostom:** (349-407) He was the Archbishop of Constantinople, and a powerful preacher who spoke out against the moral laxity of the rich and powerful in that Roman capitol, which earned him the nickname "golden mouthed." His views on personal wealth and the idea that one should give to the poor anything beyond what is needed for a normal life led to his eventual exile.

**John of Damascus:** (675-749) He is considered the bridge between the Patristic period and the Medieval Latin period of the church. His roughly 150 writings formed the core of Medieval Latin theology. He spent the final 20 years of his life living as a monk outside of Jerusalem.

**Justin Martyr:** (100-165) An early apologist for the Roman church, he used his training in Greek Philosophy to defend the faith both to cultured Romans as well as Jewish theologians. He was martyred for his faith.

**Macarius of Alexandria:** (300-395) Despite the fact that he began as a very successful businessman, his desire to live a life devoted to God, led him to move into the desert for the last 60 years of his life, as part of a small community of other monks.

**Macrina the Younger:** (330-379) Older sister of both Gregory of Nyssa and Basil of Caesarea, she helped found the monastery on their family grounds. She championed ascetic life, influencing the lifestyles of both of her famous younger brothers.

**Origen of Alexandria:** (184-253) He was the 3rd head of the catechetical school in Alexandria, Egypt. His careful work on preserving an accurate copy of the Old Testament, known as the Hexapla, ranks next to Jerome's Vulgate as the most important scholarly contribution to Biblical studies in the early church. He was often at odds with his bishop, and finally moved to Caesarea, taking his Hexapla with him, where he continued to teach.

## **Latin Fathers**

**Ambrose:** (340–397) Ambrose has the distinction of being chosen by popular acclaim to be bishop of Milan, where he had been serving as governor! At the time he wasn't even ordained! His censure (390) of the Roman Emperor Theodosius for his massacre of the citizens of Thessalonica in response to a riot there, led the way to the medieval policy of the Holy Roman Emperor being under his bishop. He was Augustine's teacher!

**Augustine of Hippo:** (354-430) Taught by Ambrose, Augustine was able to combine classical Greco-Roman thought with orthodox Christianity. His synthesis formed the basis of Western Christianity, influencing subsequent generations, including Martin Luther! He was the intellectual leader of North African Christianity, which would fall to the Vandals, invaders from Spain shortly after his death.

**Cyprian:** (200-258) Bishop of Carthage during the first empire wide persecution of Christians under Decius, he worked to hold the western African church together. After the persecution abated, he helped navigate between those who felt only the confessors had the right to readmit the lapsed, as compared to the bishop being the one to readmit the lapsed. He was the first African bishop to be martyred, under the renewed persecution under Emperor Valerian. Cyprian resisted the growing authority/power of the bishop of Rome, claiming that the African bishops didn't need the approval of Rome for their decisions regarding baptisms performed by lapsed priests or readmission of the lapsed to full communion.

**Jerome:** (347-420) A Latin Christian scholar, Jerome was asked by Damasus 1 to put together an accurate Latin Bible, since there were so many inaccurate versions in circulation. Known as the Vulgate, it became the official Bible of the Roman Church until modern times. With the help of Paula, in 384 he left Rome for good, and he established monasteries for men and women near Bethlehem, where he wrote numerous books on asceticism, theology, and of course Biblical commentaries. He lived there in community until he died.

**Tertullian:** (155-240) Known as the father of Latin theology, Tertullian of Carthage invented over 900 Latin terms to translate Greek concepts of the faith. Later in his life he joined the Montanist movement, because he felt orthodox Christianity allowed converts to live less than exemplary Christian lives. As we would say today, "You can't tell the Christians from the pagans!"

## Desert Fathers

**Anthony the Great:** (251-356) He is considered the founder of organized monasticism. In his early 20s he decided to live a monastic life, and after living in isolation on a mountain for almost 20 years, he returned and wrote the first set of rules for individualistic, contemplative monastic life. It was designed to help guide the many hermits who were attempting to copy his life of total devotion to God. After the Edict of Milan (313), he moved to a desert mountain near the Red Sea, where he remained the rest of his life. He seldom left his isolated hermitage but did return to Alexandria several times to speak out against Arianism.

**Pachomius:** (292?-348?) He is the first to put together a set of rules to govern communal as opposed to solitary monastic living. A Coptic Christian, he built the first communal monastery on the east bank of the Nile River, to replace all the private hermitages scattered there, and invited the monks to join him in structured work, prayer and contemplation. He also instituted a structure to this ordered way of living in community, with the head of the community having real power over those who chose to live there.

## Heretics

**Arius:** (250-336) A Lybian Christian priest, he served in Alexandria. His views concerning the nature of Christ (he was created, and finite) became known as Arianism, and was condemned and exiled in the Council at Nicea in 325, which stated that Christ is of the same divine nature as God. Because of his friendship with Constantia, emperor Constantine's sister, he was later brought back from exile after he consented to a compromise formula regarding the divinity of Christ.

**Marcion of Pontus:** (85?-160?) Marcion, a wealthy ship owner, came to Rome about 140 and after giving the church of Rome a huge monetary gift, began teaching that the God of the Scriptures of the Jews (our OT) could not be the same God who we meet in Jesus. Therefore he rejected all of the Scriptures of his day (our OT) and encouraged the use of an edited portion of the Gospel of Luke, and 10 letters of Paul. His teaching was unacceptable to the church, and he was given his gift back and asked to leave Rome. While his followers continued to plant churches across the Mediterranean world, they didn't follow his choice of Scripture! Orthodox church leaders would combat this heresy for decades.

**Montanus** (Exact birth and death unknown. Flourished in the 170s) Sometime around 156, he began to prophecy in Phrygia, Asia Minor, along with two female prophets, Priscilla and Maximilla. Montanus claimed that the paraclete promised in the Gospel of John, was now speaking through him, and the prophetesses and prophets that were his followers. While prophecy had been valued in the early church, when it became clear that Montanus was adding new revelations about Jesus to what had been handed down (and didn't agree with the Rule of Faith), his teachings were declared heretical. His most famous convert was Tertullian.

**Tatian:** (120-180?) A Syrian Christian who studied under Justin Martyr, he combined Matthew, Mark, Luke and John along with other Gospel sayings to create the Diatessaron. This Gospel version would dominate the historic Syrian part of the Christian world until the 5th century, when it was replaced by the Gospel of the Separated (our 4 canonical gospels).

## **Emperors**

**Constantine:** (272?-337) Emperor 306-337 After sharing the reign with other emperors, Constantine defeated them and became sole emperor in 324. Having won the decisive victory after a vision told him to place a Christian symbol on his soldiers shields, Constantine supported Christianity for the rest of his reign. The Edict of Milan (313) gave Christian leaders all the rights and privileges of a state supported religion! His request that Eusebius provide 50 copies of the Christian Scriptures for the churches he was building in his newly named capital city, Constantinople, helped shape the Biblical canon as we know it today.

**Decius:** (201-251) Emperor 249-251 Proclaimed emperor by his troops, he spent his short tenure fighting the Goths. Hoping to regain the glory of Rome, both through military campaigns and the restoration of the ancient Greco-Roman gods to prominence, he decreed that all citizens of the empire must perform sacrifices to the gods. Those that refused were to be killed. During this first empire wide persecution of Christians the bishops of Rome, Antioch and Jerusalem were martyred. Rather than weakening the Christian church, it actually strengthened it!

**Diocletian:** (244-311?) Emperor 284-305 While for Christians, he is remembered as the emperor who began the last and by far the worst persecution of the church, historically his rule is known for his reorganization of financial, military and administrative policies of the empire. Scholars debate the reasons behind his decision to persecute Christians (contained in his 4 edicts of 303-4) but the results were a bloodbath across the empire, particularly after he was succeeded by Galerius. For the first time that we know of, the refusal to turn in sacred writings was punishable by death.

**Galerius:** (250-311) Emperor 305-311 Initially serving as the Caesar for Diocletian, he assumed the role of emperor in 305. He increased the severity of the persecution. While Diocletian had resisted including the death penalty for those Christians who refused to sacrifice, Galerius had no such scruples. After contracting a severe illness, and fearing that the Christian God was punishing him, he issued the Edict of Toleration in 311. The persecution was over. Christianity would become the favored religion of the empire under his successor, Constantine!

**Marcus Aurelius:** (121-180) Emperor 161-180. He was the last Roman emperor to rule during the glory days of the empire. His meditations on Stoic philosophy remain popular to this day. He continued the policy of emperors Trajan and Hadrian, which stated that Christians were not to be sought out and persecuted, unless they were denounced by a Roman citizen. Of course, if things were bad in a particular city, Christians could be persecuted or killed as happened in Lyon in 177.