

The Golden Age continues...

# Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, our Savior, let us now come to you: Our hearts are cold; Lord, warm them with your selfless love. Our hearts are sinful; cleanse them with your precious blood. Our hearts are weak; strengthen them with your joyous Spirit. Our hearts are empty; fill them with your divine presence. Lord Jesus, our hearts are yours; possess them always and only for yourself.

(Prayer of Augustine, 354-430)

# What do we remember from the previous classes?

- Focus on Apostolic succession and unity
- Suffering/martyrdom, end of most Roman persecutions
- Christian Identity
  - Lens of Christ to view Jewish/Greek thought
  - Developing a defined structure for unity
  - Heresies, heresies and more heresies

# 4th. c. Christianity

- Conversion of Constantine, Church/state relationships were changing
- Heresies, division and the first major councils
- Trinity, Christology, Holy Spirit
- Arius was still running up trouble, divisions were increasing
- Rise of desert monasticism

# Week Five

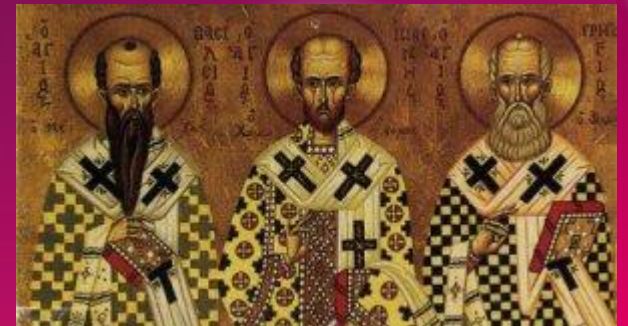
St. Basil the Great  
St. Gregory of Nazianzus  
St. Gregory of Nyssa  
St. Macrina

# The Cappadocian Fathers



# The Cappadocian Fathers

- They were like a think tank for the Holy Trinity – what does unity mean? Is there such thing as too much emphasis? Oneness in Three persons
- Drawn to monasticism and simplicity of life... and eventually to serve the Church
- Defend orthodoxy of Nicene Creed
- Defined Christian orthodoxy in the Eastern Church



# St. Basil the Great

Practically Christian royalty –

- Grandson of a martyr
- Parents and three siblings are saints
- Brother is also a Doctor of the Church

First a scholar, then a monk, then called to serve the Church – a man of action

Why was he so Great?

Renowned for his holiness, wisdom and setting the rule for monastic life and Christian philanthropy.



# St. Basil the Great

## Monastic life –

Followed the Gospel - give it all away

Started a monastic community in the hills by the Iris River

## Philanthropy –

Pastoral life of the Church should follow Jesus: prayer, charity and healing

Established hospitals, hostels, poorhouses

# St. Gregory Nazianzus

Focused on secular studies – especially literature, poetry

Met Basil in Caesarea of Pontus and then again in Athens. Followed him to the hills by the Iris

Called home by his father (a bishop) who ordained him in an ‘act of tyranny’

- Kept running away to monastic life

- Known as The Theologian

# Discussion

- How do we live our Christian life to the fullest?
- What does it mean to live in community?
- How do we understand magisterium?
- What is the power of Christian friendship?
- How do we live out our vocation when the unexpected happens?
- How can we serve the poor today?

# St. Gregory of Nyssa

Brother of St. Basil the Great - became bishop of Nyssa

Doctor of the Church, a thinker

Most philosophically minded of the three

Started off as a teacher, but became a monk after his wife died.... And then was called to serve the Church.

A in Theology, C- in Church administration

# Council of Constantinople I

The Cappadocian Fathers all fought Arianism

(St. Basil died just before the Council)

Reaffirmed Nicea

Defined the Divinity of the Holy Spirit and completed the Creed we recite at Mass

# Trinity

God is one substance (essence) in three persons –  
final answer to Arianism

Who was Jesus?

Who is the Holy Spirit?

What can we say about what God is *not*?

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God is Triune, God is infinite, but mostly we  
should understand who He is by  
defining what He is *not*

# Discussion

Where do we see a lack of acceptance about Church teaching today?

Do we struggle with this ourselves?

What can we do about it?

# St. Macrina

With her brother Basil, helped to raise their brothers. St. Gregory wrote a book about her.

Devoted student of Scripture and prayer

When her betrothed died, she committed her life to virginity and took care of her mother, turned family home into a monastery

\*Became a standard for a 'holy Christian woman'



# Summary

# Questions?

St. Jerome  
St. Augustine  
St. John Chrysostom  
St. Marcella  
St. Monica