

Ante-Nicene Fathers

Opening Prayer

Hail Mary,
Mother of God,
venerable treasure of the whole world.
You are the lamp that is never extinguished,
the crown of virginity,
the rule of orthodoxy,
the incorruptible temple
containing the one whom nothing can contain,
the Mother and Virgin,
through whom the one who comes
in the Name of the Lord
receives in the Gospel the name of "Blessed."

We salute you,
who have borne the immensity of God
in your virginal womb.

Through you,
the Trinity is sanctified.

Through you,
the Cross is venerated in the whole world.

Through you,
heaven is filled with joy.

Through you,
the Angels and Archangels rejoice.

Through you,
demons are sent flying.

Through you,
the tempter devil is cast out of heaven.

Through you,
the fallen creature is elevated to heaven.

Through you,
the whole universe,
possessed by idolatry,
has attained the knowledge of the truth.

Through you,
holy Baptism comes to those who believe.

Through you,
the oil of gladness reaches us.

Through you,
churches are established in the whole world.

Through you,
peoples are led to conversion.

Through you,
even more,
the only-begotten Son of God
has radiated like light
upon those who sat in darkness
and the shadow of death.

Through you,
the Prophets have announced their message,
and the Apostles have proclaimed salvation to the nations.

Through you,
the dead rise,
and kings exercise their royalty,
by the power of the Holy Trinity.

Amen.

Week Seven

St. Olympias

St. Leo the Great

St. Peter Chrysologus

St. Vincent of Lerins

St. Cyril of Alexandria

5th. c.

- Roman empire began to crumble
- Division began to be more visible in the East/West churches
- New heresies springing up, reactions to new challenges inspire great works and councils
 - Council of Ephesus
 - Council of Chalcedon
- A rise in preaching about Christmas

St. Olympias

Wealthy young widow, refused to remarry

Spent her life and fortune on good works

Good friend of St. John Chrysostom

- Accused of burning a church
- Rejected the bishops replacing him

Died in exile one year after St. John died

St. Cyril of Alexandria

Born to a Christian family, his uncle was patriarch of Alexandria – Cyril eventually followed.

Followed the footsteps of St. Athanasius

- ✓ Opponent of a great heresy
- ✓ Church council convened to settle the dispute
 - ✓ Which needed a second council to affirm
- ✓ Made an secular leaders angry

St. Cyril of Alexandria

Battled Nestorius by preaching 'Theotokos'

Nestorian heresy – Mary is only the mother of the human part of Jesus.

Writings were deeply focused on Mary, but he also preached and wrote theological studies, commentaries on the Bible and letters.

Council of Ephesus

Nestorius was the Patriarch of Constantinople

- Asserted that Mary wasn't the 'Mother of God' – she was only the mother of the human Jesus

St. Cyril argued – a woman gives birth to a person, not a nature

Christ is one person, with two natures – human nature and a divine nature.

Mary is “Theotokos”

Discussion

Why do you think the doctrine of Incarnation was a hot topic in the early Church?

Was the Incarnation of Jesus necessary?

Discuss!

St. Vincent of Lerins

Abandoned his military career – entered a monastery on the Isle of Lerins (France)

Only one surviving work – Commonitory

How can we tell the true
from false doctrines?

Vincentian Canon:
“believed everywhere, always, and by all”

St. Leo the Great

Pope from 440 to 461, faced many difficulties

- Negotiated w/ Attila the Hun to save Rome
- Endured the sacking (but not burning) of Rome by the Vandals
- Battled Nestorians and Monophysites
- Had to annul 'Ephesus II' which he didn't attend and resulted in the death of St. Flavian

Devoted himself to helping the Romans endure these trials.

St. Leo the Great

Pope Sixtus III passed away, Leo was unanimously elected as the next pope in 440.

One of the best administrative popes of the ancient Church.

His letter to the emperor on the nature of Christ was debated at the Council of Chalcedon

Preached and wrote about the Petrine supremacy

Council of Chalcedon

Response to both
the Nestorian and Monophysitism heresies

Christ has two natures – human and divine
They are distinct and united

“Peter has spoken through Leo... Anathema
to him who teaches otherwise.”

Discussion

True devotion to Mary leads us to Christ.

Discuss!

St. Peter Chrysologus

- Born in Imola, educated, Baptized and ordained deacon, later arc-deacon by Bishop Cornelius
- Grew up during the time when faith was declining and heresies were persistent, especially Arianism
- Appointed Bishop of Ravenna by Pope Sixtus III after rejecting the popularly elected candidate by the people of Ravenna

St. Peter Chrysologus

- He was known as the “Golden -worded by” a name given by Empress Galla Placidia who was deeply impressed and touched by his zeal, brevity of words and clarity, organized homilies, rare skills in homily delivery. Galla later supported his projects as he served as Bishop
- Nature of his homilies were Scripture based, inspired holiness, love for the faith and Sacraments
- Encouraged the daily reception of the Eucharist
- Attacked the contemporary heresies in his homilies

St. Peter Chrysologus

- Emphasized the unity of prayer, fasting and mercy; cannot be separated, give life to each other
- He was highly trusted and respected for his gentle approach to issues
- Spoke vividly on the rightful place of the Pope in the world and in the church
- Outlined the reasons for Incarnation: Restore our true nature, we shall no longer be alienated by the fall of Adam and Eve
- Known for the saying: “Holiness begets holiness and strengthen faith”

Discussion

What is an effective homily?
Name at least three aspects.

Discuss!

Questions?

St. Benedict of Nursia
St. Gregory the Great
St. John Damascus
Wrap up