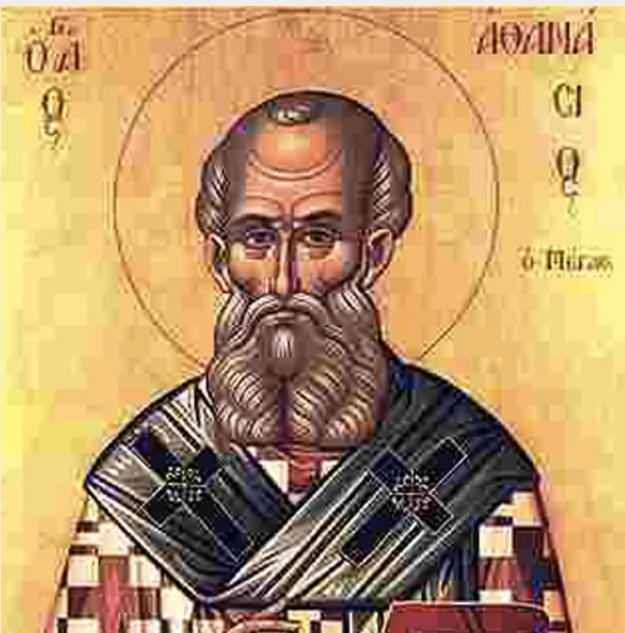


Apologetic Fathers

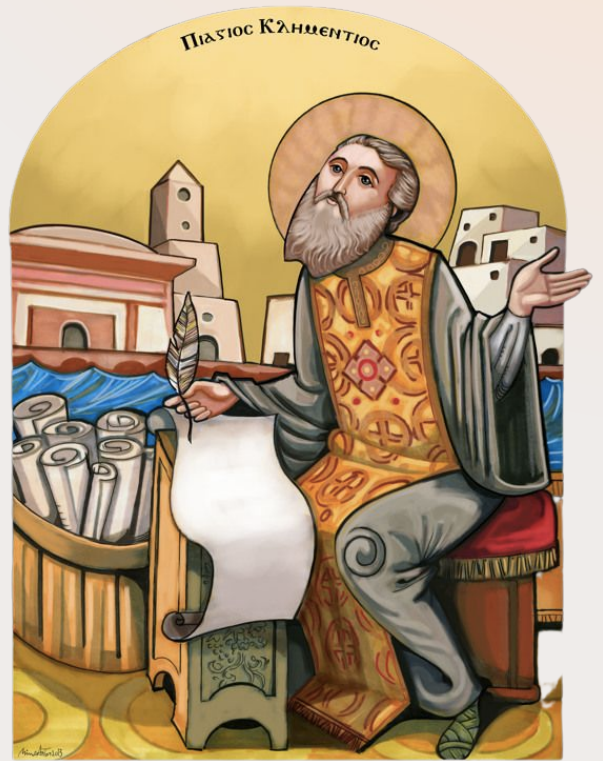


St. Melito of Sardis

- Bishop of Sardis in Lydia (modern day Turkey) in the 2nd century.
 - Considered a major light of Asia minor
 - Only one of his books still exists till today called “On Pascha.”
 - First father to refer to the Hebrew bible as “Old Testament”
 - **Theology:**
 - Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament
 - The conception of the divinity and the pre-existence of Christ dominates his entire theology.
 - Believed that the function of Christ was to rescue man from sin, death, and the devil.
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St. Clement of Alexandria

- Lived from 150-215 AD and considered a major father in the Coptic Church
- During his time, Gnostics were growing in popularity and took ownership of the word “knowledge,” leading to it being negative in church
- St. Clement wanted to change this and worked to reclaim the concept of knowledge.
- He saw secular philosophy as a tool to express true knowledge when used right
- He wrote “God is Love...and He is knowable to those that love Him”
- Traveled extensively seeking instruction from famous Christian teachers
- Settled in Alexandria, ordained a priest, and became the 1st dean of the school of theology
- First Christian writer to confront the ideas of his time with Christian doctrine (fought Gnostics).
- Ancient philosophy, in his view, was unable to achieve more than glimpses of the truth, while Christianity offers the perfect knowledge and truth in Christ.
- Taught supremacy of Christian Gnosis (knowledge).
- Main work is the “Trilogy” which is an outline of his theological system.



Apologetic Fathers



St. Irenaeus of Lyons

- Disciple of St. Polycarp
 - Considered an apologist because his largest work is an apology called “Against Heresies”.
 - Called the “father of theology” as his work was transitional in leading to the beginning of understanding the nature of Christ.
- Major opponent of Gnostics with his scientific approach to theology
 - Taught that true salvation is attained only through faith in what God has revealed and in what He has done.
 - Was the first great theologian, who emphasized the role of the Church, the canon of Scripture, and the religious and theological tradition.
 - Explains Christian doctrine with proof from the old testament
 - Taught that human thinking is powerless to know God and his dispensation for the salvation of all people.
 - Believed/Taught that No secret tradition supersedes the Church’s tradition

St. Justin Martyr

- Most important apologist of 2nd century
- Born in Syria to heathen parents
- Student of Socrates and Plato until he converted to Christianity.
- Devoted life to defending Christianity
- Focused on defending against the Jews (Dialogue with Trypho)
- 1st father to try and reconcile faith and reason
- 1st to compare St. Mary to Eve
- Called “Martyr” for his testimony unto death in Rome in 165AD.
- Believed that everyone who can speak the truth and does not speak it shall be judged by God.

