

FR. GLENN SUDANO, CFR

We Live in a Castle

*Stories, allegories, and commentaries about
the most wonderful religion in the world.*



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About the Book

“Blue collar ecclesiology” or “kitchen table catechesis” is how the Father Glenn Sudano, CFR describes his way of presenting some interesting ideas about what is considered by many to be a little known yet fascinating subject. *We Live in a Castle* is Father’s first book. The title is taken from one of its twelve stories, each of which, like an array of spotlights, illumines its subject from different angles.

The subject of the book? The Church—its nature, history and mission. Father describes his work as “friendly yet provocative.”

He challenges the reader to dig into the Church’s history and discover a valuable treasure which he calls “the most wonderful religion in the world.” He uses modern day parables, some based his real life experience, each with an introduction and spiritual reflection.

We Live in a Castle is well suited for teachers and young students participating in religious education. It will be especially useful for adults who are considering or preparing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church (RCIA).

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A Short Course in Ecclesiology

The premise and proposal of this book is clear; namely, there is an unbroken chain from the Church as presented in the pages of the New Testament to the Church we know today as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. As opposed to any popular notion that the Church is simply a “spiritual fellowship” made up of individuals who all accept some basic Christian principles, history attests to something quite different. “Ecclesiastical archeology” is necessary nowadays if we are going to discover the truth about the Church instituted by Jesus Christ. Sometimes we are afraid to look too closely for fear of what we will find out. Yet, to those who possess courage and perseverance, a wonderful treasure—a wonderful world—awaits them.

While modern technology sometimes comes with a painful price, it also makes it possible for those who would like to “dig” further to do excellent and extensive research right from home. Much of the following information has been gleaned from The Catholic Encyclopedia (Our Sunday Visitor. Edited by Rev. Peter Stravinskias, Ph.D., S.T.L.) and The Heart of Catholicism (Our Sunday Visitor. Compiled and edited by Theodore E. James, Ph.D.). The Catholic Encyclopedia is available online at <https://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/>. Enter any of the names or topics in the following entries into its easy-to-use-search field to see detailed scholarly essays on each topic.

Some Significant Early Church Writings

These few documents offer us only a sample of numerous letters and apologetical writings coming to us from the early centuries of the Church.

1. **The Didache: Teachings of the Twelve Apostles.** This document written at the latter part of the first century is a summary of the teachings and the practices of the Christian community at the close of the apostolic age. It is a manual which touches upon moral conduct, liturgical functions, the role of baptism, confession, and the Eucharist. In fact, even the subject of abortion. In addition to the *Catholic Encyclopedia* entry, the full text of this brief but highly influential treatise can be read at <http://thendidache.com/>.
2. **The letters of Saint Ignatius of Antioch (d. ca. 98-117 A.D.).** Scholars have authenticated seven letters written by Ignatius, the third bishop of Antioch. In these letters the bishop presents the Church clergy as a hierarchy composed of bishops, priests, and deacons. The letters speak of virginity and the religious

nature of marriage. Ignatius was martyred by the Emperor Trajan. His Letter to the Smyrnaeans contains the first ever reference to the “Catholic Church”.

3. **The letters of Saint Polycarp.** There is some evidence that Polycarp (A.D. 69-155), teacher to Saint Irenaeus, was appointed by the apostle John as bishop of the Church in Smyrna. It is known that he received at least one letter from Ignatius of Antioch and made a trip to Rome to consult with Pope Anicletus, second successor to the apostle Peter (A.D. 155-166). He was known for standing against the heresies of Marcion (q.v.) and Valentinus. Evidence suggests that Polycarp may be credited with compiling, editing and publishing the New Testament. In his Epistle to the Philippians, addressed to the Church at Antioch, we receive a vivid account of the bishop’s life, teaching, and reputation. Read the Epistle here: <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0136.htm>
4. **The Shepherd by Hermas.** Belief in one God, the love of truth and chastity, the sanctity of marriage, detachment from the world, the need to give alms and the value of good works are some of the themes presented in this work that was popular in the early centuries of Christianity. It presents the basic theology of repentance that prevailed in the Christian community around A.D. 150. It is frequently referred to favorably by the early authorities. The author is unknown but Origen believed it was written by the [Hermas](#) mentioned by St. Paul (Romans 16:14).

Fathers, Doctors, and Apologists of the Early Church

“Towering intellects of the early Church” is an apt description of the men who handed on and defended the authentic teachings of the twelve apostles through writings, sermons, and the example of their holy lives. Some of them lived close to the apostles in time and exhibited a profound respect for and understanding of the apostolic teachings. Some of them are considered “Doctors”, that is, teachers of the apostolic faith who could also be called apologists, meaning defenders or explainers of the same faith. Fathers of the Church, also called “Apostolic Fathers.” are those writers who are known to have had direct contact with the apostles. The study of the Church Fathers is called Patristics or Patrology

1. **Saint Clement of Rome (d.97).** Clement was the third successor to Saint Peter (A.D. 88-97) after Linus and Anacletus. He wrote two letters to the Church at Corinth which was exhibiting problems with unity. The letters clearly assert the unique authority of the Bishop of Rome in deciding on matters within the Church. In them, the Greek word “laikos” (laity) appears for the first time indicating a particular distinction—with no division—in the body of Christ.
2. **Saint Ignatius of Antioch.** Ignatius was third bishop of Antioch (present day Turkey) (A.D. 70-107) and was a fellow pupil with the Bishop-martyr Polycarp. As he was being brought to Rome for martyrdom, he

wrote letters, seven of which are preserved. He is the first person in Christian literature to attribute to the Church the adjective “catholic” or “universal”. Thus, the famous quote: “Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.”

3. **Saint Justin Martyr b. A.D. 100-d. ca. 165.** Second century apologist and Father of the Church, converted from paganism at the age of thirty. We have two significant surviving works, *The Two Apologies* and *Dialogue with the Hebrew, Tryphon*. Justin utilized the writings of the Old Testament and Greek philosophy to contradict the mythology of the pagans. He claimed that only in Christianity is found the one sane and profitable philosophy. Was beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to the pagan gods.
4. **Saint Irenaeus ca. 120-ca. 202,** Bishop of Lyons and Father of the Church. Ordained priest, stationed at Lyon in Gaul (France) under bishop Ponthius,. Saint Irenaeus spoke of the character and the sacred authority of Tradition. He is author of the famous work, *Aversus Haereses (Against Heresies and Proof of the Apostolic Preaching)*. Preaching against the heretical Gnostic teaching he insisted on strict adherence to the teachings of the apostles as faithfully handed on through the bishops of the Church. It is commonly believed he died as a martyr in 202.
5. **Saint Clement of Alexandria (d.215).** A great theologian probably born in Athens at the middle of the second century. Many sources say he was ordained a priest and fled from Alexandria seeking refuge in Caesarea. Of his most important works only three are extant: *the Protrepticus (The Exhortation)*, the *Paedagus (The Tutor)*, and the *Stromata (The Tapestries)*. Clement speaks of the path of Christian perfection which is found not in some secret knowledge as proposed by the Gnostics, but knowledge of Jesus Christ expressed in a transforming union with him in faith and in love.
6. **Origen of Alexandria (d.250).** Saint Jerome lists the titles of 320 books and 310 homilies by Origen. Unfortunately, most of these have been lost. Origen was deeply dedicated to the study of the Bible which he read and commented upon in a systematic fashion. His approach to the Sacred Text enabled his readers to understand not only the literal meaning of Scriptures but the moral, and spiritual context which always pointed towards Christ. Like his father, he died as a martyr for the holy faith weakened after imprisonment and cruel torture during the persecution of Decius. He was not yet seventy.
7. **Saint Cyprian (c. 200-258).** Bishop of Carthage. Born in Cartage to a rich pagan family, after a dissolute youth, he converted to Christianity at the age of thirty-five. Soon after ordination to the priesthood he was raised to the dignity of bishop. Saint Cyprian was a prolific author with the Church being his favorite subject. He wrote of the visible hierarchical Church and the invisible mystical Church, yet forcibly affirmed that the Church is one, founded on Peter. One famous saying is worth noting: “no one can have

God as their Father without the Church as their mother.” Cyprian is known to be the first bishop in Africa to obtain the crown of martyrdom. He was beheaded for refusing to sacrifice to idols.

8. **Eusebius of Caesarea c. 260-c. 340.** Bishop of Caesarea. Eusebius is known to be the first historian of Christianity. His *Church History* or *Ecclesiastical History* in ten large volumes is a chronological account of the Church from the time of the Apostles to Eusebius’ own time. Based on original sources, his *History* covers the key personages, the succession of the apostles as the backbone of the Church, the preaching of the gospel, persecutions by the pagans, together with the virulent heresies. While some question the accuracy of his work, scholars consider it valuable as it is based on sources now lost. As Bishop of Caesarea, Eusebius played a significant role in the Council of Nicaea.
9. **St. Athanasius (c.295-373).** Bishop of Alexandria. Called the “Father of Orthodoxy”. Athanasius wrote and preached vigorously against the Arian heresy. He was exiled numerous times by pagan emperors who came after Constantine. In defending the divinity of Christ, Athanasius contributed greatly to the theology of Mary—the “God-bearer”—who he presented as the model of Christian perfection. He is also known for his influential work entitled *The Life of Saint Anthony Abbot*. This work, translated into Latin and other Oriental languages, made an important contribution to the spread of monasticism in the East and in the West.
10. **Saint Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 316-387).** Bishop. Believed to have been born and died in Jerusalem, Cyril was ordained by Bishop Maximus, and succeeded him as bishop of that city in 350. He participated in the First Council of Constantinople in 381, in which the word “consubstantial” was used to define the divine nature of all three persons of the Holy Trinity. Cyril wrote a series of Lenten pre-baptismal addresses for sacramental preparation. These not only concern baptism but Confirmation and Eucharist. He also wrote a rich document on the liturgy of the early Church which authentically affirms the sacrificial nature of the Mass.
11. **St. Basil the Great (c.329-379).** Born in Caesarea into a family noted for sanctity, Basil was a classmate of St. Gregory of Nazianzen. Ordained in 365, he dedicated himself in defending the Council of Nicaea. He has been called “Doctor of the Holy Spirit” because of his defense of the Third Person of the Trinity. St. Basil has left us numerous writings and teachings including 365 letters on theological subjects. He was the first to stress the importance of unwritten tradition. He also wrote on the Holy Eucharist as an immense gift from God and recommended frequent, even daily reception in order to welcome within the believer true life which is Christ Himself.
12. **Saint Gregory of Nazianzen (c. 325-c.389). Doctor of the Church, Bishop of Nazianzus.** Gregory was born into a noble family in Cappadocia (modern-day Turkey). He is known as a distinguished theologian,

orator, and champion of the Christian faith in his time. He presided over the First Council of Constantinople called by Emperor Theodosius which affirmed that the Holy Spirit is co-equal with the Father and the Son. One teaching of Gregory describes the emergence of belief in Mary's Immaculate Conception and has had a great influence on Eastern thinking on this doctrine.

13. **St. Gregory of Nyssa (c. 330-c. 395). Bishop of Nyssa.** Gregory had an active part in the reorganization of the Church and played a leading role in the Council of Constantinople in 381 which defined the divinity of the Holy Spirit. Gregory is known for his theology of the Trinity. . He is distinguished for his spiritual doctrine as his theology was not simply academic but an expression of a spiritual life; a life well-lived in Christ. His *The life of Moses* is an important book wherein Gregory presents the prophet as a man ascending up the mountain of life towards God, the source of true life.
14. **Saint John Chrysostom (c. 349-407).** Bishop of Constantinople. Born in Antioch and baptized in 368. After being ordained as a lector and then desiring to live as a hermit, John spent six years in the desert studying Scripture. Ordained to the priesthood in 386, his knowledge and eloquence earned him the title "Chrysostom" or "Golden-mouthed. He was called the glory of the Christian pulpit. His history as bishop of Constantinople was filled with intrigue and opposition as he called for reform within the clergy and the royal court. John is called the "Doctor of the Eucharist" for his commentaries on the Real Presence. Besides his famous treatise, "On the Priesthood", he has left the Church 700 sermons on the Bible and 236 letters on living the Christian life. His sermon on the Resurrection is especially moving and can be heard on youtube.com (use search key: chrysostom easter sermon).
15. **St. Cyril of Alexandria (c.375-444).** Bishop. Doctor of the Church. Also called the "Doctor of the Incarnation." Born in Egypt, Cyril succeeded his uncle Theophilus as patriarch of Alexandria. By means of preaching, teaching and writing, he fought mightily against the false teachings of the Donatists and Nestorians. Pope Celestine I delegated Cyril to preside at the Council of Ephesus which formally condemned the Nestorian heresy and declared Mary as the "Theotokos", that is, the God-Bearer or Mother of God. He stressed Mary's perpetual virginity and her unique role in the work of Redemption.
16. **Saint Hilary of Poitiers (c.310-c.367).** Bishop of Poitiers, Doctor of the Church. Baptized around the year 340, Hilary was ordained the bishop of his native city at the height of the Arian heresy.. He wrote a commentary on Saint Matthew's Gospel, the oldest extant commentary in Latin on this Gospel. He is also noted for two important works *De Trinitate* (On the Trinity) and *De Synodis* (On the Synods). He assisted St. Martin of Tours of spreading monasticism throughout Gaul. St. Hilary is especially noted for his vigorous defense against the Arian Heresy (see #31 below) and preached, wrote, and suffered for his defense of the divinity of Christ. In 1851 Pope Pius IX proclaimed him a Doctor of the Universal Church.

17. **St. Ambrose (d. 339-397)** Bishop of Milan, Doctor of the Church. In addition to being one of the four original Doctors of the Church, he is also called “Doctor of Virginité.” Ambrose was elected to be Bishop of Milan as a layman by popular acclaim in 374. He is noted champion of the Catholic and apostolic faith and a vigorous opponent of Arianism (see #31 below). Although greatly involved in the political arena, he always upheld the rights of the Church while serving as a trusted advisor to imperial rulers. He gained the title “Doctor of Virginité” as he devoted five major works to this subject. His eloquent preaching converted the sinner-to-saint Augustine to the Catholic faith.
18. **Saint Jerome (c.345-420).** Secretary under Pope Damasus, Jerome was commissioned to revise the translations of the New Testament and the Psalms. A man of intense prayer and purity of heart, Jerome was not only noted for his great intellect and language skills, but an acerbic personality. Living in a cave near Bethlehem, he labored 34 years on many works, especially his Latin translation of the Bible known as “the Vulgate”. Authenticity of the books presently included in the Bible was and is the fruit of his knowledge and labors.
19. **Saint Ephrem the Syrian (c.306-373).** Ephrem or Ephraim was an ordained deacon who embraced a life of virginity and poverty. He is honored by Christian tradition with the title, “the Harp of the Holy Spirit”. Ephrem wrote many mystical songs and poems in order to contradict the teachings of the Arians which were also circulated in song. He taught that the Eucharistic consecration, the Incarnation, and redemption were all the work of the Trinity, especially the Holy Spirit. In his writings he places a great emphasis on creation as a reflection of the divine order and also spoke highly of the role of women. He would say or perhaps sing: “There is no redemption without Jesus, and there is no Incarnation without Mary.”
20. **St. Augustine (354-430).** Bishop of Hippo, Doctor of the Church, also called the “Doctor of Grace”. Born in Tagaste, North Africa, Augustine was a man not only in search of truth but also pleasure. He became a follower of the Manichees, a heretical sect (see #36 below), and became a professor in Milan where he began to listen to the preaching of its bishop Ambrose. Converted through the persistent prayers of his mother, Saint Monica, he was chosen by the people of Hippo to be their bishop. He has left an immense literary heritage in defense of the Catholic faith and clearly formulated the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.
21. **St Peter Chrysologus (406-450) Bishop Ravenna and Doctor of the Church.** Little is known about his life except what is found in homilies and in his famous letter to Eutyches, an archabbot of a monastery in Constantinople. Eutyches claimed that Christ truly possessed only one nature—divine or an amalgam of divine and human—as opposed to the apostolic teaching of two natures; namely, human and divine. This is also known as the Monophysite heresy. In his letter, Peter urged Eutyches to submit to the decision of the then Pope Leo the Great. This letter contributed to the recognition of the authority and primacy of the

Bishop of Rome. St. Peter's brief sermons were directed toward the condemnation of false teachings, explanation of the Scriptures, the role of Mary, and moral guidance for daily living.

22. **Saint Leo the Great (c.400-461) Pope.** Leo served as deacon to Pope Celestine I and Saint Sixtus III, whom he succeeded in 440. Outstanding among his writings is his "Tome to Flavian", the patriarch of Constantinople. This outstanding explanation of the two natures of Christ was read at a general council he called at Chalcedon in 451 (see #30 below). The Council was attended by six hundred bishops who, at one point arose and erupted exclaiming, "That is the faith of the Fathers; that is the faith of the apostles! So we believe! Peter has spoken through Leo!" Pope Leo is famed for dissuading Attila the Hun from sacking Rome, the city where he died in 461. His writings concerning the true nature and mission of the Church are insightful and invaluable.

Early Church Councils

A Council is a formal meeting of Church leaders, generally composed of bishops, to deliberate, clarify, study, and enact decrees pertaining to the life and teachings of the Church. The most solemn and expansive is an "ecumenical" or universal council summoned by the Bishop of Rome. It is through the councils enumerated below that the Church defined and defended the fundamental teachings given to and handed on by the apostles regarding the Holy Trinity and the true nature of Jesus as the incarnate Son of the eternal Father.

The first council of the Church is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 15, occurred around the year 49. Through the opposition of Saint Paul, the heresy of the Judaizers was rejected; namely, that to be a Christian, one had to first become a Jew and accept all the Jewish practices and customs. .

1. **The Council of Nicaea (325)** An ecumenical council called by the Emperor Constantine, most likely with the support of Pope Sylvester I, to settle the dispute between followers of the Arian heresy and the apostolic Church. The Arian controversy was injurious to Constantine's vision of Christianity as being the unifying element in his empire. Pope Sylvester did not attend the council but sent two priest representatives. The fruit of the discussion and debate was condemnation of the Arian heresy which denied the divinity of Christ. The Council issued a Creed which stated that Christ, the Son, was of the same essence (homoousios) of the Father. The Latin term which is used in Creed today is "consubstantial"; that is, Christ shares the same substance—therefore, is equal—to the Father.
2. **The First Council of Constantinople (381).** Attended exclusively by the 186 bishops from the East. This council dealt with questions concerning the person of the Holy Spirit proposed by Macedonius and his followers who claimed that the Spirit was not equal to the Father and the Son. This error was refuted and

the Creed composed at Nicea was amended to reflect this truth: “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life who proceeds from the Father (and the Son); he spoke through the prophets.”

3. **The Council of Ephesus (431).** With the divinity of the three persons of the Trinity clearly defined, other questions arose such as the relationship between the eternal and uncreated Word (logos) and the person of Jesus. As the Arian heresy was denying both the humanity and divinity of Jesus, the Catholic Church preached Jesus was “true God and true man”. Ephesus declared that Mary was not simply the mother of Jesus, who possessed a human nature, but also the mother of Jesus who possessed a divine nature. Hence, it is proper to call Mary, the Mother of God—in Greek—Theotokos, the “God bearer”.
4. **The Council of Chalcedon (451).** This fourth General Council of the Church, called by Pope Leo the Great, was attended by about 600 bishops mostly from the East . The council firmly established a working theological terminology relating to the person and nature of Christ and His relationship within the Holy Trinity used to this day. It refuted the claims of Eutyches (see #25 above), affirming the two natures present in Christ who is “fully God and fully man” joined without confusion in one divine person.

Early Church Heresies

Biblically speaking, “heresy” is a Greek word which means “a faction”. With regard to the Church, it is a false teaching, or a twisting of the truth. In the writings of the apostles Peter and Paul we can recognize doctrinal problems which emerged in the Christian community. What damage secular powers cannot do to the Church is greatly accomplish in the Church by those who distort divine revelation given through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. Listed below is but a few groups who promulgated heterodox teachings-which persist to this day.

Some of the difficulties experienced within the Church could be accounted to differences in language, culture and vocabulary which separated the Eastern and Western reaches of the Empire. This is particularly evident in the many nuances which are often present in theology and philosophy. Thus, distinctions between words such as “nature” and “person” or “soul” and “spirit” were, in the early centuries, fluid and at times, multi-faceted.

1. **Arianism** was one of the Church’s most formidable enemies. Its name originates from a priest from Alexandria named Arius who taught that Jesus was not one-in-being with the Father and was not truly divine but simply the first and greatest of all God’s creatures. Here is a case in which a misinterpretation of Scripture can cause serious problems: Arius taught what Saint Paul wrote: “[Jesus] is the firstborn of all creation.” Thus the title, “Son of God” indicated that the Logos—the eternal Word of God—was indeed *not eternal* but was *created in time*. Although condemned by Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, the teaching, promulgated by Arius and his followers spread. As it was causing divisions in the Church, the

Emperor Constantine called for an ecumenical council to deal with the matter. This was done in Nicaea (see #25 above) in the year 325. Although the Arian heresy was officially condemned, the heresy was only beginning to cause major problems.

2. **Apollinarianism** is named after Apollinarius, a bishop of Laodicea in Syria. Vehemently opposed to Arianism, he himself fell into error by an extreme opposite teaching. He would teach that Jesus was indeed “true God” yet, was not true man in that he possessed only a divine mind and will, not human ones.
3. **Docetism** comes from the Greek word “dokein” which means “to appear. This teaching claimed that Jesus only appeared to have a human body. This erroneous doctrine finds its beginnings in the teachings of the Gnostics who attempted to unite their pagan teachings to the Christian faith. As matter, the body is essentially evil. Therefore Christ could not have had such a body. In Saint Ignatius of Antioch’s (see #6 above) extant seven letters to the churches we can today read how he refutes this heretical teaching. These letters can be read at catholicculture.org. Use the search key “seven epistles.”
4. **Donatism** was a North African rigorist movement that takes its name from Donatus. Those who adhered to this heresy said that the validity of the sacraments depended on the holiness of the minister of the sacrament. Donatists could be considered the Puritans of the fourth century who expected all the members of the Church to be pure and blameless. Saint Augustine, in an attempt to reconcile the dissenters called for a series of Church councils, to address the doctrine. However, the Imperial government had little patience and prescribed strict measures against the Donatists by imposing taxes, exiling their clergy and confiscating their property. The heresy greatly diminished in numbers and influence and disappeared completely by the end of the twelfth century.
5. **Gnosticism** was and still remains a most pernicious heresy. Its name refers to the Greek word for knowledge, “Gnosis”. This heresy, perhaps originating in Persia, appeared in many varied forms. Gnosticism is syncretistic and proposes a dualist understanding of God and His creation. It claims that there are two gods and two worlds, one good and the other evil. Salvation comes not from Christ’s atoning death but rather from His teaching which contains a secret knowledge by which a person can liberate the “divine spark” hidden deep within them. Jesus was proposed to be but one of many who knew the hidden secrets of this esoteric teaching, although He was a grand master of it.
6. **Manichaeism** is named after a Syriac-speaking Babylonian named Mani. He promulgated a teaching which was a combination of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, and Gnostic forms of Christianity. He postulated the false teaching that the material world is intrinsically evil but that there is a superior, spiritual world. In the end, what he proposed was a dualistic (double tiered) understanding of life not dissimilar to the

oriental understanding of life as a balance or struggle between light and darkness or good and evil. The Manicheans rejected the Old Testament and the authority of the Church. Saint Augustine dabbled in this cult before being baptized by Saint Ambrose with his son during the Easter of 387.

7. **Monophysitism or Eutychianism.** Taking its name from its originator, Eutyches, Eutychians rejected the teaching that Jesus had both a divine and human nature as articulated by the Council of Chalcedon. Rather, they taught that Jesus had a single nature that was composed of both human and elements. (See #30 and #25 above.)
8. **Montanism** can be seen as an overly rigorous fidelity to the faith. Those who embraced this teaching believed that the “lapsi” (the lapsed) who denied Christ in the face of persecution could never be readmitted to full communion. As a response to this heresy, we see the roots of the sacrament of confession or reconciliation which allowed Montanists to return to the celebration of the Eucharist with the rest of the faithful after a period of penance.
9. **Nestorianism** comes from Nestorius, the bishop of Constantinople, who strongly opposed the Arians, yet fell into error by not condemning, and indeed defending, a sermon given by a monk named Anastasius. The heresy claimed that there was not one, but two *persons*—not two *natures*—in Jesus, one of the only-begotten Son—the “Logos”—and the other, Jesus born of Mary. This heterodox teaching was condemned at the ecumenical Council held at Ephesus.
10. **Novatianism** is named after its proponent, a Roman priest named Novatian. Novatian taught that the Church could not forgive grave sins like murder, adultery, and apostasy after baptism. He further taught that all baptisms performed by schismatics or heretics were considered invalid. Anyone baptized by one of these must be re-baptized by a valid minister. Pope Stephen, bishop of Rome from 254 to 256, decreed that baptism using the traditional Trinitarian formula was valid even if administered by those not in full communion with the Church. The Pope said that the sacrament is Christ working through its ministers; perfection is necessary in the form of the sacrament and not in its minister.
11. **Pelagianism** is a heresy which has at its subject the relationship of grace and free will. Pelagius was a fifth century British monk who taught, in essence, that man could accomplish by his own free will—and without God’s grace—whatever was required of him. Saint Augustine was Pelagius’ main opponent who saw in this false teaching a denial of original sin. Salvation, he insisted, could never be achieved solely by man’s free will and upright moral behavior; without divine grace there can be no salvation. This heterodox teaching was condemned at the Council of Carthage in 418.

Periods of Persecution in the Early Church

King Agrippa I (c. 36). Gave the Church its first martyr, Saint Steven, the deacon.

Nero (54-68). Blamed the burning of Rome in July of 64 on the Christians to deflect accusations that he was responsible for the fire. Saints Peter and Paul were martyred in Rome under his persecution. Later Nero began to persecute Christians simply as haters of the human race.

Domitian (95). Was responsible for the martyrs mentioned in the Apocalypse who were put to death at this time, as well as the banishment of Saint John the apostle to the island of Patmos.

Trajan (98-117). Trajan considered confessing Christianity a crime punishable by death. An accused could escape punishment by sacrificing to the Roman gods. Under Trajan, Simeon, the 110 year old bishop of Jerusalem, was put to death by crucifixion and Saint Ignatius of Antioch who was thrown to the wild beasts in the Roman arena.

Marcus Aurelius (160-180) Persecuted many Christians, most notably the outstanding apologist Saint Justin who was beheaded in Rome, and Saint Polycarp who is believed to have been burned alive in 167.

Septimus Severus (193-211). Responsible for the deaths of the well known martyrs Saints Perpetua and Felicity who died in the arena in Carthage in 203.

Maximinus Thrax (235-238). Exiled Pope Pontian to Sardinia.

Decius (249-251). Believing that Christians were the greatest enemy of the State, Decius carried out perhaps the most violent and extensive persecution of the Church in the third century. During this persecution, which was conducted in Rome, Africa, Gaul, Spain, and Asia, hundreds of Christians, clergy and laity both, were forced to either apostatize (that is, deny the faith) or be killed. **Pope Fabian** was one of Decius' first victims.

Gallus (251-253). Exiled Pope Cornelius as well as his successor Pope Lucius.

Diocletian (284-305). Brought on the last of the Roman persecutions by which thousands were killed throughout the Empire and which concluded in 311. The period of persecution officially ended with the Emperor Constantine's Edict of Milan in the year 313. At this time, Church property was restored and religious assemblies were permitted.

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