



Rare and Unusual 18th Century Multireliquary Centered Around the Column of Flagellation and the Sepulcher of the Theotokos, and Including First Class Relics of Saint Peter, Apostle; Saint Paul, Apostle; Saint Nicholas Tolentino; Saint Philip Neri, Saint Aloysius Gonzaga; Saint Lucy, Virgin Martyr; Saint Teresa of Avila, Virgin and Doctor of the Church; and Saint Paschal Baylon.



Mid 18th Century silver-washed brass reliquary theca, comprising First Class, *M*ex ossibus relics of Saints and Apostles Peter and Paul, Nicholas Tolentino, Philip Neri, Lucy, Teresa of Avila, and Paschal Baylon dispersed around relics of the Column of Flagellation of Our Lord, and the Sepulcher of the Theotokos. The relics are mounted against a red background, and identified with manuscript cedulae. The theca is sealed with a red Spanish sealing was seal and three sets (of probably four) of double red cords of red silk. The seal shows signs of heat, but the original episcopal seal is largely visible.

Saint Peter, Prince of Apostles

Simon Peter [Greek: Πέτρος, Pétros, "stone, rock"; possibly died AD 67], sometimes called Simon Cephas (Greek: Σίμων Κηφᾶς, was an early Christian leader, who is featured prominently in the New Testament Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Peter was the son of John or of Jonah and was from the village of Bethsaida in the province of Galilee. His brother Andrew was also an apostle. Simon Peter is venerated in multiple churches and is regarded as the first Pope by the Roman Catholic Church.

Saint Peter's true and original name was Simon, sometimes occurring in the form Symeon. (Acts 15:14; 2 Peter 1:1). He was the son of Jona (Johannes) and was born in Bethsaida (John 1:42, 44), a town on Lake Genesareth, the position of which



cannot be established with certainty, although it is usually sought at the northern end of the lake. The Apostle Andrew was his brother, and the Apostle Philip came from the same town.

Simon settled in Capharnaum, where he was living with his mother-in-law in his own house (Matthew 8:14; Luke 4:38) at the beginning of Christ's public ministry (about A.D. 26-28). Simon was thus married, and, according to Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata*, III, vi, ed. Dindorf, II, 276), had children. The same writer relates the tradition that Peter's wife suffered martyrdom (*ibid.*, VII, xi ed. cit., III, 306). Concerning these facts, adopted by Eusebius (*Church History* III.31) from Clement, the ancient Christian literature which has come down to us is silent. Simon pursued in Capharnaum the profitable occupation of fisherman in Lake Genesareth, possessing his own boat (Luke 5:3).

Like so many of his Jewish contemporaries, he was attracted by the Baptist's preaching of penance and was, with his brother Andrew, among John's associates in Bethania on the eastern bank of the Jordan. When, after the High Council had sent envoys for the second time to the Baptist, the latter pointed to Jesus who was passing, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God", Andrew and another disciple followed the Savior to his residence and remained with Him one day.

Later, meeting his brother Simon, Andrew said "We have found the Messiah", and brought him to Jesus, who, looking upon him, said: "Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter". Already, at this first meeting, the Savior foretold the change of Simon's name to Cephas (Kephas; Aramaic Kipha, rock), which is translated Petros (Latin, Petrus) a proof that Christ had already special views with regard to Simon. Later, probably at the time of his definitive call to the Apostolate with the eleven other Apostles, Jesus actually gave Simon the name of Cephas (Petrus), after which he was usually called Peter, especially by Christ on the solemn occasion after Peter's profession of faith (Matthew 16:18; cf. below). The Evangelists often combine the two names, while Saint Paul uses the name Cephas.



After the first meeting Peter with the other early disciples remained with Jesus for some time, accompanying Him to Galilee (Marriage at Cana), Judaea, and



Jerusalem, and through Samaria back to Galilee (John 2-4). Here Peter resumed his occupation of fisherman for a short time, but soon received the definitive call of the Savior to become one of His permanent disciples. Peter and Andrew were engaged at their calling when Jesus met and addressed them: "Come ye after me, and I will make you to be fishers of men". On the same occasion the sons of Zebedee were called (Matthew 4:18-22; Mark 1:16-20; Luke 5:1-11; it is here assumed that Luke refers to the same occasion as the other Evangelists). Thenceforth Peter remained always in the

immediate neighborhood of Our Lord. After preaching the Sermon on the Mount and curing the son of the centurion in Capharnaum, Jesus came to Peter's house and cured his wife's mother, who was sick of a fever (Matthew 8:14-15; Mark 1:29-31). A little later Christ chose His Twelve Apostles as His constant associates in preaching the kingdom of God.

Among the Twelve Peter soon became conspicuous. Though of irresolute character, he clings with the greatest fidelity, firmness of faith, and inward love to the Savior; rash alike in word and act, he is full of zeal and enthusiasm, though momentarily easily accessible to external influences and intimidated by difficulties. The more prominent the Apostles become in the Evangelical narrative, the more conspicuous does Peter appear as the first among them. In the list of the Twelve on the occasion of their solemn call to the Apostolate, not only does Peter stand always at their head, but the surname Petrus given him by Christ is especially emphasized (Matthew 10:2): "Duodecim autem Apostolorum nomina haec: Primus Simon qui dicitur Petrus. . ."; Mark 3:14-16: "Et fecit ut essent duodecim cum illo, et ut mitteret eos praedicare . . . et imposuit Simoni nomen Petrus"; Luke 6:13-14: "Et



cum dies factus esset, vocavit discipulos suos, et elegit duodecim ex ipsis (quos et Apostolos nominavit): Simonem, quem cognominavit Petrum . . ." On various occasions Peter speaks in the name of the other Apostles (Matthew 15:15; 19:27; Luke 12:41, etc.). When Christ's words are addressed to all the Apostles, Peter answers in their name (e.g., Matthew 16:16). Frequently the Savior turns specially to Peter (Matthew 26:40; Luke 22:31, etc.).

Very characteristic is the expression of true fidelity to Jesus, which Peter addressed to Him in the name of the other Apostles. Christ, after He had spoken of the mystery of the reception of His Body and Blood (John 6:22 sqq.) and many of His disciples had left Him, asked the Twelve if they too should leave Him; Peter's answer comes immediately: "Lord to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known, that thou art the Holy One of God" (Vulgate "thou art the Christ, the Son of God"). Christ Himself unmistakably accords Peter a special precedence and the first place among the Apostles, and designates him for such on various occasions. Peter was one of the three Apostles (with James and John) who were with Christ on certain special occasions the raising of the daughter of Jairus from the dead (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51); the Transfiguration of Christ (Matthew 17:1; Mark 9:1; Luke 9:28), the Agony in the Garden of Gethsemani (Matthew 26:37; Mark 14:33). On several occasions also Christ favored him above all the others; He enters Peter's boat on Lake Genesareth to preach to the multitude on the shore (Luke 5:3); when He was miraculously walking upon the waters, He called Peter to come to Him across the lake (Matthew 14:28 sqq.); He sent him to the lake to catch the fish in whose mouth Peter found the stater to pay as tribute (Matthew 17:24 sqq.).

In especially solemn fashion Christ accentuated Peter's precedence among the Apostles, when, after Peter had recognized Him as the Messiah, He promised that he would be head of His flock. Jesus was then dwelling with His Apostles in the vicinity of Caesarea Philippi, engaged on His work of salvation. As Christ's coming agreed so little in power and glory with the expectations of the Messiah, many different views concerning Him were current. While journeying along with His Apostles, Jesus asks them: "Whom do men say that the Son of man is?" The Apostles answered: "Some John the Baptist, and other some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets". Jesus said to them: "But whom do you say that I am?" Simon said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God". And Jesus answering said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood



hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter [Kipha, a rock], and upon this rock [Kipha] I will build my church [ekkleesian], and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven". Then he commanded his disciples, that they should tell no one that he was Jesus the Christ (Matthew 16:13-20; Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21).

By the word "rock" the Savior cannot have meant Himself, but only Peter, as is so much more apparent in Aramaic in which the same word (Kipha) is used for "Peter" and "rock". His statement then admits of but one explanation, namely, that He wishes to make Peter the head of the whole community of those who believed in Him as the true *Messias*; that through this foundation (Peter) the Kingdom of Christ would be unconquerable; that the spiritual guidance of the faithful was placed in the hands of Peter, as the special representative of Christ. This meaning becomes so much the clearer when we remember that the words "bind" and "loose" are not metaphorical, but Jewish juridical terms. It is also clear that the position of Peter among the other Apostles and in the Christian community was the basis for the Kingdom of God on earth, that is, the Church of Christ. Peter was personally installed as Head of the Apostles by Christ Himself. This foundation created for the Church by its Founder could not disappear with the person of Peter, but was intended to continue and did continue (as actual history shows) in the primacy of the Roman Church and its bishops.

Entirely inconsistent and in itself untenable is the position of Protestants who (like Schnitzer in recent times) assert that the primacy of the Roman bishops cannot be deduced from the precedence which Peter held among the Apostles. Just as the essential activity of the Twelve Apostles in building up and extending the Church did not entirely disappear with their deaths, so surely did the Apostolic Primacy of Peter not completely vanish. As intended by Christ, it must have continued its existence and development in a form appropriate to the ecclesiastical organism, just as the office of the Apostles continued in an appropriate form.

Objections have been raised against the genuineness of the wording of the passage, but the unanimous testimony of the manuscripts, the parallel passages in the other Gospels, and the fixed belief of pre-Constantine literature furnish the surest proofs



of the genuineness and untampered state of the text of Matthew (cf. "Stimmen aus Maria Laach", I, 1896, 129 sqq.; 'Theologie und Glaube', II, 1910, 842 sqq.).

In spite of his firm faith in Jesus, Peter had so far no clear knowledge of the mission and work of the Savior. The sufferings of Christ especially, as contradictory to his worldly conception of the Messiah, were inconceivable to him, and his erroneous conception occasionally elicited a sharp reproof from Jesus (Matthew 16:21-23, Mark 8:31-33). Peter's irresolute character, which continued notwithstanding his enthusiastic fidelity to his Master, was clearly revealed in connection with the Passion of Christ. The Savior had already told him that Satan had desired him that he might sift him as wheat. But Christ had prayed for him that his faith fail not, and, being once converted, he confirms his brethren (Luke 22:31-32). Peter's assurance that he was ready to accompany his Master to prison and to death, elicited Christ's prediction that Peter should deny Him (Matthew 26:30-35; Mark 14:26-31; Luke 22:31-34; John 13:33-38).

When Christ proceeded to wash the feet of His disciples before the Last Supper, and came first to Peter, the latter at first protested, but, on Christ's declaring that otherwise he should have no part with Him, immediately said: "Lord, not only my feet, but also my hands and my head" (John 13:1-10). In the Garden of Gethsemani Peter had to submit to the Savior's reproach that he had slept like the others, while his Master suffered deadly anguish (Mark 14:37). At the seizing of Jesus, Peter in an outburst of anger wished to defend his Master by force, but was forbidden to do so. He at first took to flight with the other Apostles (John 18:10-11; Matthew 26:56); then turning he followed his captured Lord to the courtyard of the High Priest, and there denied Christ, asserting explicitly and swearing that he knew Him not (Matthew 26:58-75; Mark 14:54-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-27). This denial was of course due, not to a lapse of interior faith in Christ, but to exterior fear and cowardice. His sorrow was thus so much the greater, when, after his Master had turned His gaze towards him, he clearly recognized what he had done.

In spite of this weakness, his position as head of the Apostles was later confirmed by Jesus, and his precedence was not less conspicuous after the Resurrection than before. The women, who were the first to find Christ's tomb empty, received from the angel a special message for Peter (Mark 16:7). To him alone of the Apostles did Christ appear on the first day after the Resurrection (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5). But, most important of all, when He appeared at the Lake of Genesareth,



Christ renewed to Peter His special commission to feed and defend His flock, after Peter had thrice affirmed his special love for his Master (John 21:15-17). In conclusion Christ foretold the violent death Peter would have to suffer, and thus invited him to follow Him in a special manner (John 21:20-23). Thus was Peter called and trained for the Apostleship and clothed with the primacy of the Apostles, which he exercised in a most unequivocal manner after Christ's Ascension into Heaven.

Our information concerning the earliest Apostolic activity of Saint Peter in Jerusalem, Judaea, and the districts stretching northwards as far as Syria is derived mainly from the first portion of the Acts of the Apostles, and is confirmed by parallel statements incidentally in the Epistles of Saint Paul.

Among the crowd of Apostles and disciples who, after Christ's Ascension into Heaven from Mount Olivet, returned to Jerusalem to await the fulfilment of His promise to send the Holy Ghost, Peter is immediately conspicuous as the leader of all, and is henceforth constantly recognized as the head of the original Christian community in Jerusalem. He takes the initiative in the appointment to the Apostolic College of another witness of the life, death and resurrection of Christ to replace Judas (Acts 1:15-26). After the descent of the Holy Ghost on the feast of Pentecost, Peter standing at the head of the Apostles delivers the first public sermon to proclaim the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, and wins a large number of Jews as converts to the Christian community (Acts 2:14-41). First of the Apostles, he worked a public miracle, when with John he went up into the temple and cured the lame man at the Beautiful Gate. To the people crowding in amazement about the two Apostles, he preaches a long sermon in the Porch of Solomon, and brings new increase to the flock of believers (Acts 3:1-4:4).

In the subsequent examinations of the two Apostles before the Jewish High Council, Peter defends in undismayed and impressive fashion the cause of Jesus and the obligation and liberty of the Apostles to preach the Gospel (Acts 4:5-21). When Ananias and Sapphira attempt to deceive the Apostles and the people Peter appears as judge of their action, and God executes the sentence of punishment passed by the Apostle by causing the sudden death of the two guilty parties (Acts 5:1-11). By numerous miracles God confirms the Apostolic activity of Christ's confessors, and here also there is special mention of Peter, since it is recorded that the inhabitants of Jerusalem and neighboring towns carried their sick in their beds



into the streets so that the shadow of Peter might fall on them and they might be thereby healed (Acts 5:12-16). The ever-increasing number of the faithful caused the Jewish supreme council to adopt new measures against the Apostles, but "Peter and the Apostles" answer that they "ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29 sqq.). Not only in Jerusalem itself did Peter labor in fulfilling the mission entrusted to him by his Master. He also retained connection with the other Christian communities in Palestine, and preached the Gospel both there and in the lands situated farther north. When Philip the Deacon had won a large number of believers in Samaria, Peter and John were deputed to proceed thither from Jerusalem to organize the community and to invoke the Holy Ghost to descend upon the faithful. Peter appears a second time as judge, in the case of the magician Simon, who had wished to purchase from the Apostles the power that he also could invoke the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:14-25). On their way back to Jerusalem, the two Apostles preached the joyous tidings of the Kingdom of God. Subsequently, after Paul's departure from Jerusalem and conversion before Damascus, the Christian communities in Palestine were left at peace by the Jewish council.

Peter now undertook an extensive missionary tour, which brought him to the maritime cities, Lydda, Joppe, and Caesarea. In Lydda he cured the palsied Eneas, in Joppe he raised Tabitha (Dorcas) from the dead; and at Caesarea, instructed by a vision which he had in Joppe, he baptized and received into the Church the first non-Jewish Christians, the centurion Cornelius and his kinsmen (Acts 9:31-10:48). On Peter's return to Jerusalem a little later, the strict Jewish Christians, who regarded the complete observance of the Jewish law as binding on all, asked him why he had entered and eaten in the house of the uncircumcised. Peter tells of his vision and defends his action, which was ratified by the Apostles and the faithful in Jerusalem (Acts 11:1-18).

A confirmation of the position accorded to Peter by Luke, in the Acts, is afforded by the testimony of Saint Paul (Galatians 1:18-20). After his conversion and three years' residence in Arabia, Paul came to Jerusalem "to see Peter". Here the Apostle of the Gentiles clearly designates Peter as the authorized head of the Apostles and of the early Christian Church. Peter's long residence in Jerusalem and Palestine soon came to an end. Herod Agrippa I began (A.D. 42-44) a new persecution of the Church in Jerusalem; after the execution of James, the son of Zebedee, this ruler had Peter cast into prison, intending to have him also executed after the Jewish Pesach was over. Peter, however, was freed in a miraculous manner, and,



proceeding to the house of the mother of John Mark, where many of the faithful were assembled for prayer, informed them of his liberation from the hands of Herod, commissioned them to communicate the fact to James and the brethren, and then left Jerusalem to go to "another place" (Acts 12:1-18). Concerning Saint Peter's subsequent activity we receive no further connected information from the extant sources, although we possess short notices of certain individual episodes of his later life.

Saint Luke does not tell us where Peter went after his liberation from the prison in Jerusalem. From incidental statements we know that he subsequently made extensive missionary tours in the East, although we are given no clue to the chronology of his journeys. It is certain that he remained for a time at Antioch; he may even have returned there several times. The Christian community of Antioch was founded by Christianized Jews who had been driven from Jerusalem by the persecution (Acts 11:19 sqq.). Peter's residence among them is proved by the episode concerning the observance of the Jewish ceremonial law even by Christianized pagans, related by Saint Paul (Galatians 2:11-21). The chief Apostles in Jerusalem — the "pillars", Peter, James, and John — had unreservedly approved Saint Paul's Apostolate to the Gentiles, while they themselves intended to labor principally among the Jews. While Paul was dwelling in Antioch (the date cannot be accurately determined), Saint Peter came there and mingled freely with the non-Jewish Christians of the community, frequenting their houses and sharing their meals. But when the Christianized Jews arrived in Jerusalem, Peter, fearing lest these rigid observers of the Jewish ceremonial law should be scandalized thereat, and his influence with the Jewish Christians be imperiled, avoided thenceforth eating with the uncircumcised.

His conduct made a great impression on the other Jewish Christians at Antioch, so that even Barnabas, Saint Paul's companion, now avoided eating with the Christianized pagans. As this action was entirely opposed to the principles and practice of Paul, and might lead to confusion among the converted pagans, this Apostle addressed a public reproach to Saint Peter, because his conduct seemed to indicate a wish to compel the pagan converts to become Jews and accept circumcision and the Jewish law. The whole incident is another proof of the authoritative position of Saint Peter in the early Church, since his example and conduct was regarded as decisive. But Paul, who rightly saw the inconsistency in the conduct of Peter and the Jewish Christians, did not hesitate to defend the



immunity of converted pagans from the Jewish Law. Concerning Peter's subsequent attitude on this question Saint Paul gives us no explicit information. But it is highly probable that Peter ratified the contention of the Apostle of the Gentiles, and thenceforth conducted himself towards the Christianized pagans as at first. As the principal opponents of his views in this regard, Paul names and combats in all his writings only the extreme Jewish Christians coming "from James" (i.e., from Jerusalem). While the date of this occurrence, whether before or after the Council of the Apostles, cannot be determined, it probably took place after the council (see below). The later tradition, which existed as early as the end of the second century (Origen, "Hom. vi in Lucam"; Eusebius, Church History III.36), that Peter founded the Church of Antioch, indicates the fact that he labored a long period there, and also perhaps that he dwelt there towards the end of his life and then appointed Evodrius, the first of the line of Antiochian bishops, head of the community. This latter view would best explain the tradition referring the foundation of the Church of Antioch to Saint Peter.

It is also probable that Peter pursued his Apostolic labors in various districts of Asia Minor for it can scarcely be supposed that the entire period between his liberation from prison and the Council of the Apostles was spent uninterruptedly in one city, whether Antioch, Rome, or elsewhere. And, since he subsequently addressed the first of his Epistles to the faithful in the Provinces of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Asia, one may reasonably assume that he had labored personally at least in certain cities of these provinces, devoting himself chiefly to the Diaspora. The Epistle, however, is of a general character, and gives little indication of personal relations with the persons to whom it is addressed. The tradition related by Bishop Dionysius of Corinth (in Eusebius, Church History II.25) in his letter to the Roman Church under Pope Soter (165-74), that Peter had (like Paul) dwelt in Corinth and planted the Church there, cannot be entirely rejected. Even though the tradition should receive no support from the existence of the "party of Cephas", which Paul mentions among the other divisions of the Church of Corinth (1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:22), still Peter's sojourn in Corinth (even in connection with the planting and government of the Church by Paul) is not impossible. That Saint Peter undertook various Apostolic journeys (doubtless about this time, especially when he was no longer permanently residing in Jerusalem) is clearly established by the general remark of Saint Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:5, concerning the "rest of the apostles, and the brethren [cousins] of the Lord, and Cephas", who were traveling around in the exercise of their



Apostleship.

Peter returned occasionally to the original Christian Church of Jerusalem, the guidance of which was entrusted to Saint James, the relative of Jesus, after the departure of the Prince of the Apostles (A.D. 42-44). The last mention of Saint Peter in the Acts (15:1-29; cf. Galatians 2:1-10) occurs in the report of the Council of the Apostles on the occasion of such a passing visit. In consequence of the trouble caused by extreme Jewish Christians to Paul and Barnabas at Antioch, the Church of this city sent these two Apostles with other envoys to Jerusalem to secure a definitive decision concerning the obligations of the converted pagans. In addition to James, Peter and John were then (about A.D. 50-51) in Jerusalem. In the discussion and decision of this important question, Peter naturally exercised a decisive influence. When a great divergence of views had manifested itself in the assembly, Peter spoke the deciding word. Long before, in accordance with God's testimony, he had announced the Gospels to the heathen (conversion of Cornelius and his household); why, therefore, attempt to place the Jewish yoke on the necks of converted pagans? After Paul and Barnabas had related how God had wrought among the Gentiles by them, James, the chief representative of the Jewish Christians, adopted Peter's view and in agreement therewith made proposals which were expressed in an encyclical to the converted pagans.

The occurrences in Caesarea and Antioch and the debate at the Council of Jerusalem show clearly Peter's attitude towards the converts from paganism. Like the other eleven original Apostles, he regarded himself as called to preach the Faith in Jesus first among the Jews (Acts 10:42), so that the chosen people of God might share in the salvation in Christ, promised to them primarily and issuing from their midst. The vision at Joppe and the effusion of the Holy Ghost over the converted pagan Cornelius and his kinsmen determined Peter to admit these forthwith into the community of the faithful, without imposing on them the Jewish Law. During his Apostolic journeys outside Palestine, he recognized in practice the equality of Gentile and Jewish converts, as his original conduct at Antioch proves. His aloofness from the Gentile converts, out of consideration for the Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, was by no means an official recognition of the views of the extreme Judaizers, who were so opposed to Saint Paul. This is established clearly and incontestably by his attitude at the Council of Jerusalem. Between Peter and Paul there was no dogmatic difference in their conception of salvation for Jewish and Gentile Christians. The recognition of Paul as the Apostle of the Gentiles



(Galatians 2:1-9) was entirely sincere, and excludes all question of a fundamental divergence of views. Saint Peter and the other Apostles recognized the converts from paganism as Christian brothers on an equal footing; Jewish and Gentile Christians formed a single Kingdom of Christ. If therefore Peter devoted the preponderating portion of his Apostolic activity to the Jews, this arose chiefly from practical considerations, and from the position of Israel as the Chosen People. Baur's hypothesis of opposing currents of "Petrinism" and "Paulinism" in the early Church is absolutely untenable, and is today entirely rejected by Protestants.

It is an indisputably established historical fact that Saint Peter labored in Rome during the last portion of his life, and there ended his earthly course by martyrdom. As to the duration of his Apostolic activity in the Roman capital, the continuity or otherwise of his residence there, the details and success of his labors, and the chronology of his arrival and death, all these questions are uncertain, and can be solved only on hypotheses more or less well-founded. The essential fact is that Peter died at Rome: this constitutes the historical foundation of the claim of the Bishops of Rome to the Apostolic Primacy of Peter.

Saint Peter's residence and death in Rome are established beyond contention as historical facts by a series of distinct testimonies extending from the end of the first to the end of the second centuries, and issuing from several lands.

That the manner, and therefore the place of his death, must have been known in widely extended Christian circles at the end of the first century is clear from the remark introduced into the Gospel of Saint John concerning Christ's prophecy that Peter was bound to Him and would be led whither he would not — "And this he said, signifying by what death he should glorify God" (John 21:18-19, see above). Such a remark presupposes in the readers of the Fourth Gospel a knowledge of the death of Peter.

Saint Peter's First Epistle was written almost undoubtedly from Rome, since the salutation at the end reads: "The church that is in Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you: and so doth my son Mark" (5:13). Babylon must here be identified with the Roman capital; since Babylon on the Euphrates, which lay in ruins, or New Babylon (Seleucia) on the Tigris, or the Egyptian Babylon near Memphis, or Jerusalem cannot be meant, the reference must be to Rome, the only city which is called Babylon elsewhere in ancient Christian literature (Revelation 17:5; 18:10;



“Oracula Sibyl.”, V, verses 143 and 159, ed. Geffcken, Leipzig, 1902, III).

From Bishop Papias of Hierapolis and Clement of Alexandria, who both appeal to the testimony of the old presbyters (i.e., the disciples of the Apostles), we learn that Mark wrote his Gospel in Rome at the request of the Roman Christians, who desired a written memorial of the doctrine preached to them by Saint Peter and his disciples (Eusebius, Church History II.15, 3.40, 6.14); this is confirmed by Irenaeus (Against Heresies 3.1). In connection with this information concerning the Gospel of Saint Mark, Eusebius, relying perhaps on an earlier source, says that Peter described Rome figuratively as Babylon in his First Epistle.

Another testimony concerning the martyrdom of Peter and Paul is supplied by Clement of Rome in his Epistle to the Corinthians (written about A.D. 95-97), wherein he says (chapter 5): “Through zeal and cunning the greatest and most righteous supports [of the Church] have suffered persecution and been warred to death. Let us place before our eyes the good Apostles — Saint Peter, who in consequence of unjust zeal, suffered not one or two, but numerous miseries, and, having thus given testimony (martyresas), has entered the merited place of glory”. He then mentions Paul and a number of elect, who were assembled with the others and suffered martyrdom “among us” (en hemin, i.e., among the Romans, the meaning that the expression also bears in chapter 4). He is speaking undoubtedly, as the whole passage proves, of the Neronian persecution, and thus refers the martyrdom of Peter and Paul to that epoch.

In his letter written at the beginning of the second century (before 117 AD), while being brought to Rome for martyrdom, the venerable Bishop Ignatius of Antioch endeavors by every means to restrain the Roman Christians from striving for his pardon, remarking: “I issue you no commands, like Peter and Paul: they were Apostles, while I am but a captive” (Epistle to the Romans 4). The meaning of this remark must be that the two Apostles labored personally in Rome, and with Apostolic authority preached the Gospel there.

Bishop Dionysius of Corinth, in his letter to the Roman Church in the time of Pope Soter (165-74 AD), says: “You have therefore by your urgent exhortation bound close together the sowing of Peter and Paul at Rome and Corinth. For both planted the seed of the Gospel also in Corinth, and together instructed us, just as they likewise taught in the same place in Italy and at the same time suffered



martyrdom" (in Eusebius, Church History II.25).

Irenaeus of Lyons, a native of Asia Minor and a disciple of Polycarp of Smyrna (a disciple of Saint John), passed a considerable time in Rome shortly after the middle of the second century, and then proceeded to Lyons, where he became bishop in 177; he described the Roman Church as the most prominent and chief preserver of the Apostolic tradition, as "the greatest and most ancient church, known by all, founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul" (Against Heresies 3.3; cf. 3.1). He thus makes use of the universally known and recognized fact of the Apostolic activity of Peter and Paul in Rome, to find therein a proof from tradition against the heretics.

In his "Hypotyposes" (Eusebius, Church History IV.14), Clement of Alexandria, teacher in the catechetical school of that city from about 190 AD, says on the strength of the tradition of the presbyters: "After Peter had announced the Word of God in Rome and preached the Gospel in the spirit of God, the multitude of hearers requested Mark, who had long accompanied Peter on all his journeys, to write down what the Apostles had preached to them" (see above).

Like Irenaeus, Tertullian appeals, in his writings against heretics, to the proof afforded by the Apostolic labors of Peter and Paul in Rome of the truth of ecclesiastical tradition. In *De Præscriptione* 36, he says: "If thou art near Italy, thou hast Rome where authority is ever within reach. How fortunate is this Church for which the Apostles have poured out their whole teaching with their blood, where Peter has emulated the Passion of the Lord, where Paul was crowned with the death of John". In *Scorpiace* 15, he also speaks of Peter's crucifixion. "The budding faith Nero first made bloody in Rome. There Peter was girded by another, since he was bound to the cross". As an illustration that it was immaterial with what water baptism is administered, he states in his book (*On Baptism* 5) that there is "no difference between that with which John baptized in the Jordan and that with which Peter baptized in the Tiber"; and against Marcion he appeals to the testimony of the Roman Christians, "to whom Peter and Paul have bequeathed the Gospel sealed with their blood" (*Against Marcion* 4.5).

The Roman, Caius, who lived in Rome in the time of Pope Zephyrinus (198-217 AD), wrote in his "Dialogue with Proclus" (in Eusebius, Church History II.25) directed against the Montanists: "But I can show the trophies of the Apostles. If



you care to go to the Vatican or to the road to Ostia, thou shalt find the trophies of those who have founded this Church". By the trophies (*tropaia*) Eusebius understands the graves of the Apostles, but his view is opposed by modern investigators who believe that the place of execution is meant. For our purpose it is immaterial which opinion is correct, as the testimony retains its full value in either case. At any rate the place of execution and burial of both were close together; Saint Peter, who was executed on the Vatican, received also his burial there. Eusebius also refers to "the inscription of the names of Peter and Paul, which have been preserved to the present day on the burial-places there" (i.e. at Rome). There thus existed in Rome an ancient epigraphic memorial commemorating the death of the Apostles. The obscure notice in the Muratorian Fragment ("*Lucas optime theofile conprindit quia sub praesentia eius singula gerebantur sicuti et semote passionem petri evidenter declarat*", ed. Preuschen, Tübingen, 1910, p. 29) also presupposes an ancient definite tradition concerning Peter's death in Rome.

The apocryphal Acts of Saint Peter and the Acts of Saints Peter and Paul likewise belong to the series of testimonies of the death of the two Apostles in Rome.

In opposition to this distinct and unanimous testimony of early Christendom, some few Protestant historians have attempted in recent times to set aside the residence and death of Peter at Rome as legendary. These attempts have resulted in complete failure. It was asserted that the tradition concerning Peter's residence in Rome first originated in Ebionites circles, and formed part of the Legend of Simon the Magician, in which Paul is opposed by Peter as a false Apostle under Simon; just as this fight was transplanted to Rome, so also sprang up at an early date the legend of Peter's activity in that capital (thus in Baur, "*Paulus*", 2nd ed., 245 sqq., followed by Haze and especially Lapses, "*Die Quelled der römischen Petrussage*", Kiel, 1872). But this hypothesis is proved fundamentally untenable by the whole character and purely local importance of Ebionitism, and is directly refuted by the above genuine and entirely independent testimonies, which are at least as ancient. It has moreover been now entirely abandoned by serious Protestant historians (cf., e.g., Harnack's remarks in "*Gesch. der altchristl. Literatur*"; II, I, 244, n. 2). A more recent attempt was made by Erbes (*Zeitschr. für Kirchengesch.*, 1901, pp. 1 sqq., 161 sqq.) to demonstrate that Saint Peter was martyred at Jerusalem. He appeals to the apocryphal Acts of Saint Peter, in which two Romans, Albinus and Agrippa, are mentioned as persecutors of the Apostles. These he identifies with the Albinus, Procurator of Judaea, and successor of Festus and Agrippa II, Prince



of Galilee, and thence concludes that Peter was condemned to death and sacrificed by this procurator at Jerusalem. The untenableness of this hypothesis becomes immediately apparent from the mere fact that our earliest definite testimony concerning Peter's death in Rome far antedates the apocryphal Acts; besides, never throughout the whole range of Christian antiquity has any city other than Rome been designated the place of martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul.

Although the fact of Saint Peter's activity and death in Rome is so clearly established, we possess no precise information regarding the details of his Roman sojourn. The narratives contained in the apocryphal literature of the second century concerning the supposed strife between Peter and Simon Magus belong to the domain of legend. From the already mentioned statements regarding the origin of the Gospel of Saint Mark we may conclude that Peter labored for a long period in Rome. This conclusion is confirmed by the unanimous voice of tradition which, as early as the second half of the second century, designates the Prince of the Apostles the founder of the Roman Church. It is widely held that Peter paid a first visit to Rome after he had been miraculously liberated from the prison in Jerusalem; that, by "another place", Luke meant Rome, but omitted the name for special reasons. It is not impossible that Peter made a missionary journey to Rome about this time (after 42 AD), but such a journey cannot be established with certainty. At any rate, we cannot appeal in support of this theory to the chronological notices in Eusebius and Jerome, since, although these notices extend back to the chronicles of the third century, they are not old traditions, but the result of calculations on the basis of episcopal lists. Into the Roman list of bishops dating from the second century, there was introduced in the third century (as we learn from Eusebius and the "Chronograph of 354") the notice of a twenty-five years' pontificate for Saint Peter, but we are unable to trace its origin. This entry consequently affords no ground for the hypothesis of a first visit by Saint Peter to Rome after his liberation from prison (about 42). We can therefore admit only the possibility of such an early visit to the capital.

The task of determining the year of Saint Peter's death is attended with similar difficulties. In the fourth century, and even in the chronicles of the third, we find two different entries. In the "Chronicle" of Eusebius the thirteenth or fourteenth year of Nero is given as that of the death of Peter and Paul (67-68); this date, accepted by Jerome, is that generally held. The year 67 is also supported by the statement, also accepted by Eusebius and Jerome, that Peter came to Rome under



the Emperor Claudius (according to Jerome, in 42), and by the above-mentioned tradition of the twenty-five years' episcopate of Peter (cf. Bartolini, "Sopra l'anno 67 se fosse quello del martirio dei gloriosi Apostoli", Rome, 1868) . A different statement is furnished by the "Chronograph of 354" (ed. Duchesne, "Liber Pontificalis", I, 1 sqq.). This refers Saint Peter's arrival in Rome to the year 30 AD, and his death and that of Saint Paul to 55.

Duchesne has shown that the dates in the "Chronograph" were inserted in a list of the popes which contains only their names and the duration of their pontificates, and then, on the chronological supposition that the year of Christ's death was 29, the year 30 was inserted as the beginning of Peter's pontificate, and his death referred to 55, on the basis of the twenty-five years' pontificate (op. cit., introd., vi sqq.). This date has however been recently defended by Kellner ("Jesus von Nazareth u. seine Apostel im Rahmen der Zeitgeschichte", Ratisbon, 1908; "Tradition geschichtl. Bearbeitung u. Legende in der Chronologie des apostol. Zeitalters", Bonn, 1909). Other historians have accepted the year 65 AD (e.g., Bianchini, in his edition of the "Liber Pontificalis" in P.L. CXXVII. 435 sqq.) or 66 (e.g. Foggini, "De romani b. Petri itinere et episcopatu", Florence, 1741; also Tillemont). Harnack endeavored to establish the year 64 AD (i.e. the beginning of the Neronian persecution) as that of Peter's death ("Gesch. der altchristl. Lit. bis Eusebius", pt. II, "Die Chronologie", I, 240 sqq.). This date, which had been already supported by Cave, du Pin, and Wieseler, has been accepted by Duchesne (Hist. ancienne de l'église, I, 64). Erbes refers Saint Peter's death to 22 Feb., 63, Saint Paul's to 64 ("Texte u. Untersuchungen", new series, IV, I, Leipzig, 1900, "Die Todestage der Apostel Petrus u. Paulus u. ihre rom. Denkmaeler"). The date of Peter's death is thus not yet decided; the period between July, 64 (outbreak of the Neronian persecution), and the beginning of 68 (on 9 July Nero fled from Rome and committed suicide) must be left open for the date of his death. The day of his martyrdom is also unknown; 29 June, the accepted day of his feast since the fourth century, cannot be proved to be the day of his death (see below).

Concerning the manner of Peter's death, we possess a tradition — attested to by Tertullian at the end of the second century (see above) and by Origen (in Eusebius, Church History II.1)—that he suffered crucifixion. Origen says: "Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he himself had desired to suffer". As the place of execution may be accepted with great probability the Neronian Gardens on the Vatican, since there, according to Tacitus, were enacted in general



the gruesome scenes of the Neronian persecution; and in this district, in the vicinity of the Via Cornelia and at the foot of the Vatican Hills, the Prince of the Apostles found his burial place. Of this grave (since the word *tropaion* was, as already remarked, rightly understood of the tomb) Caius already speaks in the third century. For a time the remains of Peter lay with those of Paul in a vault on the Appian Way at the place ad Catacumbas, where the Church of Saint Sebastian (which on its erection in the fourth century was dedicated to the two Apostles) now stands. The remains had probably been brought thither at the beginning of the Valerian persecution in 258, to protect them from the threatened desecration when the Christian burial-places were confiscated. They were later restored to their former resting-place, and Constantine the Great had a magnificent basilica erected over the grave of Saint Peter at the foot of the Vatican Hill. This basilica was replaced by the present Saint Peter's in the 16th century. The vault with the altar built above it (*confessio*) has been since the fourth century the most highly venerated martyr's shrine in the West. In the substructure of the altar, over the vault which contained the sarcophagus with the remains of Saint Peter, a cavity was made. This was closed by a small door in front of the altar. By opening this door the pilgrim could enjoy the great privilege of kneeling directly over the sarcophagus of the Apostle. Keys of this door were given as previous souvenirs (cf. Gregory of Tours, "*De gloria martyrum*", I, xxviii).

The memory of Saint Peter is also closely associated with the Catacomb of Saint Priscilla on the Via Salaria. According to a tradition, current in later Christian antiquity, Saint Peter here instructed the faithful and administered baptism. This tradition seems to have been based on still earlier monumental testimonies. The catacomb is situated under the garden of a villa of the ancient Christian and senatorial family, the Acilii Glabriones, and its foundation extends back to the end of the first century; and since Acilius Glabrio, consul in 91, was condemned to death under Domitian as a Christian, it is quite possible that the Christian faith of the family extended back to Apostolic times, and that the Prince of the Apostles had been given hospitable reception in their house during his residence at Rome. The relations between Peter and Pudens whose house stood on the site of the present titular church of Pudens (now Santa Pudentiana) seem to rest rather on a legend.

As early as the fourth century a feast was celebrated in memory of Saints Peter and Paul on the same day, although the day was not the same in the East as in Rome.



The Syrian Martyrology of the end of the fourth century, which is an excerpt from a Greek catalogue of saints from Asia Minor, gives the following feasts in connexion with Christmas (25 Dec.): 26 Dec., Saint Stephen; 27 Dec., Saints James and John; 28 Dec., Saints Peter and Paul. In Saint Gregory of Nyssa's panegyric on Saint Basil we are also informed that these feasts of the Apostles and Saint Stephen follow immediately after Christmas. The Armenians celebrated the feast also on 27 Dec.; the Nestorians on the second Friday after the Epiphany. It is evident that 28 (27) Dec. was (like 26 Dec. for Saint Stephen) arbitrarily selected, no tradition concerning the date of the saints' death being forthcoming. The chief feast of Saints Peter and Paul was kept in Rome on 29 June as early as the third or fourth century. The list of feasts of the martyrs in the Chronograph of Philocalus appends this notice to the date — "III. Kal. Jul. Petri in Catacumbas et Pauli Ostiense Tusco et Basso Cose." (=the year 258) . The "Martyrologium Hieronymianum" has, in the Berne manuscript, the following notice for 29 June: "Romae via Aurelia natale sanctorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, Petri in Vaticano, Pauli in via Ostiensi, utrumque in catacumbas, passi sub Nerone, Basso et Tusco consulibus" (ed. de Rossi-Duchesne, 84).

The date 258 AD in the notices shows that from this year the memory of the two Apostles was celebrated on 29 June in the Via Appia ad Catacumbas (near San Sebastiano fuori le mura), because on this date the remains of the Apostles were translated there (see above). Later, perhaps on the building of the church over the graves on the Vatican and in the Via Ostiensis, the remains were restored to their former resting-place: Peter's to the Vatican Basilica and Paul's to the church on the Via Ostiensis. In the place Ad Catacumbas a church was also built as early as the fourth century in honor of the two Apostles. From 258 AD their principal feast was kept on 29 June, on which date solemn Divine Service was held in the above-mentioned three churches from ancient times (Duchesne, "Origines du culte chretien", 5th ed., Paris, 1909, 271 sqq., 283 sqq.; Urbain, "Ein Martyrologium der christl. Gemeinde zu Rom an Anfang des 5. Jahrh.", Leipzig, 1901, 169 sqq.; Kellner, "Heortologie", 3rd ed., Freiburg, 1911, 210 sqq.). Legend sought to explain the temporary occupation by the Apostles of the grave ad Catacumbas by supposing that, shortly after their death, the Oriental Christians wished to steal their bodies and bring them to the East. This whole story is evidently a product of popular legend.

A third Roman feast of the Apostles takes place on 1 August: the feast of Saint



Peter's Chains. This feast was originally the dedication feast of the church of the Apostle, erected on the Esquiline Hill in the fourth century. A titular priest of the church, Philippus, was papal legate at the Council of Ephesus in 431. The church was rebuilt by Sixtus III (432-40 AD) at the expense of the Byzantine imperial family. Either the solemn consecration took place on 1 August, or this was the day of dedication of the earlier church. Perhaps this day was selected to replace the heathen festivities which took place on 1 August. In this church, which is still standing (S. Pietro in Vincoli), were probably preserved from the fourth century Saint Peter's chains, which were greatly venerated, small filings from the chains being regarded as precious relics. The church thus early received the name in Vinculis, and the feast of 1 August became the feast of Saint Peter's Chains (Duchesne, *op. cit.*, 286 sqq.; Kellner, *loc. cit.*, 216 sqq.). The memory of both Peter and Paul was later associated also with two places of ancient Rome: the Via Sacra, outside the Forum, where the magician Simon was said to have been hurled down at the prayer of Peter and the prison Tullianum, or Carcer Mamertinus, where the Apostles were supposed to have been kept until their execution. At both these places, also, shrines of the Apostles were erected, and that of the Mamertine Prison still remains in almost its original form from the early Roman time. These local commemorations of the Apostles are based on legends, and no special celebrations are held in the two churches. It is, however, not impossible that Peter and Paul were actually confined in the chief prison in Rome at the foot of the Capitol, of which the present Carcer Mamertinus is a remnant.

The original first class relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul were the skulls of the saints, which were removed from the (endangered) graves during the 3rd century during the Valerian persecutions, enshrined next to the entrance to the catacombs on the Via Appia, which later developed into the San Sebastiano Church. These were later transferred to the Lateran Basilica and to this date are located in two head/bust reliquaries which are mounted above the Papal altar. The marble sarcophagus of Paul is of early 4th century origins, and the earthly remains of Paul were translated to this sarcophagus at the behest of Constantine the Great in 324, at which time this sarcophagus was incorporated into the construction design of the Saint Paul Basilica.

There is some question whether the head reliquary of Peter actually holds the head of Peter, since records show that several heads were excavated and translated at that time. The relics of Paul (those which had been removed in 324) have been



under Vatican control since 324, and all first class relics of Paul are known to be derived from the original holding under Constantine the Great. It is doubtful that the Vatican will release any new relics from the rediscovered sarcophagus, which had been blocked over.

Since major saint relics are usually quite minuscule, not much would have had to have been removed to provide the basis for the Vatican's holdings. Those we have seen with full documentary authentications tend to be signed off at highest levels (usually the Papal vicar), and they are not common. Even the altar relics tend to be unusually rare.

Saint Paul - A convert on the Road to Damascus

Paul the Apostle, also called the Apostle Paul, Saul of Tarsus, and Saint Paul, (circa AD 5 – circa AD 67), was one of the most influential early Christian missionaries, with his writings forming a considerable portion of the New Testament. His influence on Christian thinking has been significant due to his role as a prominent apostle of Christianity during the spreading of the Gospel through early Christian communities across the Roman Empire.

According to the Bible, Paul was known as Saul prior to his conversion, and was dedicated to the persecution of the early disciples of Jesus in the area of Jerusalem. While traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus on a mission to "bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem", the resurrected Jesus appeared to him in a great light. Saul was struck blind, but after three days his sight was restored by Ananias of Damascus, and Paul began to preach that Jesus of Nazareth is the Jewish Messiah and the Son of God.

Along with Simon Peter and James the Just he was one of the most prominent early Christian leaders. He was also a Roman citizen—a fact that afforded him a privileged legal status with respect to laws, property, and governance.

Fourteen epistles in the New Testament are attributed to Paul. His authorship of seven of the fourteen is questioned by modern scholars. Augustine of Hippo developed Paul's idea that salvation is based on faith and not "Works of the Law". Martin Luther's interpretation of Paul's writings heavily influenced Luther's doctrine of sola fide.



Paul's conversion dramatically changed the course of his life. Through his missionary activity and writings he eventually transformed religious belief and philosophy around the Mediterranean Basin. His leadership, influence and legacy led to the formation of communities dominated by Gentile groups that worshiped the God of Israel, adhered to the Judaic "moral code", but relaxed or abandoned the "ritual" and dietary obligations of the Mosaic law all on the basis of Paul's teachings of the life and works of Jesus Christ and his teaching of a new covenant (or "new testament") established through Jesus' death and resurrection. The Bible does not record Paul's death.

The main source for historical information about Paul's life is the material found in several of his epistles and the Book of Acts. However, these epistles contain comparatively little information about Paul's past. The Book of Acts also recounts Paul's career but leaves several parts of Paul's life out of its narrative, such as his (alleged) execution in Rome. Scholars such as Hans Conzelmann and 20th century theologian John Knox (not to be confused with the 16th century John Knox) dispute the historical reliability of the Acts of the Apostles. Paul's own account of his background is found particularly in Galatians. According to some scholars, the account in Acts of Paul visiting Jerusalem [Acts 11:27-30] contradicts the account in Paul's letters. (See the Acts of the Apostles article). Some scholars consider Paul's accounts to be more reliable than those found in Acts.

Along with being ethnically Jewish, Paul was born a Roman citizen Acts 22:28. "Paul" was part of his three-part Roman name. His given name was Saul, Modern Hebrew Sha'ul, Tiberian Ša'ûl ; "asked for, prayed for"), perhaps after the biblical King Saul, a fellow Benjaminite and the first king of Israel who was replaced by King David, the second king of the united Kingdom of Israel. In Ancient Greek: Saulos, and Paulos, in Latin Paulus or Paullus, in Hebrew: Ša'ul HaTarsi (Saul of Tarsus).

When Jesus spoke to him prior to his conversion to Christianity on the Road to Damascus, Jesus called him "Saul" in confronting him for persecuting the Christians: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" [Acts 9:4] Shortly thereafter, in addressing a disciple named Ananias, Jesus referred to "a man from Tarsus named Saul." [Acts 9:4]

The earliest biblical reference to his being called "Paul" is recorded in Acts 13:9:

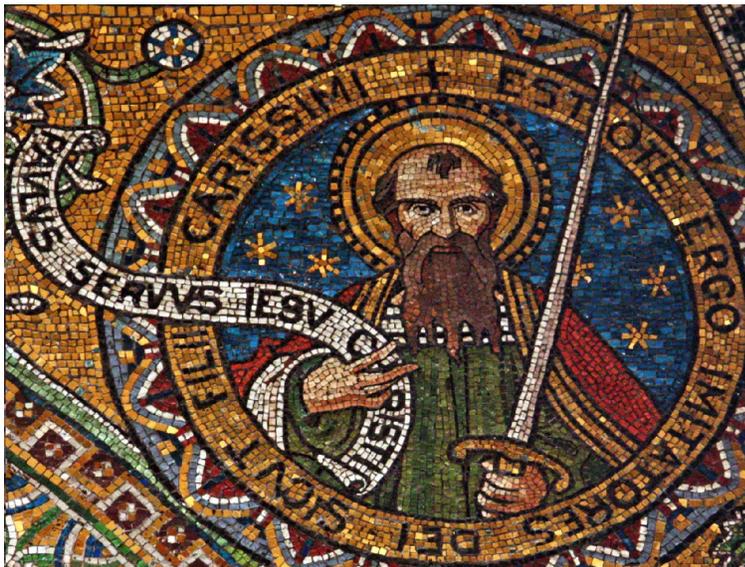


“...Saul, who was also called Paul...” All subsequent New Testament verses refer to him as “Paul” or with the appended title “Apostle Paul.”

Paul, whose Hebrew name was Saul, claimed to be “of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee.” [Phil. 3:5] But the Bible reveals very little about Paul’s family. Paul’s “sister’s son” is mentioned in Acts 23:16. Acts also quotes Paul indirectly referring to his father by saying he was “a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee”. [Acts 23:6]

Acts identifies Paul as from the Mediterranean city of Tarsus (in present-day south-central Turkey), well-known for its intellectual environment [Acts 21:39]. He was also born a citizen of Rome, an honor not often granted to “outsiders.” It is possible that Paul’s family purchased the Tarsian citizenship with money earned from their trade. His family were tent-makers, a trade that Paul uses to support himself throughout his ministry. Scripture does not say how Paul’s family acquired a Roman citizenship, but scholars speculate that his father or grandfather may have been honored with it for some sort of military service.

Although born in Tarsus, Paul was raised in Jerusalem “at the feet of Gamaliel” [Acts 22:3], a leading authority in the Sanhedrin in the mid 1st century CE. Gamaliel once gave very level headed advice to the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:34-39, to “refrain” from slaying the disciples of Jesus. This is in great contrast to the rashness of his student Saul, who zealously persecuted the “saints”. [Acts 9:13] [Acts 26:10]



Paul confesses that “beyond measure” he persecuted the “church of God” prior to his conversion. Acts records how Paul as a young man stood by and guarded the coats of those who stoned Stephen, the first Christian martyr. [Acts 7:58]

Paul’s conversion can be dated to 31 – 36 A.D. by his reference



to it in one of his letters. According to the Acts of the Apostles, his conversion (or metanoia) took place on the road to Damascus where he claimed to have experienced a vision of the resurrected Jesus after which he was temporarily blinded.[Acts 9:1-31] [22:1-22] [26:9-24] Luke, the author of Acts of the Apostles, likely learned of his conversion from one of these three sources: Paul himself, from the church in Jerusalem, or from the church in Antioch.

In the opening verses of Romans 1, Paul provides a litany of his own apostolic claim and his post-conversion convictions about the risen Christ:

Paul describes himself as

- a servant of Christ Jesus
- called to be an apostle
- set apart for the gospel of God

Paul describes Jesus as

- having been promised by God “beforehand” through his prophets in the holy Scriptures
- being the Son of God
- having biological lineage from David (“according to the flesh”)
- having been declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead
- being Jesus Christ our Lord
- the One through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations, “including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ.”

Paul's writings give some insight into his thinking regarding his relationship with Judaism. He is strongly critical both theologically and empirically of claims of moral or lineal superiority [2:16-26] of Jews while conversely strongly sustaining the notion of a special place for the Children of Israel.

Paul asserted that he received the Gospel not from any person, but by a personal revelation of Jesus Christ.[Gal 1:11-16] Paul claimed independence from the Jerusalem community (possibly in the Cenacle), but was just as quick to claim agreement with it on the nature and content of the gospel.[Gal 1:22-24] What is remarkable about such a conversion is the changes in the thinking that had to take



place. He had to change his concept of who the Messiah was, particularly the absurdity of accepting a crucified messiah. Perhaps more challenging was changing his conception of the ethnic superiority of the Jewish people. There are debates as to whether Paul understood himself as commissioned to take the gospel to the Gentiles at the moment of his conversion.

After his conversion, Paul went to Damascus, where Acts states he was healed of his blindness and baptized by Ananias of Damascus. Paul says that it was in Damascus that he barely escaped death [2Cor. 11:32]. Paul also says that he then went first to Arabia, and then came back to Damascus.[Gal. 1:17] Paul's trip to Arabia is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible, and some suppose he actually traveled to Mount Sinai for meditations in the desert. He describes in Galatians how three years after his conversion he went to Jerusalem. There he met James and stayed with Simon Peter for 15 days.[Gal. 1:13-24]

Paul asserted that he received the Gospel not from any person, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.[Gal. 1:11-12]. Paul claimed almost total independence from the Jerusalem community, and yet appeared eager to bring material support from the various budding Gentile churches that he planted to Jerusalem. In his writings, Paul persistently used the persecutions he claimed to have endured, in terms of physical beatings and verbal assaults, to claim proximity and union with Jesus and as a validation of his teaching.

Paul's narrative in Galatians states that 14 years after his conversion he went again to Jerusalem.[Gal. 2:1-10] It is not completely known what happened during these so-called "unknown years," but both Acts and Galatians provide some partial details. At the end of this time, Barnabas went to find Paul and brought him back to Antioch. [Acts 11:26]

When a famine occurred in Judea, around 45-46, Paul and Barnabas journeyed to Jerusalem to deliver financial support from the Antioch community. According to Acts, Antioch had become an alternative center for Christians following the dispersion of the believers after the death of Stephen. It was in Antioch that the followers of Jesus were first called "Christians." [Acts 11:26]

The author of the Acts arranges Paul's travels into three separate journeys. The first journey,[Acts 13-14] led initially by Barnabas, takes Paul from Antioch to Cyprus then southern Asia Minor (Anatolia), and back to Antioch. In Cyprus,



Paul rebukes and blinds Elymas the magician [Ac 13:8-12] who was criticizing their teachings. From this point on, Paul is described as the leader of the group.

They sail to Perga in Pamphylis. John Mark leaves them and returns to Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas go on to Pisidian Antioch. On the Sabbath they go to the Synagogue. The leaders invite them to speak. Paul reviews Israelite history from life in Egypt to King David. He introduces Jesus as a descendant of David brought to Israel by God. He said that his team came to town to bring the message of salvation. He recounts the story of Jesus' death and resurrection. He quotes from the Hebrew scriptures to show that Jesus was the promised Messiah who brought them forgiveness for their sins. Both the Jews and the 'God-fearing' Gentiles invited them talk more the next Sabbath. At that time almost the whole city gathered. This upset some influential Jews who spoke against them. Paul used the occasion to announce a change in his mission which from then on would be to the Gentiles. [Ac 13:13-48]

Paul left for his second missionary journey from Jerusalem, in late Autumn 49 A.D., after the meeting of the Jerusalem council where the circumcision question was debated. On their trip around the Mediterranean sea, Paul and his companion Barnabas stopped in Antioch where they had a sharp argument about taking John Mark with them on their trips. The book of Acts said that John Mark had left them in a previous trip and gone home. Unable to resolve the dispute, Paul and Barnabas decided to separate; Barnabas took John Mark with him, while Silas joined Paul.

Paul and Silas initially visited Tarsus (Paul's hometown), Derbe and Lystra. In Lystra, they met Timothy, a disciple who was spoken well of, and decided to take him with them. The Church kept growing, adding believers, and strengthening their faith daily. [Acts 16:5]

In Philippi, men who were not happy about the conversion of their slave turned the city against the missionaries and Paul and Silas were put in jail. After a miraculous earthquake, the gates of the prison fell apart and Paul and Silas were able to escape; this event led to the conversion of the jailor. They continued traveling, going by Berea and then to Athens where Paul preached to the Jews and God-fearing Greeks in the synagogue and to the Greek intellectuals in the Areopagus.



Around 50–52 A.D., Paul spent 18 months in Corinth. The reference in Acts to proconsul Gallio helps ascertain this date (cf. Gallio inscription). Paul met Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth who became faithful believers and helped Paul through his other missionary journeys. The couple followed Paul and his companions to Ephesus, and stayed there to start one of the strongest and most faithful churches at that time. In 52 A.D., the missionaries sailed to Caesarea to greet the Church there and then traveled north to Antioch where they stayed for about a year before leaving again on their third missionary journey.

Paul began his third missionary journey by traveling all around the region of Galatia and Phrygia to strengthen, teach and rebuke the believers. Paul then traveled to Ephesus, an important center for early Christianity, and stayed there for almost three years. He performed numerous miracles, healing people and casting out demons, and he apparently organized missionary activity into the hinterlands. Paul left Ephesus after an attack from a local silversmith resulted in a pro-Artemis riot involving most of the city. During his stay in Ephesus, Paul wrote four letters to the church in Corinth admonishing them for their pagan behavior.

Then Paul went through Macedonia and up to Greece, and as he was getting ready to leave for Syria, he changed his plans because of Jews who had plotted against him and had to go back through Macedonia. At this time it is likely that Paul visited Corinth for three months (56–57 A.D.). In Romans 15:19 Paul wrote that he visited Illyricum, but he may have meant what would now be called Illyria Graeca that was part of the Roman province of Macedonia, which is now modern day Albania.

Paul and his companions hit other cities on their way back to Jerusalem such as Philippi, Troas, Miletus, Rhodes, and Tyre. Paul finished his trip with a stop in Caesarea where he and his companions stayed with Philip the Evangelist before finally arriving at Jerusalem.

After Paul's arrival in Jerusalem at the end of his third missionary journey, he became involved in a serious conflict with some Asian Jews. The conflict eventually led to Paul's arrest and eventual imprisonment in Caesarea for about a year and a half. Finally, Paul and his companions sailed for Rome where Paul would eventually stand trial for his alleged crimes. Acts states that Paul preached



in Rome for two years from his rented home while awaiting trial. It does not state what happened after this time, but it is likely Paul was freed by Nero and continued to preach in Rome. It is possible that Paul also traveled to other countries like Spain and Britain before dying as a martyr.

Many plots were made against Paul in the last years of his life, especially by Jews who would stir the crowd and excite them when Paul was preaching. He was beaten more than once, and put in prison. He was persecuted in every one of his missionary journeys. He was persecuted because of a "lack of understanding, preconceptions, irritations and provocation." The message of a risen Christ and Savior was aggravating for Jews as well as many pagan believers. During his first missionary journey, Paul was stoned in the city of Lystra for healing a crippled man. Some Jews dragged him out of the city thinking he was dead but when his disciples came around him, he miraculously got up and went into the city. Paul was also put in prison while he was in Philippi and also in Jerusalem.

Most scholars agree that a vital meeting between Paul and the Jerusalem church took place some time in the years 48 to 50 A.D. described in Acts 15:2 and usually seen as the same event mentioned by Paul in Galatians 2:1. The key question raised was whether Gentile converts needed to be circumcised. At this meeting, Paul claims in his letter to the Galatians that Peter, James, and John accepted Paul's mission to the Gentiles.

Jerusalem meetings are mentioned in Acts, in Paul's letters, and some appear in both. For example, the Jerusalem visit for famine relief [Acts 11:27-30] apparently corresponds to the "first visit" (to Cephas and James only). [Gal. 1:18-20] F. F. Bruce suggested that the "fourteen years" could be from Paul's conversion rather than the first visit to Jerusalem.

Despite the agreement achieved at the Council of Jerusalem, as understood by Paul, Paul recounts how he later publicly confronted Peter, also called the "Incident at Antioch" over Peter's reluctance to share a meal with Gentile Christians in Antioch.

Writing later of the incident, Paul recounts: "I opposed [Peter] to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong". Paul reports that he told Peter: "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles



to follow Jewish customs?"[Gal. 2:11-14] Paul also mentions that even Barnabas (his traveling companion and fellow apostle until that time) sided with Peter.

The final outcome of the incident remains uncertain. The Catholic Encyclopedia states: "Paul's account of the incident leaves no doubt that Peter saw the justice of the rebuke." In contrast, L. Michael White's *From Jesus to Christianity* claims: "The blowup with Peter was a total failure of political bravado, and Paul soon left Antioch as *persona non grata*, never again to return."

Paul arrived in Jerusalem in 57 A.D. with a collection of money for the community there. Acts reports that he was warmly received. But Acts goes on to recount how he was interrogated by James for 'teaching all the Jews living among the gentiles to forsake Moses, and that you tell them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs'. (Acts 21, 21) Paul underwent a purification ritual in order to give the Jews no grounds to bring accusations against him for not following their law. Paul however continued to preach against circumcision, Jewish dietary restrictions, and other requirements of the Torah. This made a final rift inevitable with the Jews. Paul caused a stir when he appeared at the Temple, and he escaped being killed by the crowd by being taken into custody. He was held as a prisoner for two years in Caesarea until a new governor reopened his case in 59. When accused of treason, he appealed to Caesar, claiming his right as a citizen of Rome to appear there before a proper court and to defend himself of the charges.

Acts recounts that on the way to Rome Paul was shipwrecked on "Melite" (Malta), [Acts 28:1] where he was met by Publius [Acts 28:7] and the islanders, who showed him "unusual kindness". [Acts 28:2] He arrived in Rome about 60 A.D. and spent two years under house arrest. [Acts 28:16] All told, during his ministry the Apostle Paul spent roughly six years as a prisoner or in prison.

In the 2nd century, Irenaeus of Lyons believed that Peter and Paul had been the founders of the Church in Rome and had appointed Linus as succeeding bishop. Paul was not a bishop of Rome nor did he bring Christianity to Rome since there were already Christians in Rome when he arrived there (Acts 28:14-15). Also Paul wrote his letter to the church at Rome before he had visited Rome (Romans 1:1,7,11-13; 15:23-29). However, Paul would have played an important role in the life of the early church at Rome.



Neither the Bible nor other history says how or when Paul died. According to Christian tradition, Paul was beheaded in Rome during the reign of Nero around the mid-60s at Tre Fontane Abbey (English: Three Fountains Abbey). By comparison, tradition has Peter being crucified upside-down. Paul's Roman citizenship accorded him the more merciful death by beheading.

In June 2009, Pope Benedict announced excavation results concerning the tomb of Paul at the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls. The sarcophagus was not opened but was examined by means of a probe, which revealed pieces of incense, purple and blue linen, and small bone fragments. The bone was radiocarbon dated to the 1st or 2nd century. According to the Vatican, these findings were consistent with the traditional claim that the tomb is Paul's.

Fourteen epistles in the New Testament are attributed to Paul. Seven of these – Romans, 1st Corinthians, 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Phillipians, 1st Thessalonians and Philemon – are almost universally accepted as being actually written by Paul. Scholars generally agree that four others were not written by Paul, those being 1st Timothy, 2nd Timothy, Titus, and Hebrews. As to the remaining three – Ephesians, Colossians and 2nd Thessalonians -- scholars are almost evenly divided. Of those written by Paul, all except Galatians appear to have been dictated through a secretary, who would paraphrase the message, as was the practice among 1st-century scribes. The epistles were circulated in the Christian community and read aloud by church members along with other works. Paul's epistles were viewed from early times as scripture and later established as Canon of Scripture. Critical scholars regard Paul's epistles, which were written between 50 and 62 AD, to be the earliest books of the New Testament. They are referenced as early as c. 96 A.D. by Clement of Rome.

Paul's letters are largely written to churches which he had visited; he was a great traveler, visiting Cyprus, Asia Minor (modern Turkey), mainland Greece, Crete, and Rome. His letters are full of expositions of what Christians should believe and how they should live. He does not tell his correspondents (or the modern reader) much about the life of Jesus; his most explicit references are to the Last Supper [1 Cor. 11:17-34] and the crucifixion and resurrection. [1 Cor. 15] His specific references to Jesus' teaching are likewise sparse, [1 Cor. 7:10-11] [9:14] raising the question, still disputed, as to how consistent his account of the faith is with that of the four canonical Gospels, Acts, and the Epistle of James. The view that Paul's Christ is



very different from the historical Jesus has been expounded by Adolf Harnack among many others. Nevertheless, he provides the first written account of what it is to be a Christian and thus of Christian spirituality.

The authenticity of Colossians has been questioned on the grounds that it contains an otherwise unparalleled description (among his writings) of Jesus as 'the image of the invisible God,' a Christology found elsewhere only in John's gospel. On the other hand, the personal notes in the letter connect it to Philemon, unquestionably the work of Paul. Internal evidence shows close connection with Philippians. Ephesians is a very similar letter to Colossians, but is almost entirely lacking in personal reminiscences. Its style is unique. It lacks the emphasis on the cross to be found in other Pauline writings, reference to the Second Coming is missing, and Christian marriage is exalted in a way which contrasts with the reference in 1 Cor. 7:8-9. Finally, according to R.E. Brown, it exalts the Church in a way suggestive of a second generation of Christians, 'built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets' now past. The defenders of its Pauline authorship argue that it was intended to be read by a number of different churches and that it marks the final stage of the development of Paul of Tarsus's thinking. It has to be noted, too, that the moral portion of the Epistle, consisting of the last two chapters has the closest affinity with similar portions of other Epistles, while the whole admirably fits in with the known details of Saint Paul's life, and throws considerable light upon them.

The Pastoral Epistles, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus have likewise been put in question as Pauline works. Three main reasons are advanced: first, their difference in vocabulary, style, and theology from Paul's acknowledged writings; Defenders of the authenticity note, that they were then probably written in the name and with the authority of the Apostle by one of his companions, to whom he distinctly explained what had to be written, or to whom he gave a written summary of the points to be developed, and that when the letters were finished, Saint Paul read them through, approved them, and signed them. Secondly, the difficulty in fitting them into Paul's biography as we have it. They, like Colossians and Ephesians, were written from prison but suppose Paul's release and travel thereafter. However, Christianity was not yet declared a *religio illicita* at the time they were written, and according to Roman law there was nothing deserving of death against him. Finally, the concerns expressed are very much the practical ones as to how a church should function. They are more about maintenance than about mission.



2 Thessalonians, like Colossians, is questioned on stylistic grounds, with some noting, among other peculiarities, a dependence on 1 Thessalonians yet a distinctiveness in language from the Pauline corpus. This, again, is explainable by the possibility of Saint Paul requesting one of his companions to write the letter for him under his instructions.

Paul wrote down much of the theology of atonement. Paul taught that Christians are redeemed from the Law and from sin by Jesus' death and resurrection. His death was an expiation; as well as a propitiation, and by Christ's blood, peace is made between God and man. By baptism, a Christian shares in Jesus' death and in his victory over death, gaining, as a free gift, a new, justified status of sonship.

Some scholars see Paul (or Saul) as completely in line with 1st-century Judaism (a "Pharisee" and student of Gamaliel), others see him as opposed to 1st-century Judaism (see Marcionism), while still others see him as somewhere in between these two extremes, opposed to "Ritual Laws" but in full agreement on "Divine Law". These views of Paul are paralleled by the views of Biblical law in Christianity.

Paul's theology of the gospel accelerated the separation of the messianic sect of Christians from Judaism, a development contrary to Paul's own intent. He wrote that the faith of Christ was alone decisive in salvation for Jews and Gentiles alike, making the schism between the followers of Christ and mainstream Jews inevitable and permanent. He argued that Gentile converts did not need to become Jews, get circumcised, follow Jewish dietary restrictions, or otherwise observe Mosaic laws. Nevertheless, in Romans he insisted on the positive value of the Law, as a moral guide.

E. P. Sanders' publications have since been taken up by Professor James Dunn who coined the phrase "The New Perspective on Paul" and N.T. Wright, the Anglican Bishop of Durham. Wright, noting a difference between Galatians and Romans, the later being much more positive about the continuing covenant between God and his ancient people than the former, contends that works are not insignificant but rather proof of attaining the redemption of Jesus Christ by grace (free gift received by faith)[Rom. 2:13ff] and that Paul distinguishes between works which are signs of ethnic identity and those which are a sign of obedience to Christ.



According to Ehrman, Paul believed that Jesus would return within his lifetime. He states that Paul expected that Christians who had died in the mean time would be resurrected to share in God's kingdom, and he believed that the saved would be transformed, assuming supernatural bodies.

Paul's teaching about the end of the world is expressed most clearly in his letters to the Christians at Thessalonika. Heavily persecuted, it appears that they had written asking him first about those who had died already, and, secondly, when they should expect the end. He assures them that the dead will rise first and be followed by those left alive.[1 Thes. 4:16ff] This suggests an imminence of the end but he is unspecific about times and seasons, and encourages his hearers to expect a delay. The form of the end will be a battle between Jesus and the man of lawlessness[2 Thess. 2:3] whose conclusion is the triumph of Christ.

A verse in the first letter to Timothy, 1 Timothy 2:12 ("I suffer not a woman"), traditionally attributed to Paul, is often used as the main biblical authority for prohibiting women from becoming ordained clergy and or holding certain other positions of ministry and leadership in Christianity, though Paul's authorship of this letter is debated. The Letter to Timothy is also often used by many churches to deny women a vote in church affairs, reject women from serving as teachers of adult Bible classes, prevent them from serving as missionaries, and generally disenfranchise women from the duties and privileges of church leadership. The apparent message of this verse may seem anachronistic to 21st century Western societies with their emphasis on gender egalitarianism and non-discrimination.

- 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.
- 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.
- 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.
- 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

1 Timothy 2:11-14, KJV

The KJV translation of this passage seems to be saying that women in the churches are to have no leadership roles vis a vis men. Whether it also forbids women from teaching children and women is dubious as even those Catholic churches that prohibit female priests, permit female abbesses to teach and exercise



authority over other females. Any interpretation of this portion of Scripture must wrestle with the theological, contextual, syntactical, and lexical difficulties embedded within these few words. Fuller Seminary theologian J. R. Daniel Kirk finds evidence in Paul's letters of a much more inclusive view of women. He writes that Romans 16 is a tremendously important witness to the important role of women in the early church. Paul praises Phoebe for her work as a deaconess and Junia who was (according to some scholars) an Apostle. Kirk points to recent studies that have led "many scholars" to conclude that the passage in 1 Corinthians 14 ordering women to "be silent" during worship was a later addition, apparently by a different author, and not part of Paul's original letter to Corinth. Other scholars such as Giancarlo Biguzzi, claim that Paul's restriction on women speaking in 1 Corinthians 14 is genuine to Paul but applies to a particular case of prohibiting asking questions or chatting and is not a general prohibition on any woman speaking since in 1 Corinthians 11 Paul affirms the right of women to prophesy. Kirk's third example of a more inclusive view is Galatians 3:28: There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. In pronouncing an end within the church to the divisions which are common in the world around it, he concludes by highlighting the fact that "...there were New Testament women who taught and had authority in the early churches, that this teaching and authority was sanctioned by Paul, and that Paul himself offers a theological paradigm within which overcoming the subjugation of women is an anticipated outcome."

Paul's influence on Christian thinking arguably has been more significant than any other New Testament author. Paul declared that faith in Christ made the Torah unnecessary for salvation, exalted the Christian church as the body of Christ, and depicted the world outside the Church as under judgment.

Paul's writings include the earliest reference to the supper of the Lord, a rite traditionally identified as the Christian Eucharist.

Eastern Tradition

In the East, church fathers reduced the element of election in Romans 9 to divine foreknowledge. The themes of predestination found in Western Christianity do not appear in Eastern theology.



Western Tradition

Augustine's foundational work on the gospel as a gift (grace), on morality as life in the Spirit, on predestination, and on original sin all derives from Paul, especially Romans.

In the Reformation, Martin Luther expressed Paul's doctrine of faith most strongly as justification by faith alone. John Calvin developed Augustine's predestination into double predestination.

Modern Theology

In his commentary *The Epistle to the Romans* (Ger. *Der Römerbrief*; particularly in the thoroughly re-written second edition of 1922) Karl Barth argued that the God who is revealed in the cross of Jesus challenges and overthrows any attempt to ally God with human cultures, achievements, or possessions. Some theologians believe this work to be the most important theological treatise since Friedrich Schleiermacher's *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*.

As in the Eastern tradition in general, Western humanists interpret the reference to election in Romans 9 as reflecting divine foreknowledge.

Church Tradition

Various Christian writers have suggested more details about Paul's life.

1 Clement, a letter written by the Roman bishop Clement of Rome, around the year 90 reports this about Paul:

"By reason of jealousy and strife Paul by his example pointed out the prize of patient endurance. After that he had been seven times in bonds, had been driven into exile, had been stoned, had preached in the East and in the West, he won the noble renown which was the reward of his faith, having taught righteousness unto the whole world and having reached the farthest bounds of the West; and when he had borne his testimony before the rulers, so he departed from the world and went unto the holy place, having been found a notable pattern of patient endurance."



Commenting on this passage, Raymond Brown writes that while it “does not explicitly say” that Paul was martyred in Rome, “such a martyrdom is the most reasonable interpretation.”

Eusebius of Caesarea, who wrote in the 4th century, states that Paul was beheaded in the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero. This event has been dated either to the year 64 A.D., when Rome was devastated by a fire, or a few years later, to 67 A.D.. The San Paolo alle Tre Fontane church was built on the location where the execution was believed to have taken place. A Roman Catholic liturgical solemnity of Peter and Paul, celebrated on June 29, may reflect the day of his martyrdom, other sources have articulated the tradition that Peter and Paul died on the same day (and possibly the same year). The apocryphal Acts of Paul, the apocryphal Acts of Peter suggest that Paul survived Rome and traveled further west. Some hold the view that he could have revisited Greece and Asia Minor after his trip to Spain, and might then have been arrested in Troas, and taken to Rome and executed.[2 Tim. 4:13] A tradition holds that Paul was interred with Saint Peter ad Catacumbas by the via Appia until moved to what is now the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls in Rome. Bede, in his Ecclesiastical History, writes that Pope Vitalian in 665 gave Paul's relics (including a cross made from his prison chains) from the crypts of Lucina to King Oswy of Northumbria, northern Britain. However, Bede's use of the word “relic” was not limited to corporal remains.

Paul, who was quite possibly martyred in Rome, has long been associated with that city and its church. Paul is the patron saint of London.



The original first class relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul were the skulls of the saints, which were removed from the (endangered) graves during the 3rd century during the Valerian persecutions, enshrined next to the entrance to the catacombs on the Via Appia, which later developed into the San Sebastiano Church. These were later transferred to the Lateran Basilica and to this date are located in two head/bust reliquaries which are mounted above the Papal altar. The marble sarcophagus of Paul is of early 4th century origins, and the earthly remains of Paul were translated to this sarcophagus at the behest of Constantine the Great in 324, at which time this sarcophagus was incorporated into the construction design of the Saint Paul Basilica.





There is some question whether the head reliquary of Peter actually holds the head of Peter, since records show that several heads were excavated and translated at that time. The relics of Paul (those which had been removed in 324) have been under Vatican control since 324, and all first class relics of Paul are known to be derived from the original holding under Constantine the Great. It is doubtful that the Vatican will release any new relics from the rediscovered sarcophagus, which had been blocked over.

Since major saint relics are usually quite miniscule, not much would have had to have been removed to provide the basis for the Vatican's holdings. Those we have seen with full documentary authentications tend to be signed off at highest levels (usually the Papal vicar), and they are not common. Even the altar relics tend to be unusually rare.

Saint Aloysius Gonzaga

Aloysius Gonzaga, S.J. (Italian: Luigi Gonzaga, Spanish: Luis de Gonzaga; March 9, 1568 – June 21, 1591) was an Italian aristocrat who became a member of the Society of Jesus. While still a student at the Roman College, he died as a result of caring for the victims of an epidemic. He was beatified in 1605, and canonized in 1726.

Gonzaga was born the eldest of seven children, at his family's castle in Castiglione delle Stiviere, between Brescia and Mantova in northern Italy in what was then part of the Duchy of Mantua, into the illustrious House of Gonzaga. "Aloysius" is the Latin form of Gonzaga's given name, Luigi. He was the oldest son of Ferrante Gonzaga (1544–1586), Marquis of Castiglione, and Marta Tana di Santena, daughter of a baron of the Piedmontese Della Rovere family. His father had been offered the position of commander-in-chief of the cavalry of Henry VIII of England, but preferred the Spanish court. His mother was a lady-in-waiting to Isabel, the wife of Philip II of Spain.

As the first-born son, he was in line to inherit his father's title of Marquis. His father assumed that Aloysius would become a soldier, as the family was constantly involved in the frequent minor wars in the region. His military training started at an early age, but he also received an education in languages and the arts. As early



as age four, Luigi was given a set of miniature guns and accompanied his father on training expeditions so that the boy might learn “the art of arms.” At the age of five, Aloysius was sent to a military camp to get started on his career. His father was pleased to see his son marching around camp at the head of a platoon of soldiers. His mother and his tutor were less pleased with the vocabulary he picked up there.

He grew up amid the violence and brutality of Renaissance Italy and witnessed the murder of two of his brothers. In 1576, at the age of 8, he was sent to Florence, along with his younger brother, Rodolfo, to serve at the court of the Grand Duke Francesco I de’ Medici and to receive further education. While there, he fell ill with a disease of the kidneys, which was to trouble him throughout his life. While he was ill, he took the opportunity to read about the saints and to spend much of his time in prayer. He is said to have taken a private vow of chastity at the age of 9. In November 1579, the brothers were sent to the Duke of Mantua. Aloysius was shocked by the violent and frivolous lifestyle he encountered there.

Aloysius returned to Castiglione where he met Cardinal Charles Borromeo, and from him received First Communion on July 22, 1580. After reading a book about Jesuit missionaries in India, Aloysius felt strongly that he wanted to become a missionary himself. He started practicing by teaching catechism classes to young boys in Castiglione in the summers. He also repeatedly visited the houses of the Capuchin friars and the Barnabites located in Casale Monferrato, the capital of the Gonzaga-ruled Duchy of Montferrat where the family spent the winter. He also adopted an ascetic lifestyle.

The family was called to Spain in 1581 to assist the Holy Roman Empress Maria of Austria. They arrived in Madrid in March 1582, where Aloysius and Rodolfo became pages for the young Infante Diego (1575–82). At that point, Aloysius started thinking in earnest about joining a religious order. He had considered joining the Capuchins, but he had a Jesuit confessor in Madrid and decided instead to join that order. His mother agreed to his request, but his father was furious and prevented him from doing so.

In July 1584, a year and a half after the Infante’s death, the family returned to Italy. Aloysius still wanted to become a priest but several members of his family worked hard to persuade him to change his mind. When they realized there was no way to



make him give up his plan, they tried to persuade him to become a secular priest, and offered to arrange for a bishopric for him. If he were to become a Jesuit he would renounce any right to his inheritance or status in society. His family was afraid of this, but their attempts to persuade him not to join the Jesuits failed; Aloysius was not interested in higher office and still wanted to become a missionary.

In November 1585, Aloysius gave up all rights of inheritance, which was confirmed by the emperor. He went to Rome and, because of his noble birth, gained an audience with Pope Sixtus V. Following a brief stay at the Palazzo Aragona Gonzaga, the Roman home of his cousin, Cardinal Scipione Gonzaga, on 25 November 1585 he was accepted into the novitiate of the Society of Jesus in Rome. During this period, he was asked to moderate his asceticism somewhat, and to be more social with the other novices.

Aloysius' health continued to cause problems. In addition to the kidney disease, he also suffered from a skin disease, chronic headaches and insomnia. He was sent to Milan for studies, but after some time he was sent back to Rome because of his health. On November 25, 1587, he took the three religious vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. In February and March 1588, he received minor orders and started studying theology to prepare for ordination. In 1589, he was called to Mantua to mediate between his brother, Rodolfo, and the Duke of Mantua. He returned to Rome in May 1590. It is said that later that year, he had a vision in which the Archangel Gabriel told him that he would die within a year.

In 1591, a plague broke out in Rome. The Jesuits opened a hospital for the stricken, and Aloysius volunteered to work there. He was allowed to work in a ward where there were no plague victims, as they were afraid to lose him. As it turned out, a man on his ward was already infected, and on March 3, 1591 (six days before his 23rd birthday), Aloysius showed the first symptoms of being infected. It seemed certain that he would die in a short time, and he was given Extreme Unction. To everyone's surprise, however, he recovered, but his health was left worse than ever.

While he was ill, he spoke several times with his confessor, the cardinal and later saint, Robert Bellarmine. Aloysius had another vision, and told Bellarmine that he would die on the Octave of the feast of Corpus Christi. On that very day, which fell on June 21 that year, he seemed very well in the morning, but insisted that he



would die before the day was over. As he began to grow weak, Bellarmine gave him the last rites, and recited the prayers for the dying. He died just before midnight. Purity was his notable virtue. The night of his death, the Carmelite mystic Saint Maria Magdalena de Pazzi had a vision of him in great glory because he had lived a particularly strong interior life.

Aloysius was buried in the Church of the Most Holy Annunciation, which later became the Church of Saint Ignatius of Loyola in Rome. His name was changed to "Robert" before his death, in honor of his confessor. Many people considered him to be a saint soon after his death, and his mortal remains were moved to the Sant'Ignazio church in Rome, where they now rest in an urn of lapis lazuli in the Lancelotti Chapel. His head was later translated to the basilica bearing his name in Castiglione delle Stiviere. He was beatified only fourteen years after his death by Pope Paul V, on October 19, 1605. On December 31, 1726, he was canonized together with another Jesuit novice, Stanislaus Kostka, by Pope Benedict XIII. Saint Aloysius' feast day is celebrated on June 21, the date of his death.

Saint Nicholas Tolentino

Nicholas of Tolentino (Italian: San Nicola da Tolentino, Spanish: San Nicolás de Tolentino) (c. 1246 – September 10, 1306), known as the Patron of Holy Souls, was an Italian saint and mystic.

Nicholas Gurrutti was born at Sant'Angelo in Pontano in Italy, in what was then the March of Ancona. He was the son of parents who had been childless into middle age. Compagnonus de Guarutti and Amata de Guidiani, prayed at the shrine of Saint Nicholas of Myra for his intercession, and when Amata became pregnant they named their son after the saint.

A studious, kind and gentle youth, at the age of 16 Nicholas became an Augustinian Friar and was a student of the Blessed Angelus de Scarpetti. A monk at the monasteries at Recanati and Macerata as well as others, he was ordained in 1270 at the age of 25, and soon became known for his preaching and teachings. Nicholas, who had had visions of angels reciting "to Tolentino", in 1274 took this as a sign to move to that city, where he lived the rest of his life.

On account of his kind and gentle manner his superiors entrusted him with the



daily feeding of the poor at the monastery gates, but at times he was so free with the friary's provisions that the procurator begged the superior to check his generosity. Once, when weak after a long fast, he received a vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Augustine who told him to eat some bread marked with cross and dipped in water. Upon doing so he was immediately stronger. He started distributing these rolls to the ailing, while praying to Mary, often curing the sufferers; this is the origin of the Augustinian custom of blessing and distributing Saint Nicholas Bread.

In Tolentino, Nicholas worked as a peacemaker in a city torn by strife between the Guelfs and Ghibellines who, in the conflict for control of Italy, supported the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor respectively. He ministered to his flock, helped the poor and visited prisoners. When working wonders or healing people, he always asked those he helped to "Say nothing of this", explaining that he was just God's instrument.

During his life, Nicholas is said to have received visions, including images of Purgatory, which friends ascribed to his lengthy fasts. Prayer for the souls in purgatory was the outstanding characteristic of his spirituality. Because of this Nicholas was proclaimed patron of the souls in Purgatory, in 1884 by Leo XIII.

Towards the end of his life he became ill, suffering greatly, but still continued the mortifications that had been part of his holy life. Nicholas died on September 10, 1305.

There are many tales and legends that relate to Nicholas. One says that the devil once beat him with a stick, which was then displayed for years in his church. In another, Nicholas, a vegetarian, was served a roasted fowl over which he made the sign of the cross, and it flew out a window. Nine passengers on a ship going down at sea once asked Nicholas' aid and he appeared in the sky, wearing the black Augustinian habit, radiating golden light, holding a lily in his left hand, and with his right hand he quelled the storm. An apparition of the saint, it is said, once saved the burning palace of the Doge of Venice by throwing a piece of blessed bread on the flames. He was also reported to have resurrected over one hundred dead children, including several who had drowned together.

According to the Peruvian chronicler Antonio de la Calancha, it was Saint



Nicholas of Tolentino who made possible a permanent Spanish settlement in the rigorous, high-altitude climate of Potosi, Bolivia. He reported that all children born to Spanish colonists there died in childbirth or soon thereafter, until a father dedicated his unborn child to Saint Nicholas of Tolentino (whose own parents, after all, had required saintly intervention to have a child). The colonist's son, born on Christmas Eve, 1598, survived to healthy adulthood, and many later parents followed the example of naming their sons Nicolás.

Nicholas was canonized by Pope Eugene IV (also an Augustinian) in 1446. He was the first Augustinian to be canonized. At his canonization, Nicholas was credited with three hundred miracles, including three resurrections.

The remains of Saint Nicholas are preserved at the Shrine of Saint Nicholas in the Basilica di San Nicola da Tolentino in the city of Tolentino, province of Macerata in Marche, Italy.

He is particularly invoked as an advocate for the souls in Purgatory, especially during Lent and the month of November. In many Augustinian churches, there are weekly devotions to Saint Nicholas on behalf of the suffering souls. November 2, All Souls' Day, holds special significance for the devotees of St. Nicholas of Tolentino.

Saint Pius V did not include him in the Tridentine Calendar, but he was later inserted into the calendar and given September 10 as his feast day. Judged to be of limited importance worldwide, his liturgical celebration was no longer included among those to be commemorated universally in the Roman Catholic Calendar of Saints, wherever the Roman Rite is celebrated. Saint Nicholas of Tolentino is still recognized as one of the saints of the Roman Catholic Church.

A number of churches and oratories are dedicated to him, including San Nicolò da Tolentino in Venice, San Nicola da Tolentino agli Orti Sallustiani in Rome, and Saint Nicholas of Tolentino in The Bronx, New York. In the Philippines, the 16th century Church of San Nicolas de Tolentino in Banton, Romblon, was built in honor of him and his feast day is celebrated as the annual Biniray festival, commemorating the devotion of the island's Catholic inhabitants to Saint Nicholas during the Muslim raids in the 16th century.



Saint Philip Neri

Philip Romolo Neri (Italian: Filippo Neri), CO, (21 July 1515 – 25 May 1595), known as the Apostle of Rome, was an Italian priest noted for founding a society of secular clergy called the “Congregation of the Oratory”.

He was born in Florence on July 22, 1515, the youngest child of Francesco, a lawyer, and his wife Lucrezia da Mosciano, whose family were nobility in the service of the state. Neri was carefully brought up, and received his early teaching from the friars at San Marco, the famous Dominican monastery in Florence. He was accustomed in later life to ascribe most of his progress to the teaching of two of them, Zenobio de' Medici and Servanzio Mini. At the age of 18, Philip was sent to his uncle, Romolo, a wealthy merchant at San Germano, a Neapolitan town near the base of Monte Cassino, to assist him in his business, and with the hope that he might inherit his uncle's fortune. He gained Romolo's confidence and affection, but soon after coming to San Germano Philip had a religious conversion: he no longer cared for things of the world, and chose to relocate to Rome in 1533.

After arriving in Rome, he became a tutor in the house of a Florentine aristocrat named Galeotto Caccia. After two years he began to pursue his own studies (for a period of three years) under the guidance of the Augustinians (a Catholic religious order). Following this, he began those labours amongst the sick and poor which, in later life, gained him the title of “Apostle of Rome”. He also ministered to the prostitutes of the city. In 1538 he entered into the home mission work for which he became famous; traveling throughout the city, seeking opportunities of entering into conversation with people, and of leading them to consider the topics he desired to set before them.

In 1548 he founded (with his confessor, Fr Persiano Rossa) the confraternity of the Santissima Trinita de' Pellegrini e de' Convalescenti (“Most Holy Trinity of Pilgrims and Convalescents”), whose primary object was to minister to the needs of the thousands of poor pilgrims who flocked to Rome, especially in years of jubilee, and also to relieve the patients discharged from hospitals but who were still too weak for labor. Members met for prayer at the church of San Salvatore in Campo where the devotion of the Forty Hours of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament was first introduced into Rome.



In 1551 he passed through all the minor orders, and was ordained deacon, and finally priest (on 23 May). He thought of going to India as a missionary, but was dissuaded by his friends who saw that there was abundant work to be done in Rome. Accordingly he settled down, with some companions, at the hospital of San Girolamo della Carità, and while there tentatively began, in 1556, the institute with which his name is more especially connected, that of the Oratory. The scheme at first was no more than a series of evening meetings in a hall (the Oratory), at which there were prayers, hymns, and readings from Scripture, the church fathers, and the Martyrology, followed by a lecture, or by discussion of some religious question proposed for consideration. The musical selections (settings of scenes from sacred history) were called oratorios. The scheme was developed, and the members of the society undertook various kinds of mission work throughout Rome, notably the preaching of sermons in different churches every evening, a completely new idea at that time. He also spent much of his time hearing confessions, and effected many conversions in this way.

In 1564 the Florentines requested that he leave San Girolamo, in order to oversee their church in Rome, San Giovanni dei Fiorentini, then newly built. He was at first reluctant, but by consent of Pope Pius IV he accepted, while retaining the charge of San Girolamo, where the exercises of the Oratory were kept up. At this time the new society included among its members Caesar Baronius, the ecclesiastical historian, Francesco Maria Tarugi, afterwards Archbishop of Avignon, and Ottavio Paravicini, all three of whom were subsequently cardinals, and also Gallonius (Antonio Gallonio), author of a well-known work on the Sufferings of the Martyrs, Ancina, Bordonni, and other men of ability and distinction. In 1574, the Florentines built a large oratory or mission-room for the society, next to San Giovanni, in order to save them the fatigue of the daily journey to and from San Girolamo, and to provide a more convenient place of assembly, and the headquarters were transferred there. As the community grew, and its mission work extended, the need for a church entirely its own made itself felt, and the offer of the small parish church of Santa Maria in Vallicella, conveniently situated in the middle of Rome, was made and accepted. The building, however, not large enough for their purpose, was pulled down, and a splendid church erected on the site. It was immediately after taking possession of their new quarters that Neri formally organized, under permission of a papal bull dated 15 July 1575, a community of secular priests, called the Congregation of the Oratory. The new church was consecrated early in 1577, and the clergy of the new society at once



resigned the charge of San Giovanni dei Fiorentini; Neri himself did not leave San Girolamo until 1583, and then only by virtue of an injunction of the pope that he, as the superior, should reside at the chief house of his congregation. He was at first elected for a term of three years (as is usual in modern societies), but in 1587 was nominated superior for life. He was, however, entirely free from personal ambition, and had no desire to be superior general over a number of dependent houses, so he desired that all congregations formed on his model outside Rome should be autonomous, governing themselves, and without endeavouring for Neri to retain control over any new colonies they might themselves send out—a regulation afterwards formally confirmed by a brief of Gregory XV in 1622.

Although he refrained from becoming involved in political matters, he broke this rule in 1593 when he persuaded Pope Clement VIII to withdraw the excommunication and anathema laid on Henry IV of France, and the refusal to receive his ambassador, even though the king had formally renounced Calvinism. Neri saw that the pope's attitude was more than likely to drive Henry to a relapse, and probably to rekindle the civil war in France, and directed Cardinal Caesar Baronius, then the pope's confessor, to refuse the Pope absolution, and to resign his office of confessor, unless the Pope would withdraw the anathema. Clement yielded at once, though the whole college of cardinals had supported his policy; and Henry, who did not learn the facts until several years afterwards, testified lively gratitude for the timely and politic intervention. Neri continued in the government of the Oratory until his death. He was succeeded by Baronius.

Philip died around the end of the day on 25 May 1595, the Feast of Corpus Christi that year, after having spent the day hearing confessions and receiving visitors. About midnight he began hemorrhaging, and Baronius read the commendatory prayers over him. Baronius asked that he would bless his spiritual sons before dying, and though he could no longer speak, he blessed them with the sign of the cross and died.

Saint Philip Neri was beatified by Paul V in 1615, and canonized by Gregory XV in 1622. His memorial is celebrated on 26 May in the calendars of both the ordinary and extraordinary forms of the Roman Rite. His body is in the Chiesa Nuova ("New Church") in Rome.

Philip Neri was a sign of contradiction, combining popularity with piety against



the background of a corrupt Rome and an uninterested clergy, the whole post-Renaissance malaise. Saint Philip possessed a playful humour, combined with a shrewd wit. He considered a cheerful temper to be more Christian than a melancholy one, and carried this spirit into his whole life: "A joyful heart is more easily made perfect than a downcast one."

This was the secret of his popularity and of his place in the folklore of the Roman poor. Many miracles were attributed to him, and it is said that when his body was dissected it was found that two of his ribs had been broken, an event attributed to the expansion of his heart while fervently praying in the catacombs about the year 1545. Benedict XIV, who reorganised the rules for Canonisation, decided that Philip's enlarged heart was caused by an aneurism. Ponnelle and Bordet, in their 1932 biography "St. Philip Neri and the Roman Society of His Times (1515-1595)", conclude that it was partly natural and partly supernatural. What is certain is that Philip himself and his penitents associated it with divine love.

"Practical commonplaceness," says Frederick William Faber in his panegyric of Neri, "was the special mark which distinguishes his form of ascetic piety from the types accredited before his day. He looked like other men ... he was emphatically a modern gentleman, of scrupulous courtesy, sportive gaiety, acquainted with what was going on in the world, taking a real interest in it, giving and getting information, very neatly dressed, with a shrewd common sense always alive about him, in a modern room with modern furniture, plain, it is true, but with no marks of poverty about it—In a word, with all the ease, the gracefulness, the polish of a modern gentleman of good birth, considerable accomplishments, and a very various information." Accordingly, he was ready to meet the needs of his day to an extent and in a manner which even the versatile Jesuits, who much desired to enlist him in their company, did not rival; and, though an Italian priest and head of a new religious order, his genius was entirely unmonastic and unmedieval, frequent and popular preaching, unconventional prayer, and unsystematized, albeit fervent, private devotion.

Philip Neri prayed, "Let me get through today, and I shall not fear tomorrow."

When summoned to hear confessions or to see someone who had called, he came down instantly with the words "We must leave Christ for Christ". Philip was a mystic of the highest order, a man of ecstasies and visions, whose greatest



happiness was to be alone with God. Yet at the call of charity he gave up the delight of prayer and, instead, sought God by helping his neighbour. His whole life is that of the contemplative in action.

Neri had no difficulties in respect of the teaching of his church, being in truth an ardent Ultramontane in doctrine, as was all but inevitable in his time and circumstances, and his great merit was the instinctive tact which showed him that the system of monasticism could never be the leaven of secular life, but that something more homely, simple, and everyday in character was needed for the new time.

Accordingly, the congregation he founded is of the least conventional nature, rather resembling a residential clerical club than a monastery of the older type, and its rules (never written by Neri, but approved by Paul V in 1612) would have appeared incredibly lax, in fact its religious character would seem almost doubtful to men such as Bruno, Stephen Harding, Saint Francis or Saint Dominic. It admits only priests aged at least 36, or ecclesiastics who have completed their studies and are ready for ordination. The members live in community, and each pays his own expenses, having the usufruct of his private means—a startling innovation on the monastic vow of poverty. They have indeed a common table, but it is kept up precisely as a regimental mess, by monthly payments from each member. Nothing is provided by the society except the bare lodging, and the fees of a visiting physician. Everything else—clothing, books, furniture, medicines—must be defrayed at the private charges of each member. There are no vows, and every member of the society is at liberty to withdraw when he pleases, and to take his property with him. The government, strikingly unlike the Jesuit autocracy, is of a republican form; and the superior, though first in honour, has to take his turn in discharging all the duties which come to each priest of the society in the order of his seniority, including that of waiting at table, which is not entrusted in the Oratory to lay brothers, according to the practice in most other communities. Four deputies assist the superior in the government, and all public acts are decided by a majority of votes of the whole congregation, in which the superior has no casting voice. To be chosen superior, 15 years of membership are requisite as a qualification, and the office is tenable, as all the others, for but 3 years at a time. No one can vote until he has been three years in the society; the deliberative voice is not obtained before the eleventh year.



There are thus three classes of members: novices, triennials and decennials. Each house can call its superior to account, can depose, and can restore him, without appeal to any external authority, although the bishop of the diocese in which any house of the Oratory is established is its ordinary and immediate superior, though without power to interfere with the rule. Their churches are non-parochial, and they can perform such rites as baptisms, marriages, etc., only by permission of the parish priest, who is entitled to receive all fees due in respect of these ministrations.

The Oratory chiefly spread in Italy and in France, where in 1760 there were 58 houses all under the government of a superior-general. Nicolas Malebranche, Louis Thomassin, Jules Mascaron and Jean Baptiste Massillon were members of the famous branch established in Paris in 1611 by Bérulle (later cardinal), which had a great success and a distinguished history. It fell in the crash of the French Revolution, but was revived by Père Pététot, curé of Saint Roch, in 1852, as the "Oratory of Jesus and the Immaculate Mary"; the Church of the Oratory near the Louvre belongs to the Reformed Church. An English house, founded in 1847 at Birmingham, is celebrated as the place at which Cardinal Newman fixed his abode after his submission to the Roman Catholic Church. In 1849 a second congregation was founded in King William Street, Strand, London, with FW Faber as superior; in 1854 it was transferred to Brompton, where it is still based. Its church, the Church of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was consecrated on 16 April 1884 and is the second largest Roman Catholic church in London. The society has never thrived in Germany, though a few houses have been founded there, in Munich and also in Vienna, Austria.

Neri encouraged the singing of the lauda spirituale (laude) in his oratory services. The prominent composers Tomás Luis de Victoria and Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina probably participated in this music. His unique and varied aesthetic experience has been highlighted in a study of the young Italian historian Francesco Danieli.

Saint Lucy

Saint Lucy (283–304), also known as Saint Lucia or Santa Lucia, was a young Christian martyr who died during the Diocletian persecution. She is venerated as a saint by the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Lutheran, and Orthodox Churches. She is one of seven women, apart from the Blessed Virgin Mary, commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass. Her feast day in the West is 13 December.



All that is really known for certain of Lucy is that she was a martyr in Syracuse during the Diocletian persecutions of 304 AD. Her veneration spread to Rome, and by the 6th century to the whole Church.

The oldest record of her story comes from the fifth century Acts. Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda Aurea* was the most widely-read version of the Lucy's legend in the Middle Ages. In medieval accounts, Saint Lucy's eyes are gouged out prior to her execution.

All the details of her life are the conventional ones associated with female martyrs of the early 4th century. John Henry Blunt views her story as a Christian romance similar to the 'Acts' of other virgin martyrs.

According to the traditional story, Lucy was born of rich and noble parents about the year 283. Her father was of Roman origin, but died when she was five years old, leaving Lucy and her mother without a protective guardian. Her mother's name Eutychia, seems to indicate that she came of Greek stock.

Like many of the early martyrs, Lucy had consecrated her virginity to God, and she hoped to distribute her dowry to the poor. However, Eutychia, not knowing of Lucy's promise and suffering from a bleeding disorder feared for Lucy's future. She arranged Lucy's marriage to a young man of a wealthy pagan family.

Saint Agatha had been martyred fifty-two years before during the Decian persecution. Her shrine at Catania, less than fifty miles from Syracuse attracted a number of pilgrims; many miracles were reported to have happened through her intercession. Eutychia was persuaded to make a pilgrimage to Catania, in hopes of a cure. While there, Saint Agatha came to Lucy in a dream and told her that because of her faith her mother would be cured and that Lucy would be the glory of Syracuse, as she was of Catania. With her mother cured, Lucy took the opportunity to persuade her mother to allow her to distribute a great part of her riches among the poor.

Eutychia suggested that the sums would make a good bequest, but Lucy countered, "...whatever you give away at death for the Lord's sake you give because you cannot take it with you. Give now to the true Savior, while you are healthy,



whatever you intended to give away at your death.”

News that the patrimony and jewels were being distributed came to Lucy's betrothed, who denounced her to Paschasius, the Governor of Syracuse. Paschasius ordered her to burn a sacrifice to the emperor's image. When she refused Paschasius sentenced her to be defiled in a brothel. The Christian tradition states that when the guards came to take her away, they could not move her even when they hitched her to a team of oxen. Bundles of wood were then heaped about her and set on fire, but would not burn. Finally, she met her death by the sword.

Absent in the early narratives and traditions, at least until the 15th century, is the story of Lucia tortured by eye-gouging. According to later accounts, before she died she foretold the punishment of Paschasius and the speedy end of the persecution, adding that Diocletian would reign no more, and Maximian would meet his end. This so angered Paschasius that he ordered the guards to remove her eyes. Another version has Lucy taking her own eyes out in order to discourage a persistent suitor who admired them. When her body was prepared for burial in the family mausoleum it discovered that her eyes had been miraculously restored.

By the 6th century, her story was sufficiently widespread that she appears in the Sacramentary of Pope Gregory I. She is also commemorated in the ancient Roman Martyrology. Saint Aldhelm (English, died in 709) and later the Venerable Bede (English, died in 735) attest that her popularity had already spread to England, where her festival was kept in England till the Protestant Reformation, as a holy day of the second rank, in which no work but tillage or the like was allowed.

Sigebert of Gembloux wrote a mid-eleventh century passio, to support a local cult of Lucy at Metz.

The Roman Catholic calendar of saints formerly had a commemoration of Saints Lucy and Geminianus on 16 September. This was removed in 1969, as a duplication of the feast of her dies natalis on 13 December and because the Geminianus in question, mentioned in the Passio of Saint Lucy, seems to be a fictitious figure, unrelated to the Geminianus whose feast is on 31 January.

Sigebert (1030–1112), a monk of Gembloux, in his *sermo de Sancta Lucia*, chronicled that her body lay undisturbed in Sicily for 400 years, before Faroald II, Duke of



Spoletto, captured the island and transferred the body to Corfinium in the Abruzzo, Italy. From there it was removed by the Emperor Otho I in 972 to Metz and deposited in the church of Saint Vincent. It was from this shrine that an arm of the saint was taken to the monastery of Luitburg in the Diocese of Speyer - an incident celebrated by Sigebert in verse.

The subsequent history of the relics is not clear. According to Umberto Benigni, Stephen II (768) sent the relics of Saint Lucy to Constantinople for safety against the Saracen incursions. On their capture of Constantinople in 1204, the French found some relics attributed to Saint Lucy in the city, and Enrico Dandolo, Doge of Venice, secured them for the monastery of Saint George at Venice. In 1513 the Venetians presented to Louis XII of France the saint's head, which he deposited in the cathedral church of Bourges. Another account, however, states that the head was brought to Bourges from Rome, where it had been transferred during the time when the relics rested in Corfinium.

The remainder of the relics remain in Venice: they were transferred to the church of San Geremia when the church of Santa Lucia was demolished in 1861 to make way for the new railway terminus. A century later, on 7 November 1981, thieves stole all her bones, except her head. Police recovered them five weeks later, on her feast day. Other parts of the corpse have found their way to Rome, Naples, Verona, Lisbon, Milan, as well as Germany, France and Sweden.

Lucy's Latin name Lucia shares a root (luc-) with the Latin word for light, lux. This has played a large part of Saint Lucy being named as the patron saint of the blind and those with eye-trouble.

She is also the patroness of Syracuse in Sicily, Italy. At the Piazza Duomo in Syracuse, the church of Santa Lucia alla Badia houses the painting "Burial of Saint Lucy (Caravaggio)".

The emblem of eyes on a cup or plate apparently reflects popular devotion to her as protector of sight, because of her name, Lucia (from the Latin word "lux" which means "light"). In paintings Saint Lucy is frequently shown holding her eyes on a golden plate. Lucy was represented in Gothic art holding a dish with two eyes on it. She also hold the palm branch, symbol of victory over evil.



Saint Teresa of Avila

Teresa of Ávila, also called Saint Teresa of Jesus, baptized as Teresa Sánchez de Cepeda y Ahumada, (March 28, 1515 – October 4, 1582) was a prominent Spanish mystic, Roman Catholic saint, Carmelite nun, writer of the Counter Reformation, and theologian of contemplative life through mental prayer. She was a reformer of the Carmelite Order and is considered to be a founder of the Discalced Carmelites along with John of the Cross.

In 1622, forty years after her death, she was canonized by Pope Gregory XV and in September 27, 1970 was named a Doctor of the Church by Pope Paul VI. Her books, which include her autobiography (*The Life of Teresa of Jesus*) and her seminal work *El Castillo Interior* (trans.: *The Interior Castle*) are an integral part of Spanish Renaissance literature as well as Christian mysticism and Christian meditation practices as she entails in her other important work, *Camino de Perfección* (trans.: *The Way of Perfection*).

Teresa de Cepeda y Ahumada was born in 1515 in Gotarrendura, in the province of Ávila, Spain. Her paternal grandfather, Juan de Toledo, was a marrano (Jewish convert to Christianity) and was condemned by the Spanish Inquisition for allegedly returning to the Jewish faith. Her father, Alonso Sánchez de Cepeda, bought a knighthood and successfully assimilated into Christian society. Teresa's mother, Beatriz de Ahumada y Cuevas, was especially keen to raise her daughter as a pious Christian. Teresa was fascinated by accounts of the lives of the saints, and ran away from home at age seven with her brother Rodrigo to find martyrdom among the Moors. Her uncle stopped them as he was returning to the city, having spotted the two outside the city walls.

When Teresa was 14, her mother died, causing the girl a profound grief that prompted her to embrace a deeper devotion to the Virgin Mary as her spiritual mother. Along with this good resolution, however, she also developed immoderate interests in reading popular fiction (consisting, at that time, mostly of medieval tales of knighthood) and caring for her own appearance.

In the cloister, she suffered greatly from illness. Early in her sickness, she experienced periods of religious ecstasy through the use of the devotional book *Tercer abecedario espiritual*, translated as the *Third Spiritual Alphabet* (published



in 1527 and written by Francisco de Osuna). This work, following the example of similar writings of medieval mystics, consisted of directions for examinations of conscience and for spiritual self-concentration and inner contemplation (known in mystical nomenclature as *oratio recollectionis* or *oratio mentalis*). She also employed other mystical ascetic works such as the *Tractatus de oratione et meditatione* of Saint Peter of Alcantara, and perhaps many of those upon which Saint Ignatius of Loyola based his *Spiritual Exercises* and possibly the *Spiritual Exercises* themselves.

She claimed that during her illness she rose from the lowest stage, "recollection", to the "devotions of silence" or even to the "devotions of ecstasy", which was one of perfect union with God. During this final stage, she said she frequently experienced a rich "blessing of tears." As the Catholic distinction between mortal and venial sin became clear to her, she says she came to understand the awful terror of sin and the inherent nature of original sin. She also became conscious of her own natural impotence in confronting sin, and the necessity of absolute subjection to God.

Around 1556, various friends suggested that her newfound knowledge was diabolical, not divine. She began to inflict various tortures and mortifications of the flesh upon herself. But her confessor, the Jesuit Saint Francis Borgia, reassured her of the divine inspiration of her thoughts. On Saint Peter's Day in 1559, Teresa became firmly convinced that Jesus Christ presented himself to her in bodily form, though invisible. These visions lasted almost uninterrupted for more than two years. In another vision, a seraph drove the fiery point of a golden lance repeatedly through her heart, causing an ineffable spiritual-bodily pain.

"I saw in his hand a long spear of gold, and at the point there seemed to be a little fire. He appeared to me to be thrusting it at times into my heart, and to pierce my very entrails; when he drew it out, he seemed to draw them out also, and to leave me all on fire with a great love of God. The pain was so great, that it made me moan; and yet so surpassing was the sweetness of this excessive pain, that I could not wish to be rid of it..."

This vision was the inspiration for one of Bernini's most famous works, the *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa* at Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome.



The memory of this episode served as an inspiration throughout the rest of her life, and motivated her lifelong imitation of the life and suffering of Jesus, epitomized in the motto usually associated with her: Lord, either let me suffer or let me die.

Teresa entered the Carmelite Monastery of the Incarnation in Avila, Spain on November 2, 1535. She found herself increasingly in disharmony with the spiritual malaise prevailing at the Incarnation. Among the 150 nuns living there, the observance of cloister—designed to protect and strengthen the spirit and practice of prayer—became so lax that it actually lost its very purpose. The daily invasion of visitors, many of high social and political rank, vitiated the atmosphere with frivolous concerns and vain conversations. These violations of the solitude absolutely essential to progress in genuine contemplative prayer grieved Teresa to the extent that she longed to do something.

The incentive to give outward practical expression to her inward motive was inspired in Teresa by the Franciscan priest Saint Peter of Alcantara who became acquainted with her as Founder early in 1560, and became her spiritual guide and counselor. She now resolved to found a reformed Carmelite convent, correcting the laxity which she had found in the Cloister of the Incarnation and others. Guimara de Ulloa, a woman of wealth and a friend, supplied the funds. Teresa worked for many years encouraging Spanish Jewish converts to follow Christianity.

The absolute poverty of the new monastery, established in 1562 and named St. Joseph's (San José), at first excited a scandal among the citizens and authorities of Ávila, and the little house with its chapel was in peril of suppression; but powerful patrons, including the bishop himself, as well as the impression of well-secured subsistence and prosperity, turned animosity into applause.

In March 1563, when Teresa moved to the new cloister, she received the papal sanction to her prime principle of absolute poverty and renunciation of property, which she proceeded to formulate into a "Constitution". Her plan was the revival of the earlier, stricter rules, supplemented by new regulations such as the three disciplines of ceremonial flagellation prescribed for the divine service every week, and the disalceation of the nun. For the first five years, Teresa remained in pious seclusion, engaged in writing.



In 1567, she received a patent from the Carmelite general, Rubeo de Ravenna, to establish new houses of her order, and in this effort and later visitations she made long journeys through nearly all the provinces of Spain. Of these she gives a description in her "Libro de las Fundaciones." Between 1567 and 1571, reform convents were established at Medina del Campo, Malagon, Valladolid, Toledo, Pastrana, Salamanca, and Alba de Tormes.

As part of her original patent, Teresa was given permission to set up two houses for men who wished to adopt the reforms; she convinced John of the Cross and Anthony of Jesus to help with this. They founded the first convent of Discalced Carmelite Brethren in November 1568 at Duruello. Another friend, Gerónimo Gracian, Carmelite visitor of the older observance of Andalusia and apostolic commissioner, and later provincial of the Teresian reforms, gave her powerful support in founding convents at Segovia (1571), Beas de Segura (1574), Seville (1575), and Caravaca de la Cruz (Murcia, 1576), while the deeply mystical John, by his power as teacher and preacher, promoted the inner life of the movement.

In 1576 a series of persecutions began on the part of the older observant Carmelite order against Teresa, her friends, and her reforms. Pursuant to a body of resolutions adopted at the general chapter at Piacenza, the "definitors" of the order forbade all further founding of convents. The general chapter condemned her to voluntary retirement to one of her institutions. She obeyed and chose Saint Joseph's at Toledo. Her friends and subordinates were subjected to greater trials.

Finally, after several years her pleadings by letter with King Philip II of Spain secured relief. As a result, in 1579, the processes before the inquisition against her, Gracian, and others were dropped, which allowed the reform to continue. A brief of Pope Gregory XIII allowed a special provincial for the younger branch of the discalced nuns, and a royal rescript created a protective board of four assessors for the reform.

During the last three years of her life, Teresa founded convents at Villanueva de la Jara in northern Andalusia (1580), Palencia (1580), Soria (1581), Burgos, and Granada (1582). In total seventeen convents, all but one founded by her, and as many men's cloisters were due to her reform activity of twenty years.

Her final illness overtook her on one of her journeys from Burgos to Alba de



Tormes. She died in 1582, just as Catholic nations were making the switch from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar, which required the removal of October 5–14 from the calendar. She died either before midnight of October 4 or early in the morning of October 15, which is celebrated as her feast day. Her last words were: "My Lord, it is time to move on. Well then, may your will be done. O my Lord and my Spouse, the hour that I have longed for has come. It is time to meet one another."

In 1622, forty years after her death, she was canonized by Pope Gregory XV. The Cortes exalted her to patroness of Spain in 1617, and the University of Salamanca previously conferred the title *Doctor ecclesiae* with a diploma. The title is Latin for Doctor of the Church, but is distinct from the papal honor of Doctor of the Church, which is always conferred posthumously and was finally bestowed upon her by Pope Paul VI in December 27, 1970 along with Saint Catherine of Siena making them the first women to be awarded the distinction. Teresa is revered as the Doctor of Prayer. The mysticism in her works exerted a formative influence upon many theologians of the following centuries, such as Francis of Sales, Fénelon, and the Port-Royalists.

The kernel of Teresa's mystical thought throughout all her writings is the ascent of the soul in four stages (The Autobiography Chs. 10-22):

The first, or "mental prayer", is that of devout contemplation or concentration, the withdrawal of the soul from without and specially the devout observance of the passion of Christ and penitence (Autobiography 11.20).

The second is the "prayer of quiet", in which at least the human will is lost in that of God by virtue of a charismatic, supernatural state given of God, while the other faculties, such as memory, reason, and imagination, are not yet secure from worldly distraction. While a partial distraction is due to outer performances such as repetition of prayers and writing down spiritual things, yet the prevailing state is one of quietude (Autobiography 14.1).

The "devotion of union" is not only a supernatural but an essentially ecstatic state. Here there is also an absorption of the reason in God, and only the memory and imagination are left to ramble. This state is characterized by a blissful peace, a sweet slumber of at least the higher soul faculties, a conscious rapture in the love of God.



The fourth is the "devotion of ecstasy or rapture," a passive state, in which the consciousness of being in the body disappears (2 Corinthians 12:2-3). Sense activity ceases; memory and imagination are also absorbed in God or intoxicated. Body and spirit are in the throes of a sweet, happy pain, alternating between a fearful fiery glow, a complete impotence and unconsciousness, and a spell of strangulation, intermitted sometimes by such an ecstatic flight that the body is literally lifted into space. This after half an hour is followed by a reactionary relaxation of a few hours in a swoon-like weakness, attended by a negation of all the faculties in the union with God. From this the subject awakens in tears; it is the climax of mystical experience, productive of the trance. Indeed, she was said to have been observed levitating during Mass on more than one occasion

Teresa is one of the foremost writers on mental prayer, and her position among writers on mystical theology is unique. In all her writings on this subject she deals with her personal experiences, which a deep insight and analytical gifts enabled her to explain clearly. Her definition was used in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "Contemplative prayer [oración mental] in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us."

Throughout her writings, persistent metaphors provide a vivid illustration of the image of mystic prayer as watering a garden.

Saint Paschal Baylon

Saint Paschal Baylon (or Pascal Baylon) (24 May 1540 – 17 May 1592) was a Spanish friar and is a saint in the Roman Catholic Church. He is the patron saint of Eucharistic congresses and Eucharistic associations.

He was born at Torrehermosa, in the Kingdom of Aragon, on 24 May 1540, on the Feast of Pentecost, called in Spain "the Pasch (or "Passover") of the Holy Ghost", hence the name Paschal. His parents, Martin Baylon and Elizabeth Jubera, were poor peasants. He spent his youth as a shepherd. He would carry a book with him and beg passersby to teach him the alphabet and to read, and as he toiled in the fields he would read religious books.

In around 1564, he joined the Reformed Franciscan Order (Alcantarine Reform) as



a lay brother. He chose to live in poor monasteries because, he said, "I was born poor and am resolved to die in poverty and penance." He lived a life of poverty and prayer, even praying while working, for the rest of his life.

He was a mystic and contemplative, and he had frequent ecstatic visions. He would spend the night before the altar in prayer many nights. At the same time, he sought to downplay any glory that might come from this piety. He died on 17 May, which is his current feast day, in 1592.

His tomb in the Royal Chapel in Villareal in the old province of Valencia, where he died, immediately became an object of pilgrimage. Beatified by Paul V in 1618, he was canonized by Alexander VIII on 16 October 1690. The saint is usually depicted in adoration before a vision of the Eucharist.

Forty years before he was canonized, an indigenous Guatemalan claimed to have had a vision of a sainted Paschal Baylon, appearing as a robed skeleton. This event became the basis of the heterodox tradition of San Pascualito.

Paschal Baylon was enlisted in the Church's struggle against Modernism, part of which was through increasing devotion towards the Sacrament of the Eucharist; Pope Leo XIII proclaimed Saint Paschal Baylon, the "seraph of the Eucharist", patron of eucharistic congresses, and all contemporary and future eucharistic associations. Christian art usually depicts him wearing the Franciscan habit and bearing a monstrance, signifying his devotion to the Holy Eucharist.

During the Red Terror at the time of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), his grave was desecrated and his relics burned by anticlerical leftists.

