

# Patrology

*Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct. (Hebrews 13:7)*

# What is Patrology?

- Patrology – is the study of early Christianity, esp. the writings and teachings of church fathers; also called patristics, patristic study.

# Why is Patrology important?

- In our orthodox church, we depend on 3 resources:
  - The Holy Bible
  - The church Fathers
  - Tradition

# Why study Patrology?

- The early church fathers helped in keeping the teachings without change or alterations.
- Historical Reasons:
  - The Patristic literature is the primary source material for reconstructing the history of the church during the period with which we are concerned.
- Doctrinal Reasons:
  - The Patristic literature is the primary source material for reconstructing the early history of Dogma. For the Orthodox Church, the Fathers are a major source and authority alongside Holy Scripture and are venerated as such.
- Liturgical Reasons:
  - The Patristic literature is the primary source material for reconstructing the early history of the liturgy. In addition to the texts of the liturgies, Patristic literature gives us such things as the descriptions of practices, quotations of early prayers, hymns, rituals, etc.

# Why study Patrology?

- Biographical Reasons:
  - Many of the writers were outstanding personalities worth studying in their own right.
  - Patristics gives us insight into their character, etc.
- Spiritual Reasons:
  - The Fathers of the Church are saints not only because of their vast knowledge, but also because of their deep spirituality.
  - According to the teachings of the Church, there can be no real separation between theology and spirituality.
  - The Fathers are examples to us by their conduct, way of life, and holiness.

# Some of the writings

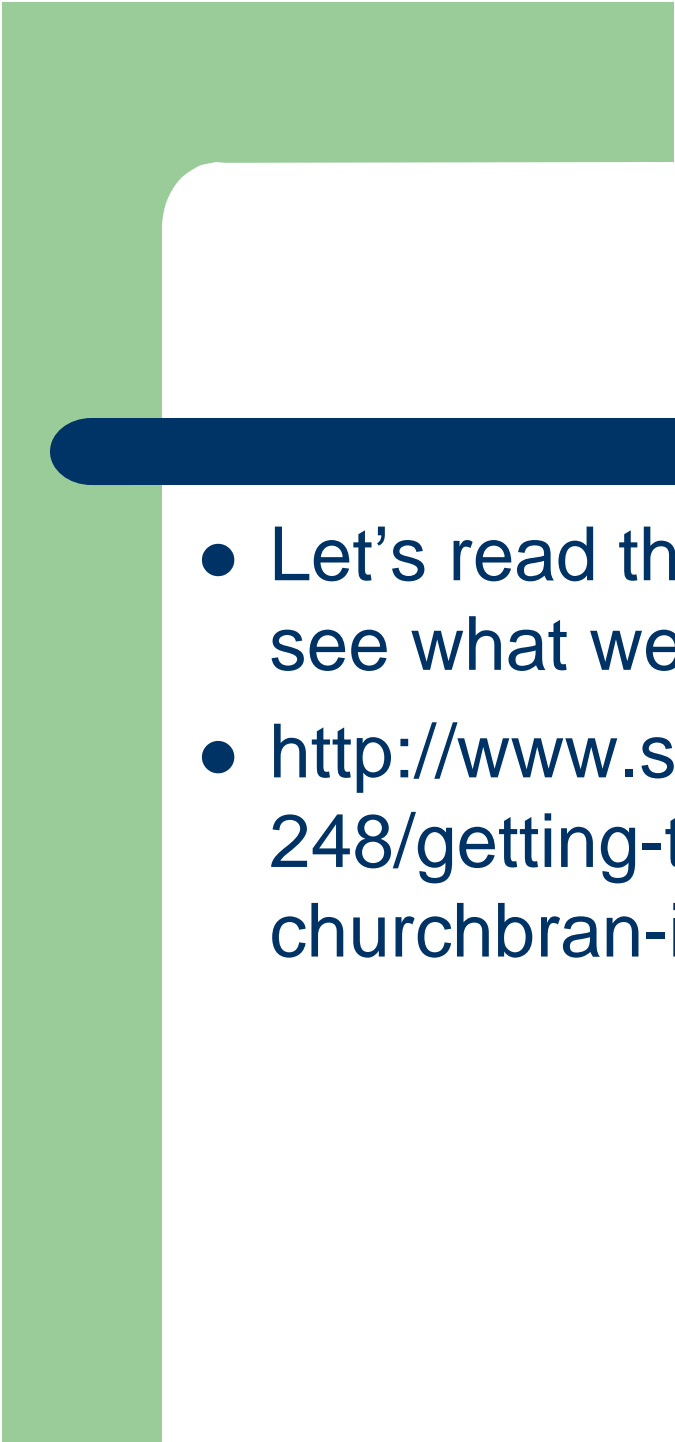

- Epistles - (epistle = formal letter)
- Homiletic works - (homiletic = art of preaching)
- Apologetic works - (apologetic = defense or proof of)
- Controversial literature - Describing, condemning, and arguing against teachers and heretics.
- Biblical commentaries
- Catechetical letters - (catechetical = pertaining to teaching)
- Personal works - such as poems by St. Gregory Nazianzen or St. Augustine's "Confessions."

# Some of the church Fathers

- Ante-Nicene, Nicene, Post-Nicene Fathers
- St. Anthony the Great
- St. Isaac the Syrian
- St. Isidore
- St. Shenouda
- Abba Poemen
- St. Athanasius
- St. John Chrysostom
- St. Cyril of Alexandria
- St. Basil

## How does this affect me?

- I now understand what are the main resources of the church.
- When I like to understand/look up any topics, Bible verses, I go to one of the church Fathers and look up what they have to say about it.
- Learn from the Saints, how they lived their lives and learn from their sayings.

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- Let's read the interview with St. Anthony and see what we can learn from him.
  - <http://www.suscopts.org/resources/literature/248/getting-to-know-the-fathers-of-the-churchbran-inte/>