

Melito of Sardis (d. 180?) is another of those who worked on dialogues particularly with Jewish listeners and left us a canon of Sacred Scripture (OT).

Need we say that more apologists could be named? To this list we could add Arnobius, Julius, etc., but what is said for the men of Martyr's class would apply to them as well: their great contribution to Historical Theology is showing the viability of the Christian faith and its place in the western world as a continuing part of the revealed plan of God's redemption.

#### 4. The Christian Polemicists

In a very general way, as noted earlier among our definitions, the apologists address their messages to the outer world while the polemicists seek to solve problems within the church fellowship. This is a very general guide and it should not be thought that scholastic works can ever be divided that easily or consistently. The concepts are based on the major stresses of the works of individuals and not particular opinions or teachings given in a specific area. Among the major contributing polemicists we list the following:

##### a. Irenaeus (115-202)

One of my favorite early writers, his major work, Against Heresies, was a forceful thrust at the gnostic movements that infiltrated the church and into which a number of believers were drawn. He shows profound knowledge of the Old Testament and seems to be familiar with most of the New Testament canonical books. His method is largely exegetical, biblical observations blended with precise and developed reasoning. In Irenaeus you will find many embryonic theological ideals not fully developed for centuries. You will be impressed with the thoroughness of his knowledge although, as with other fathers, there will be times when you will not agree with him.

##### b. Hippolytus (d. 235)

Working with tough theological questions, Hippolytus prepared a masterwork, the Refutation of All Heresies in which he spent much time arguing against Sabellianism (monarchianism), Gnosticism, and other innovative teachings in the early church. Monarchianism, with the confusion it brought to the trinitarian ideals, was his special subject and he deals competently with Noetus and others of that school. His work Apostolic Tradition purportedly sets the teaching of the Apostles beyond the canonical books. More research is available on this writer today than just a few years ago...much interest has been renewed in him.

##### c. Tertullian (d. 220)

An extremely prolific writer, Tertullian