

A "father" is one deemed by the church at large as having a foundational role in the establishment of Christianity. In both the Roman and Greek churches they are catalogued...our history does not go to sufficient depth to have a listing of our own. On page 58 I have a view of some of the fathers with regard to their orientation and character of service.

2. The Apostolic Fathers

Just a quick reminder of their service..we have seen them before. But much of the later traditional church ideology grows from this period as in the "Apostolic Constitutions" and other administrative works of the age. Apart from the writings you will want to remember:

- Papias
- Clement
- Ignatius
- Martyr (Justin)

3. The Ante-Nicene Fathers

Among the many, the following are notable and I will probably comment briefly on some of them.

- Irenaeus: Famous for the book "Against Heresies" and for his success in preventing the Easter controversy from dividing the church in its more formative years.
- Hippolytus: His book "The Refutation of All Heresies" only came to light at the close of the last century. He opposed the Roman bishops Zephyrinus and Callistus on the grounds that they were monarchians and wrote a futurist commentary on Revelation.
- Tertullian: Not officially a father since he had a time as a Montanist..but a father in the eyes of most of us in evangelical circles. Inventor of theological terms and "one line" definitions of truth. Strong polemicist, wrote against infant baptism which, indirectly, will tell you something.
- Cyprian: Out of Carthage in the days of great persecution he worked much in ecclesiology and argued for the parity of bishops and the unity of the Christian community.