

CHURCH HISTORY LITERACY

The Desert Fathers

Lesson 21

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Little Portion Hermitage

What is a “hermit?”

THE BEST OF

MGM



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HERMAN'S HERMITS



What is a “hermit?”

Desert dweller

“Hermit”

Desert dweller



“Hermit”

Greek: *eremites*

Desert dweller



“Hermit”

Greek: *eremites*

Desert dweller



A desert life of relative solitude and ascetic living
to find greater purity and fellowship



The founder
of the hermit
movement -
St. Antony

**ANCIENT
CHRISTIAN
WRITERS**



ST. ATHANASIUS

**THE LIFE OF
ST. ANTONY**

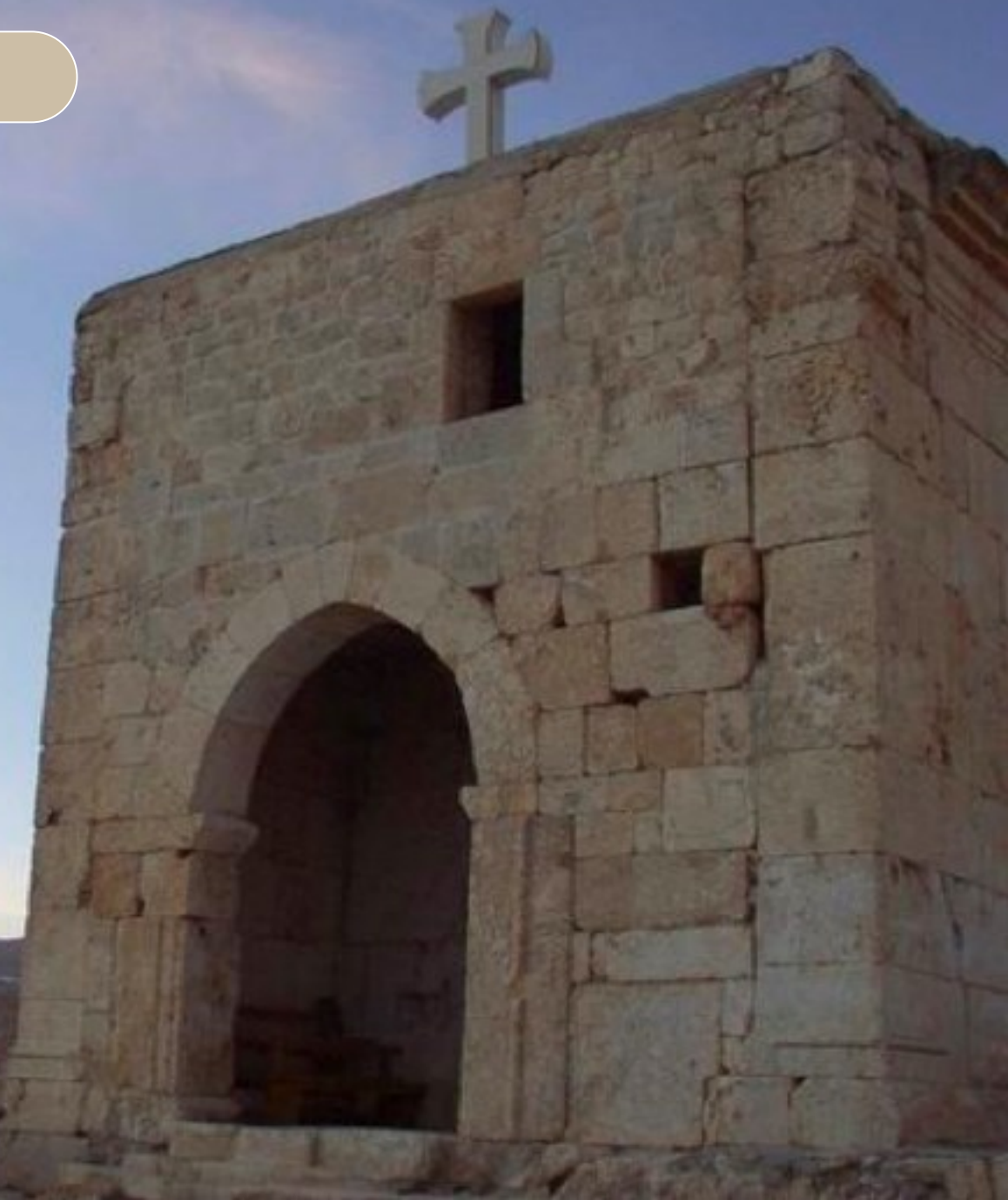
**Paulist Press
Edition is quite
readable**



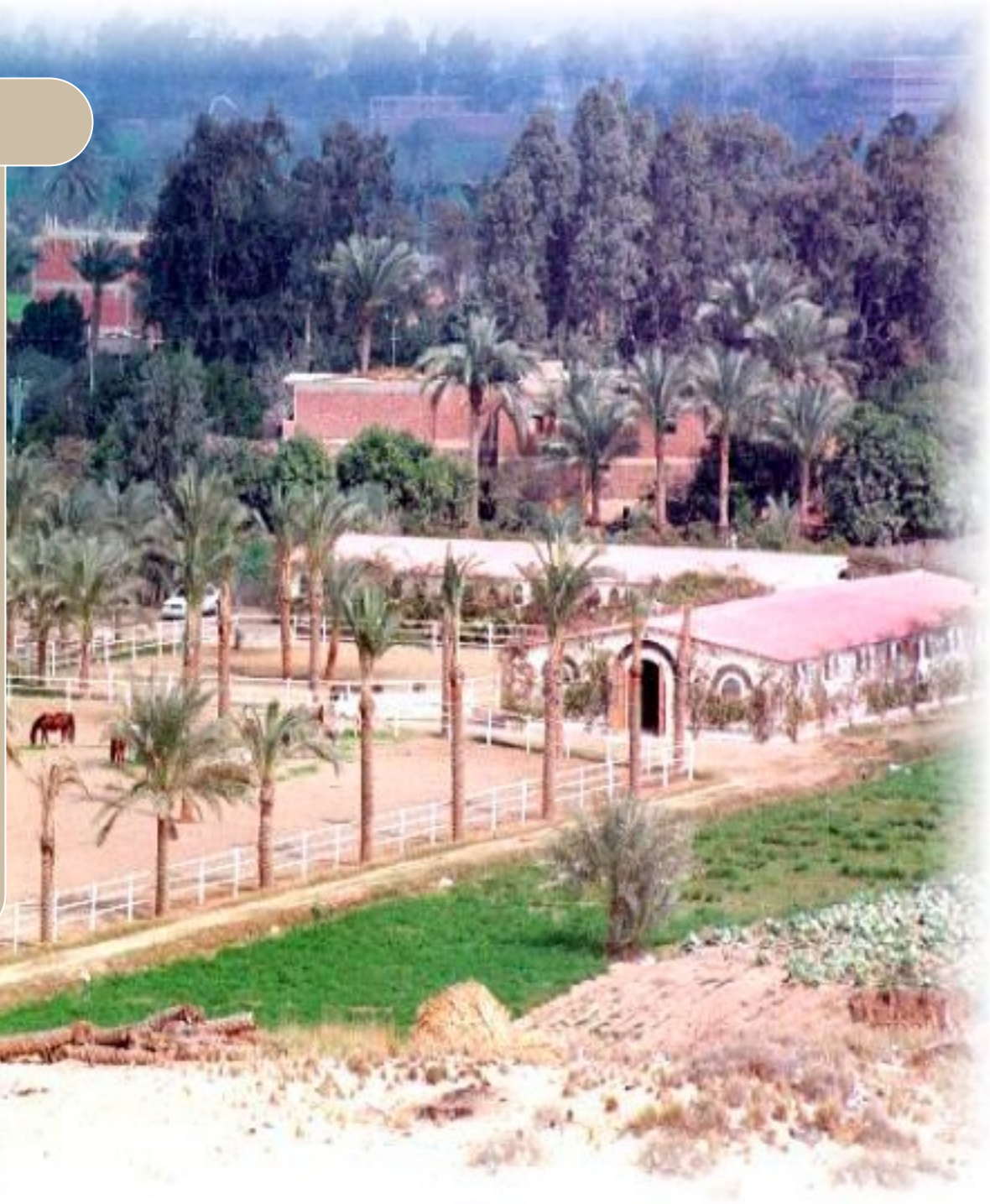
The early life
of Antony was
unusual



“If you want to
be perfect, go,
sell your
possessions and
give to the poor,
and you will
have treasure in
heaven” Mt.
19:21



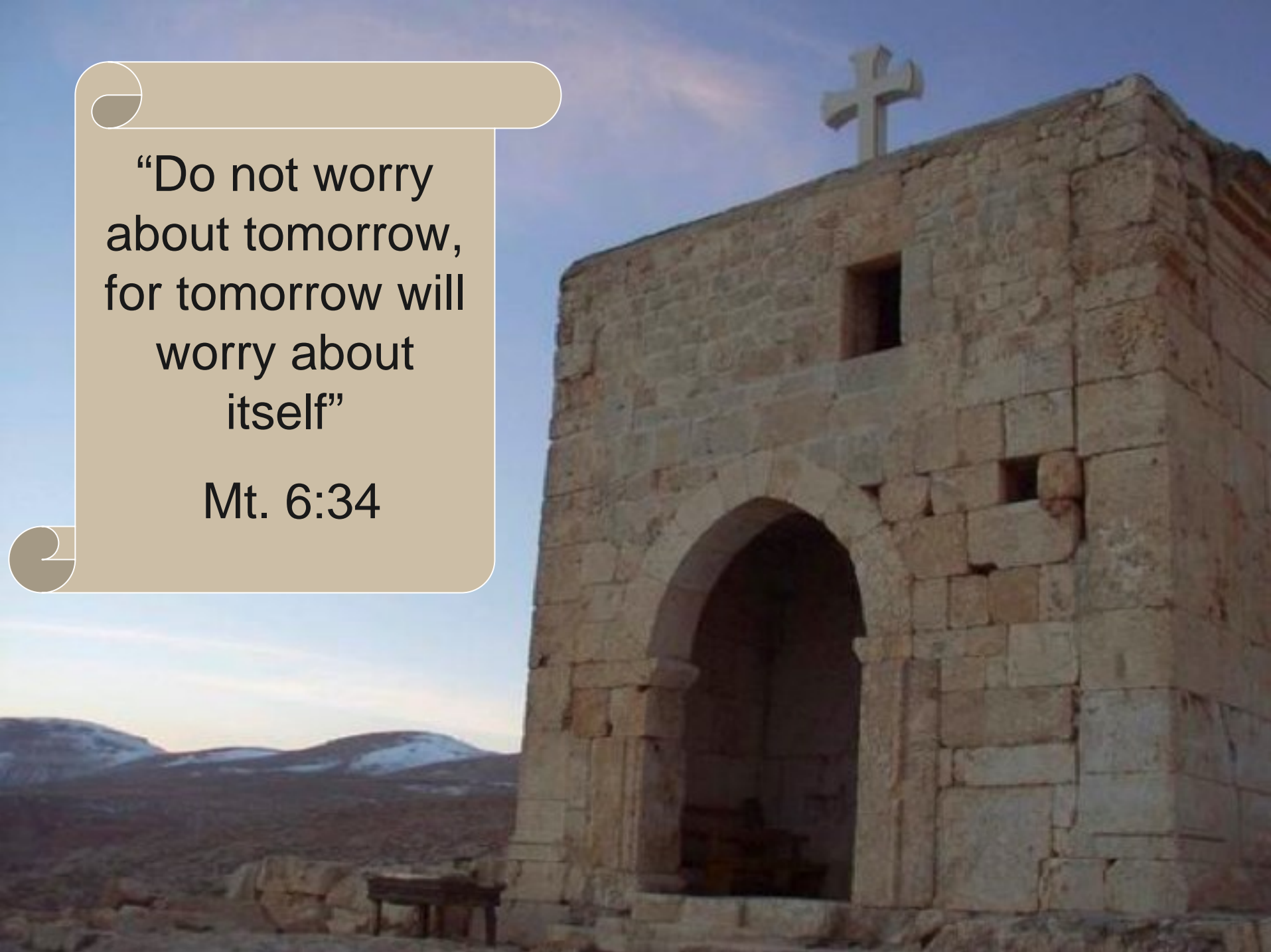
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19:21





“Do not worry
about tomorrow,
for tomorrow will
worry about
itself”

Mt. 6:34





“Ascetic”



“Ascetic”

The practice of rigorous self denial as a spiritual discipline.



Antony learned from others



Antony learned from others

ascetic practice.²⁴ He observed the graciousness of one, the earnestness at prayer in another; studied the even temper of one and the kindheartedness of another; fixed his attention on the vigils kept by one and on the studies pursued by another; admired one for his patient endurance, another for his fasting and sleeping on the ground; watched closely this man's meekness and the forbearance shown by another; and in one and all alike he marked especially devotion to Christ and the love they had for one another.²⁵

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**“If a man will
not work, he
shall not eat.” 2
Thes. 3:10**



**“If a man will
not work, he
shall not eat.” 2
Thes. 3:10**

“Pray continually” 1 Thes. 5:17



Much of the
book deals with
demonology



**Much of the
book deals with
demonology**

Satan “could not bear to see such resolution in a young man,” so he resorted to his “usual tactics”

Overdrive:





Overdrive:

Suggest filthy
thoughts



Overdrive:

**Suggest filthy
thoughts**

Try to incite to lust



Overdrive:



ggest the
thoughts

Try to incite... t

Tactics:



Tactics:

Pleasures of eating





Tactics:

Pleasures of eating

Love of money



Tactics:

Pleasures of eating

Love of money

Love of fame



Tactics:

Pleasures of eating

Love of money

Love of fame

Comfort concerns



Tactics:

Pleasures of eating

Love of money

Love of fame

Comfort concerns

Overcame with faith, prayer and fasting



Tactics:

Pleasures of eating

Love of money

Love of fame

Comfort concerns

“Thus all who fight in earnest can say, ‘Not I, but the grace of God with me’” 1 Cor 15:10





Another
weapon Antony
used was song



“Though an
army besiege
me, my heart will
not fear” Ps.
27:3



“May God arise,
may his enemies
be scattered;
may his foes flee
before him”
Ps.68

“Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” Eph 6:12



**Demons have
no real power
over believers**



**Demons have
no real power
over believers**



**Demons have
no real power
over believers**

“If you have received the power to do this against me, I am ready to be devoured by you; if you have been sent by demons, get out without delay, for I am Christ’s servant.”



**Demons have
no real power
over believers**



**Antony's living
conditions:
sparse and
ascetic**



**Antony's living
conditions:
sparse and
ascetic**



**Antony's living
conditions:
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ascetic**

“When I am weak, then I am strong.”

2 Cor. 12:10



**Antony's living
conditions:
sparse and
ascetic**



**Antony's living
conditions:
sparse and
ascetic**

“The soul's energy thrives when the body's desires are feeblest.”



20 years of
seclusion



**Between
Antony and
Constantine,
the monastic
life took off in
Egypt**



Anthony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks

“The scriptures are
adequate for our instruction”



**Antony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks**

“Start over each day, work to increase your zeal from before”



**Anthony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks**

The whole world is “a very trifling thing compared to all of Heaven”



**Antony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks**

The whole world is “a very trifling thing compared to all of Heaven”



**Antony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks**

So the ascetic never boasts!

Earthly things disappear, go for “justice, understanding, charity, love of the poor, meekness, hospitality, faith”



**Antony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks**

Sing Psalms, memorize
scripture, flee conceit and
pray continually

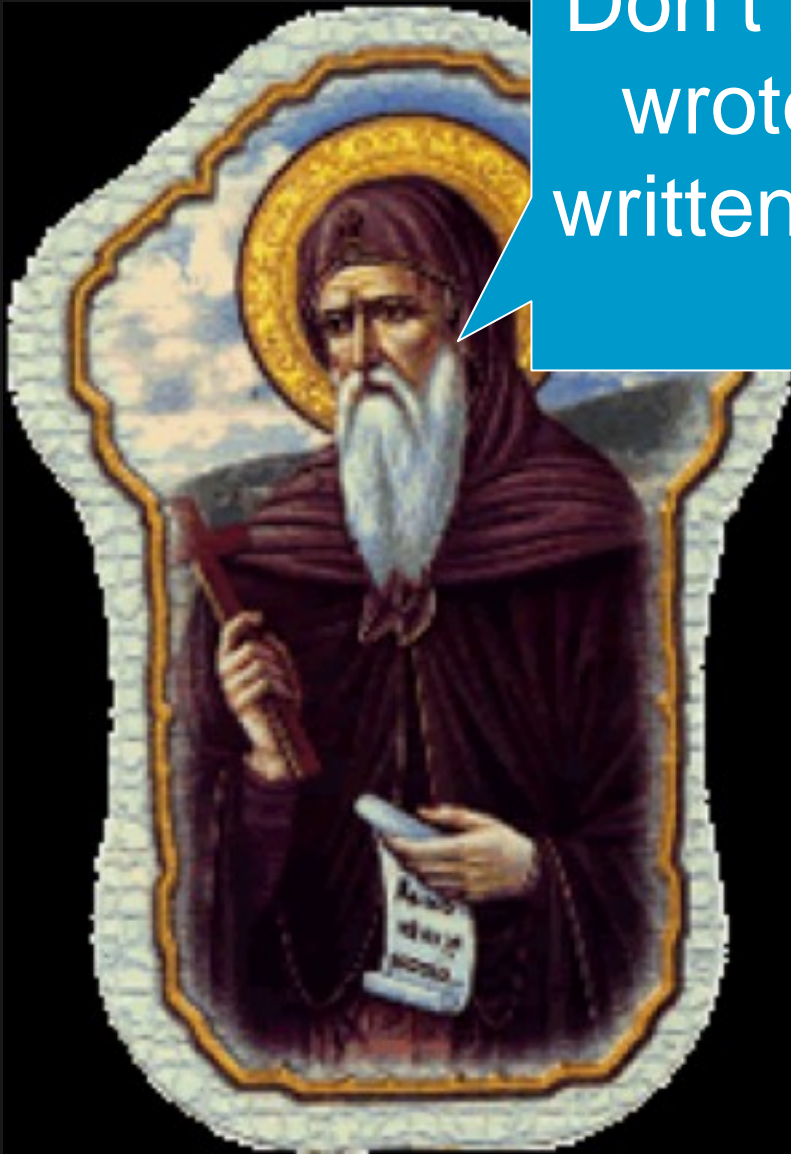


**Antony (the
“Abbot”) teaches
the monks**



Antony and Constantine

Don't be surprised the Emperor wrote, be surprised God has written his law and spoken to us through His Son



Antony and Constantine



Antony a miracle
worker



Antony a miracle
worker

Or not!



Antony's death



Antony's death

Points for Home

- Elijah, Moses, John the Baptist, Jesus, Paul

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- Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given you as well (Mt 6:33)

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- Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things will be given you as well (Mt 6:33)
- The Lord is my Shepherd (Ps. 23)
- Let us through off everything that hinders us (Heb 12:1)
- Have you had your quiet time?