

Chapter 1 : Chapter 6: The Martyrdom of Cyprian of Carthage (Ad), by Vijoy T. Oommen " Religion Onli

Saint Cyprian (Latin: Thascus Cācilii Cyprianus; c. - September 14, AD) was bishop of Carthage and a notable Early Christian writer of Berber descent, many of whose Latin works are extant.

Cyprian of Carthage A. The Fathers of the Church spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, defended the Church in apologetic writing and fought the many heresies of the first six centuries of Christianity. These men, also called Apostolic Fathers, gave special witness to the faith, some dying the death of a martyr. Like Jesus who referred to Abraham as a spiritual father Luke Paul, who referred to himself in the same terms 1 Corinthians 4: Periodically we will provide biographical information and examples of the writing of these great men of faith. This page will focus on St. Caecilius Cyprianus Thascius, St. Cyprian was born in Carthage between A. His parents were wealthy pagans and he did not convert until AD. Pontius says he was a dignified but cheerful man. He was a skilled administrator and a man of great energy and character. He became Bishop of Carthage in A. He stood against heresies at the Council of Carthage in A. Stephen over the issue of rebaptism of converted heretics. Cyprian followed the African custom to consider invalid any baptism conferred by heretical groups. The Lapsed A. You cannot be a communicant at the table of the Lord and of the table of devils" 1 Cor Indeed, he but sins the more if, thinking that God is like man, he believes that he can escape the punishment of his crime by not openly admitting his crime. And to you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: Papal primacy is clear in the first edition written about A. On him He builds the Church, and to him He gives the command to feed the sheep; and although He assigns a like power to all the Apostles, yet He founded a single chair, and He established by His own authority a source and an intrinsic reason for that unity. Indeed, the others were that also which Peter was; but a primacy is given to Peter, whereby it is made clear that there is but one Church and one chair. So too, all our shepherds, and the flock is shown to be one, fed by all the Apostles in single-minded accord. If someone does not hold fast to this unity of Peter, can he imagine that he still holds the faith? If he desert the chair of Peter upon whom the Church was built, can he still be confident that his is in the Church? Indeed, the other Apostles were that also which Peter was, being endowed with an equal portion of dignity and power; but the origin is grounded in unity, so that it may be made clear that there is but one Church of Christ. If he resists and withstands the Church, can he still be confident that he is in the Church, when the blessed Apostle Paul teaches this very thing and displays the sacred sign of unity when he says: The episcopate is one, of which each bishop holds his part within the undivided structure. The Church also is one, however widely she has spread among the multitude through her fruitful increase. The Church is bathed in the light of the Lord , and pours her rays over the whole world; but it is one light that is spread everywhere , and the unity of her structure is undivided. That Melchizedek is in fact a type of Christ is declared in the psalms by the Holy Spirit, saying to the Son, as it were from the Father: The order certainly is that which comes from his sacrifice and which comes down from it: And who is more a priest of the Most High God than our Lord Jesus Christ, who when He offered sacrifice to God the Father, offered the very same which Melchizedek had offered, namely bread and wine, which is in fact His Body and Blood! Letter of Cyprian to Puppianus who had judged him unworthy of being a bishop: Fancy anyone issuing a summons to bishops, the appointed leaders [praepositos et sacerdotes] to attend his court of inquiry. And unless we are cleared before your bench and are acquitted by your verdict, the brethren will have no overseer [episcopum] these last six years, the people no leader [praepositum], the flock no shepherd [pastorem], the Church no helmsman [gubernatorem], Christ no priest [antisitem], and God no bishop [sacerdotem]. Otherwise it could be thought that the great number of the faithful who have been called away to their rest [died] during our time may have departed without the hope of peace and salvation; it could be considered that a whole new flock of converts may have received through us no grace of baptism and the Holy Spirit; it could be judged that the reconciliation and restoration to communion which we have conferred [through the sacrament of Confession], after examination, upon so many of the penitent lapsed may be rendered null and void by the authority of your verdict.

Chapter 2 : Life and Works of Cyprian of Carthage (4 vols.) - Logos Bible Software

Cyprian (Munster,); RITSCHL, Cyprian v. K. und die Verfassung der Kirche (Gottingen,); BENSON, Cyprian, his life, his times, his work (London,). (This is the fullest and best English life; it is full of enthusiasm, but marred by odium theologicum, and quite untrustworthy when controversial point arise, whether against.

Christian theologian and bishop [died] Written By: See Article History Alternative Title: Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus St. Upon his execution he became the first bishop- martyr of Africa. Bishop during the Decian persecution Cyprian was born of wealthy pagan parents and was educated in law. He practiced as a lawyer in Carthage before he was converted to Christianity about In baptism he found complete release from the sinful and useless life he believed he had led hitherto. Within two years he was elected bishop of Carthage and a few months later, early in , was confronted by the Decian persecution. He went into hiding. Bereft of his leadership, thousands of Christians apostatized rejected their faith or obtained libelli certificates , by which they declared that they had sacrificed to the pagan gods. When the persecution began to diminish, the confessorsâ€”i. Cyprian returned to Carthage early and at a council of bishops in May was able to regain his authority. The decision of the council was that, though no one should be totally excluded from penance, those who truly had sacrificed their faith the sacrificati should be readmitted only on their deathbeds, and those who had merely accepted certificates the libellatici were to be readmitted after varying periods of penance. Three important principles of church discipline were thus established. First, the right and power to remit deadly sins , even that of apostasy , lay in the hands of the church; second, the final authority in disciplinary matters rested with the bishops in council as repositories of the Holy Spirit ; and, third, unworthy members among the laity must be accepted in the New Israel of Christianity just as in the Old Israel of Judaism. In a renewed threat of persecution by the emperor Gallus encouraged a speedier reintegration of the lapsed, because many now wanted to prove themselves as martyrs. In the same year, the steadfastness of the Christian clergy in face of a plague won for the church further popular support, and Cyprian defeated internal enemies who had set up a rival bishop in Carthage. Relations with Rome In the summer of his position was tested again, by a dispute with Stephen , bishop of Rome â€” Until then relations between the churches of Carthage and Rome had been cordial. In Cyprian had supported Bishop Cornelius against his rival, Novatian , and had written on his behalf the treatise On the Unity of the Catholic Church , which stressed the centrality of the see of Peter Rome as the source of the episcopacy. Though Cyprian may have written two drafts of an important passage concerning the primacy of the chair of Peter, he implied no acceptance of Roman jurisdictional prerogatives. The council decided that the congregations not only had a right but a duty to separate themselves from a cleric who had committed a deadly sin such as apostasy. Cyprian wrote Letter 67 that the Holy Spirit was no longer in such a priest and that his sacraments would lead to perdition and not salvation. Within months there was an even more serious dispute with Rome. For a few years the supporters of Novatian had been active in Africa, asserting against Cyprian that no forgiveness for lapsed Christians was possible. Many of those whom they had baptized clamoured to be admitted to the church. Was their baptism valid or not? In Rome, Stephen, confronted by the same problem, decided that all baptism in the name of the Trinity was valid. The Africans at first were of two minds on the issue, and Cyprian held three councils between the autumn of and September The last, at which 87 bishops were present, decided unanimously that there could be no baptism outside the church, just as there could not be faith, hope, or salvation for those outside it. A minister could not dispense what he himself did not possessâ€”namely, the Holy Spirit. Those who had received baptism from Novatianists had to be baptized anew. Behind this clash over rites lay the more fundamental question concerning the nature of the church. Baptism entailed total renunciation of the world and the reception of the Spirit. Meanwhile, persecution had been renewed by the emperor Valerian â€” On August 30, , Cyprian was summoned before the proconsul , Aspasius Paternus, and was assigned an enforced residence at Curubis Kurba on the Gulf of Hammamet. Following a more severe edict the next year, he was brought back to Carthage, tried, and condemned to death. During the previous seven years his character had matured, and he had shown himself to be a brave and resourceful leader of the church in Africa. His theology was based on the

central idea of the unity and uniqueness of the church: Unity was expressed through the consensus of bishops, all equally possessing the Holy Spirit and sovereign in their own sees. The church consisted of the people united to their bishop. Schism and rebellion against the priesthood were viewed as the worst of sins. These viewsâ€”associated with an uncompromising insistence on the integrity and exclusive character of the church, which are believed to have been derived from the North African theologian Tertullian â€”received divine sanction for most North African Christians through his martyrdom.

Chapter 3 : Monergist Father: Cyprian of Carthage

Cyprian (c. A.D.) was born to a wealthy pagan family in North African Carthage. He grew up outside of the Christian faith, converting to Christianity only later in life. He was baptized at the age of 40 and he marked this occasion of a new phase in his life by selling everything that he had in order to give the proceeds to the poor.

Augustine to worship in the Episcopal Church tradition. The present church building was consecrated in For many decades the parish thrived as a cornerstone of spiritual life in the Lincolnville neighborhood of St. Augustine, and teachers, shop owners, attorneys, doctors and dentists were counted among the membership during its prosperous years. However, when the national Episcopal Church began welcoming and affirming gays and lesbians in its life and leadership, a significant group of St. Following the schism a faithful remnant of St. Trinity did not escape the racial turmoil of the post-Confederate south. In the face of the racial segregation at the time, St. However, one woman was too devoted to her faith to give it up. Jackson moved to St. Augustine and visited Trinity nearly thirty years after the Civil War, she could see why African Americans were uncomfortable there. She wrote to Bishop Edwin Gardner Weed with her concerns. Then she invited some friends and started preaching her faith wherever comfortable space was available. Bishop Weed soon sent a deacon to take over for Mrs. Jackson, and in , the Florida diocese reported the first African American Episcopal congregation in St. It consisted of twenty members meeting for services in a rented building. The African-American congregation named their new Episcopal church after Saint Cyprian of Carthage in northern Africa, whose life bears a striking resemblance to that of Saint Augustine , also of Africa. It is assumed that Saint Cyprian was a person of color and therefore was a logical choice to be the patron saint of this new congregation. In , their devotion was rewarded by the generosity of a wealthy member of their white sister church, Trinity Parish. Emma White was the wife of a New York stock broker. As the story goes, Mrs. White heard the St. She embarked on a campaign to provide them a home worthy of their faith. White donated a lot on the corner of Central Avenue and Lovett Street. Then she solicited donations from her friends in Florida and Connecticut. She also provided the building plans, which resembled her own house and church in Connecticut. In , Bishop Edwin Gardener Weed proudly consecrated the unique and beautiful new church in the presence of the congregation, the local newspaper, and many St. Its steeply pitched roof, heart pine interior, and diamond-shaped windows made it an immediate treasure for the city. Cassey as its first deacon-in-charge. Cassey moved to St. Augustine at the age of For the next seventeen years, Fr. Cassey built the church up into a solid, comfortably segregated pillar of Lincolnville. A large concourse formed the procession to the place of burial. Cassey, and he certainly left his mark on the church. The standard was set for working in and with the community around the church. By the s, many of St. One of those professionals was Dr. He and his equally accomplished wife, Rosalie, are memorialized for their church involvement by a stained-glass window at St. Rosalie was further memorialized by a tribute Representative John Mica presented to Congress in The Gordons met at a St. When the civil rights movement came to St. Augustine, several African American churches hosted rallies, meetings, and training for the movement. Rather than risk losing their jobs for participating in demonstrations, many at St. Overall, the congregation stayed safe, albeit somewhat isolated. In the decades following the civil rights actions in St. Few of the children who grew up in St. Some took their college degrees to larger cities, such as Washington D. Others found a spiritual home in other area churches. As membership declined, so did its finances and the structure of the historic building. Trinity Parish came to the rescue. Deena Galantowicz, applied for historical and other grants and rallied support to save St. The building was restored magnificently. In late a large group of parishioners left St. The loss of so many parishioners was a devastating blow to those who remained. However, under the able leadership of the Rev. Deena Galantowicz, the remnant congregation weathered the crisis and began the process of rebuilding the faith community. Perry Smith followed Pastor Deena and served St. In November the Rev. Ted Voorhees was appointed St. The people of St. Martin Luther King, Jr. They honor the original purpose of the church by offering it as a haven to people who feel uncomfortable worshipping elsewhere.

Chapter 4 : Cyprian of Carthage | The Center for Early African Christianity

J. Quasten writes, "Cyprian's literary activity was intimately connected with his life and times. All of his works are written for specific occasions and served practical purposes. He was a man of action, interested in the direction of souls rather than in theological speculation.

Cyprian of Carthage St. Cyprian of Carthage Please help support the mission of New Advent and get the full contents of this website as an instant download. At the time of his conversion to Christianity he had, perhaps, passed middle life. He was famous as an orator and pleader, had considerable wealth, and held, no doubt, a great position in the metropolis of Africa. We learn from his deacon, St. Pontius, whose life of the saint is preserved, that his mien was dignified without severity, and cheerful without effusiveness. His gift of eloquence is evident in his writings. He was not a thinker, a philosopher, a theologian, but eminently a man of the world and an administrator, of vast energies, and of forcible and striking character. His conversion was due to an aged priest named Caecilianus, with whom he seems to have gone to live. Caecilianus in dying commended to Cyprian the care of his wife and family. While yet a catechumen the saint decided to observe chastity, and he gave most of his revenues to the poor. He sold his property, including his gardens at Carthage. His baptism probably took place c. He tells how, until the grace of God illuminated and strengthened the convert, it had seemed impossible to conquer vice; the decay of Roman society is pictured, the gladiatorial shows, the theatre, the unjust law-courts, the hollowness of political success; the only refuge is the temperate, studious, and prayerful life of the Christian. At the beginning should probably be placed the few words of Donatus to Cyprian which are printed by Hartel as a spurious letter. The style of this pamphlet is affected and reminds us of the bombastic unintelligibility of Pontius. It is not like Tertullian, brilliant, barbarous, uncouth, but it reflects the preciosity which Apuleius made fashionable in Africa. In his other works Cyprian addresses a Christian audience; his own fervour is allowed full play, his style becomes simpler, though forcible, and sometimes poetical, not to say flowery. Without being classical, it is correct for its date, and the cadences of the sentences are in strict rhythm in all his more careful writings. On the whole his beauty of style has rarely been equalled among the Latin Fathers, and never surpassed except by the matchless energy and wit of St. Another work of his early days was the "Testimonia ad Quirinum", in two books. It consists of passages of Scripture arranged under headings to illustrate the passing away of the Old Law and its fulfillment in Christ. A third book, added later, contains texts dealing with Christian ethics. This work is of the greatest value for the history of the Old Latin version of the Bible. It gives us an African text closely related to that of the Bobbio manuscript known as k Turin. Another book of excerpts on martyrdom is entitled "Ad Fortunatum"; its text cannot be judged in any printed edition. Cyprian was certainly only a recent convert when he became Bishop of Carthage c. He had declined the charge, but was constrained by the people. A minority opposed his election, including five priests, who remained his enemies; but he tells us that he was validly elected "after the Divine judgment, the vote of the people and the consent of the bishops". The Decian persecution The prosperity of the Church during a peace of thirty-eight years had produced great disorders. Many even of the bishops were given up to worldliness and gain, and we hear of worse scandals. In October, Decius became emperor with the ambition of restoring the ancient virtue of Rome. In January, he published an edict against Christians. Bishops were to be put to death, other persons to be punished and tortured till they recanted. On 20 January Pope Fabian was martyred, and about the same time St. Cyprian retired to a safe place of hiding. His enemies continually reproached him with this. But to remain at Carthage was to court death, to cause greater danger to others, and to leave the Church without government; for to elect a new bishop would have been as impossible as it was at Rome. He made over much property to a confessor priest, Rogatian, for the needy. Some of the clergy lapsed, others fled; Cyprian suspended their pay, for their ministrations were needed and they were in less danger than the bishop. From his retreat he encouraged the confessors and wrote eloquent panegyrics on the martyrs. Fifteen soon died in prison and one in the mines. On the arrival of the proconsul in April the severity of the persecution increased. Mappalicus died gloriously on the 17th. Children were tortured, women dishonoured. Numidicus, who had encouraged many, saw his wife

burnt alive, and was himself half burnt, then stoned and left for dead; his daughter found him yet living; he recovered and Cyprian made him a priest. Some, after being twice tortured, were dismissed or banished, often beggared. But there was another side to the picture. At Rome terrified Christians rushed to the temples to sacrifice. At Carthage the majority apostatized. Some would not sacrifice, but purchased libelli, or certificates, that they had done so. Some bought the exemption of their family at the price of their own sin. Of these libellatici there were several thousands in Carthage. Of the fallen some did not repent, others joined the heretics, but most of them clamoured for forgiveness and restoration. Some, who had sacrificed under torture, returned to be tortured afresh. A few began to perform canonical penance. The first to suffer at Rome had been a young Carthaginian, Celerinus. He recovered, and Cyprian made him a lector. His grandmother and two uncles had been martyrs, but his two sisters apostatized under fear of torture, and in their repentance gave themselves to the service of those in prison. Their brother was very urgent for their restoration. His letter from Rome to Lucian, a confessor at Carthage, is extant, with the reply of the latter. Lucian obtained from a martyr named Paul before his passion a commission to grant peace to any who asked for it, and he distributed these "indulgences" with a vague formula: Tertullian speaks in of the "custom" for those who were not at peace with the Church to beg this peace from the martyrs. Much later, in his Montanist days c. Correspondingly we find Lucian issuing pardons in the name of confessors who were still alive, a manifest abuse. The heroic Mappallicus had only interceded for his own sister and mother. It seemed now as if no penance was to be enforced upon the lapsed, and Cyprian wrote to remonstrate. Meanwhile official news had arrived from Rome of the death of Pope Fabian, together with an unsigned and ungrammatical letter to the clergy of Carthage from some of the Roman clergy, implying blame to Cyprian for the desertion of his flock, and giving advice as to the treatment of the lapsed. Cyprian explained his conduct Ep. The five priests who opposed him were now admitting at once to communion all who had recommendations from the confessors, and the confessors themselves issued a general indulgence, in accordance with which the bishops were to restore to communion all whom they had examined. This was an outrage on discipline, yet Cyprian was ready to give some value to the indulgences thus improperly granted, but all must be done in submission to the bishop. He proposed that libellatici should be restored, when in danger of death, by a priest or even by a deacon, but that the rest should await the cessation of persecution, when councils could be held at Rome and at Carthage, and a common decision be agreed upon. Some regard must be had for the prerogative of the confessors, yet the lapsed must surely not be placed in a better position than those who had stood fast, and had been tortured, or beggared, or exiled. The guilty were terrified by marvels that occurred. A man was struck dumb on the very Capitol where he had denied Christ. Another went mad in the public baths, and gnawed the tongue which had tasted the pagan victim. A lapsed woman of advanced age had fallen in a fit, on venturing to communicate unworthily. Another, on opening the receptacle in which, according to custom, she had taken home the Blessed Sacrament for private Communion, was deterred from sacrilegiously touching it by fire which came forth. Yet another found nought within her pyx save cinders. About September, Cyprian received promise of support from the Roman priests in two letters written by the famous Novatian in the name of his colleagues. In the beginning of the persecution waned, owing to the successive appearance of two rival emperors. The confessors were released, and a council was convened at Carthage. By the perfidy of some priests Cyprian was unable to leave his retreat till after Easter 23 March. But he wrote a letter to his flock denouncing the most infamous of the five priests, Novatus, and his deacon Felicissimus Ep. The subject of the letter is more fully developed in the treatise "De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate" which Cyprian wrote about this time Benson wrongly thought it was written against Novatian some weeks later. This celebrated pamphlet was read by its author to the council which met in April, that he might get the support of the bishops against the schism started by Felicissimus and Novatus, who had a large following. The unity with which St. Cyprian deals is not so much the unity of the whole Church, the necessity of which he rather postulates, as the unity to be kept in each diocese by union with the bishop; the unity of the whole Church is maintained by the close union of the bishops who are "glued to one another", hence whosoever is not with his bishop is cut off from the unity of the Church and cannot be united to Christ; the type of the bishop is St. Peter, the first bishop. Protestant controversialists have attributed to St. Cyprian the absurd argument that Christ said to Peter what He really meant for all, in order to give a

type or picture of unity. Cyprian really says is simply this, that Christ, using the metaphor of an edifice, founds His Church on a single foundation which shall manifest and ensure its unity. And as Peter is the foundation, binding the whole Church together, so in each diocese is the bishop. With this one argument Cyprian claims to cut at the root of all heresies and schisms. It has been a mistake to find any reference to Rome in this passage

Treatise on Unity 4. Church unity About the time of the opening of the council , two letters arrived from Rome. One of these, announcing the election of a pope, St. Cornelius , was read by Cyprian to the assembly; the other contained such violent and improbable accusations against the new pope that he thought it better to pass it over. But two bishops , Caldonius and Fortunatus, were dispatched to Rome for further information, and the whole council was to await their return-such was the importance of a papal election.

Chapter 5 : Cyprian Saint, Bishop of Carthage [WorldCat Identities]

Martyrs in the History of Christianity by Franklyn J. Balasundaram (ed.) Chapter 6: The Martyrdom of Cyprian of Carthage (Ad), by Vijoy T. Oommen. Introduction "You shall be my witness to the ends of the earth".

He was beheaded for the faith in Carthage in the year There is an account of what happened compiled directly from contemporary documents. Cyprian was first examined by the proconsul, and on affirming his adherence to the one true God, and refusing to divulge the names of his priests, he was exiled to Curubis. When a new proconsul came into office, Cyprian was brought up for trial in Carthage. He again refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods, and was sentenced to death. Accompanied by a tumultuous crowd, he was led to the field of Sextus; there he knelt in prayer. He gave a generous gift to the executioner, blindfolded himself, and his head was struck off. Based upon 1 Timothy 2: When the persecution ended, many wanted to return to the Church. My speculation is those who denied the faith were regarded as traitors. One party wanted them to be re-baptized or one Novatus said they committed apostasy and were not saved. He denied absolution to the repentant. The Church agreed Biblically that a time of penitence, that is, repentance would return one to the flock. The Biblical understanding is absolution for the penitent restores one to the Church. This crucial understanding of repentance and absolution is reflected in the true Reformation understanding: Two of the lessons we can learn from St. Cyprian and all the martyrs remind us that faith in Jesus Christ matters. Even in the midst of persecution, Cyprian and the Church debated right doctrine and the resulting right practice. They did not soften doctrine in order to be accepted by society and culture or by those who denied Christ and a lot was at stake: Cyprian was beheaded for the faith, for true worship, for right doctrine and practice. We need the courage of a Cyprian and the love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit to minister in the Name of the Lord to our neighbors: Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Almighty God, You gave Your servant Cyprian boldness to confess the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, before the rulers of this world and courage to die for the faith he proclaimed. Our churches teach that for those who have fallen after Baptism there is remission of sins whenever they are converted and that the Church ought to impart absolution to those thus returning to repentance. Now, repentance consists properly of these two parts: Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruits of repentance. They condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that those once justified can lose the Holy Ghost. The Novatians also are condemned, who would not absolve such as had fallen after Baptism, though they returned to repentance. They also are rejected who do not teach that remission of sins comes through faith but command us to merit grace through satisfactions of our own.

Chapter 6 : The Baldwin Project: Saints and Heroes to the End of the Middle Ages by George Hodges

Cyprian was born of wealthy pagan parents and was educated in law. He practiced as a lawyer in Carthage before he was converted to Christianity about In baptism he found complete release from the sinful and useless life he believed he had led hitherto. Within two years he was elected bishop of.

Introductory Notice to Cyprian. He was the spiritual son of the great Bishop of Lyons, and deeply imbued with the family character imparted to his disciples by the blessed presbyter of Patmos and Ephesus. But while Cyprian is the spiritual son and pupil of Tertullian, we must seek his characteristics and the key to his whole ministry in the far-off See and city where the disciples were first called Christians. Cyprian is the Ignatius of the West. We see in his works how truly historical are the writings of Ignatius, and how diffused was his simple and elementary system of organic unity. His was the system of the universal parity and community of bishops. In his scheme the apostolate was perpetuated in the episcopate, and the presbyterate was an apostolic institution, by which others were associated with bishops in all their functions as co-presbyters, but not in those reserved to the presidency of the churches. Feudal ideas imposed a very different system upon the simple framework of original Catholicity. But a careful study of that primitive framework, and of the history of papal development, makes evident the following propositions: Cyprian is the patron and defender of the presbytery and of lay co-operation, as well as of the regimen of the episcopate. His letters illustrate the Catholic system as it was known to the Nicene Fathers; but, of all the Christian Fathers, he is the most clear and comprehensive in his conception of the body of Christ as an organic whole, in which every member has an honourable function. This change involved a subversion of the primitive episcopate, an annihilation of the rights of the presbytery, and a total abasement of the laity; in a word, the destruction of synodical constitutions and of constitutional freedom. The constitutional primacy, of which Cyprian was an early promotor, had to be entirely destroyed by decretalism before the papacy could exist. It was the spirit of the Decretals to substitute the fictitious idea of a divine supremacy in one bishop and one See, for the canonical presidency of a bishop who was only primus inter pares. Nobody can understand the history of Latin Christianity without mastering the system of Cyprian, and comprehending the entirely hostile and uncatholic system of the Decretals. I am not anxious to conceal the fact that I profoundly sympathize with the free spirit, the true benignity, and the moral purity which are everywhere reflected in the writings of Cyprian. If ever American Romanism becomes sufficiently enlightened and purified to comprehend this great Carthaginian Father, and to speak in his tones to the Bishop of Rome, a glorious reformation of this alien religion will be the result; and then we may comprehend the mysterious Providence which has transferred to these shores so many subjects of the despotism of the Vatican. The following Introduction, from the Edinburgh editor, supplies further answers to inquiry, and suffices to elucidate the subjoined narrative of Pontius. Little is known of the early history of Thascius Cyprian born probably about a. That he was born of respectable parentage, and highly educated for the profession of a rhetorician, is all that can be said with any degree of certainty. His ordination and his elevation to the episcopate rapidly followed his conversion. With some resistance on his own part, and not without great objections on the part of older presbyters, who saw themselves superseded by his promotion, the popular urgency constrained him to accept the office of Bishop of Carthage a. Nothing can enable us more vividly to realize the intense convictionsâ€”the high-strained enthusiasmsâ€”which formed the common level of the Christian experience, than does the indignation with which the prelate denounces the evasions of those who dared not confess, or the lapses of those who shrank from martyrdom. Living in the atmosphere of persecution, and often in the immediate presence of a lingering death, the professors of Christianity were nerved up to a wonderful contempt of suffering and of worldly enjoyment, and saw every event that occurred around them in the glow of their excited imagination; so that many circumstances were sincerely believed and honestly recorded, which will not be for a moment received as true by the calm and critical reader. Of this Dean Milman observes: Before being advanced to the episcopate, Cyprian had written his Epistle to Donatus shortly after his baptism a. In the following translation the order of Migne has been adopted, which places the letter to Donatus, as seems most natural, first among the Epistles, instead of with the Treatises. The breaking

out of the Decian persecution a. During this year he wrote many letters from his place of concealment to the clergy and others at Rome and at Carthage, controlling, warning, directing, and exhorting, and in every way maintaining his episcopal superintendence in his absence, in all matters connected with the well-being of the Church. He appears to have returned to his public duties early in June, Then follow many letters between himself and Cornelius bishop of Rome, and others, on subjects connected with the schisms of Novatian, Novatus, and Felicissimus, and with the condition of those who had been perverted by them. The question proposed in Epistle 52 was settled in the Council that was held in May, ; and the reference to that anticipated decision limits the date of the letter to about April in the same year. In the 53d Epistle, Cyprian is alluding to the impending persecution of Gallus, under which Cornelius was banished in July, The 56th Epistle was a letter of congratulation to Cornelius on his banishment; and therefore it must have been written before September 14th in that year, the date of the death of Cornelius. Lucius, his successor, was also banished, and was congratulated on his return by Cyprian in Epistle 57, which therefore must have been written about the end of November, The 59th Epistle is referred by Bishop Pearson to the beginning of the year From his place of exile he wrote Epistle 76, which was replied to in Epistles 77, 78, and Doubts are entertained as to the date of Epistle 80, whether it should be referred to a. Pamelius prefers the latter date, on the ground that the Rogatianus to whom it is inscribed was one who survived the Decian persecution, and a younger man than the one who, as he supposes, was declared to have suffered martyrdom at the date of this Epistle. This, however, seems very unsatisfactory; and the weight of authority is in favour of the earlier date. For the sake of uniformity, it has been thought well to adhere to the arrangement of Migne, in the order of the Epistles as well as in their divisions. For the convenience of reference, however, the number of each Epistle in the Oxford edition is appended in a note. Moreover, such various readings as might suggest different shades of meaning in doubtful passages have been given. The Translator has only to add, that, as a rule, an exact rendering has been sought after, sometimes in preference to a version in fluent English. But, except in cases where the corruption or obscurity of the text seems insurmountable, the meaning of the writer is believed to be given fairly and intelligibly. The style of Cyprian, like that of his master Tertullian, is marked much more by vehemence than perspicuity, and it is often no easy matter to give exact expression in another language to the idea contained in the original text. It is easy to speak with ridicule of such instances as Dean Milman here treats so philosophically. But, lest believers should be charged with exceptional credulity, let us recall what the father of English Deism relates of his own experiences, in the conclusion of his Autobiography: Life of Herbert, p.

Chapter 7 : Church as Mother: Cyprian of Carthage () | cloisterwalk

CYPRIAN [3] J UST about the time when Cyprian was born in Carthage, Perpetua and Felicitas amazed the people. Everybody was talking about it. Perpetua was twenty-two years old. Cyprian's father.

He was born around the year in North Africa near Carthage. His father was a noble and a wealthy Roman officer of high rank who gave his son a good Greek education. Cyprian himself became a leading member of a legal fraternity in Carthage. He was well into middle age when he converted to Christianity and was baptized. The exact date of his conversion is unknown. But after his baptism, around , he gave a portion of his wealth away to the poor in Carthage, as befitted a man of his status. After his conversion, he devoted himself to ascetic retirement and to the study of the scriptures and great men of the church, especially Tertullian, whom he highly admired. Soon after his conversion he became a deacon. In or around or , after he had been a believer for a year, the church at Carthage made him a presbyter. The following year they prevailed upon him to fill the vacant position of bishop. This placed Cyprian as the head of the North African clergy. This was a popular choice among the poor but was opposed among a portion of the presbytery. Moreover, this opposition did not dissolve during his episcopacy. He administered his office with skill, wisdom and fidelity. Soon, the church community was put to a test. Christians in North Africa had not suffered persecution for years and the church was assured and lax. Early in , the Decian persecution began. Measures were taken demanding that the bishops and church officers sacrifice to the emperor. The proconsul went on circuit to administer the edict. But when the proconsul reached Carthage, Cyprian had fled in order to escape seizure. Under the onslaught of this persecution, many lapsed and denied the faith. Cyprian urged them to constancy. He continued in his office while in seclusion, writing to his presbyters, deacons and laymen, encouraging them to be faithful and true. He assured them that he would return as soon as God showed him it was his will. The Roman clergy wrote to Cyprian in terms of disapproval. Cyprian defended his decision stating that he fled in accordance with visions and divine command. The persecution was especially severe at Carthage, according to church sources. Their requests were granted early with no regard being paid to the demand of Cyprian and the faithful at Carthage who insisted upon earnest repentance. Indeed, when dealing with the lapsed, Cyprian was rigid, demanding confession and unmistakable evidence of penitence. But the confessors among the more liberal group intervened to allow hundreds of the lapsed to return to the church. Cyprian returned to Carthage in , after the persecution was over, having been in retirement for two whole years. It was decided that pardon could be granted to the lapsed, but only after a proper period of penitence. During this time, Cyprian rose in favor with the people when they saw his self-denying devotion during a time of great plague and famine. He comforted his brethren in his writing exhorting them to active charity toward the poor, while he himself set the best pattern for his own life. He also defended Christianity against the reproach of the heathen who said that Christians were the cause of public calamities. In , yet another round of persecution of the church under the emperor Valerian. Cyprian courageously prepared his people and set an example himself when he was brought before the Roman proconsul on August 30, He refused to sacrifice to the pagan deities and firmly professed Jesus Christ. He was banished to Curubis modern day Korba and there he comforted his flock the best he could. In a vision he saw his approaching fate. After a year he was recalled and was put under house arrest in his own villa. Soon a more stringent imperial edict arrived, demanding the execution of all Christian clerics, according to the reports of Christian writers at the time. On September 13, , he was imprisoned and the following day was examined for the final time and sentenced to die by the sword. A crowd followed him on his final trip. He removed his garments without assistance, knelt down, and prayed. After he blindfolded himself he was beheaded by the sword. The body was interred by Christian hands near the place of execution and over it, along with the site of execution, were churches built. But they were destroyed by the Vandals. Charlemagne is said to have had the bones removed to France. Cyprian wrote a number of epistles and tracts. Peter the center of episcopal unity. He gave Peter a primacy of honor in the church. His first writing starts out as a speech he made to his friends. Cyprian remarks that the only refuge from these evils is the prayerful life of a Christian. He was the first great Latin writer in the Church. Until Jerome and Augustine, his writings had

no rivals in the West. His feast day in the Anglican Communion is September In the Catholic Church, it is September

Chapter 8 : Cyprian - Wikipedia

Caecilius Cyprianus Thascius, St. Cyprian of Carthage (A.D.) Cyprian was born in Carthage between A.D. and A.D. His parents were wealthy pagans and he did not convert until AD., at which time he made a vow of chastity.

His teaching was in high demand and soon Cyprian was a wealthy man with his own household in Carthage and Roman Villa in the countryside. Carthage rivaled Rome for sophistication and power But like many of us in middle-age, Cyprian went through a period of soul-searching and disenchantment with the world around him. As people begin to search for God it is not uncommon for God to send someone out to find them. Cyprian was baptized in the year AD when he was approximately 50 years old. Cyprian was an earnest convert. By his own testimony he felt his heart was renewed and his life had meaning and purpose. Having an intellectual gift, he gave himself earnestly to Christian studies reading the Bible and early theologians in a dedicated fashion. An ancient baptismal near present day Carthage According to Acts We are rightly men and women of our times at the behest of God and thus we have a part in the specific history and destiny of where we live. Even as Cyprian was growing towards maturity in his new found faith, he had no idea the challenges he would face and the burdens he would bear through the remaining years of his life. In AD the beloved bishop of the people of Carthage dies. But there was equally something unnatural about this as well. As a man with a commanding knowledge of the scriptures, Cyprian knew this and rejected the intentions of the congregation. Unfortunately for Cyprian, the Church rejected his rejection and literally forced upon him the mantle of being their bishop. Although his election was resented by some in church leadership who questioned mere popularity as a qualification for bishop, God used Cyprian in a mighty way and his viewpoints were to have a future impress on the entire church for generations to come. The Decian persecution was very harsh on the church and was very effective in terms of driving many nominal Christians to apostasize. Cyprian had observed that the years of prosperity and ease that preceded the persecution had caused the discipline and morals of the church to become quite lax. Cyprian had only started to enforce stricter discipline when the persecution broke out. Cyprian viewed the persecution as a divine cleansing of the church which led him to set strict standards by which those who came back to the church would be restored to fellowship. Read more on the later Donatist Controversy in North Africa But Cyprian was destined for controversy because during the persecution, he, the bishop of the city, went into hiding. Cyprian defended his position as thoroughly biblical: He instructed all to not offer themselves up, but if caught not to cave-in and apostasize but stand faithful in the face of persecution and torture. He believed their failure to stand in persecution sundered their bonds with Christ and the church. If the community of the faithful was going to remain truly that, grievous failure such as apostasy and the desire to be restored to the church needed an orderly connection. Cyprian was committed to theology and the scripture In truth, Cyprian dealt with this quite circumspectly. Some had been faithful in their confession but had been tortured severely and had a momentary break in their loyalty. Others had used money to buy off the authorities. And still others, even lay leaders, gave up without a fight. He recognized that there were degrees of failure and made allowances for human frailty. It seems that his strongest policy was directed towards those who willingly cooperated with the Roman government. In this case if you were penitent you may attend a sermon or church gathering but you will be deprived of the sacraments until you are on your deathbed or so sick that death might be imminent. The alternative was to offer yourself in martyrdom during another persecution. This offering of your lifeblood was believed efficacious in cancelling out your previous betrayal of Christ by undergoing a second baptism. On the other hand, the Pope in Rome had taken the view at least for a short period that never under any circumstance could a lapsed Christian return to the church. Watch a short 2 minute video on Cyprian and Pope Cornelius Penance was considered a medicine for the soul. It allowed a person to demonstrate over time their sorrow for their sin and eventually be received back into the church as a full member. It allowed for grace and forgiveness but also restoration and discipline in the community of the faithful. It may seem that the church forgot the fact that Jesus took back Peter after Peter denied him on the night of his betrayal and arrest Mt. From my own perspective it seems withholding the benefits of the sacraments from a sorrowful believer is a denial of grace, but the modern viewpoint tends to

cheapen grace by extending it often at the sacrifice of all church discipline. Witness the complete predictability of what happens when a high-profile minister is caught having committed a grievous sin. Although the names and sins vary, their elders uniformly send the pastor and his spouse away to a counseling center for 10 weeks and then they return with several accountability advisors and then they are officially restored. The ancients were seeking the same end in the absence of a therapeutic culture. Cyprian held a high view of his office as a bishop. In his day, the bishop was the leader of a church in a particular area such as a city and governed the life of the church in its worship and discipline. Other ministers of congregations were his deputies and served under his authority. What Cyprian was doing was pointing to the reality, much more clearly known in his day, that bishops either succeeded or were connected in their succession to the original apostles of Christ. Lists were kept and maintained because it was believed this would maintain and conserve the truth and apostolic foundations of the true church as opposed to any heretical or schismatic churches. Being connected with a true bishop in church membership and the receiving of the sacraments ensured that one had believed in the true gospel and was rightly connected into the body of Christ. Apostolic succession and the inheritance of the churches knowledge and experience is important to all Christians. For Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism the inheritance of the faith comes the scriptures but also the long and unbroken chain of bishops from the ancient times to the present. Bishops met in councils to discuss problems and theology Cyprian, like others in his day, also believed that the bishop of one church was the equal to all other bishops in the world. He believed in praying for other bishops and also to gather with them to discuss and make judgments on matters of faith and teaching. The practice of councils was in place and the practice of the North African churches prior to Constantine and Nicea although it is marked as the first world council. One should also note that Cyprian, strong as he was on the importance of the bishop, believed in collegiality. The concept of the Roman Papacy having primacy over all the bishops of the church would have been utterly contrary to his thought on this office despite the fact that his thinking was adopted to support it. The Valerian persecution AD was more fierce and more torturous than many of the other persecutions. Empire wide, it was directed specifically to Church leadership, members of the senate, military and aristocracy that were Christians. Valerian sent a letter to the pro-consul of Carthage naming Cyprian as one he wanted targeted for death. In he was demanded to sacrifice to the god Jupiter by the local pro-consul. Cyprian refused and found himself banished from Carthage. He continued to write and teach his church from a distance at his country estate in Utique. But the next year a death sentence was handed down and Cyprian was to report to the proconsul there for it to be carried out. When he was officially summoned to the magistrate, Cyprian fled Utique and went back to Carthage. There and there only would Cyprian present himself to bear witness and seal his testimony, for it was Carthage and not Utique that Cyprian was the chief bishop. Great resource landing page for further study of St. He was buried on the spot and church was built over his grave. Unfortunately the later invasion of the Vandals ended up causing the church to be demolished. Beheading of Cyprian in church frescoes Cyprian truly had no view of the visible and invisible church. For him, all Christian life was directly related to your external connection to the visible church. His most well-known words must be understood in that context: But his passion was that Christians be connected to Jesus and that connection was made from within the body of Christ which was a very visible presence in his world. *Born to New Life: New City Press, Cyprian of Carthage. McClintock and Strong Eds. Ferguson, Wright, and Packer Eds. Harper and Row, Saint of the Day: Lives, Lessons, and Feasts. Anthony Messenger Press, Schaff, Philip. History of the Christian Church Vol. Ante-Nicene Christianity AD Eerdmans Publishing, Posted by.*

Chapter 9 : History - St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church

Thascius Caecilius Cyprian (c AD) and the Shape of the Church by Chris White Icon of Cyprian St. Cyprian was born to a prominent Roman family in Carthage and for his first 50 years lived what most of us would consider a "charmed life."

Hoffman writes, "Caecilius Cyprianus, also named Thascius ep. His high level of education, considerable wealth, friends in the equestrian and senatorial classes, the degree to which he was known in Carthage, and his treatment as an honestior at his trial all suggest that his family belonged to the leading circles of Carthage and that he was at least of the equestrian class. According to Jerome *vir*. Under the influence of the presbyter Caecilian he turned to Christianity in his early to mid-forties Pontius, *Vita Cypr*. His quick rise seems to have been due especially to the community ep. Among the Carthaginian clergy, on the other hand, there was until a noticeable opposition centered on five presbyters who had been passed over in the episcopal election. The treatise, *To Quirinius*: The collection is of shapeless material, testimonia pure and simple, texts already commonly used in the second century in anti-Jewish polemics From the same period comes another treatise, likewise a compilation, which contains material taken chiefly from Tertullian and Minucius Felix, and which has for its purpose, as did the material from those two writers, to combat pagan religion; its title is *That Idols Are not Gods Quod idola dii non sint*. For a long time this treatise was considered not to be from Cyprian. It is indeed attributed to him by Jerome and Augustine, but it is not found in the manuscripts of his works. Cyprian takes as his model a work on a similar subject by his teacher, Tertullian; he stresses, however, the need for modesty and simplicity of dress and takes a resolute position on the excesses attending the practice of *virgines subintroductae*, that is, of those women who shared their lives with men, while observing virginity in agreement with them. This was a problem to which the bishop returned later in some letters. Quasten writes, "There are several valuable sources of information for his life. The most important and reliable are his treatises and his numerous letters. For the arrest, trials and martyrdom, we possess the *Acta Proconsularia Cypriani*, which are founded on official reports cf. Finally, there is a *Vita Cypriani* extant in a great number of manuscripts, supposedly written by his deacon, Pontius, who shared his exile until the day of his death Jerome, *De vir*. The first biography of which the history of early Christian literature knows, it has been found to be historically unreliable. Thus his purpose is to edify. Shortly after his election as bishop, the Church was thrown into disorder and confusion by the ravaging persecution of Decius which lasted from January to the spring of Cyprian took refuge in this persecution, but maintained contact with the church in Carthage by correspondence. After giving thanks to God for the restoration of peace, he praises the martyrs who have resisted the world, have afforded a glorious spectacle in the sight of god and have been an example to their brethren. However, his joy soon turns to gloom and sorrow because of the many brethren who had fallen away during the persecution. He speaks of those who had sacrificed to the gods even before they were forced to do so, of parents who had brought their children to participate in these rites and especially of those who, for blind love of their property, remained and denied the faith. No easy pardon can be granted them. He warns the confessors against interceding for such people. Leniency under these circumstances would merely prevent them from making due atonement. Those who became weak only after great tortures deserve more mercy. However all of those must submit to penance, evne those who in some way or other had secured certificates of sacrifice without having polluted their hands with actual participation in such pagan worship *libellatici* , because they have defiled their conscience. All of his works are written for specific occasions and served practical purposes. He was a man of action, interested in the direction of souls rather than in theological speculation. On the other hand, his practical wisdom avoids the exaggerations and provocations which did so much harm to the other. His language and style are clearer and more polished, and show a greater influence of the vocabulary and imagery of the Bible. In Christian antiquity, as in the Middle Ages, he was one of the most popular authors and his writings are extant in a great number of manuscripts. However, Hoffman writes, "There is disagreement on whether Cyprian also composed the works *To Quirinus* or *Testimonies from Scripture* *testim*. Claudio Moreschini writes, "Some inauthentic works have come down to us It must be kept in mind, however, that the placement of the works in the African world is not certain for any of them.

Hoffman writes, "Certainly not authentic, in addition to some letters, prayers, and sermons, are these works: Against the Jews adv. Two works, On Chastity pudic. Cyprian is also not the author of the prose version of the Banquet cena , the origin of which has not yet been cleared up, nor of poems On Sodom De sodoma and On Jonah De Iona , among others; whether they were written by Cyprian the Singer C.