

## CHURCH HOLY FATHERS

### **Who Are They?**

- They are those who interpreted the words of God, the Bible, into a living experience.
- They are those who experienced God's grace, love and mercy through their action of love and mercy towards others without any distinction or explanation.
- They are those who bore the Word of God in their wombs, breath, heart, soul and mind.
- They are those who spoke the wisdom of God.
- They are those who transformed the Scriptures into Dogma while defending the Orthodox Faith from heresies and controversies.
- They are the Theologians<sup>1</sup> who are transcended towards God in ascetic life.<sup>2</sup>
- They are those who are undergoing divinization (*theosis*) in transforming experiences, not just in concept. They are borne by the Holy Spirit where it wills and not where they wish.<sup>3</sup>
- They are those who defended the faith by articulating the inexplicable in human words.
- They are those who "wise by communion with wisdom; good by participating in good; just by sharing in justice; prudent by fellowship with prudence; and brave by sharing in the heavenly power."<sup>4</sup>
- They are those whose life is, always and unceasingly, in a progressive purifying, illuminating and deifying process.
- They are those whom the faithful look towards them in piety and try to imitate.
- They are those who inspire us to imitate Christ and their life compels us to be Christ-like.
- They are those: who through the centuries have maintained the integrity and the intensity of the Apostolic faith, handing it down through generations of such other fathers and Mothers to the present day."<sup>5</sup>
  - They are those who "seek to introduce us to the inner treasure of scripture as the Word of God, and to initiate us into the hidden beauty of life in God."<sup>6</sup>
  - They are: "the divine army, God-inspired soldiers of the camp of the Lord, most brilliant luminaries in the super-sensuous firmament, impregnable towers of the mystical Zion, scented flowers of paradise, the golden lights of the Word, the price and delight of the whole universe."<sup>7</sup>

***Prepared to OCFMcGill Bible Study group, through God's grace, by Fr. Jean El-Murr.***

---

<sup>1</sup> A Theologian is the one who prays; Theos come into his logismoi, or the logismoi (wisdom) of God speaks in him through the grace of the Holy Spirit as a result of unceasing prayers.

<sup>2</sup> Ascetic life is not restricted to Monasteries, huts, mountains, caves or the deserts. It can be lived throughout the daily life in the city or anywhere.

<sup>3</sup> Archimandrite Vasileios, Abbot, Iviron Monastery, Mt Athos, excerpt from the Forward for the book of John Chryssavgis, *The Way of the Fathers, Exploring the Patristic Mind*.

<sup>4</sup> John Chryssavgis, *The Way of the Fathers, Exploring the Patristic Mind*, p. 37.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.130.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>7</sup> This hymn is chanted on 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pascha and on the Sunday that follows October 11, in honor of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical councils respectively.