

# 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**

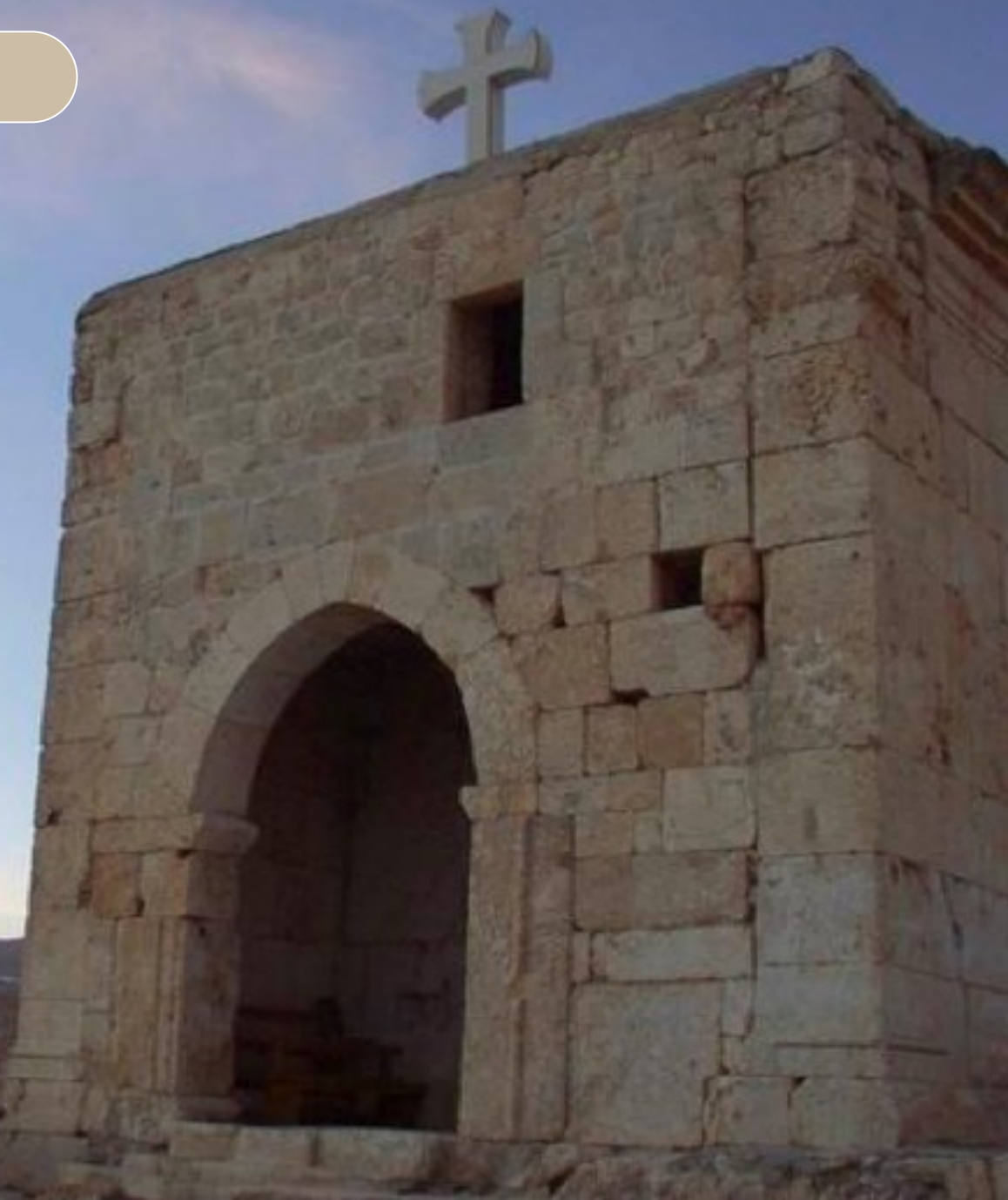


The early life  
of Antony was  
unusual



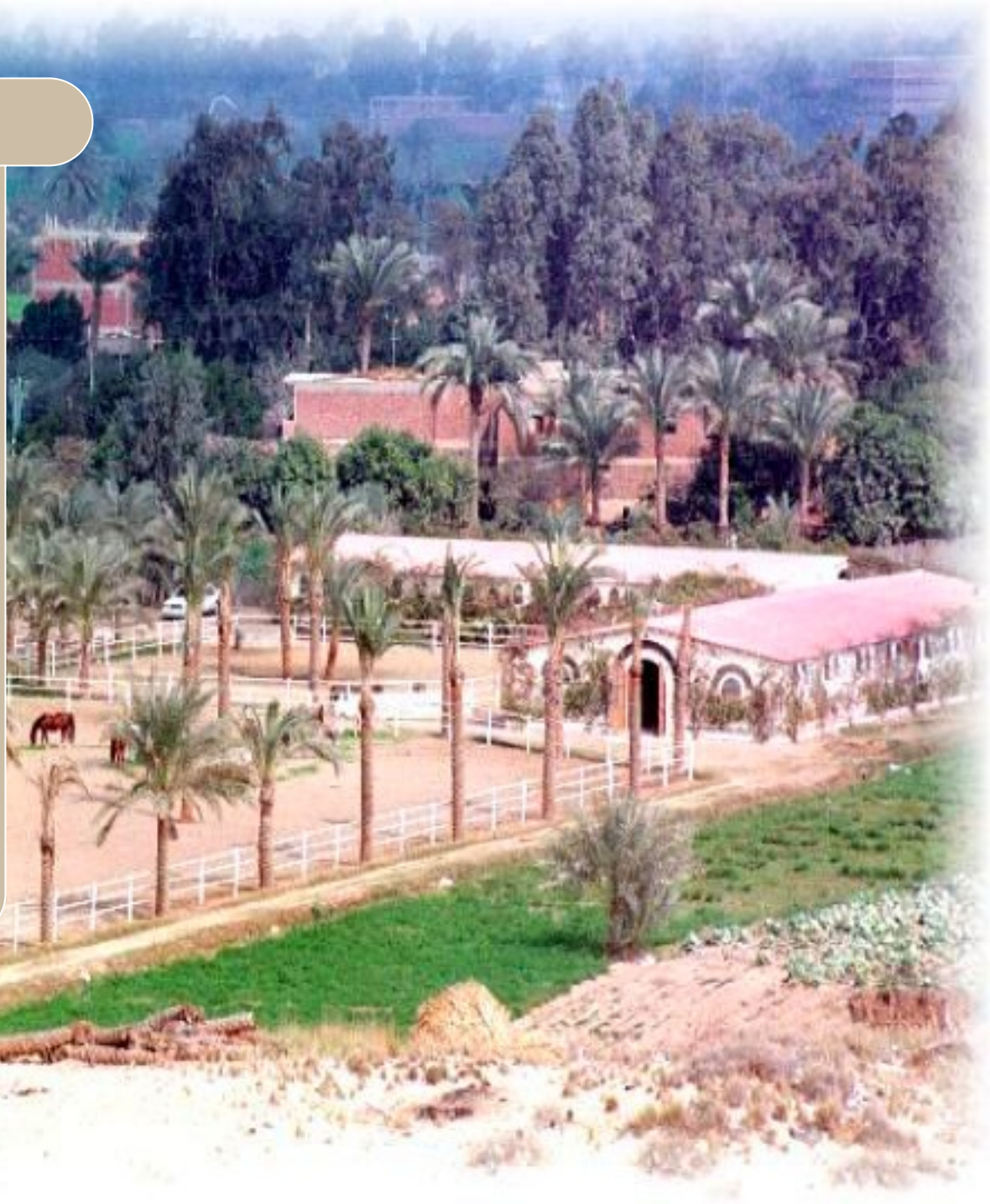


“If you want to  
be perfect, go,  
sell your  
possessions and  
give to the poor,  
and you will  
have treasure in  
heaven” Mt.  
19:21





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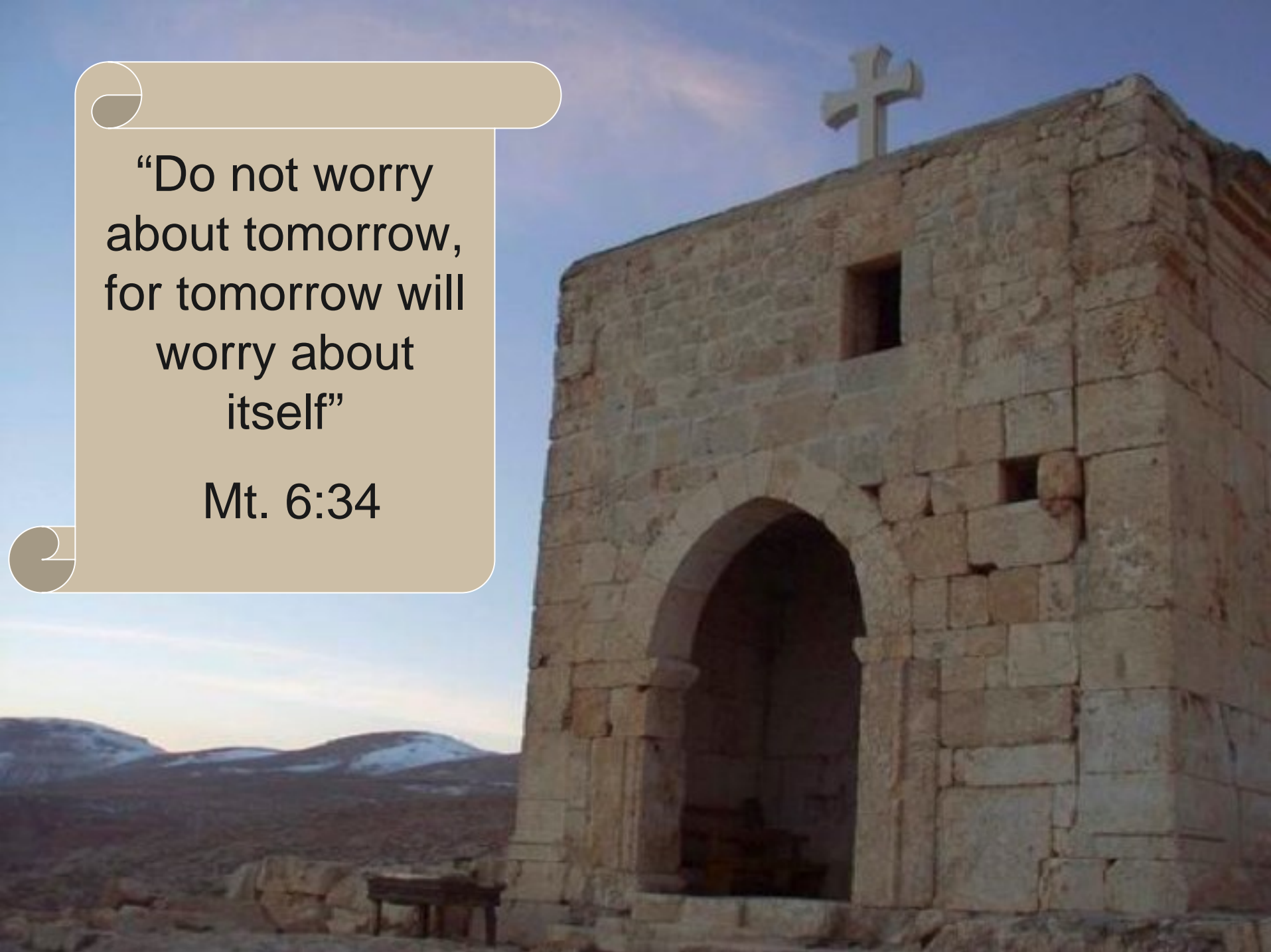






“Do not worry  
about tomorrow,  
for tomorrow will  
worry about  
itself”

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.<sup>24</sup> 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.<sup>25</sup>

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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:





# 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**





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**Demons have  
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“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:  
sparse and  
ascetic

“When I am weak, then I am strong.”

2 Cor. 12:10





Antony's living  
conditions:  
sparse and  
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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





Antony (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”



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



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



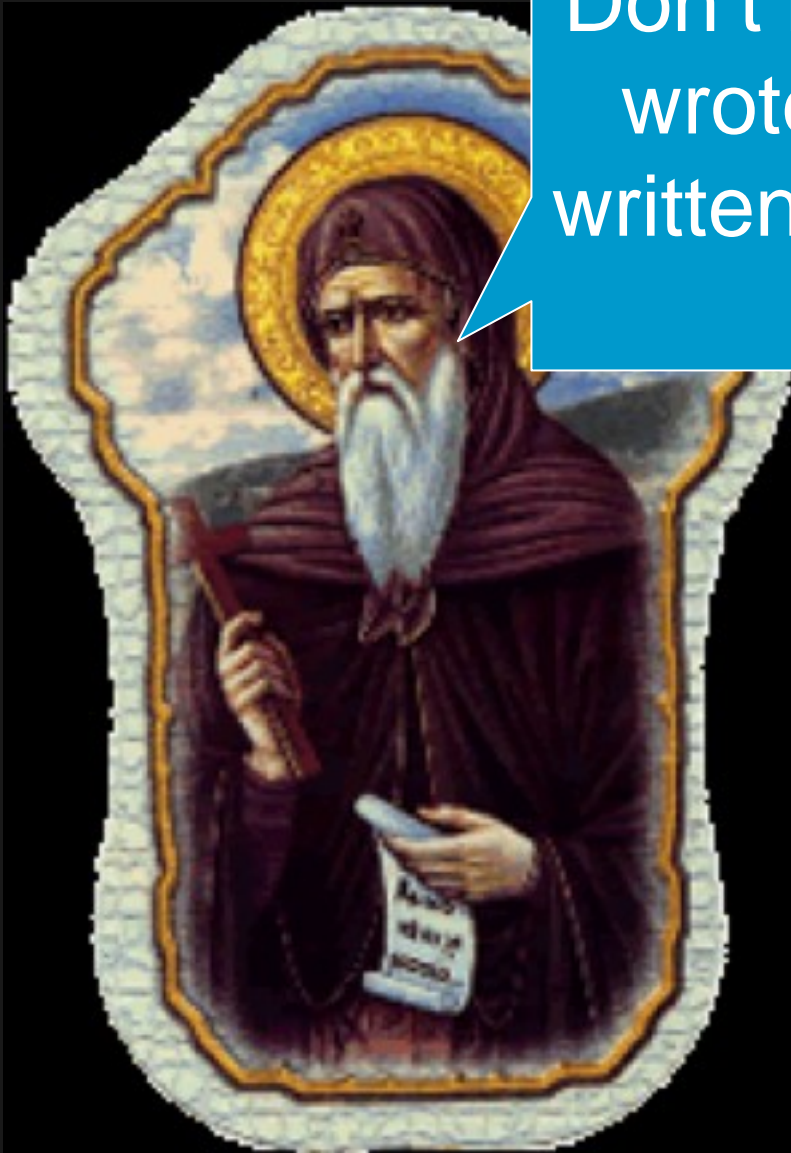
**Antony (the  
“Abbot”) teaches  
the monks**



# 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





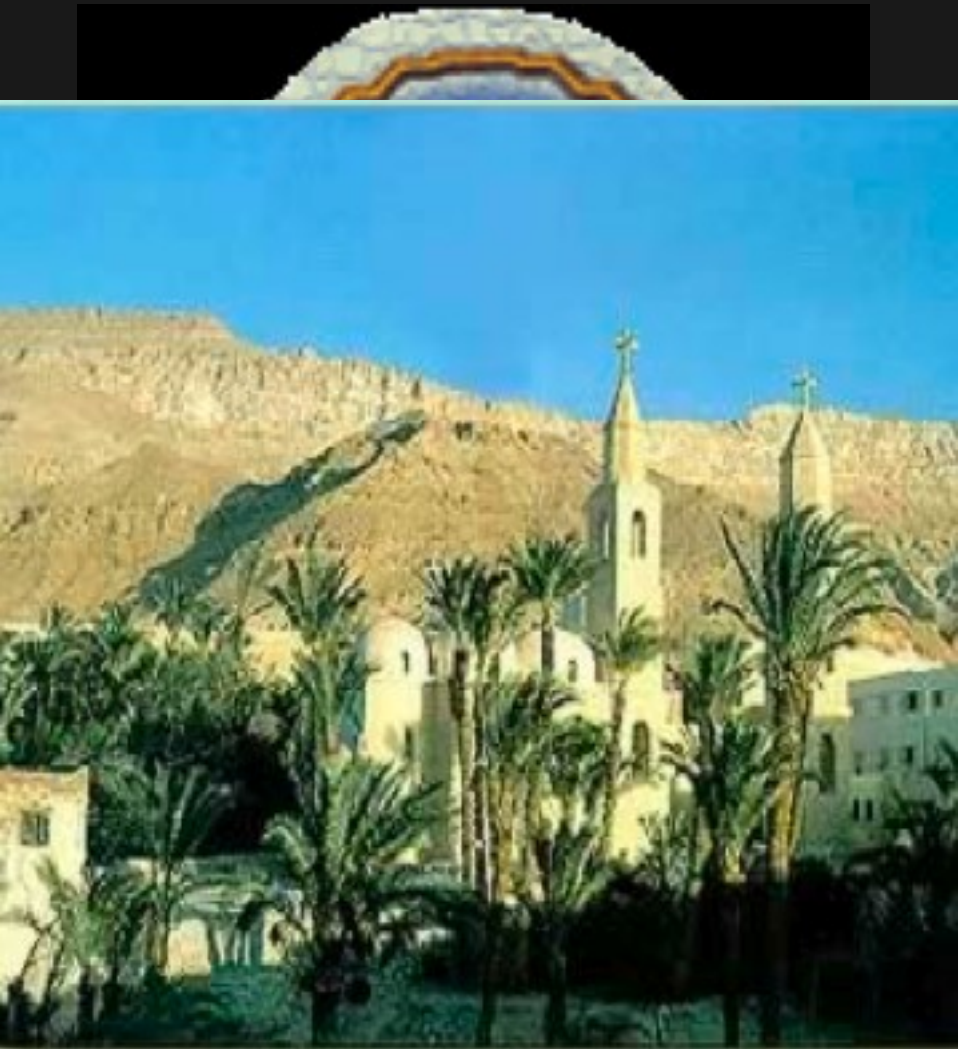
Antony a miracle  
worker

Or not!



# Antony's death





# Antony's death

# Points for Home

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



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- Let us through off everything that hinders us (Heb 12:1)



# Points for Home

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