

Magic, and who, it is alleged, had previously found himself baffled by some prodigy when Appollonius of Tyana was brought before him, now contented himself to banishing the apostle to the island of Patmos. It was on this island that St. John received those revelations from Heaven which he wrote down in his book called the Apocalypse.

After the death of Domitian in the year 96 St. John could return to Ephesus, and many believe that he wrote his gospel at this time. His object in writing it he tells us himself, "These things were written that you may believe that Jesus is Christ, the Son of God; and that, believing, you may have life in His name." It is entirely different in character from the other three gospels, and a work of such theological sublimity that, as Theodoret says, it "is beyond human understanding ever fully to penetrate and comprehend." His soaring thought is aptly represented by the eagle, which is his symbol. St. John also wrote three epistles. The first is called catholic, that is, addressed to all Christians, especially his converts, whom he urges to purity and holiness of life and cautions against the craft of seducers. The other two are short, and directed to particular persons: the one probably to a local church; the other to Gaius, a courteous entertainer of Christians. The same inimitable spirit of charity reigns throughout all his writings, and this charity which he had so conspicuously himself he constantly and affectionately urged in others. St. Jerome writes that when age and weakness grew upon him at Ephesus so that he was no longer able to preach to his people, he used to be carried to the assembly of the faithful, and every time said to his flock only these words: "My little children, love one another." When they asked him why he always repeated the same words, he replied, "Because it is the word of the Lord, and if you keep it you do enough."

St. John is frequently represented in symbolism by a chalice out of which is rising a serpent. This has its origin from a legend in which the apostle was challenged by Aristodemus, the high priest of Diana at Ephesus, to drink from a poisoned chalice of wine. He did so without sustaining any harm and thereby converted the high priest himself. St. John is also symbolized by an eagle, referring to his gospel, by a book, referring to his writings, and by a kettle, recalling his attempted martyrdom in a cauldron of boiling oil.

St. John died at Ephesus in the year 100 of the Christian era, being then about 94 years old according to St. Epiphanius.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux

"He carried the 12th century on his shoulders," it has been said of St. Bernard. He founded monasteries, preached crusades, wrote books that earned him the title of Doctor of the Church, fought heresies, performed many miracles, taught the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception long before it was defined as an article of faith, and spontaneously—in a procession in the great church of Spire in Germany—added the words, "O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Maria," to the hymn *Salve Regina*.

Bernard was born in 1090 in Fontaines, the castle of the lordship of his father, Tescelin Sorrel. He and his brothers were well educated and learned Latin under the direction of their devout mother, Aleth. Then they were schooled in military exercises and feats of arms. Bernard was sent to Chatillon to attend college. He was shy, but made exceptional progress in his studies. At the age of nineteen he returned home. In that year his mother died and Bernard grieved so much that only his lively sister, Humbeline, could rescue him from his brooding and inertia.

A happening without parallel in Christian history came to pass when Bernard decided to become a Cistercian in Citeaux. Thirty-one men followed his example, among them a number of his brothers. When Nivard, the youngest, saw that they were leaving him their estates, he cried out: "It isn't fair! You take heaven and leave me only the earth!" And he followed them to Citeaux.

Bernard was made an Abbot and was sent to establish a new monastery, Clairvaux. Afterwards, he founded others. He wished to live a hidden life of prayer and mortification in the cloister, but the Pope needed and received his help. He established peace between the Archbishop of Rheims and the citizens there, and he induced worldly prelates to forego their pomp and luxury and give to the poor all beyond what was necessary for their simple maintenance. He was compelled to assist in synods. He also defended the true Pope against a false one, healed schism, and five times refused to be made a Bishop. He combated the dangerous teachings of Abelard, in whom he detected vanity and arrogance masquerading as science. He also preached against heresy throughout Languedoc.