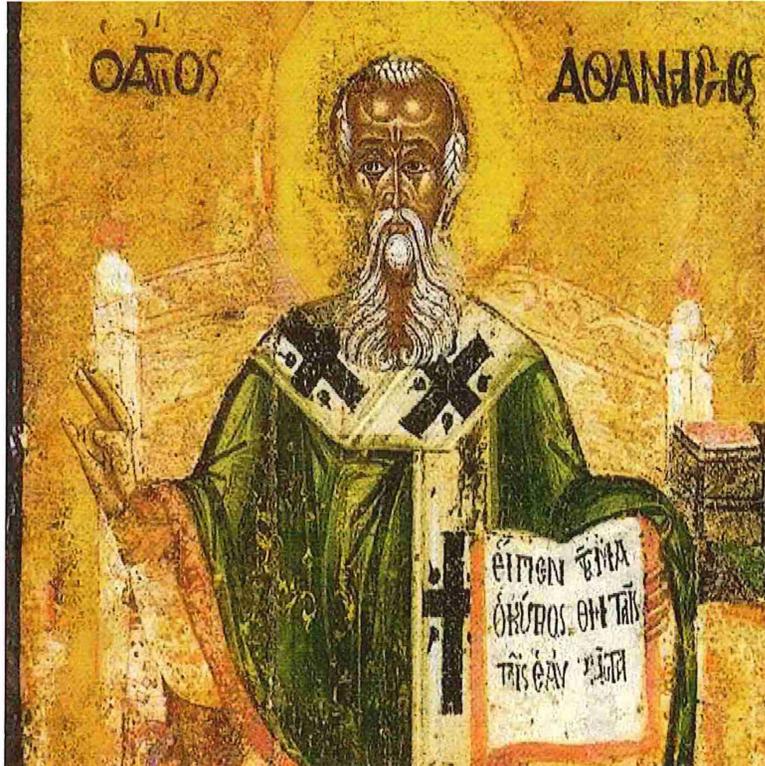


“Christian History is Black History”



Church History is Black History

Athanasius of Alexandria

Athanasius of Alexandria (c. 296–373 AD) was one of the most influential leaders of the early Christian church. Born in **Alexandria**, he became bishop (patriarch) in 328 and served for more than four decades. His ministry took place during a time of intense theological conflict and political pressure within the Roman Empire. Known for his strong character, deep theological insight, and unwavering faith, Athanasius devoted his life to teaching, writing, and defending what he believed to be the true apostolic faith.

The central issue of his lifetime was the controversy over the nature of Jesus Christ. A growing movement, influenced by the teachings of Arius, claimed that Jesus was a created being and not fully divine. Athanasius strongly opposed this teaching and defended the decision of the **First Council of Nicaea**, which affirmed that the Son is of the same essence as the Father. For Athanasius, this was not a minor theological detail but the very heart of the gospel, because only if Christ is truly God could He fully save humanity.

His commitment to this truth came at great personal cost. Athanasius was exiled five separate times by Roman authorities and spent about seventeen years away from his church. Despite opposition from emperors and many church leaders, he continued writing and teaching wherever he was sent. His perseverance earned him the historical description *Athanasius contramundum*—“Athanasius against the world.” During these difficult years, he also wrote influential works such as **On the Incarnation**, which remains a classic explanation of why God became human in Jesus Christ.

Athanasius matters today because his faithfulness helped shape core Christian beliefs that continue across many traditions. He played a key role in preserving the doctrine of the Trinity, defending the full divinity of Christ, and providing the earliest known list of the 27 books of the New Testament. His life stands as an example of courage, theological clarity, and endurance under pressure. More than a historical figure, Athanasius represents the conviction that truth is worth defending and that faithful perseverance can shape the faith of generations.