



ANTHONY OF THE DESERT

Anthony of the Desert

d. 356

17 January

Desert Monastic

- ✦ Gave away all his possessions to take up evangelical poverty
- ✦ Lived first as hermit, then in 305 became head of informal cluster of hermits
- ✦ St. Paul the Hermit preceded him in desert monasticism
- ✦ Athanasius wrote Anthony's life (Jerome wrote Paul's)
- ✦ Lived to be a hundred years old

“Who ever met him grieving and failed to go away rejoicing?”

Athanasius on St. Anthony

“His doctrine surely was pure and unimpeachable; and his temper is high and heavenly, without cowardice, without gloom, without formality, without self-complacency. Superstition is abject and crouching, it is full of thoughts of guilt; it distrusts God, and dreads the powers of evil. Anthony at least had nothing of this, being full of confidence, divine peace, cheerfulness, and valorousness, be he (as some men may judge) ever so much an enthusiast.”

John Henry Newman on Anthony