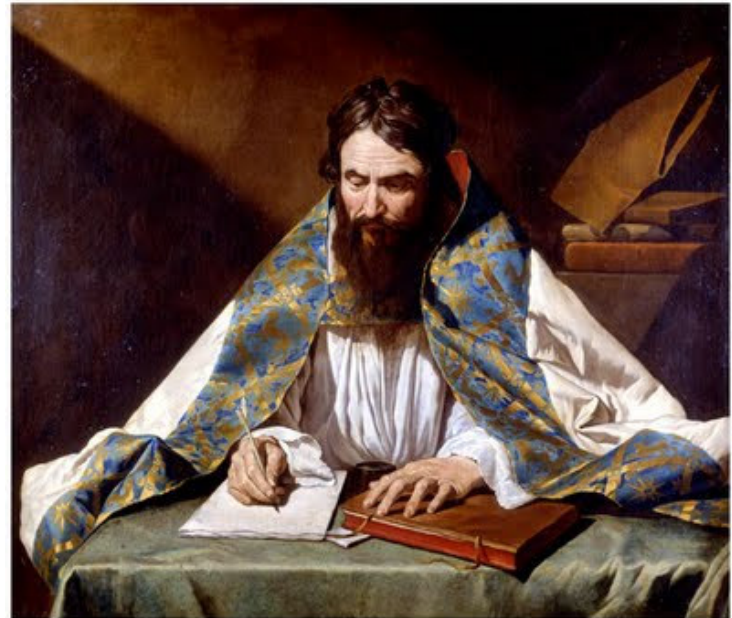


Saint Ambrose

Bishop of Milan

“...I venture to compose an address, for when God willed even the [donkey] spoke”

(*Concerning Virgins*, book I, chapter I as quoted in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Hendrickson Publishers Inc.)



Overview

- Birth & early life
- Baptism & ordination
- Leadership in Milan
- Influence and rebuke of rulers
- Against Arianism & Heathenism
- Writings

Birth & Early Life



Birth & Early Life



Birth & Early Life



Birth & Early Life



Birth & Early Life



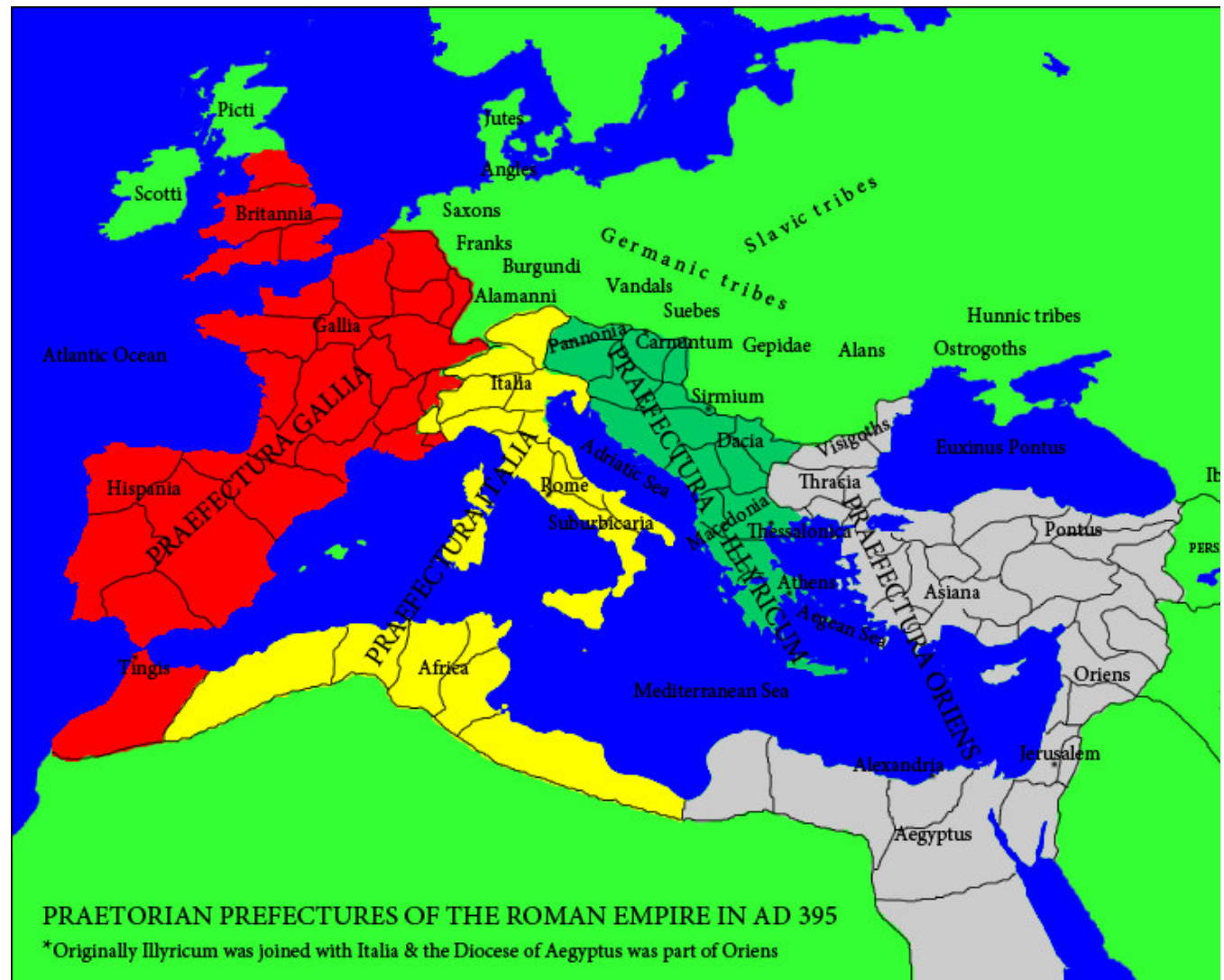
Birth & Early Life



Birth & Early Life

Father:
Ambrosius
prefect of
the Gauls

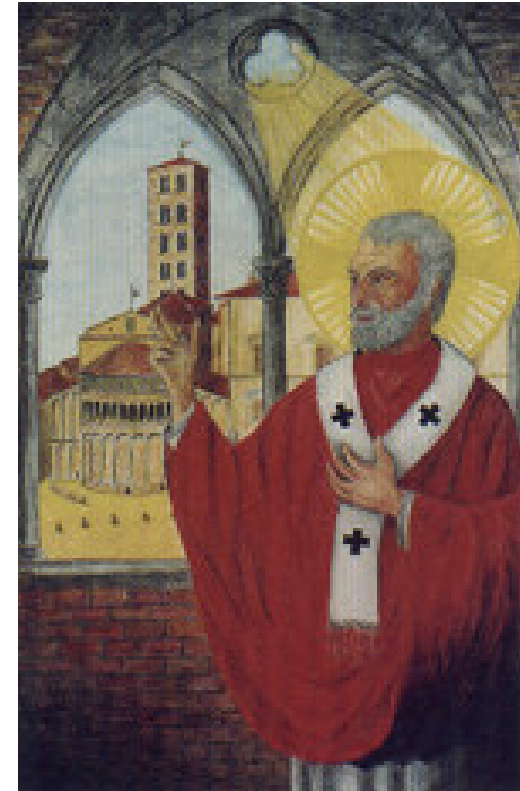
Family was
Roman
(upper
class),
Christians



Birth & Early Life



Sister Marcellina
(wore the veil)



Brother
Satyrus
(served with
him)

Birth & Early Life

Moved to Rome with mother, sister & brother (after 353 A.D.)

Devoted himself to legal studies

Appointed consular of Liguria & Aemilia (370 A.D.)

“Go and act not as a judge but as a bishop”



Baptism & Ordination

374 A.D. Auxentius, Arian Bishop of Milan, died

While selecting his successor, a child cried out
“Ambrose Bishop”

The crowd elected him
and...

he was baptized...

8 days before being
ordained Bishop!



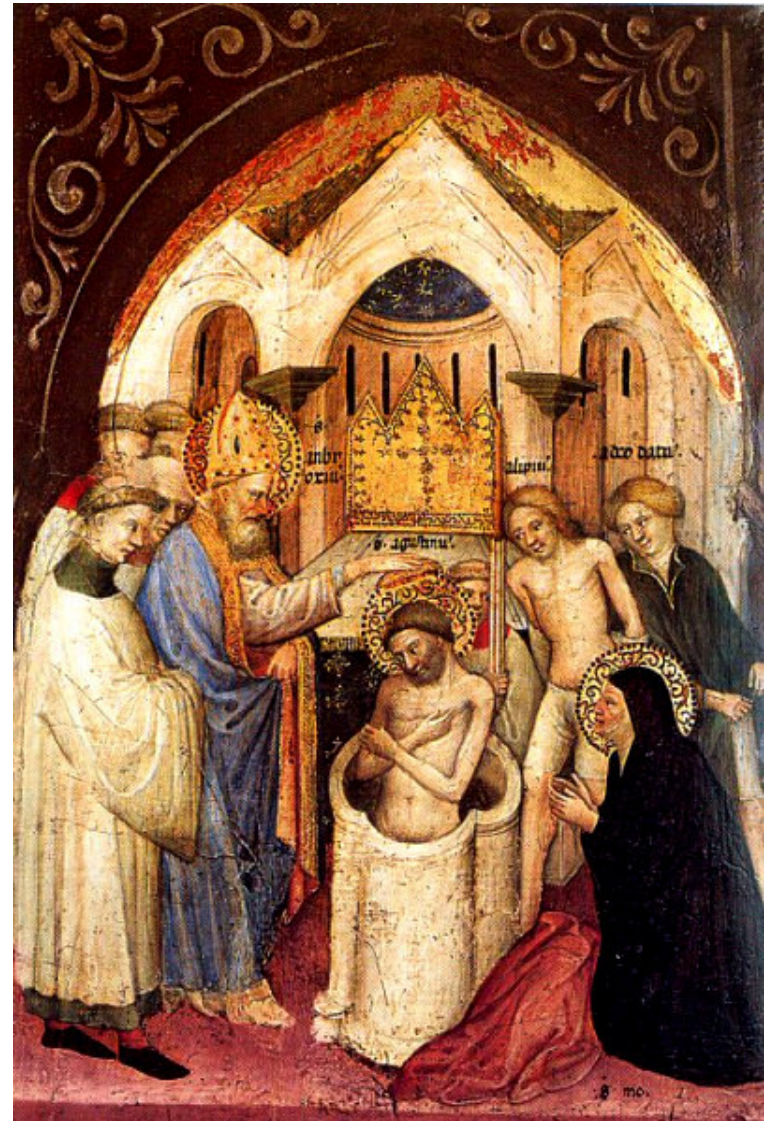
Leadership in Milan

Days were spent in study & devotion besides his official duties

Preached every Sunday
(and daily in some seasons)

Successfully ministered to
catechumens

(foremost among whom was
St. Augustine)



Against Arianism & Heathenism

- 383 A.D., Valentinian II (12 yrs old), ascended the throne.
- Heavily influenced by his mother Justina (an Arian)
- Tried to allow the Arians to use the Portian Basilica outside Milan (and a newer Basilica inside the city)
- St. Ambrose refused twice saying “The Emperor has his palaces, let him leave the Churches to the bishop”
- Soldiers were sent to secure the building, but St. Ambrose occupied it with the believers singing songs & hymns till they left.

Against Arianism & Heathenism

- The heathens attempted to rebuild the Altar of Victory several times
- St. Ambrose successfully opposed three times through epistles to Valentinian II and Theodosius



Influence and Rebuke of Rulers

Remonstrated with
Valentinian I (364 – 375
A.D.) regarding his harsh
rule.

Emperor's reply:

“Well, if I have offended,
prescribe to me the
remedies which the law of
God requires.”



Influence and Rebuke of Rulers

In 390 A.D. Theodosius harshly opposed a seditious movement slaying 7000 people. St. Ambrose wrote him a letter exhorting him to repent and preventing him from partaking of the Mysteries. He later rebuked him when he tried to enter the church sanctuary which was only permitted to the clergy.



Writings

- Dogmatic & Controversial works (5)
 - On Faith
 - On the Holy Spirit
 - On the Mystery of the Lord's Incarnation
 - On the Mysteries
 - On Penitence
- Exegetical works (14) on different parts of the Bible
- Ethical works (The Duties of the Clergy, 4 concerning Virgins & Virginity, 1 on Widows)
- 4 Sermons, 91 Letters & at least 4 Hymns

Writings

“...it is clear that they are not to be counted amongst the disciples of Christ, who think that harsh and proud opinions should be followed rather than such as are gentle and meek; persons who, while they themselves seek God’s mercy, deny it to others”

(*Concerning Repentance*, book I, chapter I as quoted in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Hendrickson Publishers Inc.)

Summary

- St. Ambrose was a devout church father
- Even before becoming Bishop, his kindness won him the love of the people
- As a Bishop, he was faithful and diligent in every aspect of his service
- He opposed heresy and heathenism
- He upheld the true teaching through faith, writing, and works regardless of the cost to him, even in front of emperors.

Summary

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Glory be to God forever, Amen.

