





### Not Quite Right

Young Basil may have thought he had gotten it right (like these hermits by Albrecht Dürer) when he began a hermitage on his family estate, but his best friend Gregory was not impressed.

Years later, when both men were bishops, Gregory wrote to Basil reminding him of their youthful enthusiasm.

## Remembering A Youthful Hermitage

Letter of Gregory Nazianzus to His Friend Basil,  
NPF, Vol. 7

“Your roofless and doorless hut, your fireless and smokeless hearth, your walls dried by fire, that we may not be hit by the drops of the mud, condemned like Tantalus thirsting in the midst of waters, and that pitiable feast with nothing to eat, to which we were invited from Cappadocia . . . we young and miserable survivors of a wreck. For I remember those loaves and the broth (so it was called), yes, and I shall remember them too, and my poor teeth that slipped on your hunks of bread, and then braced themselves up, and pulled themselves as it were out of mud. You yourself will raise these things to a higher strain of tragedy, having learnt to talk big through your own sufferings . . . for if we had not been quickly delivered by that great supporter of the poor—I mean your mother—who appeared opportunely like a harbor to men tossed by a storm, we should long ago have been dead, rather pitied than admired for our faith in Pontus.”

## Basil's Big Sister



St. Macrina the Younger was named for her grandmother, Saint Macrina the Elder. She was to be married, but her intended died and she eventually turned the family home into a monastery. From there Macrina kept close watch on Little Brother Basil and was a strong spiritual influence for him.

Macrina's brother, Gregory of Nyssa, wrote *A Dialogue on the Soul and Resurrection* in her memory.

## St. Basil on The Love of God

“The love of God is not taught. No one has taught us to enjoy the light or to be attached to life more than anything else. And no one has taught us to love the two people who brought us into the world and educated us. Which is all the more reason to believe that we did not learn to love God as a result of outside instruction. In the very nature of every human being has been sown the seed of the ability to love. You and I ought to welcome this seed, cultivate it carefully, nourish it attentively and foster its growth by going to the school of God's commandments with help of His grace.”

## Collect

Almighty God, who hast revealed to thy Church thine eternal Being of glorious majesty and perfect love as one God in Trinity of Persons: Give us grace that, like thy bishop Basil of Caesarea, we may continue steadfast in the confession of this faith, and constant in our worship of thee, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; who livest and reignest for ever and ever.