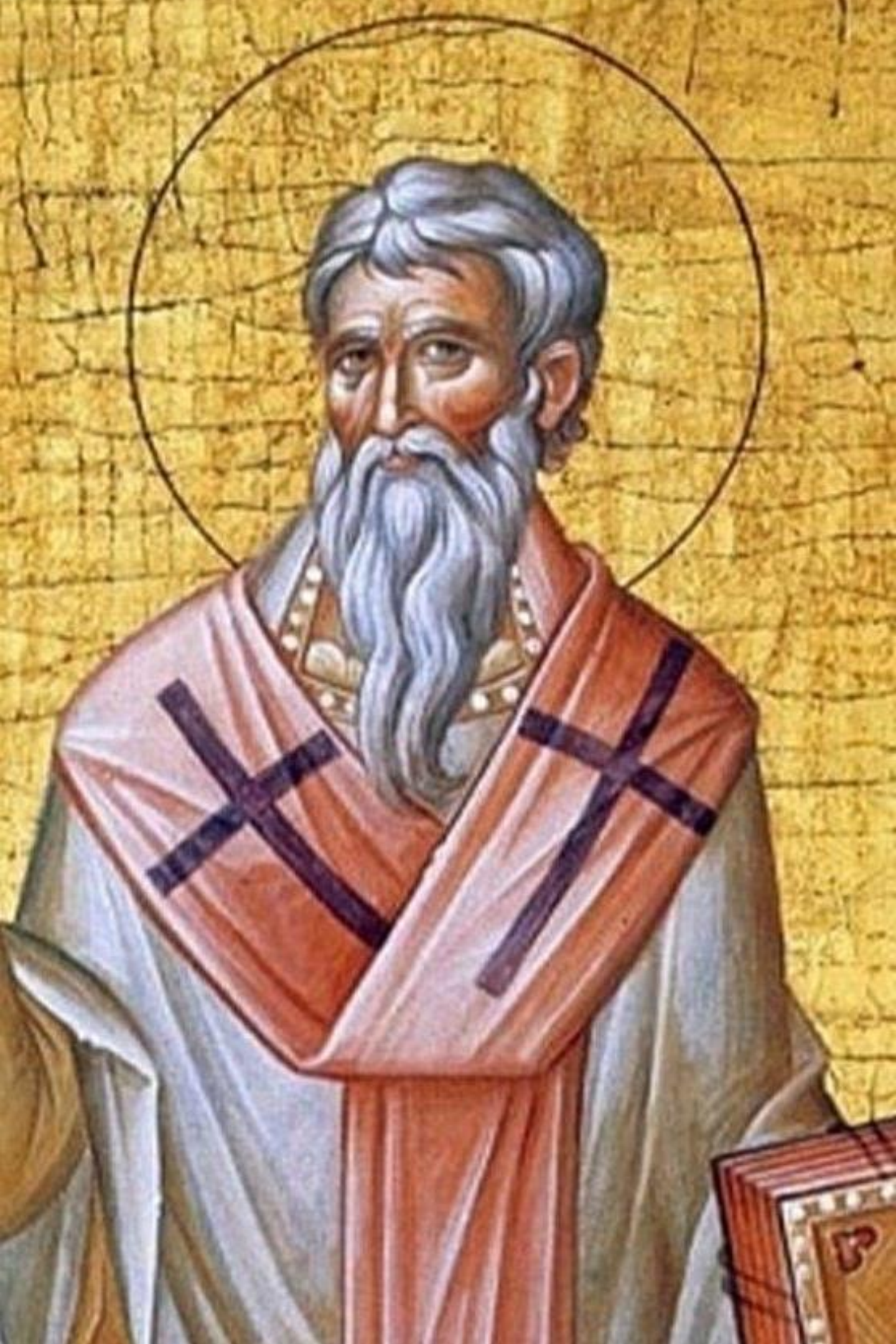


The Meaning of Christmas

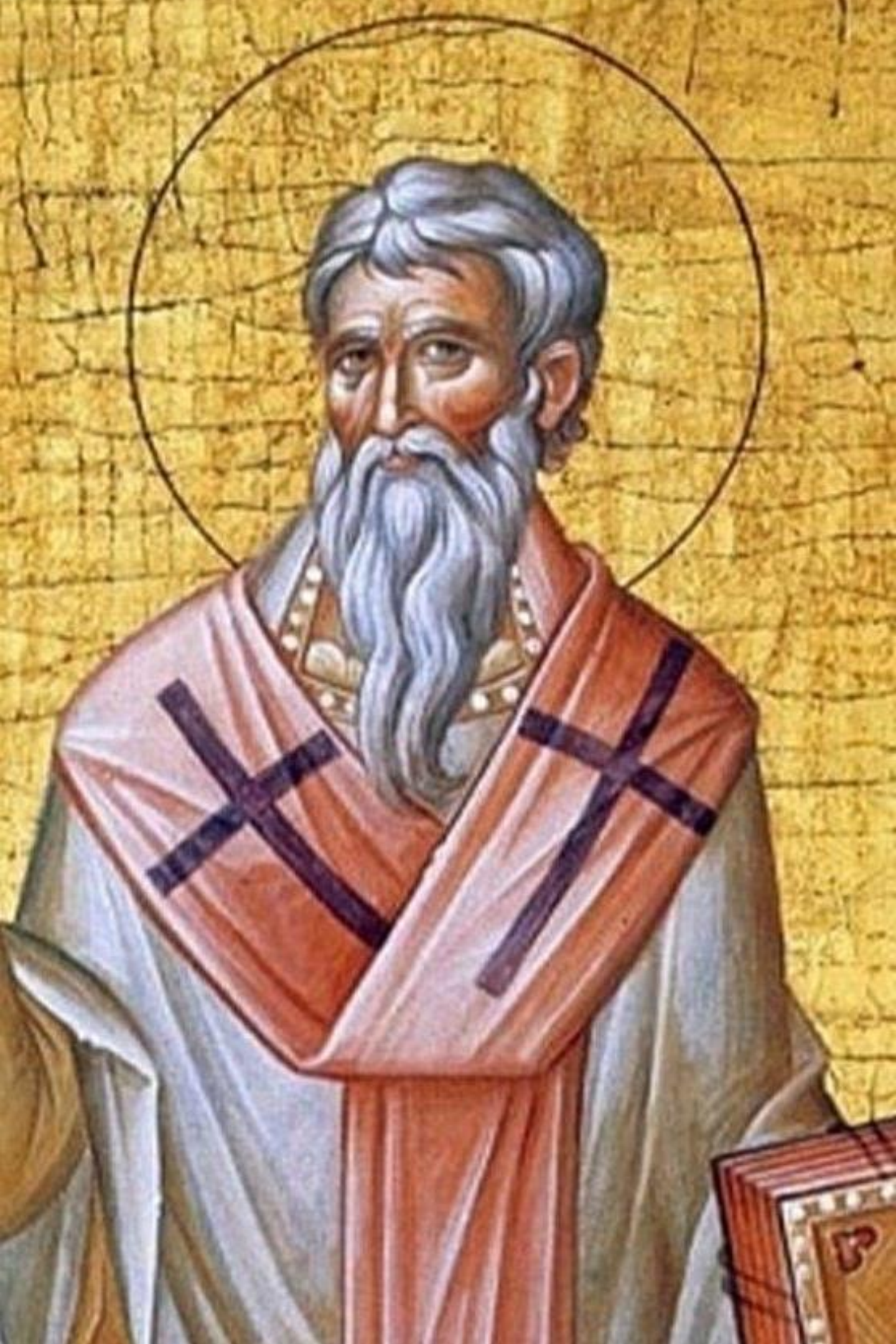
Selected Scripture





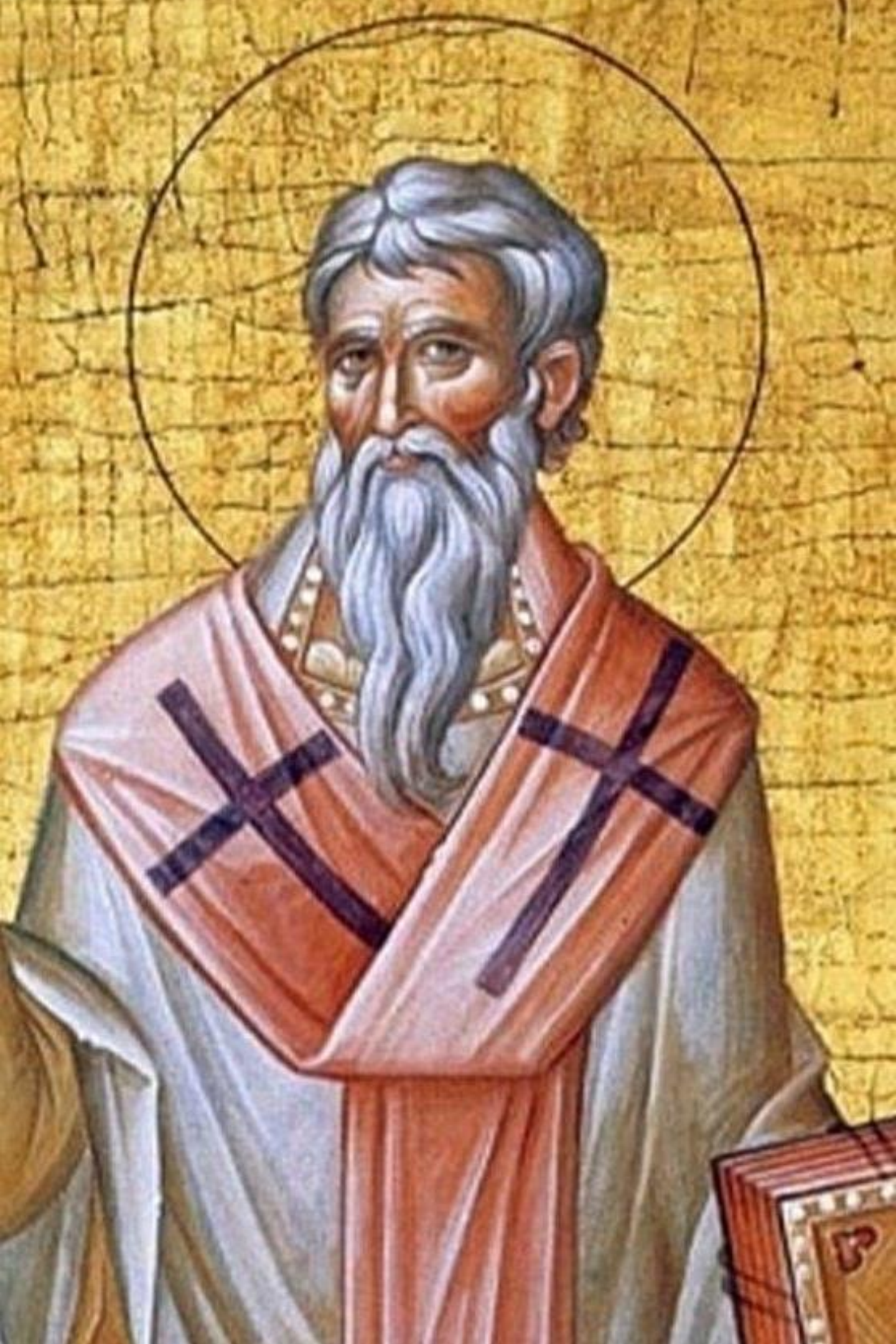
The Church Fathers on the Incarnation

- “For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.” (Nicene Creed)



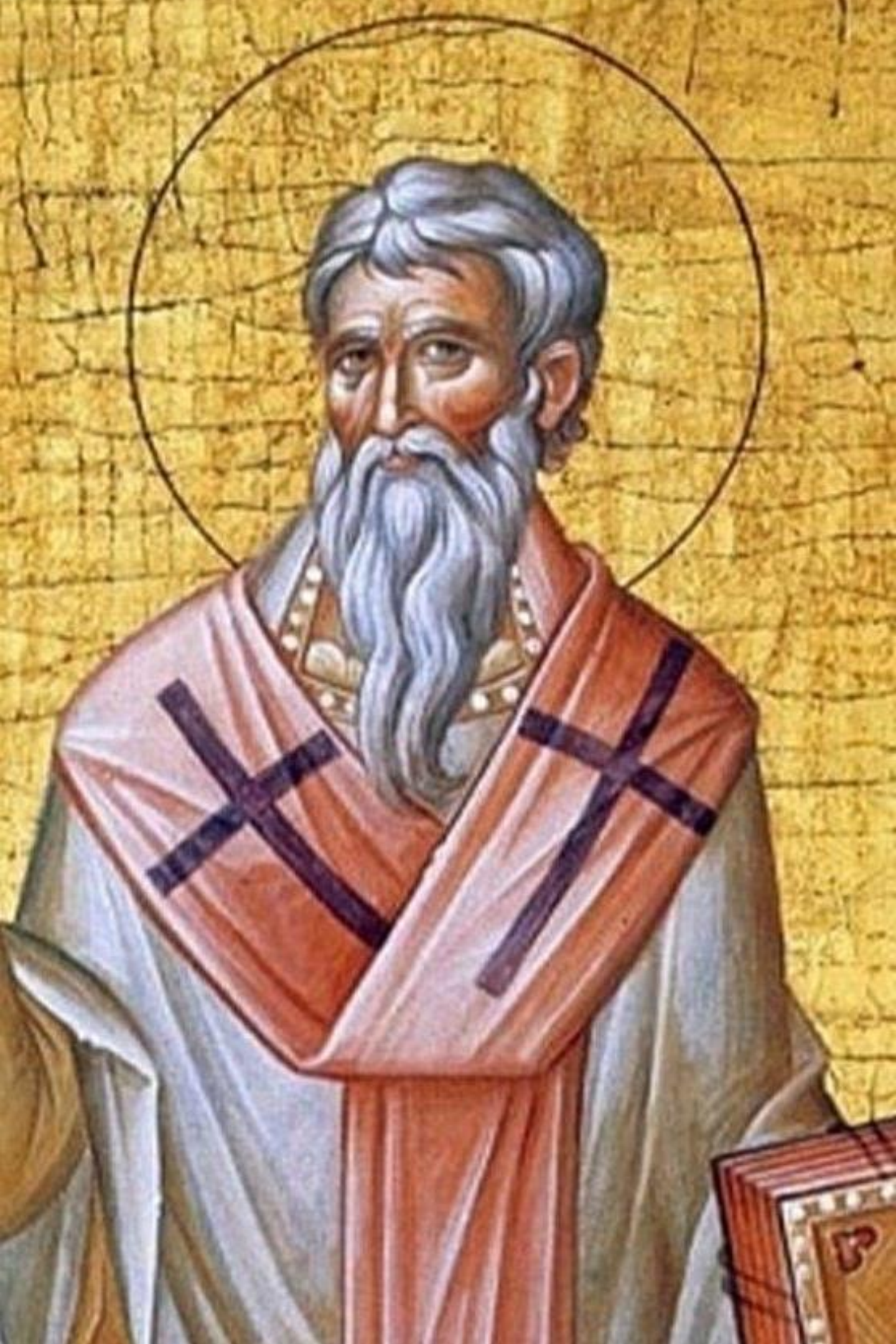
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- “He became what we are so that we might become what He is.” (Irenaeus of Lyons)



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- “Without ceasing to be what he was, he became what he was not.” (Gregory of Nazianzus)
- “Let us confess the presence of him who is both king and physician. For Jesus, the king when about to become our physician, girded himself with the linen of our humanity, and healed that which was sick . . . For if the incarnation was a phantom, salvation is a phantom also.” (Cyril of Jerusalem)

1. The Word became flesh

John 1:1, 14

John 1:1-5, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.





Memoir & Remains of
ROBERT MURRAY
M'CHEYNE

ANDREW BONAR

“The Word was made flesh.” Christ did not get more glory by becoming man, but He manifested His glory in a new way. He did not gain one perfection more by becoming man; He had all the perfections of God before. But now these perfections were poured through a human heart. The almightiness of God now moved in a human arm. The infinite love of God now beat in a human heart. The compassion of God to sinners now glistened in a human eye. God was love before, but Christ was love covered over with flesh.

—Robert Murray M'Cheyne

1. The Word became flesh

John 1:1, 14

2. The Son became a servant

Philippians 2:5-8

Philippians 2:5-8

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!



2. The Son became a servant

Philippians 2:5-8

3. The rich became poor

2 Corinthians 8:9

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.



2 Corinthians 8:7-8

But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also. ⁸ I say this not as a command, but to prove by the earnestness of others that your love also is genuine.



3. The rich became poor

2 Corinthians 8:9

4. The sinless became the sin-bearer

2 Corinthians 5:21

2 Corinthians 5:21

For he made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him.



Isaiah 53

Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows...

But he was pierced for our transgressions;
he was crushed for our iniquities;

upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace,
and with his wounds we are healed....

Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;
he has put him to grief...



Isaiah 53

Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied;
by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant,
make many to be accounted righteous,
and he shall bear their iniquities...

He poured out his soul to death
and was numbered with the transgressors...

He bore the sin of many...

—vv. 4-5, 10a, 11, 12b





The maker of man, he was made man, so that the director of the stars might be a babe at the breast; that bread might be hungry, and the fountain thirsty; that the light might sleep, and the way be weary from a journey; that the truth might be accused by false witnesses, and the judge of the living and the dead be judged by a mortal judge; that justice might be convicted by the unjust, and discipline be scourged with whips; that the cluster of the grapes might be crowned with thorns, and the foundation be hung up on a tree; that strength might grow weak, eternal health be wounded, life die.

—Augustine of Hippo

4. The sinless became the sin-bearer

2 Corinthians 5:21

Summary

1. The Word became flesh

1. The Son became a servant

1. The rich became poor

1. The sinless became the sin-bearer

