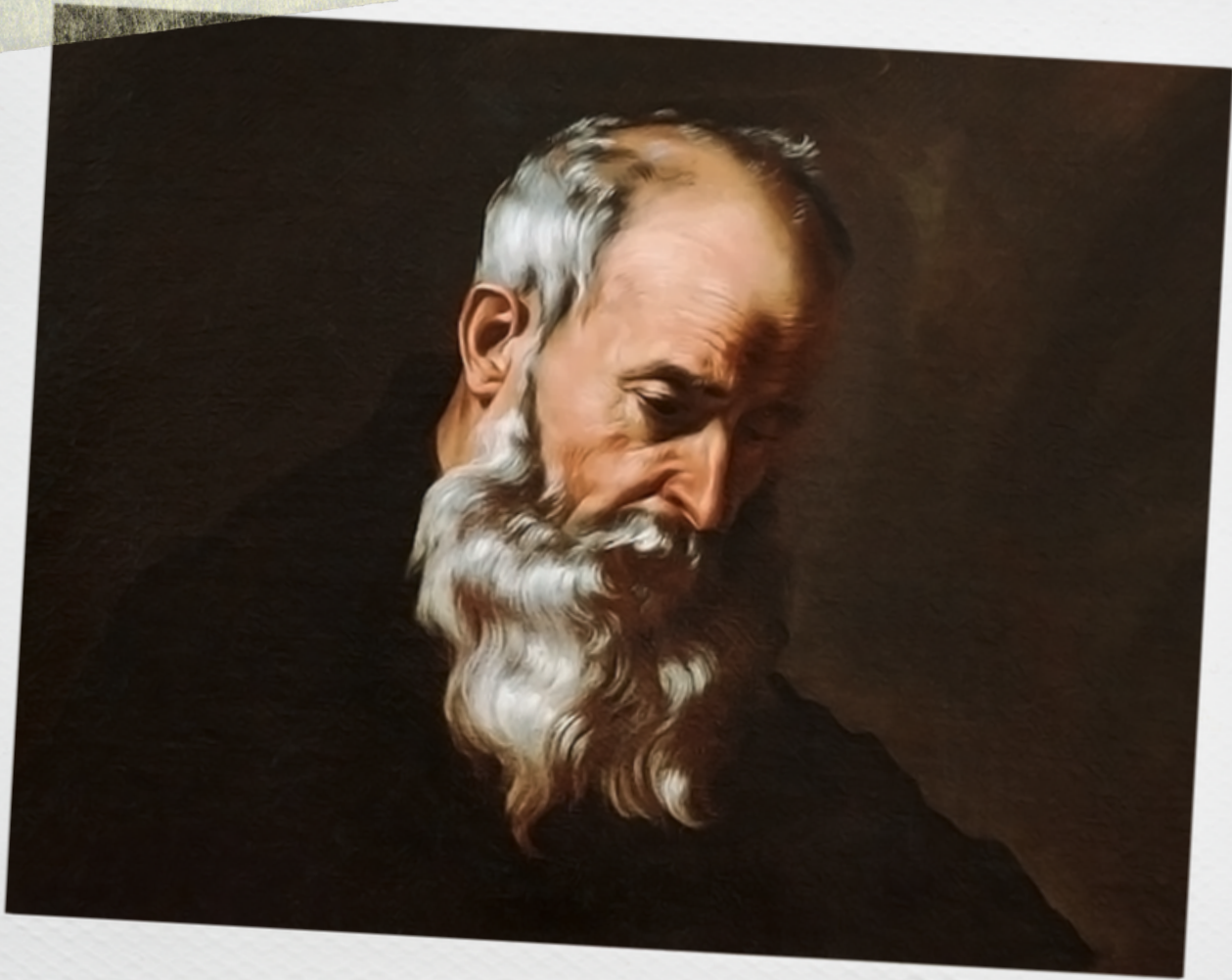
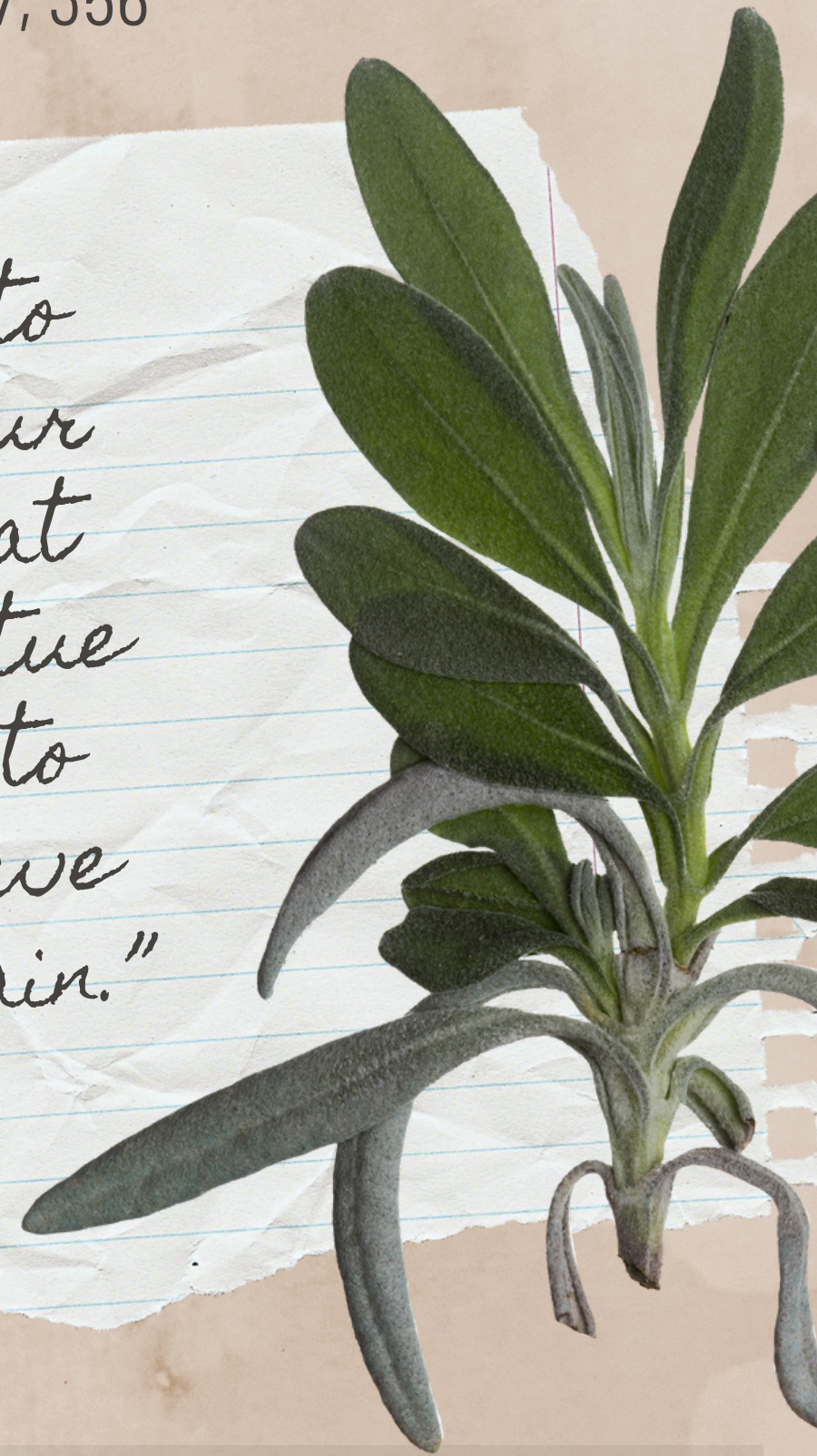


Saint Anthony the Great

- Feastday: January 17
- Patron Saint of: Skin Diseases, Basket Makers, Grave Diggers
- Birth: January 12, 251
- Death: January 17, 356



*"We ought to
make up our
minds what
kind of virtue
we want to
forge, or we
labor in vain."*



❖

St. Anthony the Abbot also known as Anthony the Great was from Egypt and a prominent leader among the Desert Fathers. The biography of Anthony's life helped to spread the concept of monasticism, particularly in Western Europe through Latin translations. He was the first known ascetic to go into the wilderness.

Most of what is known about St. Anthony comes from the "Life of Anthony", written in Greek around 360 by Athanasius of Alexandria. It depicts Anthony as an illiterate and holy man who through his existence in a primitive landscape has an absolute connection to the divine truth. He was born in Coma, in Lower Egypt to a wealthy landowner. At age eighteen his parents died and left him with the care of his unmarried sister. He took the words of Jesus to heart, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasures in heaven; and come, follow me". He sold everything, gave it to the poor, and placed his sister into a group of nuns.

He decided to follow the tradition of the hermits and headed out into the Alkaline Nitrian Desert region about 60 miles west of Alexandria. He remained there for thirteen years. He was notably the first ascetic to attempt living in the desert proper, completely cut off from civilization. He is called the father of

monasticism because he inspired hundreds of men and women to move into the depths of the desert, some organized into small communities. It is said when he passed, he requested to be placed in an unmarked grave.

In the biography, St. Athanasius wrote of St. Anthony: "That he was everywhere known, admired and desired by everyone, even those who had not seen him, is a sign of his virtue and God-friendly soul. In fact, neither for writings nor for a profane wisdom nor for any capacity is Anthony known, but only for his piety towards God - and no one could deny that this is a gift from God."