When we think about the early centuries of Christianity, we imagine catacombs, martyrs, hostile emperors, and small communities that nevertheless changed the course of history. But who has told us all this? How do we know what happened in those decisive years? The answer leads us to a key figure, often forgotten outside specialized circles: Eusebius of Caesarea.

We find ourselves in the 4th century, a time of radical transition. Christianity was moving from being persecuted to being recognized, especially after the historic Edict of Milan promoted by Constantine the Great. In the midst of this change of era, Eusebius emerges as the great narrator of Christian memory.

A PRIVILEGED WITNESS OF HISTORY

Eusebius was not simply a writer: he was a direct witness to the events that shaped the life of the early Church. Born around the year 260 in Caesarea of Palestine, he personally experienced the last great persecution against Christians, that of Diocletian. This context would deeply mark his work.

But what distinguishes Eusebius is not only his experience, but his access to extraordinary documentary wealth. Thanks to the famous Library of Caesarea, he was able to consult texts that have now been lost: letters from bishops, accounts of martyrs, episcopal lists, writings of the first theologians…

That library, heir to the work of great masters such as Origen, was one of the most important intellectual centers of the ancient world. And Eusebius knew how to make use of it like no one else.

THE FIRST GREAT HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

His most famous work, the *Ecclesiastical History*, is not simply a book: it is the first serious attempt to narrate in an orderly way the life of the Church from the Apostles to his own time.

In it, Eusebius gathers:

- The succession of bishops from the Apostles
- The persecutions suffered by Christians
- The heroic testimonies of the martyrs
- The heresies that threatened the unity of the faith
- The writings and teachings of the early Church Fathers

Thanks to him we know details about figures such as Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp of Smyrna, or Irenaeus of Lyons.

Without his work, much of the Christian memory of the first three centuries would have been lost forever.

BETWEEN HISTORY AND THEOLOGY

Now, it would be naive to think that Eusebius is a “neutral” historian in the modern sense. He writes with a clear intention: to show how God has guided the history of the Church.

For Eusebius, events are not mere facts, but signs of Providence. Persecutions are not defeats, but purifications. The Constantinian peace is not accidental, but a divine gift.

This theological vision of history is deeply Christian: God acts in time. History is not chaos, but a path of salvation.

A CONTROVERSIAL FIGURE

However, Eusebius is not without controversy. His closeness to Constantine the Great has led some to accuse him of presenting an overly favorable view of the emperor.

Moreover, his stance in certain theological controversies, especially regarding Arianism, has generated debate. Although he participated in the Council of Nicaea, his position was nuanced and, for some, ambiguous.

This reminds us of something important: the great men of Church history are not perfect. They are instruments, with lights and shadows, in the hands of God.

THE LEGACY OF EUSEBIUS TODAY

Why is Eusebius still relevant in the 21st century?

Because we live in an age that, like his, is marked by profound changes, cultural tensions, and challenges to the faith. And in the midst of all this, we need memory.

Eusebius teaches us that:

- The Church has a concrete, real, incarnate history
- Faith is transmitted through people, communities, and testimonies
- Suffering for Christ is not sterile, but fruitful
- God acts even in the darkest moments

In a world where the past tends to be forgotten or reinterpreted according to ideological interests, his work invites us to seek the truth with rigor, love, and fidelity.

A FINAL INVITATION

Reading Eusebius is not just studying history. It is entering into contact with the living memory of the Church. It is listening to the voices of the first Christians who, with their blood and their faith, built what we are today.

Perhaps today we do not have access to the Library of Caesarea. But we do have something even more valuable: the accumulated testimony of centuries of faith.

And the question that remains in the air is as current as it is demanding:

What place do we occupy in that history?
Will we be mere spectators… or faithful protagonists of the faith we have received?

Because, in the end, the history of the Church did not end with Eusebius.
It continues today… with you.