

Evagrius

*LIFE OF SAINT ANTHONY*  
[4<sup>th</sup> Century]

1. PROLOGUE  
(PL 73.167)

Word-for-word translation from one language into another clouds the sense, and like uncontrolled weeds, smothers the crop. For, while the original case usages and figures of speech dominate the text, what could have been stated in pithy sentences is hardly made clear by long periphrases. This I have avoided in acceding to your request to translate the life of St Anthony. Even if some words are missing, nothing is missing from the sense. Leave it to others to go chasing after words and syllables; you must look for the sense.

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2. EPILOGUE  
(PL 73.167)

Therefore I would ask those prudent people who have been kind enough to read this book to excuse me if, in translating from Greek to Latin, I could not bring over the full power of the Greek. In any case, this was not to my purpose. But we did not take this decision with malice, but knowing full well how Greek loses when translated into Latin. But I preferred to see the Greek suffer this loss, rather than have those who manage to read translations from the Greek suffer loss of divine favour. May Almighty God, who inspired Saint Anthony in his great exploits, also inspire us to imitate him, and that in all things His name may be glorified through Jesus Christ, our Teacher, Counsellor, Redeemer and Saviour, with the Holy Spirit, to whom is glory and everlasting power for ever and ever.