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THE SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES

A Byzantine Approach

The present work is an inquiry into the "mysteric" character of the sacraments of the Byzantine Church both in their early Christian context and in their present state. Hopefully, this is the first volume of a series that will consider these same sacraments from other viewpoints, for instance their theology and their administration. Yet, what is offered here is not an incomplete study, but a complete and independent whole.

The "mysteric" character of the sacraments is visible in the tradition of all the Christian Churches, but more particularly in the Byzantine, where to this day the sacraments are still called "Mysteries" or "Holy Mysteries." The exploration of the notion of mystery in its Christian and pagan aspects is one of the most fascinating fields in the area of liturgical studies.

Our book is divided into three parts. Part I is historical: it explores the genesis and meaning of the mysteries in both pagan and Christian contexts. Even a cursory survey of the two may offer richer fruits than mere apologetics, for it gives new insights into the works of the Fathers and shows some of the problems faced and solved by the early Church. Such practical realism may help in the solution of similar difficulties faced by churchmen and Christian writers in their present attempt to make their message relevant to the twentieth century world. Contemporary problems, grave as they may seem, are dwarfed in comparison with those of the ancient Church. Modern man may benefit greatly from the study of ancient religious wisdom.

Part II traces the institution of the seven sacraments, their meaning and their ritual in the early Church. Based on documentary sources of the first five centuries, this survey shows that all seven sacraments existed in the primitive Church. It distinguishes their essential rites from auxiliary ceremonial introduced to make their meaning more explicit to the early Christians.

Part III deals briefly with the present sacramental theory of the Byzantine Church. It may surprise many Western Christians that most of the discrepancies between the Orthodox and Latin Catholics are merely a matter of focusing on different facets of the same truth. Different mentalities rather than different theologies separate the two great Christian bodies. The gap between Latin Catholics and Byzantine Catholics is far greater than that between Byzantine Catholics and Orthodox. This is why, in nearly all instances, we legitimately regard the viewpoint of Byzantine Catholic theologians and that of the Orthodox as identical, and call it the Byzantine approach.

In this day of Christian renewal and ecumenism, religious groups may learn much from one another. To understand another rite's viewpoint on any religious truth means coming closer to it in thought and heart; it means drawing nearer to that final embrace of oneness in Christ.

Most of the material of this book was delivered in the form of lectures to post-graduate students at the John XXIII Institute for Eastern Christian Studies, Fordham University, New York City. It is now being offered to anyone interested in Byzantine sacramentology. Some of the lectures are published in abridged form. Selected footnote references offer a basis for more detailed studies. The reader will find the term sacrament(s) *less confusing than its Byzantine counterpart,* mystery *or* mysteries; *hence the more familiar term is generally used throughout the work.*

I wish to embrace in an expression of gratitude all those who have helped or encouraged me in this work: the Russian Jesuit Fathers who invited me to deliver these lectures at the John XXIII Institute in the summer of 1972; the students of the same Institute whose enthusiasm inspired their publication; the various University librarians without whose patient cooperation this volume would not have been possible; also, "my three Polish friends," John Markewich, Joseph Chicilo, and Joseph Barteski, whose great love for the Byzantine liturgy has increased my own affection for it; Mr. Wasyl Leniuk, my devoted cook, who at eighty-five faithfully prepared my daily bread while I readied more ethereal sustenance; finally, Baron Jose de Vinck who prepared the manuscript for publication and supervised the design and production of the book.

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PART ONE

THE PAGAN AND THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERIES COMPARED

CHAPTER I

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE PAGAN WORLD

To the Jews Jesus was a blasphemer; to the Romans, a common agitator with designs of making himself king. When he died on that barren hilltop outside Jerusalem on these charges, he was crucified between two thieves. His enemies thought they had disgraced him forever. His little band of followers scattered, silently disappearing into the anonymity of the tenement quarter. Soon everybody would forget—they always do. But the mighty had miscalculated.

Christ's revolution swept on. The initial group of believers of "about an hundred and twenty" (Acts 1:15) grew within a century to become an important minority in the Roman Empire. Undaunted by overwhelming obstacles, it spread from Palestine to Asia Minor, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Africa and Gaul.

Christian cemeteries at Naples date from A.D. 150. Christians lived and died at Pompeii and Herculaneum long before Vesuvius erupted in A.D. 79 and buried the two cities. The Christian community must have been relatively numerous at Gortyna in Crete where so many splendid Christian ruins can still be seen. There must have been many Christians in Gaul among the colonies of Eastern merchants who conducted the commercial business of the province. In the area of present day Tunisia at Susa, the ancient Hadrumetum, catacombs containing more than five thousand tombs prove that the Gospel of Christ was widespread there at the time of the Antonines.

In Syria, Asia Minor, in Athens and Greece, the Church flourished. At Lyons, Vienne, and down the Rhone Valley, the Church increased in strength. Christ's Gospel touched exotic places: Numidia, Mauretania (Algeria), Africa Proconsularis (Northern Tunisia) and the provinces of Byzacena (Southern Tunisia). In some areas, in fact, the Christians became a majority. By the end of the second century, Tertullian could write: “We appeared only yesterday, and

now we fill your cities, islands, forts, towns, your squares, even military camps, the tribes, the town councils, the palace, the senate and the forum; we have left you nothing except your temples. Should we secede from you, you would be terrified by your own loneliness."1

Christ's revolution was not only widespread: it was also deep. It penetrated all levels of society, from the humble slaves and artisans, cobblers, seamstresses, and wool-carders, to the very wealthy Romans, aristocrats of imperial society, senior magistrates, intellectuals, and senators. On the lower level stand poor and unlettered men: Stephanus, Phlegon, Achaicus, Fortunatus, and Urbanus, known only through clumsily carved names in the catacombs. Others are not even mentioned by name: they are only identified as having died for Christ in that vanished world of the second century. Some inscriptions read: "God and only God knows this man's name." On the top levels are names that would have made the social register of the day: senators, Pudens and Apollonius; consuls, Liberalis, Marcus Acilius Glabrio; aristocrats, Vetius, Praxedes and Caecilia; intellectuals, Justin, Epicletus, Dion Chrysostomus, who could have held their own on any university faculty.

Christianity even made inroads into the imperial family: Vespasian's nephew, Flavius Clemens, his wife Flavia Dimitilla, and their two sons, the emperor's heirs presumptive, suffered under Domitian for their belief in Christ. Long suspect for his "lack of enthusiasm" for the official cult, Flavius Clemens, says Suetoneus, was condemned and put to death" on the flimsiest of pretexts."

A minority group in the Roman empire of the second century had become a decisive majority by the fourth century.

While the Christian revolutionary movement spread horizontally by increasing its membership, its action was mostly vertical: it penetrated to the heart and transformed people. Numerical increase depended upon the depth of penetration. Without an inner transformation of the individual convert, the movement could not have survived and spread. The fierce persecutions alone would have buried it without trace in history. At best, it would have been

[1] Tertullian, *Apologeticus adv. Gentes pro Christianis,* 37, PL 1, 525 A.

remembered as a quaint, scholarly footnote. The Church would indeed have been a house built on sand.

The total transformation of individual Christians must be explained through divine providence and grace, but also through the fiercely rigorous policy of the Church, which demanded and obtained a total transformation through iron discipline, stern training and careful instruction. Totally dedicated Christians were made through the the catechumenate. Modern armies insist on rigorous training: so did the ancient Church for the soldier in the army of Christ. Ancient Christian literature often speaks of warfare with the powers of evil. If the prospective convert failed to make sufficient progress, or did not measure up to the expected standards, he was rejected. Total transformation could not have been accomplished in any other way. And without complete transformation and dedication, the pagan world could not have been conquered.

The Christian ideal of those days was a completely sanctified life, or, as the Greeks later put it, *theosis* (θέωσις)—becoming more and more God-like. The closer men and women patterned themselves on the Divine Model, the more God-like they became. With Paul, they could say, *"*I live now not with my own life but with the life of Christ who lives in me" (Ga 2:20). They took Christ's precepts literally and put them into practice. They heard Paul's wonderful Letters read to them and took to heart his own example when he described (foolishly, he said) his own difficulties and trials: "Five times I had the thirty-nine lashes from the Jews; three times I have been beaten with sticks; once I was stoned; three times I have been shipwrecked and once adrift in the open sea for a night and a day. Constantly travelling, I have been in danger from rivers and in danger from brigands, in danger from my own people and in danger from pagans; in danger in the towns, in danger in the open country, danger at sea and danger from so-called brothers. I have worked and laboured, often without sleep; I have been hungry and thirsty and often starving; I have been in the cold without clothes. And to leave out much more, there is my daily preoccupation..." (2 Cor 11: 25-28). So when their time came to suffer, they expected it: most did not flinch in the arena, in the market-place or in prison.

The transformation in Christ and for Christ did not make them

sour, hollow-eyed zealots who spurned all contact with the pagan world about them. No, *theosis* made them kind, compassionate and lovable to all, even to their enemies. Defining the evangelical standard, the *Didache* tells us what the Christian should do: "Be gentle, for the gentle will inherit the land. Be long-suffering, and merciful, and guileless and quiet and good... Do not carry your head high, or open your heart to presumption. Do not be on intimate terms with the mighty, but associate with holy and lowly folk."[2] Church leaders demanded and obtained complete personal transformation of their flocks. There was no sin, except those faults whereby even a just man falls seventy times a day.

Being transformed into Christ, the Christians went out into the marketplace as living witnesses to his truth. That is why Tertullian could write with perfect frankness: "We others, we Christians, do not live apart from the rest of the world. We visit the forum, the baths, the workshops, the stores, the markets and all the public places. We earn our livings as sailors, soldiers, farmers, or businessmen." [8] The anonymous author of the *Epistle to Diognetus,* who calls himself Mathetes and a disciple of the apostles, expresses it even better: "For the Christians are not distinguished from other men either by country, or language, or the customs which they observe... They marry, as do all (others); they beget children, but they do not destroy their offspring. They have a common table, but not a common bed. They are in the flesh, but they do not live after the flesh. They pass their days on earth, but they are citizens of heaven. They obey prescribed laws, and at the same time surpass the laws by their lives. They love all people, and are persecuted by all. They are unknown and condemned; they are put to death... They are poor, yet make many rich; they are in lack of all things, and yet abound in all; they are dishonoured, and yet in their very dishonour are glorified. They are evil spoken of, and yet are justified; they are reviled, and bless; they are insulted, and repay the insult with honour; they do good, yet are punished as evil-doers. When punished, they rejoice as if quickened into life; they are

[2] *Didache* or *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,* 3, 7; trans, by J. A. Kleist, in ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WRITERS (Westminster, Maryland, 1948), p. 17.

[3] Tertullian, *Apologeticus,* 42, PL 1, 555 A-556 A.

assailed by the Jews as foreigners, and are persecuted by the Greeks; yet those who hate them are unable to assign any reason for their hatred.

"To sum up all in one word—what the soul is in the body, that are Christians in the world. The soul is dispersed through all the members of the body, and Christians are scattered through all the cities of the world."4

The transformed Christian prayed intensely, he prayed constantly. According to Clement of Alexandria who lived at the end of the second century:"The Christian prays while he walks, while he talks, while he rests, while he works or reads: and, when he meditates alone in the secret retreat of his own soul, and calls upon the Father with groans that are no less real because they are unspoken, the Father never fails to answer and draw near to him."5

It was not easy, it could not have been easy to keep the faith, much less to spread it among a people steeped in evil and moral depravity. We only have to re-read Paul's Letter to the Romans to realize what it was to live among those whom "God left to their filthy enjoyments and practices," who "worshipped and served creatures instead of the creator," who "are steeped in all sorts of depravity, rottenness, greed and malice, and addicted to envy, murder, wrangling, treachery and spite. Libellers, slanderers, enemies of God, rude, arrogant and boastful, enterprising in sin, rebellious to parents, without brains, honour, love, or pity" (Rm 1: 25-32).

Because some jobs and occupations were closely connected with immorality or implied support of idolatry, they were closed to the Christian. Hippolytus lists the more obvious ones: brothelkeeper, sculptor or painter of idols, playwright and actor, teacher or charioteer, gladiator, priest or sacristan of temples, judge and governor,6 magician, soothsayer, astrologer, incantator, and interpreter of dreams.[7]

[4] *Ep. ad Diog.,* chaps 5 and 6, PG 2, 1173 B-1176 C.

5 Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.,* VII, 7, PG 9, 469 C.

[6] Because judge and governor could condemn men to death.

[7] Cf. G. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome* (London, 1937), 23, v. 1-18 and 25, v. 4-15.

It took courage and not a little daring to forsake an occupation in which one had worked for years before conversion. If, on becoming a Christian, a man had to abandon the only trade he knew, what of wife, of family? Could he learn another trade? Would his family and neighbors suspect the reason why he abandoned the first? Would they report their suspicions to government officials? Would this lead to the arena or the deadly mines? Soldiers who refused to execute fellow Christians were signing their own death warrants. Yet there were many Christian soldiers and they proved to be good missionaries.

Christians encountered many other obstacles. If a Christian businessman had to borrow money, he would have to take the usual oath in the name of the gods. What was he to do? A Christian teacher could be asked to instruct his students in classical mythology; but this was propagating pagan beliefs. How was he to evade it? Every pagan festival—and there were many—was an occasion fraught with danger. How to avoid the drunken bacchanalia or the degrading spectacles in the circus, watching men die in sport—without giving oneself away? In times of persecution, the prosecuting tribunals were especially watchful of those who failed to attend such events. If a Christian belonged to one of the many trade guilds — and it was almost impossible to survive without belonging to one—how was he to evade religious celebrations and eating food and drink offered to idols? How could he avoid the immorality of drunken orgies? The system of slavery placed Christians in a difficult position because it offered the pagan master easy opportunities to abuse Christian boy or girl slaves. He used them in any way he wished, as chattel. Resisting a master's advances often meant death. Some masters even tested poison on their slaves.

Even within the circle of family and friends, there could be dangers and difficulties, demanding nothing short of heroism. A pagan father pleaded with his only daughter to pity his grey hair and renounce the superstitions of the Christians. Another disinherited his convert-son who refused to worship the gods of his *gens*. The chances of domestic disagreements were seemingly endless. Tertullian recounts an incident in which a husband, extremely suspicious of his unfaithful wife, noticed her sudden change in behavior. When he learned that conversion to the Christian sect was the cause of this transformation, he begged her to take back her lovers rather than make him endure the shame of being the husband of a Christian!

To cling to Christ and to spread his truth in the face of such superhuman obstacles meant that the Christian had to be completely transformed. The incredible growth of the Church proves the vast majority of Christians in those early centuries were indeed made like God, and triumphed over sin, at least over deadly sin. This single fact explains why confession and reconciliation were used so sparingly in the early Church. For the most part, the need did not arise. The sins which were not unto death were forgiven by weeping, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. For the rest, grave sin was unthinkable for the Christian. This may perhaps be explained by the fact that during the first centuries most of the followers of Christ were converts. They became Christians because they wanted to be Christians, and only after becoming thoroughly convinced of Christ's truth. And they were received only after severe testing and training. They had to prove their sincerity before they were received into the *ecclesia.* In these early days "born Christians" were probably a rarity. Tertullian did not lie when he wrote at the end of the second century: "Men become Christians, they are not born Christians." [8]

For all its iron discipline, the Christian revolutionary movement with its wondrous transformation of people must ultimately be explained by divine power. The main ways in which God chose to touch the souls of men to effect this transformation are the sacraments, channels of grace so mysterious that to this day half of Christendom calls them "mysteries" in the strictest sense. It is mainly through the sacraments that the Holy Spirit "communicates,"

[8] Tertullian, *Apologeticus,* 18, PL I, 435 A. The sentence may be understood to mean that men, being born sinners, can only become Christians through the sacrament of Baptism or, even if born of Christian parents, they become true followers of Christ only by their actions; however, such an interpretation seems unlikely in view of the sentence which precedes: "These are points (of doctrine) at which we, too, laughed in times past. We are from your own ranks."

pours into men deifying energies (δυνάμεις) making them «partakers of the divine nature" (θείας κοινωνοί φύσεως, 2 P 1:4) in an inscrutable but real way.9 Then as now, the sacraments are the chief instruments through which the « rays of divinity penetrate men's souls and transform them into God-the apocalyptic revolution dwarfing every other revolution and upheaval of human history.

[9] The distinction between God's essence and his energies forms the Eastern Church's dogmatic basis for explaining union with God. See chap. XXXII below.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGIN AND EARLY MEANING OF MYSTERY

The first Christians, including those of the Apostolic era, were at a loss, as we would have been, to name some of the new, unheard-of things taught and practiced by Christ and his apostles.

Not all of these teachings and practices, however, were entirely new. Some had a foundation in the Old Testament and hence presented no difficulty. Others were entirely original. New words designating the revolutionary spiritual realities would have meant little or nothing to their listeners. Christian leaders, then, chose to use words already in existence, but to give them a new meaning. Sometimes it took centuries for terminology to settle down and to be universally adopted.

Some of the great new spiritual realities were the ritual-signs established by Christ himself to impart grace, make men holy, transform them, so that, as Hippolytus later put it boldly, man "will also be God" (έσται και θεός).[1] What names could be given to the manifestations of the Lord's saving power, those means by which Christ is present and works in his Church, those realities founded on the close connection of spirit and matter, the supernatural and the material, pervading all of Christianity?

The first churchmen saw the whole Christian life as a unity, a single mystery (in the Pauline sense, cf. below, pp. 38 ff.), to be made holy by a variety of acts, some performed but once in a person's life, as the laver of regeneration, others perhaps daily, as receiving the Eucharistic Christ into their souls. But these rites or acts were so spiritual, so tremendous, that they seemed to defy any attempt at understanding them completely, expressing them adequately or even denominating them through the attribution of a proper name.

[1] Hippolytus, Sermo in 5. *Theophania,* 8, PG io, 860 A; the phrase probably refers to 2 Peter 1:4. Other Fathers were no less daring in expressing θέωσις, divinization, cf. chap. XXXII below.

When, for instance, at the Last Supper, Christ changed bread and wine into his own Eucharistic body and blood,[2] or when he imparted the power of forgiving sins,[3] he did not give any particular name to these tremendous spiritual realities. Nor did he label any of the other channels of grace he established: we may search the New Testament in vain to find terms designating what was to be known later as Baptism, [4] Chrism or Confirmation,[5] Holy Orders,[6] the Unction of the Sick,[7] and Matrimony.[8] The New Testament writers did not synthesize, nor did they neatly categorize these divinely instituted realities to distinguish them from those lesser ones which Christ and the apostles used: exorcisms, benedictions, and special blessings. While the seven chief means of grace were known from the earliest times, their specific names, definition, and centenary determination came much later.

The apostles' first concern, quite naturally, was *to do* what Christ had taught them, not to expound scientific, theological formulations. The bulk of their converts, after all, were the unlettered poor, and many were slaves. Elaborate terms would have confused them. The Christian writers and preachers of the primitive era, roughly the first two centuries, did the same. They relied heavily on Scriptural sources for their instructions, practices, and liturgical prayers. Whenever they spoke of what the Western Church would later call *sacraments* and the Byzantine *mysteries* they referred to them descriptively without labeling them.[9] They did the same with the lesser spiritual realities, later called *sacramentals* or *lesser mysteries.* The formal terminology appeared only in the fourth century.

St. Paul did make frequent use of the word μυστήριον, *mystery* but the Pauline mystery had little if anything to do either with the sacraments or with the pagan mysteries (see below, pp. 38 ff.).

[2] Mt 26:26 ff.; Mk 14:22 ff.; Lk 22:19 f.; 1 Co 11:23 ff.

[3] Jn 20:21 ff.; Mt 16:19; 18:18; cf. Ac 19:18.

[4] Mt 28:19 f.; cf. Ac 2:41; 8:38; 16:33.

[5] Ac 8:12 ff.; 19:2 ff.; cf. Heb 6:2.

[6] 1 Tm 4:6 ff.; 2 Tm 1:6 f.; Ac 6:6; 13:3; 14:22; cf. 1 Tm 5:22.

[7] Jm 5:13 ff.

[8] Ep 5:22 ff.; cf. 1 Co 7:14, 39; Mt 19:4 ff.

[9] E. g., Ep 1:13; *4:30,* 2 Co 1:22, Ac 2:33 f.; Rm 5:5 f., etc.; also Barnabas who speaks of Baptism=water.

Etymologically, μυστήριον may be traced to the verb μύω, I close, I shut,[10] originally used only of the eyes, ears, and lips. Even the verb's root μύ is pronounced by closing the lips. The word μύστης, the one initiated into the mysteries, also implies a close-mouthed person. From μύω later evolved another verb μυέω meaning I initiate into the mysteries or I instruct about sacred things 11 (often used only in the passive μυούμαι[12]). Thus, the person initiated was called the μύστης and the revealed secret or mystery itself μυστήριον.[13] The etymological evolution of the term μυστήριον had stopped long before Paul's time.

Did Paul borrow the term from the pagans? Is there any real evidence of a true analogy between Paul's mystery and the pagan mysteries? To what extent, if any, are the verbal figures and

[10] Most Byzantine theologians seem to trace the etymology of the term to μύω; e. g., Gabriel Severus, Συνταγμάτιον περί των αγίων μυστηρίων in Chry santhos, Συνταγμάτιον (Venice, 1778), p. 97; Athanasius of Paros, Επιτομή των θείων της πίστεως δογμάτων (Leipzig, 1806), p. 344; Archbishop Ignatij, *O tainstvakh jedynoi, sviatoi, sobornoi i apostolskot tserkvy* (St. Petersburg, 1849), p. 19; N. Malinovsky, *Pravoslavnoe dogmaticheskoe bogoslovie,* IV (Serg. Posad. 1909), p. 4; C. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου άναθολικής Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907), p. 294.

[11] N. M. Damalas, 'Ορθόδοξος κατήχησις (Athens, 1877), P. 78. The idea of sacredness is also evident in the Latin Church's term *sacrament.* Ultimately, the term *sacrament* stems from the verb *sacrare,* to render sacred; *sacrare,* in turn, can be traced to the Latin base *sancire,* to make holy, deriving from the original Indo-germanic root SAK (cf. K. Brugmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der Indogermanischen Sprachen,* II [Strassburg, 1889-1890], p. 744). The *sacra ment's* immediate etymological derivation is from the term *sacramentum,* which, in the oldest and most general form of civil lawsuit, was a deposit made beforehand by the parties in the suit. The deposit originally consisted of five sheep or five oxen, depending on the value of the object in dispute; later, the sum of ten asses for each sheep and one hundred for each ox was substituted. This deposit was given back to the party winning the suit; the loser's deposit was originally applied to religious purposes (whence its connotation of sacredness) but later it went to the public treasury. The evolution progressed further: the term *sacramentum* was used later to designate the procession to the law court; then, for the oath taken in court, whence it began to be applied to any oath in general, but especially to the military oath of allegiance (cf. Cic. *Off.,* i. 11 36; Livy, xxii, 38 2). Such an oath was first taken by the legates and tribunes; these officers in turn admi nistered it to the soldiers.

[12] K. Oikonomos, Κατήχησις ή 'Ορθόδοξος διδασκαλία (Athens, 1868), p. 54.

[13] Curiously, Archbishop Ignatij erroneously derives μύω from μη and applies it accordingly as "the expression by which a person cannot explain himself because either he is a mute, or he lacks the knowledge, or because he is not allowed to speak about something." *Ibid.*

general terminology of the Hellenic mysteries related to the concepts and sacraments of Christianity? After the third century, undeniably, in terminology and outward ceremonial, certain analogies may be found between the practices of Christians and those of the world about them. Was this true of earlier centuries?

From the perspective of modern times, certain similarities and analogies seem so striking that many enthusiasts of comparative religion reached startling conclusions: that pagan influence permeates the very core of Christian liturgy and doctrine; that Christianity is a syncretism of paganism and Judaism, and particularly, that the pagan mysteries were the origin of the Christian sacramental system.

The first attempts, in the seventeenth century, at "showing" the Catholic sacraments as an outgrowth of the ancient, cultic mysteries seem to have been the result of sectarian polemics rather than an honest striving after truth.[14] The shallow Enlightenment and Hellenizing of the eighteenth century whipped up an avid interest in the mysteries of ancient Greece, with the result that many nineteenth-century writers gleefully—and just as lightly—saw many essentials of the Christian faith in the pagan mysteries.[15] Using this work as a basis for searching out all the apparent similarities between the pagan cults and Christianity, early enthusiasts of comparative religion sought, with varying degrees of superficiality, to explain the genesis of Christianity through the pagan mysteries.[16] The initial

[14] I. e., Isaac Casaubon, a Calvinist *(Exercitationes de rebus sacris* [Geneva, 1655],) who tried to show that the sacramental system either originated with or was fundamentally influenced by the pagan mysteries.

[15] Christian Lobeck's *Aglaophamus,* 2 Vols. (Regiomontii Prussorum, 1829), did much to kill such shallowness in every form.

[16] E. g., R. Reitzenstein in his *Die hellenistichen Mysterien-religionen nach ihren Grundgedanken und Wirkungen* (Leipzig, 1910; 3rd edit., 1927); later he propounded his "Iranian mystery of redemption theory" in *Das iranische Erlosungsmysterium* (Leipzig, 1921) and still later proposed the Mandaean cult as the forerunner of Christianity in *Die Vorgeschichte der christlichen Taufe* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1929); W. Bousset, who had the ritual-mystical *dromenon* constituting the basic structure of Christian doctrine regarding redemption and the sacraments in *Kyrios Christos* (2nd edit., Gottingen, 1921); W. Leipoldt in his *Sterbende und auferstehende Gutter* (Leipzig, 1923) did the same (though in other respects his work is of high scholarly quality); the most radical of all, A. Loisy, in *Les mysteres payens et le mystere chretien* (Paris, 1930), proposes new interpretations of the same fundamental position. He introduces his "cult-hero" theory and has St. Paul reading this into the Gospels. Cf. also S. Angus, *The Mystery-Religions and Christianity* (3rd edit., New York and London, 1928). Numerous lesser known names may be added to the list.

frenzies of enthusiasm, however, were gradually displaced by a dispassionate approach and the scientific method,[17] because of the earnest, solid research into the ancient mysteries which had begun in our own century.[18] The result was usually a reversal of opinion regarding any substantial borrowing by Christianity from paganism.

The problems of historical, conceptual, and genetic relationships between the mysteries of the Christians and those of the pagans are breathtaking in their complexity. Their momentous implications have kept historians of religion occupied for almost a century. Every step of the way is fraught with pitfalls; every bypath, difficult. Part of the difficulty stems from the fragmentary nature of the evidence regarding both the mystery cults and the early Christian liturgy. Early Christian practices, however, are better documented. The only evidence of pagan ritual consists mainly in scattered fragments: a verse or two of poetry here, a line of a hymn there, a few words of a prayer or incantation, some inscriptions and cult

[17] Here, too, the bibliography is large. The better-known names include: C. Clemen, *Der Einfluss der Mysterienreligionen aufdas alteste Christentum* (Giessen, 1913); K. Prumm, *Der christliche Glaube und die altheidnische Welt,* 2 Vols. (Leipzig, I935); *Christentum als Neuheitserlebnis, Durchblick durch die christlichantike Bege gnung* (Freiburg im B., 1939); *Das antike Heidentum nach seinen Grundstromungen: Ein Handbuch zur biblischen und altchristlichen Umweltkunde* (Munich, 1942); *Religionsgeschischtliches Handbuch fur den Raum der altchristlichen Welt* (Freiburg im B., 1943; Rome, 1954); N. Turchi, *Fontes historice mysteriorum aevi hellenistici* (Rome, 1923); W. F. Otto, especially his *Der Geist der Antike und die christliche Welt* (Bonn, 1923); B. Heigl, *Antike Mysterienreligionen und Urchristentum* (Muenster, 1932); H. Rahner, *Griechische Mythen in christlicher Deutung* (Zurich, 1945), tr. B. Battershaw, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery* (London, 1963); F.J. Dolger, *Antike und Christentum, Kultur und Religions-Geschichte,* 6 Vols. (1929-1940); certainly no list would be complete without the incomparable *Real lexikonfur Antike und Christentum* (Leipzig, 1941 ff.).

[18] By such men as F. Cumont (*Les religions orientates dans le paganisme romain* [4th edit., Paris, 1929]); H. Hepding (*Attis: Seine Mythen und sein Kult* [Giessen, 1903]); A.B. Cook *{Zeus, A Study in Ancient Religion,* 5 Vols. [Cambridge, 1914-1941]); J.G. Frazer *{The Golden Bough, A Study in Magic and Religion,* 12 Vols. [London, 1911-1915]); M.P. Nilsson (*The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion* [2nd edit. Lund, 1950]); U.v. Wilamowitz (*Athena, Sitzungsber. d. Akad. d. Wiss.* [Berlin, 1921]); *Der Glaube der Hellenen* 2 Vols. [Berlin, 1931-1932]), etc.

emblems and the ruins of temples.[19] Any other source is either second-hand or speculative.[20] The few documents often contain layers of material: some ancient text, some remnant of ancient cults, is mixed with later pagan, Christian or Jewish data.[21]

Then there is the fluid nature of both the mystery religions and Christianity, seen, not as static phenomena, but as living realities with distinct stages of development. These stages cannot be comprehended through any fixed concept or written formula, and yet they must be extricated painstakingly as the layer of a palimpsest (see below, pp. 37 ff.). Where one stage of development of Christianity may not have been influenced by the pagan cults, another may have; or vice-versa.

Many questions still remain unanswered. Yet, in our century there has been great progress at the price of long and meticulous labor in methodology and exegesis, resulting in complex shifts of opinion among scholars. Time and time again, approximations had to be investigated and re-investigated. Progressive re-evaluations have provided reasonably conclusive answers to some questions, while solutions to others are still far from decisive. This much is certain, however: many of the early a priori analogous relations between the beliefs and forms of the mystery cults and the evolution of the Christian liturgy and doctrine have been rejected by sober research.

[19] The only mystery ritual which has survived in its entirety is the one belonging to the Mithraic cult. It was preserved, because it was later used as a magic formulary. Cf. A. Dieterich, *Eine Mithrasliturgie, Mit den Nachtragen der dritten Auflage von A. Weinrich* (Leipzig, 1903). For a survey of the mysteries of Cybele, Isis, and Mithras, cf. B. Heigl, *op, cit.;* K. Prumm, *op. cit.,* vols. I and II; S. Angus, *The Mystery Religions and Christianity* (New York, 1925). For some light on the Gnostic forms of worship, see R. Reitzenstein, *Hellenistische Wundererzahlungen* (Leipzig, 1906), pp. 103-150.

[20] The main weakness of a great scholar like Dom Casel *(Das christliche Kultmysterium* [2nd edit., Regensburg, 1938]) perhaps lies precisely in his willingness to accept uncritically the scientifically weak theories about the pagan mysteries propounded by the early comparative school. Dom Casel's greatness lies in demonstrating persuasively that all the material from which the theories had been built were actually more apt to exalt Christianity than to disparage it.

[21] E.g., cf. T. Schermann, *Griechische Zauberpapyri und das Gemeinde-und Dankgebet im. I. Klemensbrief, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1909)·

In his magnificent sermon on Baptism, Gregory of Nazianzus first spoke of the chaotic splendor of the pagan mysteries and then preached on the Christian mystery "with trembling tongue, with quaking heart and spirit." [22] Psychologically, his method is excellent. With equal trepidation, we shall adopt his method in inquiring into the possible relationships, whether genetic, historical, or conceptual, between Christianity and the pagan mysteries: first, by briefly surveying the Greco-Oriental mystery-religions (from the primordial beginnings of prehistoric mother cults, through their transfigurations in the historical era, to their nocturnal rites of initiation, with those of Eleusis as a sublime archetype, and, finally, their disintegration and death); then, by inquiring into the nature of the cults and of Christianity, their diversity and points of similarity. Such a brief treatment, of necessity, can convey only a few, bare essentials of what has given rise to impassioned controversies among scholars during the last seventy years.

[22] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio* 39, 11, PG 36, 345 C.

CHAPTER III

THE PAGAN MYSTERIES

From the dawn of recorded history, the pagan Greeks never really had a uniform religious system nor any fixed doctrine, but only a confused, contradictory, and ambiguous mythology. The origins of these myths must be sought in the agrarian and fertility rites of still more ancient cults in which gods were personifications of the powers of nature. These powers, the living thrust of vegetation, trees, grain, and other plants, seemed to wane each autumn and revive in the spring. In their most primitive form, the "nature" rituals imitated the nature-cycles of plant death and rebirth. Such rituals, probably forms of imitative magic, were calculated to stimulate the energies latent in plant life. Myths were developed from the phenomena of plant death and rebirth, which were regarded as the suffering and death of the gods and their revival.

The original connection between the gods and the nature-cycle disappeared gradually, while greater prominence was given to the gods as personal beings holding sway over nature and people. Such a transition had already taken place in the Homeric poems, the oldest extant records of Greek intellectual life.[1]

The Greek gods were subject to moral weakness and deviation from, virtue. They possessed immortality, but did not exist from the beginning. These two basic beliefs provided fertile ground for the legends of their origin, death and rebirth.

Certain gods held pre-eminence;[2] these were the most popular,[3]

[1] For ample background and detail on the evolution of the Greek cults, myths, and mysteries, see A.B. Cook's five volume work, *Zeus, A Study in Ancient Religion* (Cambridge, 1914-1941).

[2] In general, the gods were divided into the divinities of heaven, earth and sea. Most religions founded on nature seem to have the same three categories. Typi cally, the Greeks regarded the gods of heaven as pre-eminent, and called them "the gods above" or the "upper gods" (in contrast to the gods of earth and sea) and coined a special group-name for them, the Olympians.

[3] The number of gods was never clear, even before the introduction of foreign deities. From the earliest dawn of recorded Greek history, some deities were worshipped in one place and were unknown in another. A few of them, Zeus,

though local custom often differed considerably even in regard to the same deity.[4] Since the gods were especially pleased with careful observance of traditional rituals, ceremonies were carried on in essentially unchanged form, with a few variations and alterations in details. Some such modifications lost all connection with the original religious concepts, to the point of becoming unintelligible. As a result, their interpretation was changed completely. This happened occasionally in the Christian liturgy.[5]

Certain aspects of pagan worship were public. The outward forms of religion were given over mostly to the care of the State; foreign cults were naturalized, becoming part of the State religion.[6] After the Peloponnesian War (431-404 B.C.), when philosophers began to influence the populace and undermine the old beliefs[7] without supplying any suitable alternative, superstition gained ground. As time went on, more and more Greeks took refuge in the bizarre mystery cults which emphasized the welfare of the individual rather than that of the State. Such cults were more personally satisfying to many people because they gave vent to greater religious feeling, even to religious frenzy.[8]

When Alexander the Great marched to the East with his victorious armies (334 B.C.), the soul of Greece was ready to assimilate the

Dionysus and Pan, became accepted all over the Mediterranean area. Certain states and cities gave precedence to their own gods even over Zeus. The principal deity in Athens was Palla Athene; in Agros it was Hera; the Dorians, especially at Delphi, gave pre-eminence to Apollo; Poseidon was principal among the Ionians; at Naxos, Dionysus, at Rhodes, Helios, at Thespiae, Eros, etc.

[4] Local custom sometimes modified the god's attributes, form of worship, and even name. Different gods and goddesses received worship under the same name, e.g., Aphrodite.

[5] E.g., the origin and meaning of the *eulogia (antidoron)*.

[6] Foreign deities and cults were usually imported through conquest: acquisition of new territories involved contact with and eventually absorption of their religious rites. Also in most cities there were strangers who revered their own deities, many of which were naturalized and absorbed into the State religion.

[7] Even before the Peloponnesian War, the philosophers, with their critical spirit, attacked the inconsistencies and anthropomorphism inherent in the religion of the old gods; however, opinions vary greatly as to their effect on the official religion.

[8] Cf. K. Latte, "Religiose Stromungen in der Frohzeit des Hellenismus," in *Die Antike,* I (Berlin, 1925), pp. 153 ff.

foreign spirits of those vast conquered lands.[9] Oriental mystery cults and faiths poured into Greece along Alexander's lines of communication. Mystic and superstitious faiths became ever more popular, filling the religious needs of men better than did the official cults.[10] This held true until well after the advent of Christianity.

The religious history of the Romans parallels that of the Greeks in many ways. With certain qualifications, their religious ideas have a common foundation: the worship of the powers of nature considered in the abstract as gods. While both Greeks and Romans regarded their deities as persons, the sober-minded Romans were not quite as imaginative as the Greeks who had their Olympus and Hades, and "knew" intimately the sordid relationships and love-affairs of their divinities. But like the Greeks, the Romans had gods of heaven, earth, and sea. [11] Their number was limitless, since the Romans believed every object, inanimate or animate, every profession, every event, every important action had a divine representative and protector. New gods were added after historical events (since, to the Romans, such events were due to divine influence).[12] Foreign

[9] Alexander himself was touched by the Eastern spirit, probably through Darius' daughter whom he married. He adopted the regal trappings of Persia including the diadem and robe of state, and the Eastern idea of the divine right of kings. Finally, he announced, in grand Eastern style, that he was god. All of Greece laughed and Alexander drank himself to death.

[10] Cf. F. Cumont, *Les Religions orientates dans le paganisme romain* (4th edit., Paris, 1929), p. 23.

[11] The god of light and the god of all beginning was Ianus (related to the female Iana or Diana); the god of heaven, Iupiter (related to the female Iuno); Mars, originally the protector of agriculture, was the ancestral god of the nation (the corresponding gods of the Sabines were Quirinus and Vesta, the goddess of the State).

Of lesser importance, though still prominent, were the gods of earth, who blessed the fields, gardens, and cattle, e.g., Ceres, Saturnus, Flora, Silvanus, Faunus, etc. The early Romans, no seafaring people, gave the sea-gods much less prominence than did the Greeks. The Lares and Penates, the household gods, also held an important place.

[12] In a sense, this state of affairs lasted until the disintegration of paganism. St. Augustine, for example, chides the multitude of pagan gods that "presided over" the paltriest acts of life *(Civ. Dei,* IV, 21 et passim, PL 41, 128),.

deities and cults were absorbed easily in such fertile ground. The indigenous gods, however, held the priority of rights, for the shrines of foreign imports were not allowed within the Pomerium (the space along the city-wall reckoned as holy).

The Roman religion was deeply influenced by contact with the Greeks. The greatest impact was made during the final years of the kings, through the introduction of the Sibylline books, which originated among the Greeks of Asia Minor. Through these, a number of Greek and Asiatic gods were introduced gradually into the Roman cult. Some were new deities, such as Apollo, Cebele or Magna Mater, Aesculapius; others were superficially identified with the older, native gods, e.g., Demeter with Ceres, Dionysus with Liber, Proserpine with Libera, Aphrodite with Venus, etc.[13] Together with the new gods came innovations, new rituals, etc.

Controlled by the State,[14] the official Roman religion held that a moral and pure life was pleasing to the deities, but this was always dependent upon the precise performance of external rites. The lengthy ceremonial was performed with minute attention to detail, both in public and in private life.

As with the Greeks, the external form of worship survived long after belief in the gods had weakened and decayed as a result of Greek "enlightenment." Philosophical speculation sowed doubt: this soon infiltrated the forms of worship. Hence, during the republican period, religion lost to politics, and priests neglected their official duties. In order to shore up a weakening faith, attempts were made under the Empire to stimulate the ancient forms of worship.[15] Whatever religious feeling was revived usually consisted

[13] After the second Punic War, when Greek ideas began permeating Roman life, the process of identifying the Roman gods with those of the Greeks was accelerated: thus, Jupiter was identified with Zeus, Juno with Hera, Mars with Ares, Neptune with Poseidon, Ceres with Demeter, etc.

[14] The kings were high-priests who laid the foundation of a law of ritual and organized it. After the abolition of the kings, the Roman senate entrusted the priests, as State officials, with the performance of the rituals in the different cults. They were also to give judgment in affairs of religion. Under the Republic, the Senate took over the work of formulating religious decrees.

[15] As an incentive, the deification of the deceased emperors was introduced. Nero was the first to attempt it. From Domitian on, κύριος καῖ θεός, *Lord and god* was the favorite title of the emperors.

in strange Oriental cults: that of the Persian Mithras, the Syrian Adonis, the Egyptian Serapis, and the Asiatic Attis, whose mysteries fascinated the Romans as they had the Greeks.

At the beginning of the Christian era, the "mysterization" of Greco-Roman religious experience was by no means completed.[16] Initiation into the mysteries was confined to certain specific locations. As time went on, however, especially from the second century A.D. on, the popularity of the mystery religions grew and they became diffused throughout the Empire. At the same time, most cults lost their original character and were gradually reduced to hybrid forms— mixtures that catered to the most varied tastes.

By the third century A.D., the mystery cults were fully developed. Disentangling the original, indigenous elements from the overlay of imports from the East and from later cosmopolitan elements is impossibly difficult. The Eleusinian mysteries, for example, like the rites of Dionysus and those of Orphism, have roots going deep into pre-history,[17] but they were enriched by Cretan, Asiatic, and Thracian traditions. The accretions of late antiquity embellished them still further.

Most cults seem to have developed along the same lines as those of Eleusis, the Panhellenic religious center which dominated the religious life of Greece for over a thousand years. A candidate for initiation into the Eleusinian mysteries had to be proposed by a member.[18] First, he was admitted to the lesser mysteries. Most of these rites are unknown, but there was some form of preliminary purification (καθαρμός), ending with the crowning or garlanding of the candidate. At this stage, he was called μύστης. Then came the τβλετης παράδοσις, the transmission of mystic knowledge, although, as Aristotle noted (Frag. 15), the mystes did not learn

[16] H. Rahner, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery* (London, 1963), P. 18.

[17] The extremely archaic elements in the Eleusinian initiation descend directly from an agricultural ritual commemorating the death and revival of a deit con trolling the fertility of the fields; in the Orphic-Dionysiac ceremonies, it was the bull-roarer (a long, narrow piece of wood attached to a string; when whirled through the air, it made a roaring sound like a bull or thunder), characteristic of primitive cultures, etc.

[18] Barbarians, however, were excluded and any person guilty of murder or serious offense.

anything actually new, nor any really secret doctrine.[19] He already knew the divine myth of Proserpine (Kore), but he now witnessed its sacred dramatization: her abduction by Pluto, her forced transfer to the underworld, her mother's search for her, and, finally, her return to light and to her mother, Demeter. Such a dramatic or ritual representation was called δρώμενον. The preliminary initiation imparted a right to take a limited part in the greater Eleusinia the next autumn, to be followed a year later with initiation into the greater mysteries.

This final initiation, always held in September (in Boedromion) lasted about nine days. At the cry, "To the sea, O mystai" (άλαδε, μύσται), the initiates rushed to the sea for various purifications and ablutions in sea-water (κάθαρσις)[20] and the offering of sacrifices preparatory to the main celebration. On the sixth day, the initiates, wearing festal garb and crowned with myrtle, left Athens in procession along the "sacred way" (οδός ιερά) to Eleusis. According to Herodotus (8:65), "three myriads" (thirty thousand people) took part in the procession in his day. The dust could be seen from afar. The image of the divine child Iacchus was carried, accompanied by cries of" Iakch', O Iakche!" Some sacred objects (τά ιερά) of Eleusis were also carried along. Stops were made along the way at numerous holy places to perform acts of devotion or merriment, "sacrifices and dances," and "other customary usages" (Plutarch, *Aidbiades,* 34).[21]

Late in the evening, the procession arrived at the magnificent temple of initiation.[22] On the night of the high festival, the initiates following the image of Iacchus performed a *lampadephoria,* a torch-

[19] Ού μαθεϊν άλλα παθεϊν seems to have been the aim of the initiate, i.e., he was "not to learn but to suffer and be made worthy of suffering" (in Synesius, *Dion,* 7, PG 66, 1136 A).

[20] Nearly all chthonic cults, ή κάθαρσις , the final stage of "purification" or "atonement": man is at first κόπρος, dirt, mud dung; then unmingled, pure "earth" (γη) from which the final, new form arises καθαρός, i.e., "unmingled, pure, genuine, untainted, immaculate."

[21] An ancient imperial inscription reads: "sacrifices, libations, and paeans," cf. *Corpus inscriptionum Atticarum* (Berlin, 1878), Vol. III, no. 5.

[22] The *Telesterion,* a temple built by Pericles, after the ancient temple of Demeter was burned down in the war with the Persians.

light dance (Aristophanes, *Frogs,* 318).[23] Whether this torchlight dance was intended to represent the wanderings of Demeter searching for Proserpine is unknown. It does seem likely, however, since Demeter carried torches in her search. The end of the festivities probably coincided with the final initiation of the *mystai.* These rites, it seems, began in darkness, leaving the celebrants in a state of suspense and expectation. They were continued in dazzling lights, amid great splendor. Finally, the hierophant disclosed to the initiates certain objects (ἐποπεία = inspection) pertaining to the goddess and to Iacchus and explained their significance. A touch of the miraculous was given to the proceedings by having the hierophant take out of a box an ear of grain which ripened with supernatural suddenness, possibly by some pious fraud.[24] However, a scholar as highly rated as Otto says of this happening: "There can be no doubt of the miraculous nature of the event. The ear of wheat growing and maturing with a supernatural suddenness is just as much a part of the mysteries of Demeter as the vine growing in a few hours is part of the revels of Dionysus..."[25] During the ceremonies sacred songs were intoned by priests and choirs with instrumental accompaniment.

The succession of initiatory rites served as representations of the original events in the mythical story. These rites were intended to make the myth itself come alive in the mind of the initiates by having them participate in the dramatized action: the rape of Proserpine, Demeter's laments, the search for Proserpine, the joy and merriment at finding her, etc. Bound as these events were with the death and revival of the nature cycle, they were more than mere play. The preliminaries, the purifications, the fasting, the drinking of the potion

23 Euripides also speaks of the *lampas* on this sacred night and of the dance around the *Kallichoron,* "the well of the beautiful dance," in which he says even the stars of heaven and the moon, Selene herself, participate *(Ion,* 1074).

24 Pious fraud would seem to be ruled out by the veneration accorded to the mysteries by men such as Sophocles and Euripides. On the other hand, not all were as respectful. Alcibiades, the fanatical aristocrat and philosophical-enthusiast, showed almost positive scorn for Eleusis when he imitated the hierophant for the amusement of his drinking companions.

25 W.F. Otto, "Meaning of the Eleusinian Mysteries," in *The Mysteries, Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks,* II (New York, 1955), p. 25; and he adds, "We find exactly the same miracles in the nature-festivals of primitive peoples." *Ibid.*

and the whole atmosphere surrounding the proceedings (not the least of which was the participation of the mystai in the re-enactment of the myth) added to the sense that these events were taking place here and now. The whole proceedings induced a progressive feeling of the nearness of the deities, culminating in their very presence.

This final effect was produced by the climax, the central point of the drama on that sacred night. This undoubtedly was the most moving of all. What was it? How was the very presence of the deities induced? No one really knows for certain but the evidence, scanty as it is, suggests an evocation of spirits—supposedly, among others, Proserpine, summoned from the depths. Apollodorus of Athens records that when Proserpine was called, the hierophant struck the so-called ἠχεῖον, a kind of bronze gong,[26] and the context leaves no doubt that the kingdom of the dead burst open.[27] Without going into vain speculation, we can only say that the meaning and effect of this unusual rite were overpowering and convincing. To quote the conclusion of Otto regarding this supreme rite of Eleusis:

> "The gods are called, the gods are present. And what gods! When the modern scholar comes to this point, he usually thinks no farther. He easily explains the amazement of the enraptured mystai on the basis of delusion and priestly artifice. But anyone who has ever witnessed a great Oriental cult rite, as for example the Chinese evocation of Confucius, knows that in this sphere our rational concepts are not adequate. The simplest settings and actions here produce an overpowering effect on all present. At the crucial moment, when the sublime spirit that has been summoned prepares to appear, when the great drum begins to beat, first slowly and solemnly, then more and more rapidly, and finally in a breath-taking rhythm—even the most enlightened observer no longer doubts the real presence of the supernatural." [28]

Whatever took place on that great night at Eleusis, it was convincing and it was overpowering, an unforgettable religious experience.

26 Scholiast on Theocritus, 2, 36 (Theocritus, Bion, Moschus, edit. T. Kiessling [London, 1826], Vol. II, p. 41).

27 W.F. Otto, *op. cit.,* p. 27.

28 *Ibid.,* p. 29.

Other cults had similar initiations and celebrations. Each one was moving in its own way. Each one relived the myth central to its cult. Aphrodite mourns her Adonis; the Great Mother, her Attis; the Babylonian Ishtar, her Tammuz; the Egyptian Isis, her Osiris, etc. Their death and return to life are seen as symbols of the death and reawakening of the earth's vegetation. Whatever literary elaborations Plutarch may have given to the celebration of a mystery cult, his description contains the essentials of truth: "At first abortive and wearisome wandering about, various unsuccessful and perilous passages in the darkness. Then, just before the rite itself, all manner of terrors, shuddering and trembling, silence and anxious wonder. After this, a wonderful light breaks in on everything, friendly landscapes and meadows receive us and we become aware of voices and dances and of the splendor of sacred songs." [29]

It is the fully developed mysteries of late antiquity that Christianity encountered and was finally forced to fight. In summary the basic traits of mystery cults are:

I. Remnants of a "mother-religion," centered on the goddess and her male consort (in the case of Demeter, her daughter).[30] In other words, primordial agrarian and fertility rites gradually built up into a cult legend and this in turn crystallized into a mystery rite. In the tribulation, death, and revival of the legendary deity are seen the annual death and revival of plant life, the eternal cycle of nature. By a careful re-enactment of the legend through the *dromenon,* the initiate lives and experiences the deeds and the trials of the deity, not as a mere onlooker, but through an experience that "transforms" him into something higher. The ritual procures confidence in a higher destiny in life and death by enabling the mystai to participate, as it were, in the divine powers which keep the circle of life unbroken. •This is why Cicero could say that in those sacred rites, "we have learned the very basis of life and have gained the power not only to live happily, but also to die with better hope." [31]

[29] Stobaeus, Anthologia, IV, 107 (cf. N. Turchi, *Fontes historiae mysteriorum aevi hellenistici* [Rome, 1923], no. 118)·

[30] Cf. K. Prumm, *Der christliche Glaube und die altheidnische Welt,* I (Leipzig, I935), pp. 290 ff.

[31] Cicero, *De legibus,* II, 14, 26.

2. The mysteries were essentially cults of emotion and feeling, sometimes directed at the very nerves of the initiate. "Common to all mysteries is a ritual that works on the feelings through powerful external means, such as glaring light and sound effects, and also a system of symbols which exalts these basic proceedings into images of super-sensory secrets. The nearness of the godhead is thus brought much closer to the believers than in the old cults..." [32] Besides this, there were also ritual anointings, ablutions, fasts, sacred meals, cleansing baths, potions, loud music, frenzied dancing, etc. Such nocturnal celebrations were often extremely licentious. The word *orgies* derives from δργιον, a *sacred act,* allied to έργον, *work.* The word *liturgy,* λειτουργία, contains the term too. Indeed a trance-like, holy frenzy was characteristic of the mysteries, especially of the Bacchanalia.[33] Through ecstasy (from the Greek έκ = *out* and στάσις = *standing,* standing out of oneself) a person sought to free himself, as it were, from his own life.

3. Most mystery cults lack a clear-cut doctrine. The cult legend takes on many forms, interpretations, and meanings. Explanations of belief are generally vague and weak; their purpose, clearly, was not to induce any depth of inquiry, reflection or thought.

Related to this absence of dogmatism was the lack of strong ethical codes in the area of sex, except perhaps in the cult of Mithras. This is due to the fact that the ancient mysteries were originally agrarian fertility cults with marked sexual implications.[34] A clear distinction should be made, however, between the relative morality of the Greek cults and the complete amorality of the imports from the East.

4. The mystery cults of late antiquity exhibit what may be described as the *"soteria* syndrome," a desperate and disoriented grasping for "salvation." [35] The salvation (σωτηρία, perhaps

[32] K. Latte, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 154 f.

[33] Celebrated by men and women together, the Bacchanalia were the scene of such shameless excesses, even by pagan standards, that they were outlawed by a decree of the Roman senate in 186 B.C.

[34] Cf. E. Rhode, *Psyche,* tr. W.B. Hillis (London, 1925), p. 228; however, his view may be somewhat exaggerated.

[35] Or what H. Rahner calls a "nervous uncertainty of salvation" in his *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery,* London, 1963 (tr. of the original *Griechische Mythen in christlicher Deutung* [Zurich, 1957]), p. 22.

"welfare" would be a better word for it) promised to the mystai was not the Christian kind of salvation, but an assured safety in the vicissitudes of social and political life, comfort in the trials and sufferings of this life and brighter hopes after death—a kind of triumph over the misfortunes of life and death suffered by the deity. Since such a "saving" concerned individuals, the mysteries attracted the populace much more than did the official State religions chiefly concerned with official well being and consisting mostly in external displays.

Born of an intense yearning for salvation combined with uncertainty concerning its attainment, the *soteria* syndrome showed itself in the fact that the mystery cults tried to assimilate everything they came across, including some elements of Christianity.[36] In Augustine's time, for example, pagan mystery priests used the name of Christ in their magic incantations.[37] The same yearning and uncertainty moved the pious to be initiated into several cults in order to increase their chances of "salvation." In St. Paul's day, the Athenians had a temple to the "unknown god." This eclecticism increased markedly toward the end. Veritable catalogues of initiations, for example, appear on epitaphs and other monuments, such as the one for Paulina, noble Roman lady: "*sacrata apud Eleusinam deo Baccho Cereri et Corae, sacrata apud Laernam deo Libero et Cereri et Corae, sacrata apud Aegynam deabus, taurobolita, Isiaca, hierophantria deae Hecatae.*" [38]

Decay had set into the once strong and healthy mysteries. Now the cults were dying, and Christianity would take their place and satisfy the spiritual hunger of the Greco-Roman world.

[36] Cf. H. Hepding, *Attis, seine Mythen und sein Kult* (Giessen, 1903), pp. 179, 200, n. 7.

[37] PL 35, 1440.

[38] *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum,* VI, No. 1779; cf. H. Hepding, *op. cit.,* p. 205. For similar records of multiple initiations, cf. G. Anrich, *Das antike Mysterienwesen in seinem Einfluss auf das Christentum* (Gottingen, 1894), p. 55.

CHAPTER IV

THE SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES IN APOSTOLIC CHRISTIANITY

While retaining their basic character, the cultic mysteries changed with the times, and so did the Christian liturgy. Despite its unchanging, divine basis, the liturgy of the apostolic era with its straightforward rites is very different from the rich ceremonial of fifth or sixth century Byzantium. The simple baptismal ceremony, performed by the apostles, for example, was very far from that described by Cyril in Jerusalem or the Pseudo-Areopagite in Northern Syria. Likewise, the Eucharistic Supper at Corinth in Paul's day and the Eucharist celebrated at Justinian's coronation in A.D. 527 had little in common externally. The Church's rites as seen in Acts and other primitive sources differed greatly from those described in later Christian literature.

A similar change occurred in the language and concepts of Christian theology: different worlds separate the *Didache* from the *Apostolic Constitutions,* Justin from Augustine, Ignatius of Antioch from Chrysostom, Basil from Theodore of Mopsuestia. Christianity is not static but alive.

Valid comparisons between pagan and Christian mysteries should take this evolution into consideration. An older school of comparative religion failed to do so. Whether mythologizing Christianity or "Christianizing" mythology, it brought about a superficial synthesis by confusing primitive forms with others highly developed, by collating and comparing fragments of evidence separated by centuries. It was precisely against such amalgams as a basis for genetic dependence and relationship that Adolf von Harnack leveled his biting criticism:

> "We must reject such comparative mythology which attempts to connect everything causally with everything else, which tears down solid barriers, bridges chasms as though it were child's play, and spins combinations out of superficial

> similarities... By such methods it is possible in the twinkling of an eye to turn Christ into a sun god, and the twelve apostles into the twelve calendar months; to recall, when dealing with Christ's nativity, all the legends of divine births; to let the dove at Jesus' baptism set us chasing all sorts of doves out of mythology; to find any number of celebrated asses to join the ass on which Jesus rode into Jerusalem; and thus, with the magic wand of' comparative religion' triumphantly eliminate every original and spontaneous trait in any religion."[1]

In attempting to ascertain any reciprocal influence of the pagan mysteries and Christianity, we should clearly distinguish their relative stage of development, the date of the compared elements, etc. Only then can any reciprocal influence be validly assessed.

During the first five centuries after Christ, three periods are discernible in the development of Christian liturgy and theology: 1) the primitive (first and second centuries); 2) the formative (third century), in which ritual and theology are built up; 3) the developed (fourth and fifth centuries) or final form of the ancient Church. As in all historical processes, the development was gradual, occasionally overlapping. Its rate of progress differed with the geographical area. In general, however, the three distinct phases are sufficiently discernible.

Our task, then, is to investigate each period of ancient Christian history and to assess its relationship—genetic, historical, or conceptual—with the pagan mysteries of the same epoch.

When Paul used the term *mystery,* he had in mind something quite different from either the idea of the sacraments or the Hellenistic notion of the pagan mysteries. The term "mystery″ and related expressions were commonly used in widely different senses. Jesus himself used it (Mt 13:11; Mk 4:11; Lk 8:10) in reference to the "kingdom of heaven: "this was a mystery embodying the hidden

[1] Adolf von Harnack, *Wissenschaft und Leben,* II (Giessen, 1911), p. 191.

design of God and revealed to men of good will, but cloaked in parables for those not ready to receive it.

Originally, the Septuagint term μυστήριον, *mystery,* meant "the secret plan of the king;[55] later, it took on the meaning of God's hidden secrets, that is, God's wisdom shown to his people through his plans and designs (the divine economy) and through revelation. Wisdom and revelation, σοφία και άποκάλυψις, were inseparably linked and correlated to μυστήριον. They may be seen in Jewish history and tradition as two beacons piercing the inscrutability of God's way.

The Israelite sages soon recognized that true wisdom comes from God since he alone is wise (Pr 21:30). Perhaps it would be better to say that man's wisdom must depend upon that of God. Man could witness God's excelling wisdom in the works of creation, but not without the help of revelation (Jb 28:38 f.; Si 1:1-10; 16:24 f.; 39:12 f.; 42:15-43:33). This seems to be the beginning of the Scriptural use of mystery in which the wisdom of God shows itself through the divine economy. The whole Book of Job is a masterpiece of the wisdom movement: it illustrates God's mysteriously inscrutable plan and contrasts it with the rational, finite wisdom of man. The latter, however, cannot pierce the infinite mystery of God, his designs, his wisdom. This is all the more important since the Book's author is an Israelite, brought up on the works of the prophets and the teachings of the sages.

In the prophetic literature, God's wisdom shines forth through the divine economy, but it is made known especially through direct revelation. Here σοφία is directly linked to άποκάλυψις, wisdom to revelation. The Book of Daniel, the last expression of messianic prophecy in the Old Testament, is a "sealed book" (12:4); it is the Old Testament counterpart of the New Testament's Book of Revelation. In it are revealed the hidden plans of God for his people and for the nations. In it the various events of the world's history become stages in the execution of God's eternal purpose, so that these events, past, present, and future, become prophetic of a further future, since all are seen through the eyes of God "since wisdom and power are his alone. His, to control the procession of times and seasons, to make and unmake kings, to confer wisdom on the

wise, and knowledge on those with wit to discern; his, to uncover depths and mysteries, to know what lies in darkness" (2:20 ff.). Daniel goes on to declare: "there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries," and he is "the Revealer of Mysteries (who) disclosed to you what is to take place" (Dn 2:28, 29). The Theodotion, a second-century Greek version of the Hebrew old Testament, specifically has here ἀποκαλύπτον μυστήριον.

Now Paul, an educated Jew, well versed in the Scriptures and Jewish tradition, takes up the biblical concept of God's mystery and its relationship with divine σοφία and ἀποκάλυψις (wisdom and revelation) and applies it to Christianity. Thus, to Paul, the "mystery" meant God's plan for the salvation of the world, a plan hidden in the depths of his wisdom, unknown to man until it was revealed by God through his Spirit.

The Scriptural passages concerning the Pauline "mystery" take the "mystery" prophesied by Daniel and apply it to the climax of the history of salvation, Christianity. In fact, Paul uses the whole vocabulary of Daniel and the very Jewish nexus of μυστήριον with both σοφία and ἀποκάλυψις: his thought is the same as in Daniel, the Jewish apocalypse. He borrowed nothing from the pagans. It was all there in Jewish Scripture and tradition. He merely shows how Christ and the Church (Daniel's kingdom), seen as his body, fulfill the "mystery" in Daniel. But the striking thing about Paul equating the "mystery" with Christ, his Gospel, his redemption, and his Church is its nexus with σοφία (wisdom) and ἀποκάλυψις (revelation, prediction). He relates them so often that coincidence must be ruled out, especially, when he uses the word *mystery* and dwells on it at length:

"Glory to him who is able to give you the strength to live according to the Good News I preach, and in which I proclaim Jesus Christ, the *revelation* (ἀποκάλυψιν) of a *mystery* (μυστήριον) kept secret for endless ages... this is only what scripture has predicted, and it is all part of the way the eternal God wants things to be. He alone is *wisdom* (σοφω) " (Rm 16:25-27).

"The hidden *wisdom* (σοφίαν) of God we teach in our *mysteries* (έν μυστηρίω, lit. "in our *mystery* ") is the *wisdom* that God predestined to be for our glory before the ages began. It is a *wisdom* that none

of the masters of this age have ever known, or they would not have crucified the Lord of glory... These are the very things that God has revealed (απεκάλυψε) to us through the Spirit, for the Spirit reaches the depths of everything, even the depths of God " (I Cor 2: 7 ff.).

" Such is the riches of the grace which he has showered on us in all *wisdom* (σοφία) and insight. He has *let us know* (γνωρίσας) the *mystery* (μυστήριον) of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head" (Ep 1:7-10).

" ...it was by a *revelation* (κατά ἀποκάλυψιν) that I was given the knowledge of the *mystery* (το μυστήριον)... If you read my words, you will have some idea of the depths that I see in the *mystery* (έν τω μυστηρίω) of Christ. This *mystery* that has now been *revealed...* was unknown to any men in past generations... of explaining how the *mystery* is to be dispensed. Through all the ages, this has been kept hidden by God. Why? So that the Sovereignties and Powers should learn only now, through the Church, how comprehensive God's *wisdom* really is, exactly according to the plan which he had had from all eternity in Christ Jesus, our Lord" (Ep 3:3-12).

" ...the message which was a *mystery* hidden for generations and centuries and has now been *revealed* (έφανερώθη) to his saints. It was God's purpose to *reveal* (γνωρίσαι) it to them and to show all the rich glory of this *mystery* to pagans. The *mystery* is Christ among you, your hope of glory; this is the Christ we proclaim, this is the *wisdom* in which we thoroughly train everyone and instruct everyone..." (Col 1:25-29).

"It is all to bind you together... until you really *know* God's secret (= mystery, του μυστηρίου) in which all the jewels of *wisdom* and knowledge are hidden " (Col 2:2-3).

In other passages, Paul alludes to the term *mystery* without elaboration. For example, when he asks prayer for opportunities to "speak without fear and give out the *mystery* of the gospel" (το μυστήριον του ευαγγελίου, Ep 6:19) and for "proclaiming the *mystery* of Christ" (τό μυστήριον τοῦ χριστού, Col 4:3) or when he urges

the faithful to "be conscientious believers in the *mystery* of the faith" (1 Tm 3:9) and states that" the *mystery* of our religion is very deep" (1 Tm 3:16). Similarly, he writes to the Corinthians: "People must think of us as Christ's servants, stewards entrusted with the mysteries of God" (οικονόμους μυστηρίων θεού, 1 Cor 4:1). His words "understanding all the *mysteries* there are" (1 Cor 13:2) and "I will tell you something that has been secret" (Douay has: "behold, I tell you a mystery," 1 Cor 15:51) also refer to the "mystery" without elaboration.

In short, whether Paul elaborates the term *mystery* or not, its meaning for him is essentially and conspicuously the same: the whole or part of God's world-embracing plan of salvation—issuing from his wisdom—long hidden, now revealed in the fullness of time. Paul applies it to the plan of redemption as a whole (Rm 16:25 1 1 Cor 2:7; Ep 6:19; Col 1:26; 1 Tm 3:9, 16, etc.) or to a particular part of it: the inclusion of the gentiles (Rm 11:25; Ep 3:3, 9), the union of Christ with the Church (Ep 5:32) or the transformation of Christians alive on earth at Christ's return (1 Cor 15:52). The Pauline term represents the Old Testament concept of God's mystery, with its traditional Jewish nexus of wisdom and revelation, now applied to Christianity. Only indirectly and incidentally does the Pauline "mystery" have anything to do with what was later known as the sacraments,[2] that is, only in so far as the sacraments were part of the whole divine plan.

Even less can the Pauline meaning be identified with the Hellenistic mysteries. In none of the passages in which Paul uses the "mystery" do we find anything remotely resembling the pagan mysteries.[3]

First, Paul's "mystery " is not related to any ritual. He regularly uses the singular, [4] while the pagan term is plural.[5] As seen above, he is referring to God's plan of salvation, first hidden and inscrutable,

[2] The only possible exception may be 1 Co 4:1 which may be construed as referring to the sacraments; yet, all evidence leads away from this interpretation.

[3] Cf. H. Rahner, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery* (London, I957), p. 30.

[4] Except in 1 Co 4:1.

[5] Or as Wisdom (14:15, 23) uses the term in referring to the secret rites of the gentiles.

then revealed and fulfilled in Christ and his Gospel. To the pagans, on the other hand, the "mysteries" were always rites, preserved and kept secret by the initiated. The interpretations of these rites were varied and free, of too little importance to be worthy of dogmatic concern.

In the sacred rites themselves, what a world of difference separates the pagan mysteries from those of the primitive Church! Historians who tend to find analogies either conveniently forget this historical fact or fail to distinguish later Christian rites from the primitive. The pagan mysteries were cults of emotion, relying heavily on frenzied, trance-like states, induced by what may be described today as psychedelic means—alternations of glaring light and darkness, repetitive, bodily motions, dancing, loud music, etc. (see above, p. 35). All evidence of primitive Christian liturgical practices, on the other hand, shows that they were the exact opposite. Simple and forthright, they can hardly be called rites at all. Anything that had to be done was done in the most direct and practical way. The singing of the gospel, *apostolos,* or other passages of the Scriptures was done in plain "speech-song," a chant which permitted only certain cadences for punctuation, so that no emotion could be put into it.[6] Presbyters and bishops wore no specific liturgical vesture, probably as an intentional contrast with pagan worship.

Adding to the contrast was the importance of belief and doctrine underlying the Christian rites. From the very beginning, the Christians insisted on the correct belief—to them supremely important—in the invisible reality that inspired their religious practices. In the rite of Communion, for example, it mattered very much whether one believed that he was receiving not just ordinary bread and wine but the very body and blood of Christ; in Baptism, whether the body was being washed physically or sins were being cleansed away, etc. During the first five centuries, while Christianity had to live with Greco-Roman paganism, the strictest unity of doctrine was

[6] Most early writers use the expression *carmen dicere* (lit. to say a song) to describe this recitative chant, e.g., Pliny the Younger in his Letter to Emperor Trajan, c. A.D. 111-112. Cf. C. Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (Allendale, N.J. 1972), pp. 40, 68.

imposed by a powerful apostolic tradition. The pagan cults never really insisted on intellectual conviction as a foundation for their rites. That is why interpretations were varied and changeable. *While the Christians changed their external practices to better express their constant beliefs, the pagans changed their beliefs every time they altered their rites.*

For the Christians, clear dogmatic teaching included not only their sacred practices but also the whole field of revelation, ethics, and redemption. The one true God was revealed, not in any myth or legend, but in the historic person of Christ, crucified under the governorship of Pontius Pilate. He walked among men, cried out in anguish, and suffered the frightful realism of the cross. His execution took place within the recent past. Brutal, shameful, yes; but completely real! Preaching this kind of Christ-Saviour could not be anything but foolishness and a stumbling-block. This is what made the claims of Christianity so contemptible and offensive. Otherwise, it would have been accepted and amalgamated into the religious system of the pagans as one more cultic import. Besides, it was built on the strictest monotheism, which tolerated no other god. Nor were the basic Christian doctrines vague, something fashioned hazily out of myth and legend: they were the clear words of Christ and his apostles, recorded in the New Testament or taught within the strict confines of apostolic tradition. Some of these doctrines were hard, difficult to believe, and even more difficult to apply. This in itself is proof of their clarity: no ambiguous teaching is ever hard. Ambiguity begets multiple interpretation, providing alternatives to every difficulty. No acceptable alternative was provided for martyrdom, for example. Thousands would not have died willingly for some hazy notion. Paganism had only a confused jumble of cult legends and mysteries, each one honoring a different god, and constantly increased by the admixture of new divinities. Nothing even remotely resembling monotheism can be detected in the pagan cults until the third century A.D. Even then, the painfully contrived solar henotheism, the sun-cult imported from the Orient, was more of an aspiration than a reality.

In the sphere of ethical demands, the difference between Christianity and the pagan cults is so fundamental that this alone rules out

any relationship of origin between the two. The cults imported from the East were almost totally amoral. The indigenous ones, originating from agrarian and fertility rites, were really never exacting nor formative, charged as they were with sexual implications.[7] Even during and after the third century A.D. when solar henotheism attempted to raise the moral standards to a higher plane, their ideals left much to be desired. When set against the New Testament standards actually realized in primitive Christianity, the ethical demands of the pagan cults are low even in the most favorable assessment. The moral chasm between the two worlds is so deep and wide that it is unbridgeable—a conclusion reached through careful examination of the sources by scholars who cannot be accused of biased apologetics.[8]

Closely related with all this is the principal doctrine of Christianity: redemption and salvation. The central point of Paul's mystery was this: salvation brought about by the historical person of Christ, through his death; a salvation purely spiritual, completely beyond the natural order. It was preached unequivocally by the primitive Christians as it is today. While Christ died in order to save, the death of a god in the pagan mysteries had no saving value. The gods themselves were not savior-gods; in fact, it was the gods themselves who were being saved![9] The Attis-ritual, one of the very few extant sacred formulae of the pagan mysteries, makes this quite clear: “Take courage, mystai; since the god has been saved, there will be for you also salvation from your troubles." [10] The god was not doing the saving: any salvation of the mystai would come from their own effort.

The Christian salvation concept differed entirely from that of the

[7] Even if the conclusions of E. Rhode *{Psyche,* tr. W.B. Hillis, [London, 1925], p. 228) and G. Kittel (*Die Religionsgeschichte und das Urchristentum* [Gutersloh, 1*932, pp.* 116 ff.) are exaggerated, the lack of moral ideals is obvious.

[8] Cf. K. Latte, " Schuld und Sunde in der griechischen Religion," *Archiv fur Religionswissenschaft* (Freiburg im B.), XX (1920-21), pp. 254 ff.

[9] Regarding this, A. Boulanger (*Orphee: Rapports de I'orphisme et du christianisme* [Paris, 1925], p. 102) says: "The idea that God should die and rise again in order to lead his faithful to life everlasting is unrepresented in any Hellenistic religion."

[10] Firmicus Maternus, *De Errore Profan. Relig.* (edit. Ziegler, p. 57, 14 f.).

mystery cults. The "σωτηρία" or "saving" promised by the cults was conceived in terms of the natural order and transposed as such to the other world (see above, pp. 35 f.). In the past, too many authors have superimposed Christian concepts on the "redemption cults." Scientific scholarship has reached more sober conclusions. [11] The vague longing for a redeeming god, however pervasive among the pagan cults at the beginning of the Christian era, cannot in any real way be equated with Christ's redemption and salvation. He promised no panacea for this life, but a purely spiritual and supernatural good. Without condemning flesh as evil, Christian doctrine recognized moral guilt; it proclaimed a redemption from that guilt by the atoning death of Christ, a forgiveness of sins to the repentant sinner. Such a teaching proceeds from a basis wholly different from anything the Hellenes had ever offered, since it postulates that man was originally a child of God, that he lost this supernatural kinship through sin, and regained it through the cross of Christ the Redeemer. Redeemed man's inheritance is perfect union with God in the bliss of heaven.

Another pertinent difference: the writers of the New Testament and the very early preachers of Christ's truth were careful never to present Christianity as a cult or "religion" in the way the world of the Caesars understood it. Because of this, the pagans accused the Christians of atheism! Because of this, too, the pagans did not attempt to amalgamate or integrate Christianity into their system of cults. Jesus himself changed both the Jewish and the pagan perspective on worship and cult when he answered the Samaritan woman at the well: “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem... But the hour will come—in fact it is here already—when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper the Father wants " (Jn 4:21-23).

All considerations of persecution aside, the primitive Christian community had no uniquely sacred localizations, no sacred

[11] E.g., Cf. A. M. J. Festugiere, *L'iddal religieux des Grecs et l'Evangile* (Paris, 1932), p. 219; F. J. Dolger, *Ichtys,* Vol. I (Munster, 1928), p. *7;* G. Kittel, *Theologisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament,* I (Stuttgart, 1933), p. 539; etc.

geography, no temples, no notable holy places. [12] Until the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325), for example, the Christians showed no special regard for the places where Jesus had lived and died. During the persecutions, there could have been clandestine pilgrimages, but there were none. By contrast, the pagan mysteries had hundreds of sacred places, temples and centers where the myths reputedly materialized or were re-enacted.

The primitive Christians had to have places in which to meet, and meet they did in each other's homes. That was sufficient. Nowhere do we find them longing for temples or shrines. Minucius Felix, writing at the end of the second century, reflected the Christian attitude of his day when he argued against the pagans' excessive attachment to shrines and temples: "What temple am I to build for Him (God), since this whole world, fashioned by his hand, cannot hold Him? Am I to confine so vast and majestic a power to one little shrine, while I, a mere man, live in a larger place? Are our mind and heart not better places to be dedicated to Him?" [13] The Christians believed in Christ's historical reality; that was the unquestioned ground of their faith. But they felt no need to visit those places where he once had been. These places were now empty, while Christ came to them every day in the Eucharist (which they took from the reserved sacrament in their own homes). Christ came in a mysterious way whenever two or more gathered in his name.[14] They, the *plebs sancta Dei,* were his mystical body. And Christians were moved, not so much by their Saviour's memory, as by his welcome presence here and now. He was their Emmanuel, Godwith-us, *Maranatha,* Our Lord come![15]

[12] Even in the latter part of the 3rd century, special buildings for Christian worship were few.

[13] Minucius Felix, *Octavius,* 32, PL 3, 353 B-354 A.

[14] The *Shekinah,* or mysterious presence of Christ amid two or three gathered in his name (Mt 18:20). The Jewish *Shekinah,* localized first in the tabernacle and later in the Temple, referred to the mysterious presence of God with his people (based on Ezk 3:12); post-exilic rabbinical texts, influenced by Ezekiel himself, taught that where two or three were gathered to read the Scriptures, there in their midst was this special presence of God. Christ applied this to himself in Mt 18:20.

[15] This acclamation is found in the *Didache,* 10, 6.

A thorough examination of the deep contrast between primitive Christianity (of the first and second centuries) and the pagan mysteries of the same era leads to the inescapable conclusion that emerging Christianity was rather an anti-mystery religion than a mystery religion.[16]

[16] In fact, some wonder how the early school of comparative religion could have seriously attempted to derive the basic doctrine of Christ from the mystery cults, or even to compare them. K. Prumm, for example, in his *Das antike Heidentum nach seinen Grundstromungen: Ein Hanbuch zur biblischen und altchristlichen Umweltkunde* (Munich, 1942), p. 308, says: "Without claiming any prophetic gifts, we can predict that the coming generations will simply fail to understand that the attempt to trace an inner connexion between the fundamental ideas of Christianity and those of the mystery cults could ever have been made with so much seriousness." Cf. also C. Clemen, *Der Einfluss der Mysterienreligionen auf das alteste Christentum* (Giessen, 1913), pp. 81 ff.

CHAPTER V

THE SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES IN THE PRE-NICENE FATHERS

The Christians of the first two centuries utterly abhorred the idea of borrowing anything from paganism and its cults, because of the difference in beliefs. We only have to read Minucius Felix to see the scorn of the Christians for pagan mysteries and rites.[1] They considered any borrowing as idolatrous, a sin unto death: in this category they included the use of paintings or sculptures of idols, the teaching of pagan myths, the eating of sacrificial offerings, etc.[2]

In vain do we search the writings of the sub-Apostolic Fathers for anything which could have been borrowed from the pagan mysteries. They use the word "mystery" but never with any connotation of cult. Its use is Pauline: God's general plan for the world, or some part of this plan.[3] Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 112), for example, refers to the virginity of Mary, to Christ her son, and his death as "three mysteries of renown, which were wrought in silence, but have been revealed to us." [4] The author of the *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. A.D. 130) brings out the Pauline meaning even more clearly. Like Paul, he relates *mystery* to σοφία and αποκάλυψες *(wis-dom* and *revelation)*: God "formed in his mind a great, unspeakable purpose which he communicated to his Son alone. He was seemingly neglectful of us, seemingly unconcerned about us, as long as he held and preserved his own *wise counsel* in a *mystery,* but once he *revealed* it through his beloved Son and made known what had been prepared from the beginning, he conferred on us every blessing all at once..." [5]

[1] Minucius Felix, *Octavius,* 23, PL 3, 322 B-225 A.

[2] *Didache,* 6, 3.

[3] The only possible exception may be Ignatius of Antioch's *Ad Trail,* (chap. 2), where he says: "It behoves you also, in every way, to please the deacons, who are ministers of the mysteries of Christ Jesus; for they are not ministers of meat and drink, but servants of God's Church." PG 5, 676 C-677 A.

[4] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Ephes.,* 19, PG 5, 660 A.

[5] *Ep. ad Diogn.,* 8, PG 2, 1180 A. The same relationship of *mystery* to σοφία and άποκάλυπσις (w*isdom* and *revelation)* is evident in chap. 11: "...the things

The primitive Christians felt no need to borrow anything from paganism anyway. God revealed his wisdom, his plans for mankind, in Christ Jesus. God's mystery was revealed to them sufficiently: the Redeemer taught man everything that was necessary for salvation. It was indeed an unspeakable trust. Not only would they jealously keep the worship of the true God and his teachings from adulteration of any kind, but they would guard these holy things of God against the danger of abuse even at the cost of their lives. The world seen as the kingdom of the true God was absolutely separate from that of the false gods: the one was life, the other death.

What the early Christians feared was not so much the danger of corruption, though this was real enough, but the wasting of their gift, for the Master had said: "Do not give dogs what is holy; and do not throw your pearls in front of pigs, or they may trample them and then turn on you and tear you to pieces" (Mt 7:6). The *Didache* repeated this caution forcefully.[6] That is why almost all the early apologists, Minucius Felix, Athenagoras, Arnobius, Tatian, and Theophilus, are silent about the Eucharist and say very little if anything about the other sacraments.[7] Holy things were for the members of Christ's body, the *ecclesia,* and no one else.

Such fears were fully justified. By A.D. 150, when the mystery cults were becoming more and more popular with the masses, there were already indications of abuse: these cults seemed to be adapting and imitating some of the Christian rites, together with the concepts behind them: baptism and rebirth, self-punishment or penance, catharsis, sacred meals, etc. Justin and Tertullian believed this, since their accusations against the pagans ring loud and clear. Justin, for example, referring to the Eucharist, points out:

which have been clearly shown by the Logos to his disciples, to whom the Logos appeared in person and has made revelations to them in plain language; indeed, he was not understood by unbelievers, but he gave explanations to the disciples, esteemed by him as trustworthy, and they acquired a knowledge of the mysteries of the Father; for this reason he sent the Logos to be manifested to the world." PG2, 1184AB. ' *Didache,* 9, 5. [7] Justin and Tertullian did write briefly about some of the sacraments (e.g., Baptism and the Eucharist) but they had a deeper purpose: to refute the charges of atheism, incest and even cannibalism leveled at the Christians by the pagans.

"In imitation of this, the wicked demons ordered the same thing to be done in the mysteries of Mithras. For as you know or may easily find out, bread and a cup of water, together with certain incantations, are used in the mystic rites of initiating a person." [8] In his *Dialogue with Trypho,* Justin also accuses the priests of Mithras of distorting the prophecy of Daniel (Dn 3:34), stating that it "has been imitated by them," and that "they have attempted likewise to imitate all the sayings of Isaiah." [9] He explains many adaptations of the myths to the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah: e.g., regarding Bacchus,[10] Perseus, [11] Hercules,[12] Aesculapius,[13] and Proserpine. [14]

The accusations of Tertullian are no less biting: "...the devil, of course, wily in perverting truth, vies even with the essentials of God's own sacraments. He, too, baptizes some—that is, his own believers and faithful followers. He promises to take away sins by a laver (of his own). And, if my memory serves me correctly, Mithras there (in Satan's kingdom), puts his marks on his soldiers' foreheads. He also celebrates an oblation of bread and puts forward a counterfeit resurrection... What, too, must we conclude about (Satan's) limiting his chief priests [the Flamen Dialis] to a single marriage [like the early Christian bishops, I Tm 3:2]. He, too, has his virgins, his proficients in continence." [15] Later in the same chapter, Tertullian's accusations extend to the "diabolical" imitations of Christian Scriptures and doctrine: "Since he has demonstrated such emulation,

[8] Justin, *I Apol.,* chap. 66, PG 6, 429 A.

[9] Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.,* chap. 70, PG 6, 640 A. In his I *Apology,* chap. 62, PG 6, 421 BC, Justin offers an example of the pagans imitating Baptism after it had been prophesied by Isaiah: "After hearing of this Baptism which Prophet Isaiah announced, the demons prompted those who enter their temples and come to them with libations and burnt offerings to sprinkle themselves also with water; likewise, they cause them to wash their whole persons... before they enter into the shrines in which their images are located."

[10] Justin, I *Apol.,* chap. 54, PG 6, 409 AB.

[11] *Ibid.,* 409 C.

[12] *Ibid.,* 412 A.

[13] *Ibid.,* 412 A.

[14] *Ibid.,* 425 C.

[15] Tertullian, *Praescr. adv. Haer.,* chap. 40, PL 2, 66 AB. Cf. *De Bapt.,* chap. 5, PL 1, 1312 B-1313 B; also *De Corona,* chap. 15, PL 2, 122 AB.

in purposely imitating those very things which make up the administration of Christ's sacraments for his own idolatrous interests, of course, it follows that the same evil genius also passionately desired and succeeded in adapting to his own profane, rival creed the very documentary sources of divine things and of the Christian saints [i.e., the New Testament Scriptures]—adapting his interpretation from their interpretations, his words from their words, his parables from their parables." [16]

It could be that Justin and Tertullian (and a few others of this period) painted the cults in excessively Christian colors: consciously or unconsciously, they attributed Christian meanings to some of the cultic elements. Some cultic items were certainly borrowed from Christianity,[17] but the Christian apologists probably exaggerated the extent of these "demoniac" borrowings in order to hold this up as an example of the pagans' unspeakable iniquity.

Perhaps a better explanation for some allegedly "borrowed" items by the mysteries, or vice versa, may be found in man's universal depths, in his nature whose psychological processes and needs are common to heathen and Christian alike. We could perhaps designate this as the law of psychological identity.[18] Some of the sensible images or symbols, created by man to reflect spiritual truths, are indeed common to many peoples and races, not because of any supposed intercommunication but because their basis is the same human nature or experience. For instance, water is universally used for cleansing; hence, water is naturally used as a symbol of spiritual cleansing or purification. Burning fire provides light; hence, it is a naturally appropriate symbol of enlightenment. Food provides nourishment; hence, food can easily become a symbol of spiritual sustenance. Darkness and light naturally reflect gloom and happiness, etc.

[16] *Ibid.,* 67 A.

[17] Cf. F. Cumont, *Les religions orientates dans le paganisme romain* (4th edit., Paris, 1929), preface, p. ix; also pp. 54, 65 f.; also H. Hepding, *Attis, seine Mythen und sein Kult* (Giessen, 1903), p. 179.

[18] K. Prumm calls it the law of correspondence between object and form *(Das antike Heidentum nach seinen Grundstromungen; ein Handbuch zur biblischen und altchristliche Umweltkunde* [Munich, 1942], p. 331).

This universal natural symbolism was used by Christ in the form of rites or signs intended to impart grace. When he instituted what we now call the sacraments (or mysteries in the Eastern Church) he used such signs, which man could naturally understand. He did the same in his teachings. In order to illustrate spiritual or supernatural truths, he used natural images: the parable of a father and son, a king, living water, a supper, a mustard seed, a pearl of great price, etc. This basis of psychological identity may explain many rites, words, and ideas common to Christianity and paganism. Added to this are the processes of common cultural heritage, a common system of social custom and convention, a common stock of ideas evolved from educational precedents, etc.

All these factors further complicate the study of genetic origins and relationships in comparative religion. Validly ascertaining genetic dependence of religious rites is not merely a matter, as was once thought, of superficially identifying items shared by Christianity and some cultic mysteries, finding out which was first in point of time, and grandly pronouncing a verdict as to which borrowed from which. In both the cultic initiation and the early Christian ritual of Baptism, for example, the candidate was given milk and honey. Yet, if the mysteries were the first to do it, this does not necessarily mean that Christianity "borrowed" it from the cults. It was a simple usage of daily life, made into religious symbol for two different reasons.

Another factor further complicates the study of the derivation of religious concepts and rites: common roots in Judaism.[19] Some of the pagan imitations witnessed by Justin and Tertullian, for example, may indeed have been borrowed from Biblical ideas by way of pre-Christian Judaism.[20] A zealous Jewish Diaspora covered the

[19] Jewish origins of some items in Christian worship are discussed in several excellent studies: F. Gavin, *The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments* (London, 1928); W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Jewish Background of the Christian Liturgy* (Oxford, 1925); G. Dix, *The Jew and the Greek: A Study in the Primitive Church* (Westminster, 1953); C. W. Dugmore, *The Influence of the Synagogue on the Divine Office* (Oxford, 1944); J. Jeremias, *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus* (Oxford, 1955); cf. also *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery,* M. Burrows, ed., Vols. I and II (New Haven, Conn., 1950-1951).

[20] As Justin claimed regarding the prophecy of Daniel and the sayings of Isaiah (see above, p. 51).

Mediterranean world long before Christ. Jewish efforts at proselytizing must have exercised some influence on pagan religious ideas. There has been no thorough, scientific research into this subject, yet there is some evidence.

In the few magical texts still extant, for example, Jewish theology is mixed with that of other peoples. Iao (Yahveh), Sabbaoth and angels are called upon together with Egyptian or Greek divinities. The doctrinal modifications in interpreting the ancient rites of Sabazius (the Thraco-Phrygian god frequently identified by the Greeks with Dionysus[21]) is another example. Under Jewish-Hellenic influence, the purifications practiced in the Dionysian mysteries imply the wiping out of some hereditary impurity incurred by a guilty ancestor, and, of the consequent wrath of heaven—much as the Biblical original sin, incurred by Adam's disobedience and staining the whole human race, was wiped out by Baptism. Like the Jews, the initiates of Sabazius believed that after death their good angel (*angelus bonus)* would lead them to the banquet of the eternally happy—their liturgical meals foreshadowing and anticipating the eternal joys of celestial feasting. Even the god's name (κύριος Σαβάζιος) seems to have been taken from the Septuagint's "Yahveh Zabaoth" (κύριος Σαβαώθ), or the Biblical "Lord of Hosts."[22] Like the God of the Jews, Sabazius was worshipped as the supreme, almighty and holy God.

On the Christian side some borrowing was inevitable, especially when we remember that cultic concepts and language were bound to spill over into everyday life. The Church's liturgical and theological life did not exist in a vacuum. The churchmen who fashioned its liturgical rites in the century preceding Nicaea were men of the Greco-Roman world, with its distinctive speech and culture. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150-211) was probably the first, and far ahead of his time, to borrow knowingly. "Come to us," he tells the

[21] Cf. Diodorus, iv, 4. His cult was introduced into Athens as early as the 5th century B.C. (Aristophanes, *Vespae* 9, *Lysistr.* 388; Demosthenes, *De Cor.,* 260). In the 2nd century B.C. Roman law proscribed its propagation in Rome and the first Jews who settled in Rome were expelled in 139 B.C. in virtue of this law. Only in the 2nd century A. D. did it gain a firm footing in Rome.

[22] Cf. Val. Max. i. 3, 2; Plutarch, *Symp.* iv. 6; also "Les mysteres de Sabazius et le judaisme," in *Comptes-rendus acad. inscr.* Feb. 9th, 1906, pp. 63 *S.*

pagans," here are the true mysteries!"[23] He knew what arguments were best suited to convince and affect their minds. He turns the pagans' own weapons against them. Thoroughly versed in their literature and religious beliefs (he was a philosopher before his conversion), he uses their language and concepts to win them for Christ and Christian ideals. His whole *Exhortation to the Heathen (Protrepticus)* is permeated with mythic allusions, quotations, direct and indirect, from their poets, writers, and philosophers through which Clement demonstrates the truth of Christianity.[24] While the philosophers' speculations were generally intellectual exercises, he turns them into norms of conduct. This had always been the main difficulty for the Christians: trying to convince the pagans that they should regard divine truths as most important and to live by them. Not for another hundred years would Christian writers in other parts of the Church be bold enough to adapt some of the pagan terminology and apply it to Christian truth and ritual.

This process by which the mystery terminology and imagery was being introduced into the theology and liturgy of the Church was gradual. Slowly, almost painfully, it worked its way from Alexandria into the other centers of Christianity.[25] What finally removed the last obstacles from its path was the final decay of the pagan cults and the victory of Christianity.

[23] Clement of Alexandria, *Cohort, ad Gentes,* XII, PG 8, 240 C-241 A.

[24] *Ibid.,* especially chaps. VI and VII, PG 8, 172 B-185 C.

[25] How this process spread is superbly analyzed by G. Anrich in his amply documented *Das antike Mysterienwesen in seinen Einfluss auf das Christentum* (Gottingen, 1894), pp. 130-154.

CHAPTER VI

THE SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES IN THE POST-NICENE PERIOD

Beginning approximately in the fourth century, whole cities and provinces of the Empire became Christian. Concomitantly, paganism lost its hold and gradually declined. As its danger decreased, Christian writers no longer felt the need to attack it, nor were they afraid any longer to borrow from cultic terminology nor to introduce certain forms, gestures, etc., from the mysteries into their own liturgy. Like Clement of Alexandria more than a hundred years before, the churchmen boldly used the language and concepts of the cultural world in which they lived, thus anticipating the spirit of Vatican II.[1]

The features drawn from pagan mysteries were mostly insignificant externals. Some may not have been incorporated consciously,[2] while others were deliberately adopted, "Christianized," interpreted and changed to suit Christian concepts and truths. Thus, there are *initiates,* μεμνημένοι; the catechetical teacher is the μυσταγωγός and his teaching is the *mystagogia,* μυσταγωγία, etc. Churchmen transposed many of the ancient world's terms, forms, figures, and values into the Christian context.

In its triumph, the Christian Church would also appropriate the essentials of Roman juridical institutions, some part of the cultic ritual of the dead, some feasts transformed into holy days, and a number of Greco-Roman customs. Though victorious Christianity would take numerous themes and imagery from the Hellenistic mysteries, it insisted on the radical differences in the religious content of its own mysteries. Profound and thoroughly documented studies have brought this out clearly. Never did Christianity run the risk of

[1] I.e., that the things of God and teachings of the Church be expressed in contemporary idiom.

[2] This could happen again. Even before Vatican II, many churches displayed a national flag; in a thousand years archaeologists and historians may well wonder how a secular, non-Christian symbol had crept into the Christian liturgy!

being confused with the syncretistic religions which many of the mystery cults were. For a while, Gnosticism posed much more of a danger. Yet, the very intolerance of triumphant Christianity proves the point: the Church put an end to the mysteries and to the initiatory Gnosis. The regeneration previously sought in the mysteries was replaced with the real, spiritual regeneration brought about by the sacraments. The periphery of these Christian rites may have been embellished with some ancient forms, but their core remained pure and unadulterated.

To make certain that ignorance would not damage the deposit of faith, the Church intensified its training program, the catechumenate (usually lasting from three to five years). Meanwhile, through its *disciplina arcani,* its iron discipline, it kept the most sacred things of God away from unbelievers and non-members. It is in the fourth and fifth centuries, when the masses were flocking into the Church, that the *disciplina arcani* reached its highest point, not out of fear of being betrayed to persecutors, since the persecutions had ended in A.D. 313, but in order to safeguard what was most holy in Christianity from the unworthy and the unprepared who would otherwise have flocked in with the sincere believers. This was excellent psychology even by today's standards.

The pagan cults had a counterpart to the Christian *disciplina arcani,* for the same natural, psychological reasons. Many scholars had once believed that the Christians had borrowed it from the pagans. From time immemorial, men have tended to safeguard their most intensely sacred rites through concealment from the uninitiated. Witch-doctors still do the same. The Greeks had their mysteries.[3] Eusebius preserved an old Orphic aphorism which expresses this feeling of "mystical silence" among the Greeks: "I shall speak to those to whom it is lawful. Shut your ears, profane one."[4] In late antiquity, a Pythagorean urged: "Nothing from the store of knowledge must be revealed to him whose soul has not been purified; for it is not permissible to expose to every passer-by what

[3] Cf. O. Casel, *De philosophorum graecorum silentio tnyitico* (Giessen, 1919).

[4] *Praeparatio evangelica,* III, 7, PG 21, 180 B.

has been achieved with so much travail, nor to reveal the mysteries of the Eleusinian goddess to the profane." [5]

Among Christians, the same silence regarding the sacred rites prevailed from the very beginning. Paul tells the Corinthians that he could not speak to them as people of the Spirit, but that he had to feed them as "infants in Christ," giving them "milk, not solid food, for you were not ready" (1 Cor 3:1-2).[6] The *Didache* reiterates the injunction of the Lord about not casting pearls before swine.[7] And Tertullian chides the heretics for their carelessness in not following that dictum: "To begin with, among them it is doubtful who is a catechumen, and who a believer; all can come in alike; they hear side by side and pray together, even heathens, if any should happen to come in. That which is holy they will cast to the dogs, and their pearls, even though they be false ones, they fling to the swine." [8] On another occasion, he speaks about "the obligation of pledged silence, "being binding upon all mysteries by their very nature." [9]

Today, we cannot appreciate the importance of such reasoning. Our world, we should remember, has been conditioned by nearly two thousand years of Christianity: it knows something of the Church's history and of its doctrine. The world of Justin, Tertullian, and Cyprian did not. To the average pagan, then, many of the Christian practices and beliefs were strange, incomprehensible, utterly unheard of. Furthermore, scandalous accounts circulated in the marketplace: Christians were practicing ritual murder, participating in cannibal feasts, in orgies of promiscuous vice and even incest.[10] Any unguarded Christian talk of "receiving the most precious body and blood," or indiscreet remarks about "loving everyone," or the "kiss of brothers and sisters" would only confirm such rumors.

[5] Iamblichus, *Vita Pythagorae,* 17, 35.

[6] Hebrews 5:12-14 also uses the same simile of milk and solid food and ends by saying, " Solid food is for mature men with minds trained by practice to distinguish between good and bad. "

[7] *Didache,* IX, 5.

[8] Tertullian, *De Praescrip., 41,* PL 2, 68 A.

[9] Tertullian, *Apologeticus,* 7, PL 1, 360 A.

[10] E.g., see Tertullian's *Apologeticus,* 2, PL 1, 318-321, and 8, PL I, 363-365; also Minucius Felix, *Oct.,* 28, PL 3, 341 A.

The best policy, therefore, was silence and secrecy until a person was ready for instruction, which had to be given systematically and clearly; otherwise, harm would result.

Cyril of Jerusalem built his catechetical lectures on such a principle. After comparing the catechetical instructions with a building, where stone must follow stone by course and corner must be matched with corner, he says: "And unless you fit them together in one whole, and remember what is first, and what is second, the builder may build but you will find the structure unsound. When, therefore, the lecture is delivered, should a catechumen ask you what the teachers have said, tell him nothing. [11] For we deliver to you a mystery and a hope of the life to come. Guard the mystery for Him who gives the reward." [12] Adding another reason, he goes on: "Let no one ever say to you:' What harm is there for you if I know it too? ' So too the sick ask for wine; but if it is given at the wrong time, it causes delirium and two evils result: the sick man dies and the physician gets blamed. The same thing happens with a catechumen if he hears anything from the believer: both the catechumen becomes delirious (for he does not understand what he has heard, and so finds fault with it or scoffs at what is said), and the believer is branded as a traitor. You are now on the borderline: take care, therefore, not to divulge anything to an outsider; not that the things spoken about are unworthy to be told, but because the ear that hears is unworthy to receive." [13]

In Cappadocia, Basil warns his audience: "These things must not be told to the uninitiated." [14] Gregory of Nazianzus clearly differentiates the knowledge for those within and those without.[15] Often, preachers like Chrysostom and Augustine use more or less veiled language in referring to what was most sacred and added, "The initiated will understand what I mean." [16] This occurs at least fifty times in Chrysostom's writings alone. As late as A.D. 485,

[11] Cyril's lectures were intended for catechumens almost ready for Baptism.

[12] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 11 and 12, PG 33, 352 A-353 A.

[13] *Ibid.,* 12, PG 33, 353 AB.

[14] Basil, *De Spir. Sana.,* 27, PG 32, 189 A.

[15] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratorio 40 in s. bapt.,* 45, PG 36, 424 D-425 A.

[16] Or in making statements such as: "I would like to express myself freely on this subject (i.e., Baptism), but cannot do so on account of the presence of

Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite still warns his readers: "See that you be not a babbler concerning the most holy things; guard the mysteries of the hidden God so that none of the uninitiated participate therein; and to make this sure, in your sacred illuminations, speak of the holy only with holy people."[17]

The same discipline was enforced in the Divine Liturgy: the catechumens, hearers, etc., were dismissed before the actual Eucharistic Sacrifice began. The various dismissals are so well known that they need no comment here.[18]

Safeguarding what was the holiest was at the root of the language of fear, so frequent in the sermons of the time, especially in regard to the Eucharist. Gone was the familiar intimacy of the pre-Nicene era. With the masses flocking into the Church, the danger from the unworthy was always present, a danger which even careful screening and instruction could never obviate entirely. Preachers such as Cyril of Jerusalem, Chrysostom, and Theodore of Mopsuestia seized on the Syrian tradition in which the notion of "the holy" had been always associated with "the dangerous," and used it to the fullest: the Eucharist was φρικωδέστατος,"the most dread" (lit. what makes one's hair stand on end) and the mysteries were φρικτά και φοβερά, frightful and terrifying, making men freeze with awe. Expressions such as "fearful," "awful,"and "dread" became almost commonplace. [19]

This language of fear in turn inspired the sanctuary veil and, later, the iconostasis, intended to hide, to safeguard the holiest from the faithful.

This is the time when the term "mystery" first appears to designate the sacraments. In some provinces the Church flourished; in others not. Where the Church was the strongest, adoption of the pagan terminology, etc. was bolder. In Alexandria, one of the

some who are not initiated." *(Homil. in* I Cor., 40, 1, PG 61, 348). For details see V. Schmitt's excellent *Die Verheissuttg der Eucharistie (Joh. Kap. 6) bei den Antiochenern, Cyrill von Jerusalem, und Johannes Chrysostomus* (Wurzburg, 1903), pp. 47 ff. Cf. also Augustine, *Tract, in Ioa.,* 96, n. 3, PL 35, 1857.

[17] Dionysius the Ps.-Areopagite, *Eccles. Hierarchia,* I, 1, PG 3, 372 A.

[18] Cf. C. Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (Allen dale, N.J., 1971), PP· 62 f.; 91; 109-118; 163.

[19] Cf. G. Anrich, *Das Antike Mysterienwesen in seinen Einfluss auf das Christentum* (Gottingen, 1894), pp. 157 f·

greatest centers of Christian authority and learning, the way was prepared by Clement at the beginning of the third century (see above, pp. 54 f.). He uses "mystery" mostly in the Pauline sense but applies it occasionally to Baptism, the Eucharist and Matrimony. [20] He seems loath to extend it to all the sacraments, because of its origin.[21]

Somewhat later, Origen, also at Alexandria, takes up Clement's idea, develops it, and applies the term "mystery " to all the sacraments. [22] He is the first to do so.

Many Fathers and writers followed suit. Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, introduces his Holy Week lectures on the ceremonies of

[20] Clement of Alexandria, *Strom., III*, 12, re. Matrimony, PG 8, 1185 A, and V, 11, re. Baptism, PG 9, 108 A. Cf. also *Paedagogus,* I, 6, PG 8, 305 A. Ter tullian, who is credited with introducing the word *sacramentum* into the Christian context, applied various meanings to it, much as Eastern writers did with *mysterion;* sometimes he used it in the sense of revealed truth, either the divine plan or some part of it (e.g., *Adv. Jud.,* 13, PL 2, 676 C and 10, PL 2, 668 A); at other times he used it to mean symbol or image of these truths (e.g., *Adv. Jud.,* 11, PL 2, 671 C, and 13, PL 2, 676 A), or even to mean martyrdom *(Scorpiace,* 9, PL 2, 611 AC). It seems significant that Tertullian was not afraid to apply the term *sacramentum* to a rite or cult (e.g., *Adv. Jud.,* 11, PL 2, 671 C-672 B) much earlier than the Eastern Fathers did with "mystery,"probably because there was no danger of its being interpreted in the pagan sense. It was a different word and never meant "cult" among the pagans. Since Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucha rist and Matrimony were rites, Tertullian logically applied the term *sacramentum* to them (e.g., *Adv. Marc,* IV, 34, PL 2, 473 B, *De Monogamia,* 11, PL 2, 993 C, *De Exhort. Castitatis,* 5, PL 2, 969 C, *De Cor. Militis,* 3, PL 2, 99 A, *De Virg. Velandis,* 2, PL 2, 939 A, etc.), just as he did to the renunciation of the devil at Baptism, the adhesion to Christ at Baptism, etc. (e.g., *De Spectaculis,* 23, PL 1, 731 A; *De Idololatria,* 6, PL 1, 744 A; *De Cor. Militis,* 11, PL 2, III BC). While he applied the term to these rites, it was no more than a rite.

Cyprian, Tertullian's disciple, used the term *sacramentum* in much the same way as his master: for the Christian truths themselves (e.g., "sacrament of truth, "in *Ep. LXXIII, ad Jubaianum,* 20, PL 3,1168 A; "sacrament of divine tradition,"in *Ep. LXXIV, ad Pompeyum, II*, PL 3, 1182 B; "sacrament of the Trinity," in *Liber De Orat. Dom.,* 34, PL 4, 559 B; "sacrament of the Pasch,"in *Liber De Unit. Eccl.,* 8, PL 4, 522 A), for the mystery of Church unity (Ep. LXXIII, ad *Jubaianum,* 11, PL 3, 1162 A). Curiously, Cyprian was careful not to apply the word *sacramentum* to the sacraments in the strict sense (as we now understand the term), perhaps because he did not feel that it was acceptable yet. The sole exceptions may be *De lapsis,* 25, PL 4, 500 A and *Ep. 70, Ad Januarium,* 3, PL 3, 1082 A, where he may be referring to the sacraments in the strict sense as a sign of grace.

[21] Cf. A. Katansky, *Dogmatycheskoe uchenie o semy tserkovnykh tainstvakh v tvoreniyakh drevnijshykh ottsev i pysatelej tserkvy do Origena vkjuchytelno* (St. Petersburg, 1877), 181 ff.

[22] Cf. A. Katansky, *op. cit.,* pp. 264 ff. for references.

Baptism, Chrismation and the Eucharist by saying: “For a long time I've been wanting to speak to you about these mysteries.”[23] In his Sixth Lecture, he seems to use both meanings of mystery: “To hear the gospel is allowed to all; but the glory of the gospel is reserved for Christ's true children only... It is not customary to explain to heathen these mysteries which the Church is now explaining to you going out of the catechumen class. For we do not explain the mysteries concerning Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to a heathen, nor do we speak plainly of the (other) mysteries before catechumens; however, we often speak of many things in a veiled way in order that believers, who know, may understand and those who know not may suffer no harm.” [24] In one of the last lectures before Easter, referring to the reception of the catechumens into the Church, he says: “You shall again be taught what is required... for what purpose each of the holy mysteries of Baptism is performed, and with what reverence and order you must go from Baptism to the holy altar of God, and enjoy its spiritual and heavenly mysteries.” [25] and “how the Seal of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Chrismation) was given to you, and concerning the mysteries of the Altar of the New Testament... what is the power of these mysteries, how you must approach them, and when and how receive them.” [26]

At Nyssa, Gregory also uses the word “mysteries” in the restricted sense of sacraments: “The time has come, then, and bears in its course the remembrance of holy mysteries, purifying man—mysteries which purge out from soul and body even that sin which is difficult to cleanse away, and which brings us back to that fairness of our first state which God, the best of artificers, impressed upon us.” [27] Here he is referring to Baptism, but he alludes also to Chrismation, the Eucharist and Ordination.[28] At Nazianzus, the other Gregory

[23] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX (Mystag. I), I*, PG 33, 1065 A.

[24] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. VI,* 29, PG 33, 589 B; cf. also *Cat. XVIII,* 33, PG 33, 1056 B.

[25] *Ibid., Cat. XVIII,* 32, PG 33, 1053 B.

[26] *Ibid.,* 1056 B.

[27] Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio in Bapt. Chr.,* PG 46, 577 C-580 A.

[28] Though he talks chiefly about Baptism, he alludes to the other sacraments: “Again, the bread is at first common bread, but when the sacramental action consecrates it, it is called and becomes the Body of Christ. So with the sacramental

uses the term in the same way when he touchingly describes the miraculous recovery of his father (who was a priest) so that he could celebrate the Divine Liturgy: “leaning on his (servant's) hand as upon a staff, he imitates Moses upon the mount, arranges his feeble hands in prayer and in union with, or on behalf of, his people, and eagerly celebrates the mysteries, in such few words as his strength allowed, but, as it seems to me, with most perfect intention. What a miracle! “ [29]

Chrysostom uses the term “mystery “ in Antioch and in Constantinople as if its meaning of “sacrament” were already commonly accepted: “Thus let us do in the mysteries also, not looking at the things set before us, but keeping in mind his (God's) sayings,” [30] and, “With each one of the faithful does he mingle himself in the mysteries, and by himself he nourishes whom he begat.” [31] Again, “Wherefore it is necessary to understand the marvel of the mysteries: what it is, why it was given, and what is the action's profit. We become one body, and * members of his flesh and of his bones.” [32] And, in the same homily: “Awful in truth are the mysteries of the

oil; so with the wine. “ *(Oratio in Bapt. Chr.,* PG 46, 581 C)— “The same power of the word, again, also makes the priest venerable and honorable, separated, by the new blessing bestowed upon him... without being changed at all in body or in form; but, while continuing to be in all appearance the man he was before, he is, by some unseen power and grace, transformed in respect of his unseen soul to the higher condition.” *(Oratio in Bapt. Chr.,* PG 46, 581 D).

[29] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat. XVIII, Funerbris orat. in Patrem,* 29 (PG 35,. 1021 A). In view of what he says later, “In the sanctuary without a sanctuary, sacrificing without an altar, a priest far from the sacred rites...” PG 35, 1021 A,. the passage may not necessarily mean that he was actually celebrating the Eucha ristic Sacrifice; he may have merely used some of the prayers of the Divine Liturgy and united himself in spirit with the Divine Sacrifice being performed in church at the time. Also cf. *Orat. I, In sanctum Pascha,* 2, PG 35, 396 B, which probably refers to his ordination: “A mystery anointed me.”

[30] Chrysostom, *In Matt, homil. LXXXII,* 4, PG 58, 743. That he was using the term in the restricted sense, referring to the Eucharist and Baptism, is obvious from what follows:” For his word cannot deceive, but our senses are easily beguiled: the former has never failed, the latter goes awry in most things. Since then the word says, ′ This is my body,' let us both be persuaded and believe, and look at it with the eyes of the mind. For Christ has given nothing sensible, but though in things sensible yet all to be perceived by the mind. So also in Baptism, the gift is bestowed by a sensible thing, that is, by water; but that which is done is perceived by the mind...”

[31] Chrysostom, *In Matt, homil. LXXXII,* 5, PG 58, 744.

[32] Chrysostom, *In Joan, homil. XLVI,* 3, PG 59, 260.

Church, awful in truth is the altar." [33] Even clearer is the statement: "And the initiated know it, since they are indeed regenerated by water and nourished by the Blood and the Flesh. Hence, the mysteries take their beginning; (to teach you) that when you approach that awful cup, you may approach it as if you were drinking from the very side (of Christ)." [34] Referring to Baptism, he says: "If the mysteries be excellent and desirable, let no one receive Baptism at his last gasp. For that is not the time for the giving of mysteries but for the making of wills; the time for mysteries is in health of mind and soundness of soul." [35]

These are only a few examples: others equally illustrative could be quoted. From now on, the term "mystery" means sacrament (in addition to the plan of salvation, the Pauline meaning).[36] So it has remained till now. What the Latin Church calls the "sacraments, "the Byzantine calls the "mysteries;" thus, for the Greeks, μυστήρια; the Russians, таинства; the Ukrainians, тайни ; the Bulgarians таинства or тайни; the Serbians, *Tajne;* the Rumanians, *mistere;* the Arabic Melkites, *Asraar*. The term may be used alone but is usually qualified by the adjective "holy."

[33] *Ibid, homil. XLVI,* 4, PG 59, 261.

[34] *Ibid, homil. LXXXV,* 3, PG 59, 465.

[35] Chrysostom, *In Act. Ap. homil.* I, 7, PG 60, 24. In the same homily, he goes on: "the sick man himself lies there in darkness... full of extreme despondency at the thought of leaving his children orphans, his wife a widow, his house desolate. Is this the state in which to approach the mysteries? Answer me. Is this the state in which to approach the sacred table? "This last refers to Holy Communion administered immediately after Baptism.

[36] Developments in the West regarding the term "sacraments, "parallel those in the East concerning *mysteria.* The great Augustine, for example, uses *sacramentum* in the wide sense most of the time (e.g., he calls the "Our Father," "the sacrament of the Lord's Prayer," in *Serm.* 228, 3, PL 38, 1102; he terms *sacra mentum,* a "sacred sign"in *De civ. Dei,* 1, X., c. 5, PL 41, 282, or "the visible form of invisible grace, in *Epist. 105,* 3, 12, PL 33, 401, or *sacramenta* as "signs, since they pertain to divine things,"in *Epist. 138, 1*, 7, PL 33, 527; also in *De gratia Christ. et de pec. orig.,* II, 40, n. 45, PL 44, 408, and in *De cat. rud.,* 26, PL 40, 344. Beginnings of the restricted meaning of the term can perhaps be traced to his *Contra Faustum* (1. 19, c. 13, PL 42, 355) where he says that the sacraments of the New Law are more efficacious than those of the Old Law, and to *Serm. 228,* 3, PL 38, 1102, where he speaks of the "sacrament of the altar."

Both "sacraments" and "mysteries" were often used in the wider sense by Christian writers until the Middle Ages. In the 12th century, Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas defined the term "sacrament" and restricted its use to the technical sense.

PART TWO

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH

CHAPTER VII

THE HUMAN USE OF DIVINE POWERS IN THE SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES

Jesus of Nazareth was a Jew. So were his apostles. Christianity originated within the Jewish milieu of Palestine and its first activity centered there. Building his kingdom upon Jewish foundations, Jesus took many usages, practices and beliefs from his own people and put new reality into them, sometimes with unheard of, almost incredible meanings. When he instituted the sacraments, he did not invent them *ex nihilo:* he took practices already familiar to his people and made them into infallible instruments of divine grace to fulfil uniquely Christian needs.

He endowed, for example, the Jewish ritual bath, or "baptism," which was a mere symbol of moral change, with the tremendous power of spiritually regenerating men through water and the Holy Spirit, of making them "sons of God." The age-old, familiar gesture of healing and blessing—the imposition of hands—he remade into the instrument of actually imparting the Holy Spirit. Taking the Jewish traditional signs of oneness and unity, the bread and wine blessed and consumed in the *chaburah* (and paschal) supper, he transformed them into the Eucharist, into his own body and blood, which effects real union and oneness with the partakers. He utilized the Jewish practice of" binding and loosing," the Jewish repentance and confession, with actual forgiveness of sins imparted in time and in eternity. He transformed the Jewish anointing of the sick, which had only earthly, natural effects, into the unction of the sick, which always cures spiritually, saves the sick person, and sometimes restores bodily health. He refashioned marriage, which had been only a contract, albeit a sacred, solemn one, into an effectual channel of grace for his baptized followers. The prototype of Judaic priestly institutions and leadership he remade into the sacrament of priestly Orders to provide his *ecclesia* with dispensers of his divine powers.

Jesus, as we shall see, truly gave the apostles the divine powers to do these things, that is, to "perform" the sacraments, and

commissioned them not only to use these powers themselves but to transmit the same capability to others. They, in turn, did just that: they actually bestowed or transferred the same capability to their successors, with effects that God would ratify. To help us understand how this was possible, we turn to the "apostles" and to the Scriptural meaning of the term.

The concept of "apostle" was not an invention of Jesus, but can be traced to its Jewish counterpart. The Christian "apostle," as St. Jerome points out,[1] is recognized in the Jewish prototype of *shaliach:* the Jews had envoy-representatives—friends or slaves, "sent" as plenipotentiaries not only "in the name," but "in the person" of their principals. The envoy's action committed the principal as if he had been present. This concept appears in Genesis chapter 24: Abraham had sent a *shaliach* to procure a wife for his son Isaac from among his own countrymen; when the *shaliach's* choice fell on Rebecca, her father Bethuel and brother Laban could act without hesitation, for they knew that Abraham was bound by his *shaliach's* action and could not disavow it. This Judaic institution, both secular and religious, was well known in the time of Christ. Jewish references to the office of *shaliach* are numerous, [2] though mostly from the Christian era—from the "apostles" of the High Priest and Sanhedrin to those of the Patriarch of Jamnia, who seems to have "ordained" them with the imposition of hands and sent them on their missions.[3] Jewish congregations used to appoint a *shaliach* to represent them before God and man.[4] The Talmud itself cites the rabbinic addage, "A man's *shaliach* is as it were (or "like") himself"—and this at least nine times!

[1] Jerome$_s$ *Comm. in Ep. ad Gal.,* I, 1, PL 30, 806 C.

[2] See H. Strack-P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch,* Vol. III (Munich, 1926), pp. 2 ff.; also K. Kohler, Jewish Encyclopedia, II, 19 (s.v., *Apostle and Apostleship);* F. Gavin, *The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments* (London, 1928), pp. 103 ff.

[3] Judaism continued the "apostolate" usage in the centuries after Christ: cf. *Tosefta, Sanhedrin,* ii, 6; Justin Martyr, *Dialog,* c. *Tryph.,* 108, PG 6, 721 C; Epiphanius, *Adv. Haer.,* I, *adv. Ebionaeos,* 4, PG 41, 412 AB; Eusebius, *Comm. in Isa.,* 18, PG 24, 213 AB; also A. v. Harnack, on Acts XXVIII, 21, *Apostelgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1908).

[4] Cf. *Mishnah, Berakoth,* V, 5.

When founding his Church, Jesus utilized the concept behind this Jewish institution—personal representation through a plenipotentiary—and adapted it to Christian purposes.[5] His people appreciated its full import, the Jewish tradition behind it, and especially the fact that the principal could never repudiate his *shaliach's* action. When Christ gave his twelve chosen ones the divine power of forgiving sins, he prefaced his action by saying, "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you " (Jn 20:31). They immediately understood that the Father sent Jesus as his *shaliach* and they in turn were to be his; and they, as *shelihim* (plural of *shaliach)* of Jesus in using the power of pardoning sins, unalterably committed the divine principal, both Jesus and his Father in heaven. Whatever they pardoned on earth would be pardoned in heaven, and whatever they retained would be retained.

At the Last Supper, after he had washed the feet of his disciples, Jesus explained his action as an example to them and told them: "I tell you most solemnly, no servant is greater than his master, no 'apostle = shaliach' (απόστολος) is greater than the man who sent him" (Jn 13:16). In fact, his farewell discourse is largely based on the concept of the *shaliach',* "Whoever welcomes the one I send welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me"; "If you know me, you know my Father too"; "The words I say to you I do not speak as from myself; it is the Father, living in me, who is doing this work. You will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you"; "I am the vine, you are the branches," etc.

The apostles did not receive an unlimited right to act in the Lord's name: their power extended only to those matters which he had entrusted to them; they had no mandate to re-establish polygamy, to allow murder, fornication, etc., with the expectation that God would also be held to the same! Their commission was to preach his word, to baptise (" Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them... and teach them to observe all the commands

[5] He did not necessarily utilize the special institution of *Shaliach* which had evolved from the concept of personal representation through a plenipotentiary; hence, the controversy regarding priority of the terms "apostolus" (and its verbal form) and *shaliach* is really redundant.

I gave you" (Mt 28:19 f.), to make the Eucharist (" This is my body... do this in *anamnesis* of me" Lk 22:19), etc.

If this concept of shaliach-apostle was so important, why was it so seldom applied to the Twelve in the Gospels? The answer is simple: the *shaliach* is the principal's envoy-representative, but when the principal is present, there is no need of representing him. He can act for himself. As long as Jesus was present, he acted in his own name. Mark, who never used the expression, refers to the concept when he writes: "And he appointed twelve; they were to be his companions and to be sent out to preach, with power to cast out devils. And so he appointed them" (Mk 3:13-15). Neither did Matthew ever use the word, yet he draws a careful parallel between the mission of the Twelve and that of Christ (Mt 9:35; 10:7-8). Luke draws the same parallel (9:1 f.), and uses the expression twice.

In short, just as Jesus was, in Paul's words, "the apostle and high priest of our religion" (Heb 3:1),[6] being the plenipotentiary of God, so after Christ's ascension the Twelve are his *apostle-shelihim,* his plenipotentiaries doing in his name whatever he had commissioned them to do. From then on, the "apostles" began exercising their functions as *shelihim* of the Lord, and the term "apostles" began to be used.

Soon others were added: Matthias (to fill the vacancy left by Judas), James," the brother of the Lord" (James the son of Zebedee was already an apostle), and Saul of Tarsus, later known as Paul. Whenever Paul says he acted "in the name of the Lord," or "in the person of Christ," the *shaliach-concept* is implied. Christ's appointment of the original Twelve was well known; his was not. So, when his authority was challenged by the Galatians, he begins, "From Paul to the churches of Galatia, and from all the brothers who are here with me," and significantly, insistingly adds, "an apostle who does not owe his authority to men or his appointment to any human being but who has been appointed by Jesus Christ and by God the Father who raised Jesus from the dead" (Ga 1:1 if.). The title

[6] K. Rengstorf gives references of the Jewish high-priest being the *shaliach* of God (art. in *Theologisches Wdrterbuch zum Neuen Testament,* edit. G. Kittel (Stuttgart, 1933).

"apostle" is given to Barnabas (Acts 14:14), Silvanus (1 Th 2:7), Andronicus and Junias (Rm 16:7), etc. These were not "witnesses of these things" as had been the original Twelve, but they are *shelihim,* commissioned by *shelihim* of the Lord, and were fulfilling the functions of "apostles." So were Timothy and Titus.

Successors, presbyters and bishops, had been indeed appointed by the apostles (Acts 14:23) or by their representatives (Tt 1:5), through the imposition of hand (1 Tm 5:22; cf. 1 Tm 4:14; 2 Tm 1:6), and their power derived from the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). These were true *shelihim* of God, with the same power and authority as the original apostles. James, for example, writes about having presbyters anoint the sick "in the name of the Lord." When anointing by his authority and power, they are acting as his *shelihim*— their action committing the Lord as if he himself had performed it—for it would result in the sick man being saved, his sins forgiven, etc. (Jm 5:13-16). Obviously, the mandate had been transferred. This appears to differ from Jewish custom whereby a *shaliach* could not appoint a successor.[7] Jesus changed the custom, extending its use to include "deputizing" or commissioning others. Each ordination is a joint divine and human action: the ordaining bishop calls down the Holy Spirit, the divine principal, who "makes" the new *shaliach-bishop)* or priest, giving him divine authority and power (cf. Acts 20:28). Each ordination, therefore, is a fresh descent of the Holy Spirit who, as divine principal, empowers the elect with the same capability to act in the divine name as had the original apostles (except that mere priests cannot ordain others).

The shaliach-principle utilized by the Lord in his sacrament of Holy Orders aids us immeasurably in understanding the human use of divine powers in pardoning sins, in conferring the Holy Spirit, in transforming bread and wine into Christ's body and blood, etc., and indeed, in creating new *shelihim* or priests of God—and, finally,

[7] The specially conceived formula showing someone to be *shaliach* of a *shaliach* seems to have applied only to cases in which a letter of divorce was not delivered by the *shaliach* on account of illness, etc., and the Jewish magistrate appointed a substitute who then delivered the letter, together with his special authorization as *shaliach* of the *shaliach.* Strictly speaking, therefore, such a *shaliach* of a *shaliach* was a substitute, not a successor.

in understanding how these divine powers are transmitted from one *shaliach* of the Lord to another in the apostolic succession.

In all of this, we see that Christianity is not merely a new Judaism but is *sui generis,* completely unique and differing from anything the world has ever known. Why? Because, among other things, in conferring the sacraments, priests and bishops truly act as God's plenipotentiaries, as his *shelihim,* using his divine powers in a real way "as it were himself!"

CHAPTER VIII

THE BASIC MEANING OF BAPTISM IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The practice of ritual baths and lustrations was known many years before the time of Christ. There were ceremonial purifications during the celebration of the ancient pagan mysteries of Eleusis, Isis, Mithras, Dionysius, Sabazius, etc.[1] Palestine and Syria witnessed a strong "baptizing movement" between 150 and 300 B.C.[2] Even in our modern days, they are still found in many primitive religions. [3]

As for the Jewish tradition, the Essenes performed ritual baths or baptisms. Qumram is close to Salim where John was baptizing in the Jordan. He was doing nothing new. Like the Jewish ritual, John's baptism was a symbol of moral change, a baptism of repentance, a sign of spiritual rebirth—but it was also a preparation for the coming of the Messiah.

When Nicodemus, a prominent Jew and a Pharisee, came in the night to Jesus for spiritual advice and instruction, the Lord said to him: "I tell you most solemnly, unless a man is bom through water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (Jn 3:3). Nicodemus was puzzled: how could a grown man be born again? Jesus gently rebukes him: "You, a teacher in Israel, and you do not know these things!" (Jn 3:10). A man in the position of Nicodemus should have known more about ritual baths and their meaning. Perhaps he could not have recognized circumcision, Old Testament purifications and ablutions, Noah's salvation from the deluge, the passing of Israel's children through the Red Sea as prophetical types

[1] For bibliography, see A. Oepke, in G. Kittel, edit., *Theologisches Worterbuch zum Neuen Testament,* Vol. I (Stuttgart, 1933), pp. 528-533.

[2] Cf. M. Eliade, *Rites and Symbols of Initiation, The Mysteries of Birth and Rebirth,* trans. from the French by W. R. Trask, (Harper Torchbooks edit., New-York, 1965), p. 116.

[3] *Ibid.,* pp. 67, 72, 85, etc.

and figures of Christian baptism.[4] But he should have known something of the change of heart and the spiritual purification attributed to the Jewish custom of ritual washing and baptizing,[5] including Yahweh's words reported by Ezekiel: "I shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement" (Ez 36:25).

Like the Baptist, Christ's disciples performed the Jewish baptismal ritual—but only after the Ascension did they receive the power to regenerate men with the Holy Spirit. The final injunction of Jesus to his own gave them this special power: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:18-19). Thus did Christ the Messiah, Son of God, make the ritual bath of the Jews into something quite different: he gave it sacramental value, endowed it with the power of regenerating men and enabling them to enter the kingdom of God, as he had told Nicodemus.

Almost immediately, the apostles used this power, for on that first Pentecost, about three thousand were baptised after hearing Peter's words: "You must repent, and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38-39). From that time on, entrance into God's kingdom, the Christian community of both heaven and earth, was possible only through baptism. Paul was baptised at Damascus (Acts 9:18); Simon the magician and many people, at Samaria (Acts 8:12); Cornelius, the Roman centurian, his household, and friends were baptised in Caesarea (Acts 10: 47-48); Crispus, his household and many others at Corinth (Acts 18: 8); whoever believed, at Ephesus (Acts 19:5); the Ethiopian eunuch and an officer, along the road to Gaza (Acts 8:36-39); Lydia, a saleswoman from Thyatira, and her household, at a river near

[4] All were regarded by the early Fathers of the Church as types prefiguring Christian baptism (see below, p. 83), and still considered as such by Byzantine theologians; cf. C. Dyobouniotes, Τα Μυστήρια της ανατολικής ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας εξ έπόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1912), PP· 39-42.

[5] E.g., in such practices as recounted in Judith 12:7-9; Mark 7:4; Luke 11:38; Hebrews 9:10, etc.; cf. F. Gavin, *The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments* (New York, 1969), PP· 31 ff.

Philippi (Acts 16:14-15); also at Philippi, the jailer and all his family (Acts 16:34), etc.

How was Christian baptism performed? What made it different from the Jewish baptism? Obviously, the fact of baptising believers "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" in obedience to Christ's command. The trinitarian formula was added to the Jewish practice.[6]

There is an abundance of early Christian source-material, from both East and West. It deals not only with the essential rites, the laver and the Trinitarian formula, but also with ceremonial added during the first four centuries. Early writers preached and explained baptism more fully than any other sacramental mystery, since it is the "door" to the other sacraments, the first in time and importance, the key to God's kingdom.

This overabundance produces its own problem: summarizing. How can one synopsize Tertullian's treatise *On Baptism,* Cyprian's *Letters,* Gregory of Nazianzus' *Sermon on Holy Baptism,* Gregory of Nyssa's *Sermon on the Feast of Lights,* Basil's *Protreptic on Holy Baptism,* Chrysostom's *Instruction to the Neophytes* (I and II), *Discourse with Nicodemus,* and his beautiful *Homily to the Newly Baptised,* [7] Ambrose's *On the Mysteries,* Pseudo-Ambrose's *On the Sacraments,* Zeno of Verona's *Seven Invitations to the Baptismal Font,* Augustine's *Sermons*—not to mention the material contained in Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition* and its cognate *Church Orders,* the *Apostolic Constitutions,* the *Egyptian Church Order,* the *Ethiopic Church Order,* the *Canons of Hippolytus,* the *Testament of the Lord,* the *Didascalia,* etc.?

From all this wealth of instruction, however, one outstanding fact emerges: a clear distinction between the baptism of Christians and that of pagans or of Jews. Some of the later terminology and supplementary ceremonial may have been borrowed from the pagan

[6] Acts 8:36, 38; 10:47; Ephesians 5:26; Romans 6:3 f.; and Matthew 28:19.

[7] The text of this homily is not included in Migne's *Greek Patrology (Patrologia Graeca),* though it was known in its 16th and 17th-century translations; the Greek text, in manuscript form, was discovered at Mt. Athos by Pere A. Wenger (cf. *Jean Chrysostome: Huit Catiches baptismales inidites,* Sources chretiennes, 50, Paris, 1957)·

mysteries, but Christian baptism was unique in its meaning, in its inner reality.

Christian baptism was no mere symbol of purification: it brought about real spiritual regeneration and rebirth, together with forgiveness of sins and the remission of punishment due to them. The baptised became members of Christ's mystical Body and received title to heaven, through the redemption wrought by Christ on the Cross.

A half century ago, some scholars believed that the pagan teaching closest to the Christian concept of salvation and redemption was found in ancient Persia, in the "Iranian mystery of redemption," particularly, belief in the soul's return to its divine origin through an initiation both gnostic and ritual. Today, specialists have abandoned the theory,[8] concluding that Mazdaism's ritual "mysteries" and its "mystery of salvation" do not coincide with those of Christianity [9]— nor did the former have any bestowal of immortality or grace as in Christian baptism.

Nor does the oft-quoted inscription of the Roman aristocrat Aedesius constitute proof—the only one offered—that the Christian doctrine of rebirth was borrowed from the pagan mysteries. The Aedesius inscription records the numerous mysteries into which he had been initiated and in which he boasts of having been "*in aeternum renatus*." [10] Aside from the vast difference in meaning of this rebirth, related to the pagan concept of *soteria* (cf. above, pp. 35 f.),

[8] Even those who worked with R. Reitzenstein when he first proposed the theory in his *Das iranische Erlosungsmysterium* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1929) have rejected it; in fact, all the material has been re-examined and re-appraised—from the Greek scholar's notion of a mystery religion to that of the soteriological mystery in St. Paul (cf. A. D. Nock's, "Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian sacraments", Mnemosyne [Leiden], Series 4, V [1952], 117-213)· For studies of the Iranian material, see E. Benveniste, *The Persian Religion According to the Chief Texts* (Paris, 1929); H. S. Myberg, *Die Religionen des alten Iran,* tr. H. H. Schaeder (Leipzig, 1938); M. S. Wikander, *Der arische Mannerbund* (Lund, 1938) and G. Widengren, *Hochgottglaube im alten Iran* (Uppsala, 1938).

[9] There are limited points of contact between Mazdaism and Christianity: both connect "light" with God, both believe that men will enjoy this light at life's end if they continue in their struggles against the powers of darkness and evil.

[10] The inscription reads: *Pater patrum Dei Solis invicti Mithrae, hierofanta Hecatarum, dei Liberi archibucolus, taurobolio criobolioque in aeternum renatus* (in *Corpus Inscriptionutn Latinarum,* VI, 510).

the very date of this inscription, A.D. 376, makes it suspect as a *source* of the Christian belief of eternal rebirth.[11] Christ and his apostles had preached the doctrine of spiritual, eternal rebirth through baptism more than three centuries earlier. The concept itself had not been invented by Chrysostom, Basil or Augustine: it had been taught by God through Paul when he told Titus: "But when the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life. This is doctrine that you can rely on. I want you to be quite uncompromising in teaching all this..." (Tt 3:4-8).

The passage makes it clear that the Christian spiritual regeneration or rebirth, fundamentally different from the pagan concept, was gratuitous, due solely to God's action of mercy. By contrast, any "saving" in pagan initiations was due to the efforts of the candidate himself. Unlike the gods and goddesses who themselves were saved, the Christian God does the saving.

Nor is there anything in paganism (or in Judaism) even faintly resembling the doctrine of the Mystical Body, brought about through baptism. Paul is clear on this when he writes to the Corinthians: "Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised..." (1 Cor 12:12-13), and he goes on, "Now you together are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it" (1 Cor 12:27).[12] Through baptism, through its immersion and emersion, man's

[11] By this time, the Church already had been recognized officially for over fifty years and the basilica of St. Peter had been built by Constantine over the Phrygian grotto on the Vatican.

[12] Paul tells the Galatians almost the same thing: "All baptised in Christ, you have all clothed yourselves in Christ, and there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one, in Christ Jesus. (3:27-28). Cf. also Ephesians 4:4 ff.

participation in Christ's Mystical Body gives him a share also in Christ's death and resurrection: "You have been taught that when we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life" (Rm 6:3-4).[13]

All this the early writers of the Church believed firmly. Thus, Barnabas, like Paul, stresses the twofold way in which the laver of baptism works: it purifies from sin, and it bestows a completely new life that is eternal. Quoting the prophet Ezechiel,[14] he writes:" *And there was a river creeping along to their right, and out of it beautiful trees were rising; and whoever eats of them will live forever.* This means that we indeed descend into the water, laden with sins and filth, and then emerge from it bearing fruit, with the fear [of God] in the heart and the hope of Jesus in our soul. And the words *Whoever eats of them will live forever* mean: Whoever hears these words and believes will live forever." [15] Hermas summarizes the same belief: "They descend into the water dead and they arise alive." [16] So does Justin when he contrasts Jewish baptism with the Christian laver, the one cleansing the body alone, the other the soul,[17] a laver obtaining "the remission of sins formerly committed, illumination," [18] and inner healing.[19]

In Lyons, Irenaeus offers an outline of Christian teaching on baptism: the forgiveness of sins, the seal of eternal life, and rebirth, making men children of God. "Here is the faith," he says, "which the priests, disciples of the apostles, have transmitted to us." First of all, it has us recall that we have received baptism for the remission of sins, in the name of the Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. By it we know that this baptism is the seal of eternal life and of rebirth in God, so that we are not merely sons of mortal men but also the children of this eternal and indefectible God.

[13] Cf. also Colossians 12:13; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:4 f.
[14] Ezechiel 47:1-12.
[15] Barnabas, *Ep.* XI, PG 2, 760 A.
[16] Hermas, *Simil.,* IX, 16, PG 2, 996.
[17] Justin, *Dialog, c. Try.,* 14, PG 6, 504 CD.
[18] Justin, I *Apologia,* 61, PG 6, 421 A.
[19] Justin, *Dialog, c. Try.,* 43, PG 6, 568 AB.

" So when we are regenerated by baptism, given to us in the name of the three persons, we are enriched by this second birth with the blessings that are in God the Father through his Son together with the Holy Spirit, because those who are baptised receive the Spirit of God who gives them to the Word, that is, to the Son, and the Son takes them and offers them to his Father, and the Father communicates incorruptibility to them." [20]

In Alexandria, almost the same baptismal effects are proposed by Clement: "Being baptised, we are illuminated; illuminated, we become sons of God; being made sons, we are made perfect; being made perfect, we are made immortal... This work is variously called grace (χάρισμα) and illumination, perfection and washing: washing by which we cleanse away our sins; grace, by which the penalties accruing to transgressions are remitted; and illumination, by which that holy light of salvation is beheld, that is, by which we see God clearly." [21] Also at Alexandria, Didymus speaks of man's renewal, his restoration to the image of God and his receiving adoptive sonship of God through baptism.[22] No less does Origen, teaching that baptism effects remission of sins,[23] releases man from the power of the devil, [24] causes his regeneration,[25] and makes him a member of the Church as Christ's Body.[26] But, like the rest of early writers, Origen does not have salvation automatically guaranteed by baptism, for he says that some are "baptised to condemnation." [27]

The writer of II Clement is explicit about this when he calls baptism a "seal" (branding the baptised as property of God) and asks, "how can we hope to enter the royal residence of God (the

[20] Irenaeus, *Apost. Demonstr.,* trans, from *Baptism, Ancient Liturgies and Pa tristic Texts,* edit. A. Hamman (Staten Island, N.Y., 1967), p. 12.
[21] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagog.,* I, 6, PG 8, 308 C. Also in another passage Clement explicitly connects man's divine sonship with the bestowal of baptism and the regeneration through the Spirit *(Paedagog.* I, 5, [PG 8, 276 A]).
[22] Didymus (or Ps.-Basil), *Eun.,* 5, PG 29, 725 D and 732 C.
[23] Origen, *mart.*,30, PG 11, 600 C.
[24] Origen, *Homil.* 5, 5, *in Ex.,* PG 12, 330 D if.
[25] Origen, *Jo.* 6, 33, PG 14, 257 B.
[26] Origen, *Rom.* 8, 5, PG 14, 1168.
[27] Origen, *Homil. 6,* 5, *in Ezek.,* PG 13, 713 D.

heavenly kingdom) unless we keep our baptism holy and undefiled?"[28] Immoral conduct breaks the "seal," [29] and defiles the Church which is the Body of Christ—and only the undefiled, being joined to the Spirit, will ultimately partake of life and immortality.[30]

One of the key passages in Tertullian's work *On Baptism* is his comparison of the waters stirred by the angel at the Bethsaida pool with those of baptism, the former prefiguring the latter: "They used to remedy bodily defects, now they heal the spirit; they used to work temporal salvation, now they renew eternal salvation; they used to set free but once yearly, now they save daily by doing away with death through ablution of sins. When the guilt is removed, of course, the penalty is removed too. Thus, man will be restored for God to his ' likeness,' who in days bygone had been conformed to it."[31]

The *Discourse on the Holy Theophany,* penned by Hippolytus, has God the Father sending his Son to man, "in order to wash him with water and the Spirit; and he, begetting us again to incorruption of soul and body, breathed into us the breath (spirit) of life, and endowed us with an incorruptible panoply. If, therefore, man has become immortal, he will also be God. And if he is made God by water and the Holy Spirit after the regeneration of the laver, he is found to be also joint-heir with Christ after the resurrection of the dead." The text recalls the primal brooding of the Spirit upon the waters, invites every man to become "born anew to sonship of God." When man does this," he comes up from baptism brilliant as the sun, flashing forth the beams of righteousness, and most importantly, he returns a son of God and joint-heir with Christ." [32]

In Jerusalem, Cyril echoes Paul's doctrine by explaining the threefold immersion and emersion as symbols of Christ's burial and resurrection. "At the same time, you were both dying and being born; that water of salvation was at once both your grace and your

[28] II Clem., VI, PG 1, 337 A: cf. VII, PG 1, 340 A; or *Apostolic Fathers* (London-Cambridge, Mass., 1952), Vol. I, p. 138.
[29] II Clem., VII, PG 1, 340 A; or *edit, cit., p.* 138.
[30] II Clem., XIV; *edit, cit.,* p. 152.
[31] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 5, PL I, 1314 AB.
[32] Hippolytus, *Theoph.,* 8-10, PG 10, 860-861.

mother [for rebirth]...your birth went hand in hand with your death." [33] Later, he again stresses our share through baptism in the sufferings and death of Christ:" Let no one suppose that baptism is merely the grace of remission of sins, or even that of adoption... we know very well that, as it purges our sins and ministers to us the gift of the Holy Spirit, so also it is the counterpart of Christ's sufferings." [34]

In his magnificent sermon *On Baptism,* preached at Constantinople in A.D. 381, Gregory of Nazianzus eloquently uses the biblical images of sin, disease, leprosy, and death in order to illustrate the transforming action of baptism on the soul. Baptism, he says, is "not merely a washing away of the old filth," but "it purifies the source," [35] and you "receive the Gift, not of mere covering of your sins, but of taking them clean away." [36]

In Antioch in A.D. 387, Chrysostom uses his oratorical ability to instruct the catechumens in the same truths: "Even if a man be impure, a fornicator, an idolater, or even if he has committed any kind of crime or is filled with all the wickedness there is among men, after he plunges into this pool of waters, he comes forth from the divine fountain purer than the rays of the sun." [37] "Why," he asks, "if the bath takes away all our sins, is it called, not a bath of remission of sins, nor a bath of cleansing, but a bath of regeneration? Because it does not simply take away our sins, nor does it simply cleanse us of our faults, but it does this just as if we were born anew. For it does create us anew and it does fashion us again, not forming us again out of earth, but creating us out of another element, the nature of water. This bath does not merely cleanse the vessel, but melts the whole thing down again. Even if a vessel has been wiped off and carefully cleaned, it still has the marks of what it is and still

[33] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* XX *(mystag.,* II), 4, PG 33, 1080 C-1081 A.
[34] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* XX *(mystag.,* II), 6, PG 33, 1081 B; cf. also *Cat.* XX, 5, PG 33, 1081 A. This echoes the innate connection of baptism with the Cross, so heavily stressed by Paul (Rm 6:3-4) and Barnabas, "Blessed are those who hoped in the cross and descended into the water." (Ep. XI, PG 2, 760 A). Cf. also Ignatius of Antioch, *Ep. ad Eph.,* 18, PG 5, 660 A.
[35] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat. 40 in s. Bapt.,* 32, PG 36, 404 C.
[36] *Ibid.,* 405 A.
[37] Chrysostom, *Ad ilium, catech.,* I, 3, PG 49, 226.

bears the traces of stain. But after it is cast into the smelting furnace and is renewed by the flames, it puts aside all dross and, on coming from the furnace, it gives forth the same brilliancy as newly-molded vessels... So, too, God takes this nature of ours when it is rusted with the rust of sin, after our faults have covered it with soot and it has lost its beauty, put into it by God in the beginning, and he smelts it anew. He plunges it into the waters as into the smelting furnace but, instead of the flames, He sends forth the grace of the Spirit. Then He brings us forth from the furnace, renewed like newly-molded vessels, to rival the rays of the sun with our brightness." [38]

In commenting on Paul's Letter to the Galatians, verse 27, "For as many of you as were baptised into Christ, did put on Christ," Chrysostom delves deeper into the effects of baptism: "Why does he (Paul) not say, ' For as many of you as have been baptised into Christ, have been born of God,' for this was what directly constituted proof that they were sons? The reason is that he states it in a much more awe-inspiring way: if Christ be the Son of God and you have put him on, you, by having the Son within yourself and being fashioned after his pattern, have been brought into one kindred and nature with him." [39] But Paul did not stop there, says Chrysostom, for he tries "to find something more exact that would convey a still closer oneness with Christ. After saying, * you have put on Christ,' even this is not enough, for he goes on to comment on it, by delving more deeply into this union,' You are all One in Christ Jesus,' that is, you have all one form and one mold, even Christ's. What can be more awe-inspiring than these words?" [40]

These few among many possible quotations show clearly that the teaching proclaimed by Jesus and correctly understood by St. Paul did not lose any of its meaning in the centuries that followed—that the mystery of Christian baptism did not undergo any radical modification through the influence of the mystery cults, as sometimes claimed. The essence of Christian baptism remained Christian

[38] *Ibid.,* 227; cf. Basil, *Homil. 13 in bapt.,* 5, PG 31, 433.

[39] Chrysostom, *In Gal.,* 3, 27, PG 61, 656.\

[40] *Ibid.*

even if after the second century the Church adopted some of the mystery terminology, contemporary expressions and symbols, in order to convey the full meaning of its baptism.[41]

In explaining the mystery of baptism and the redemption-salvation wrought by it, the early Christian writers relied on the figures and symbols provided by the Old Testament Scriptures much more than they did on those of the mystery cults. The Old Testament types prefigured the new. In many of these types, water played an important role as it does in baptism. Following the lead of Paul and Peter who saw the figure of baptism in the deliverance of the Israelites when crossing the Red Sea (1 Co 10:1-2), and in Noah being saved from the deluge (1 P 3:21), the early writers used many water-related themes: the primeval waters of the first creation, Moses striking water from the rock, Jonas cast out of the water onto the land of eternal life, the chaste Susanna in her bath, water providing drink for Agar's son in the desert (and saving his life), the importance of water in the figures of Sara, Isaac, and Jacob,[42] the crossing of the Jordan by Joshua, the Samaritan woman at the well, etc. Many of these themes, representing the effects of redemption, are depicted in the paintings of the catacombs.

Other scriptural themes were also favored: the parallelism of the two Adams (first offered in Rm 5:14 ff.); the restoration of man to the image of God in whose likeness he has been created; the return to paradise; the mystical voyage, etc.[43]

The explanations of these types have one object in common: to show what baptism really does for the soul. The ancient names of

[41] See above, pp. 54 f.

[42] I.e., the well of water near which the servants find Rebecca and where a covenant will be concluded "from which Christ will be born." The wells of Isaac, dug on all sides against the enemy who blocks them, provide the figure of baptism that will submerge all the earth. Jacob rolls away the rock stopping the wells—" the rock which stops the wells spiritually signifies Christ who conceals in this mystery the bath of the new birth."

[48] For details on the symbolism of the mystical voyage of baptism, see Pere Lundberg, *La typologie baptismale dans Vancienne Eglise* (ACTA SEMINARII NEOTESTAMENTICI UPSALIENSIS, X [Uppsala and Leipzig, 1942]), pp. 73 *ff.;* also A. Rucher, "Die ' Ankunft im Hafen ' des syrisch-jakobitischen Festrituals und verwandte Riten," JAHRBUCH FUR LITURGIEWISSENSCHAFT [Munster], III, [1923], pp. 78-92.

baptism show this: "The great variety of its benefits has suggested for us its names; we call it Gift, Grace, Baptism, Unction, Illumination, the Clothing of Immortality, the Laver of Regeneration, the Seal, and finally everything that is honorable." [44]

[44] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat. 40 in s. Bapt.,* 4, PG 36, 361 CD. Chrysostom also discusses the various names given to baptism: the *bath of regeneration, enligthenment, baptism, circumcision, cross,* and says that "many other names could be mentioned." (*Ad ilium, catech.,* I, 2, PG 49, 225-226); cf. also Clement of Alexandria, *Paedag., 1, 6,* PG 8, 281 A; Basil, *Protrept. de s. Bapt., Homil.* 13, 5, PG 31, 433·

CHAPTER IX

THE TRAINING PERIOD FOR BAPTISM

In the early Church, little, if any, formal training seems to have been required of the candidate to baptism.[1] The desire to be baptised and some rudimentary expression of faith in God and in Christ as Saviour, together with a promise to live according to the divine commands were enough. Obviously, the convert had to know these fundamental teachings in order to commit himself. By the end of the first century, when the *Didache* was written (c. A.D. 80-100), a period of moral preparation and instruction is indicated. The *Didache* is the earliest handbook of catechetical instructions after the New Testament. Meant for ordinary people, it states authoritatively what is to be done, what to be shunned, and how to foster inner spirituality.[2] For the educated pagans, for the pagan intelligentsia, a somewhat different approach was used; perhaps this is best seen in the *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. A.D. 117-138) and in the Ignatian *Letters* (A.D. 30-107). Whatever the method, its aim was Christian formation, preparing the candidate to become one of "those who are convinced and believe that what we say and teach is true," [3] and, thus, to receive baptism. Theory was reinforced by moral practice. This is obvious from the many directives sprinkled throughout the *Didache* (especially in chapters 8, 12,13, and 14).

Of the very immediate preparation for baptism, the *Didache* merely states: "The minister, the baptised and the others who are able ought to prepare themselves by fasting before baptism; but the one to be baptised should be commanded to fast a day or two beforehand (VII, 4), and, according to Justin (A.D. 150), the candidates "are taught in prayer and fasting to ask God to forgive their past sins." [4]

[1] E.g., cf. Acts 2:37 ff.; 8:9 ff.; 10:44 ff-5 16:13 ff.; 16:29 ff.; 18:8; 19:5 f., etc.
[2] Because it was so fundamental and so familiar to all the Christians, a large part of it was incorporated into patristic writings and early Church manuals.
[3] Justin, 1 *Apol,* 61, PG 6, 420 BC.
[4] *Ibid.,* C.

Later, this developed into a formal training program, with precise periods for instruction, religious exercises, classification of candidates, etc. The program became known as the *catechumenate.* Tertullian (A.D. 150-230) and Cyprian *(ob.* A.D. 258) are the first known to have used the word *catechumen,* but its Greek origin (κατηχούμενος = one who receives oral instructions) suggests prior usage in the East. They also used the Latin term *audientes* or "hearers" in a way which implies established usage. The "hearers" were those in the catechumenate, a stable institution in their day, who "heard" the Scriptural readings and homily but were dismissed before the Eucharistic celebration. Tertullian stresses the catechumenate's discipline and strongly reproves the heretics who did not observe it.[5]

The purpose of the catechumenate was a strict and thorough intellectual, moral and ascetical training of the candidates. Becoming a Christian meant a capital decision, a complete break with the past, with customs and traditions, even with family in many cases. One had to be trained to live according to God's precepts. This entailed not only the acquisition of the necessary knowledge but also a period of testing, proving one's ability to lead a Godly life in a world reeking with immorality, corruption and vice (see above, pp. 15 ff.). Until A.D. 313, the terrifying possibility of torture and death for one's beliefs proved an additional strain. It was warfare, total warfare, with the enemies of darkness, and the catechumenate was its basic training.

The Church was stern in those days. It had to be. In warfare the most successful soldiers are those best trained, the best disciplined. The same is true of spiritual warfare, which must also count on God's grace. The phenomenal growth of the Church (see above, pp. 11 ff.) and the thousands of martyrs proved the effectiveness of rigorous discipline and training. A candidate who did not measure up was rejected. Total regeneration of the candidate took place at baptism, but his transformation had started years before when he had been accepted as a catechumen.

Training transformed the recruit into a soldier of Christ, able to battle the powers of evil. The theme of warfare occurs again and

[5] Tertullian, *de Praescrip.,* 41, PL 2, 68 A-69 A.

again in the writings of the Fathers. It led to the notion of Church Militant ("the fighting Church"), with Christ the "emperor," or "king," as commander in chief. The community of faithful was labeled "cohort of Christ's soldiers," who "return from battle... bearing trophies from a prostrate enemy." The baptismal commitment was likened to the recruits' oath of fidelity to the flag. The baptised were in Christ's "camp" (see below, p. 107). Even pious practices were designated as vigils or sentry-duty," drills," etc.[6]

Such Christian semi-military trappings closely resemble those of the cult of Mithras. On joining the cult, the candidate took an oath *(sacramentum)* similar to that required of recruits in the army.[7] As a sign of his belonging to the cult, he was branded with a hot iron. After receiving the grade of" soldier" *(miles),* he became part of the sacred militia of the invincible god. From then on, he was to battle the powers of evil—" under orders "from the god. Such practices were inspired by Mazdean dualism which regarded life as a constant struggle against malevolent spirits. Such ideas were part and parcel of Mithraism, a soldiers' religion long before importation into the West.

Did Christian symbolic militarism derive from the cult of Mithras? The question is of minor importance since military symbolism is far from the core of Christian teachings on the sacraments and is only incidental to sacramental practice. The fact is, however, that there was no derivation. The theme of *militia Christi* occurs in the oldest Christian authors, including Clement of Rome and, in fact, dates back to St. Paul.[8] At that time, the cult of Mithras had no importance whatever in the Greco-Roman empire; hence, direct borrowing is extremely unlikely.

The explanation of any similarities should rather be sought in the processes of a common cultural heritage, a heritage clearly prior to

[6] For an excellent, detailed account, see A. v. Harnack, *Militia Christi* (Tubingen, 1905).

[7] The Christian parallel can be seen in the baptismal commitment and promise.

[8] E.g., Clement of Rome, *Ep.* I, 37, PG I, 281 B-284 A (" Let us then, men and brothers, with all energy act the part of soldiers in accordance with his holy commands"); cf. 2 Co. 10:4; 6:7; Ep. 6:11, etc.

both Christianity and Mithraism. This, in fact, is one of the clearest examples of how Christianity utilized the system of social custom and convention to spread the kingdom of Christ on earth. Stoic philosophy often likened human life to a campaign and compared God with a *strategus,* a general or leader of an army.[9] Even the astrologers called a man who accepted his destiny and renounced all revolt a "soldier of fate." Impetus was given to such ideas by the civic morality seeping into Greece from the military monarchies of Alexander's generals (the Diadochi) after they divided his empire among themselves. They governed their territories in the manner of the Persian Achemenides *(Hakhamanishiyd).* Their soldiers bound themselves by sacred vows, not to the country, but to the person of the deified king, swearing to defend and uphold him at the cost of their lives. Having the same friends and the same enemies as the king was also a part of that oath. To him also they dedicated not only their actions and words, but even their very thoughts. For them, loyalty and piety were one.

This philosophy surely had an impact on Greek and, later, on Roman religious thought. Under the Empire, for example, the mystics of Isis were commonly regarded as a sacred cohort in the service of the goddess.[10] Propertius, the Roman elegiac poet, born about 50 B.C., uses the expression *militia Veneris* (the militia of Venus);[11] so does Horace (born 65 B.C.),[12] and especially Ovid (born 43 B.C.) who uses it frequently.[13] In a word, the idea of religious life, or even life in general, as warfare was very popular since the beginning of the Christian era. The Church merely utilized it.

The Church was a realist. As in any army, some candidates are unfit and cannot be accepted into the service. Through experience, it soon became evident that a person steeped in evil could not or would not in practice be expected to overcome the forces arrayed

[9] Cf. Capelle, "Schrift von der Welt," NEUE JAHRB. FUR DAS KLASS. ALTERT., XV, 1905, p. 558, n. 6; Seneca, *Ep,* 107, *9.*

[10] E.g., Apuleius, *Metam.,* XI, 14; cf. also Vetius Valens (V, 2, edit. Kroll, p. 220, 7).

[11] Propertius, IV, i, 137.

[12] Horace, *Od.,* III, 26.

[13] Ovid, *Amor.,* I, 9, 1 ff., and *Ars amat.,* III, 233 ff., etc.

against him. Before acceptance into the training program, the Church set up a screening process. At first, it was probably simple, a mere question why the candidate wanted to become a Christian— somewhat like the procedure prior to the proselyte-baptism of the Jews, dating at least to the early half of the second century A.D. A Tannaitic stipulation in the Babylonian Talmud reads: "At the present time a person who comes to be made a proselyte is to be asked: ' Why dost thou come to be made a proselyte? Dost thou not know that at this time Israel is afflicted, buffeted, humiliated and harassed, and that sufferings and sore trials come upon it? ' If he answer: * I know this, and am unworthy,' they are to accept him immediately.[14] Another source, probably a Palestinian usage of the same time, confirms this.[15]

The preliminary procedure for accepting prospective converts into the catechumenate seems to have been standardized in Hippolytus' day. His *Apostolic Tradition* put it thus: "Those who come forward for the first time to hear the word shall first be brought to the teachers at the house before all the people come in. And let them be examined as to the reason (αιτία) why they have come forward to the faith (πίστις). And those who bring them shall bear witness for them whether they are able to hear. Let their life and manner of living be enquired into..." [16] All later *Church Orders* make like demands:[17] trustworthy Christians must introduce and vouch for the inquirer before his acceptance into the assembly—a deterrent against spies and informers. During the persecutions, precaution was a matter of survival, and in these "witnesses" we see the beginnings of sponsorship for baptism. Indeed, they sponsored the candidate in a very real, important sense:[18] they had to know the candidate well. Unlike

[14] *Yeb* 47.

[15] This is the little handbook *Gerim I (On Proselytes)* which contains a similar procedure as Yeb 47; see F. Gavin, *The Jewish Antecedents of the Christian Sacraments* (London, 1928), p. 33.

[16] XVI, 1-3; *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome,* edit. G. Dix (London, 1937), p. 23.

[17] For complete texts, see J. M. Hanssens, *La Liturgie d'Hippolyte* (Rome, 1959), p. 128.

[18] This is why the *Testamentum Domini* also adds that they must be mature Christians and well-known to the assembly in order to act as witnesses; cf. J. M. Hanssens, *op. cit.,* p. 128.

the initial inquiry for Jewish proselytes, his examination was thorough. An additional reason for the rigorous screening was a genuine, deeply felt concern for the candidate's ability to lead a virtuous Christian life. Thus, the witnesses had to vouch for his character, his mores and life; whether he was freeman or slave (if he was slave to a Christian master, the latter had to vouch for his good character).[19] Married candidates were taught to be content with their spouses and not to indulge in sexual relations with any other. Single candidates were urged to enter lawful marriage, etc. The list of professions incompatible with being a Christian was a lengthy one (see above, p. 15.);[20] a person belonging to one of these either had to "desist," or he would be rejected. [21] Even a teacher, the *"grammaticus,"* because he could hardly avoid explaining the myths of the gods to his students, was a doubtful candidate; though he was not categorically rejected, the warnings were clear and to the point.

The training, essentially a period of instruction and probation, lasted a long time, usually from three to five years.[22] The time could be shortened or extended depending upon behavior: "it is not the time that is judged but the conduct (τρόπος)," says the *Apostolic Tradition.* [23] Many, of their own accord, postponed baptism for many years.[24]

During this time of real probation, the faith was being studied: the word κατηχούμενος meant just that, one who receives instruction.

[19] Thus, most of the cognate *Church Orders;* cf. J. M. Hanssens, *op. cit.,* pp. 128-129.

[20] The lists in the cognate *Church Orders* is generally fuller and more encompassing; cf. cf. J. M. Hanssens, *op. cit.,* pp. 129-135.

[21] *Apostolic Tradition,* XVI, 9-25, *edit, cit.,* pp. 24-28; for the cognate *Church Orders,* see Hanssens, *op. cit.,* pp. 131-135.

[22] Cf. P. de Puniet, art. "Catechumenant," DACL, especially 2583-2584.

[23] *Apost. Trad.,* XVII, 2, *edit, cit.,* p. 28; thus also the cognate *Church Orders,* cf., Hanssens, *op. cit.,* p. 136.

[24] The delay was usually prompted by the severity of penance assigned for relapse into serious sin; also, because reconciliation was usually granted but once in a life-time (see below, pp. 212 ff.). Many, therefore, remained catechumens until the "dangerous years of youth" were past, e.g., Augustine was baptised at 33, Chrysostom at 25, Basil at 26, Gregory of Nazianzus at 28, etc. Postponement of baptism, however, was always considered an abuse by Church authorities.

Most courses were elementary, based on the *Didache,*[25] or on an updated version of it. In addition, the courses stressed the Scriptures, both the New Testament or those Old Testament books which contained suitable moral instructions, such as Esther, Judith, Tobias and the Sapiential books.[26] Not all catechetical courses were elementary. Some were equal to our university classes. The school of Alexandria where Origen taught offered a higher level of interpretation of the Scriptures and a well-ordered exposition of Christian philosophy. A student could spend many profitable years in such an institution.

After completing the catechetical period, the candidate who was "earnest and persevered well," [27] was received into the final stage of preparation. While he had belonged until then to the class of κατηχούμενοι, ἀκροώμενοι, *catechumeni, audientes,* he now became one of the φωτιξόμενοι, *competentes,* or *electi.* Again, examination for acceptance into this class of "the illumined" was severe: "And when they are chosen, who are set apart to receive baptism, let their life be examined, whether they lived piously (σέμνως) while catechumens, whether they honored the widows, whether they visited the sick, whether they have fulfilled every good work."[28] Etheria confirms this when she describes one such examination in Jerusalem and mentions that even the candidate's neighbors were questioned about his life.[29] The names of those found worthy, together with their sponsors (ἀνάδοχοι), were inscribed into a special book, the "book of life;" this was the ὀνοματογραφία. Cyril of Jerusalem compares it to the registration of soldiers into the army.[30] From

[25] Another favorite was the *Shepherd* of Hermas.

[26] Origen, *In Num. homil.* 27, 1, PG 12, 780 D.

[27] *Apost. Trad.,* XVII, 2, *edit, cit.,* p. 28; similarly the cognate *Church Orders,* cf. Hanssens, *op. cit.,* p. 136.

[28] *Apost. Trad., XX,* 1; *edit, cit.,* pp. 30-31; for cognate *Church Orders,* cf. Hanssens, *op. cit.,* p. 136.

[29] Here the questions were whether the candidate led a good life, was obedient to his parents, whether he was "not given to wine, "whether deceitful and "about the several vices which are more serious in man;" *Peregrinatio,* VII, 1, English trans, in L. Duchesne, *Christian Worship, Its Origin and Evolution* (London, 1923), p. 567. In Africa, Rome and Gaul, such examinations were called "scrutinies."

[30] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 1, PG 33, 333 A. By the time of Ps.-Dionysus (A. D. 500) the ceremony of registration was becoming a mere technicality (since

then on, the candidates were committed to some extent. That is why they were regarded as Christians, though they had not yet received baptism.[31] That is why, too, the register symbolized the "book of life "in which God's elect were inscribed.[32]

The final preparation generally took place during Lent, for Easter was the favored date for imparting baptism.[33] The instruction became more intensive, the training more strenuous. Emphasis shifted from moral to dogmatic matters. A systematic summary of the faith was given and explained on the basis of the Apostles' or some other baptismal Creed. This the candidate had to commit to memory and recite before the bishop some time prior to baptism. Usually, too, the whole history of salvation was explained: the Old Testament prophecies and their fulfilment in Christ, his life, sufferings, and death. "During those forty days," says Etheria, "he (the catechist) will go through all the Scriptures, beginning from Genesis, explaining them, first literally, and then unfolding them spiritually. They are also taught about the resurrection and likewise all things concerning the faith during those days." [34]

the catechumenate in Northern Syria was disappearing). The sponsors bring the candidate to the bishop; the bishop asks what the candidate wishes; the candidate states his need and desire for baptism; the bishop delivers a sermon on the Christian life; the candidate promises to live accordingly; the bishop lays his hand on the candidate's head and makes the sign of the cross over him, and finally instructs the presbyters to enter his name and that of the sponsors into the register.

[31] Augustine, for example, instructs: "Ask a man, ' Art thou a Christian?' If he is a pagan or a Jew, he will answer,' I am not.' But if he say,' I am,' ask him further, 'catechumen or faithful? ' If he answers,' catechumen,' he has been anointed, but not yet baptised. " *(In Jo. Evang. Tract.,* 44, 2, PL 35, 1714). The anointing refers to the "exorcised oil" with which the candidate was anointed on admission in North Africa at the time of Augustine.

Cyril of Jerusalem also reckons the catechumen as πιστός, one of the faithful *(Procat.,* 6, PG 33, 345 A).

[32] The rolls were carefully guarded, especially during the persecutions, since they would become death warrants in the hands of the civil authorities. The modern baptismal registry stems from these ancient registers.

[33] Thus, Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 19, PL 1, 1331 A; *de Cor.* 3, PL 2, 99 A; another favorite time was between Easter and Pentecost *(de Bapt.,* 19, PL 1, 1331 BC); however, baptism could be given at any time *(de Bapt.,* 5, PL 1, 1314 A). The instructions in the *Apostolic Tradition* and in all the cognate *Church Orders* are geared to the administration of baptism at Easter (XX, 5-9; XXI, 1 ff., *edit, cit.,* pp. 31 ff., and footnotes on same pages regarding the various Church Orders).

[34] *Peregrinatio,* VII, 2, *edit, cit.,* p. 568. She says that Lent lasted eight weeks, but Saturdays and Sundays were not included.

Again, practice was not neglected. In fact, it was intensified, according to Tertullian, through "prayers, fasts, kneelings, all-night vigils, together with confession of all past sins."[35] Simple words, but the effort entailed was almost superhuman. Just to explain one item: the *confession of past sins;* this was an open affair, done publicly. "To confess publicly our iniquities or our turpitudes now is, for us, something to be grateful about," says Tertullian in his work *On Baptism.* [36] He also tells exactly what this full public confession entailed:

> " This act, which is better and more frequently expressed by the Greek word, is *exomologesis.* By it we confess our sins to the Lord, not indeed as if He were ignorant of them, but inasmuch as confession prepares for satisfaction: from confession penance is born and by penitence God is appeased. Accordingly, *exomologesis* is a discipline for man's abasement and humiliation, imposing such conduct as attracts mercy. Even in matters of dress and food, it commands [a person] to lie in sackcloth and ashes, to hide the body in sordid attire, to depress the spirit with sadness, to exchange for harsh treatment the sins which he has committed; in addition, to know only plain food and drink... to nourish prayer by fasting, to weep, to moan, and groan to the Lord our God day and night; to throw oneself at the feet of the presbyters, and kneel to God's dear ones, to enlist all the brethren as intercessory legates of one's prayerful petitions. All this *exomologesis* does, that it may encourage repentance... that by passing judgment on the sinner, it may of itself act as a substitute for God's wrath, and by temporal punishment, I will not say frustrate, but rather discharge the eternal penalties. Therefore, when it *[exomologesis]* casts a man down, it raises him up all the more; when it makes him sordid, it cleanses him all the more; when it accuses, it excuses; when

[35] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 20, PL 1, 1332 A; cf. also Justin, I *Apol.,* 61, PG 6, 420; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* I, 6, PG 33, 376; Augustine, *De Fide e Op.,* 9, PL 40, 205, etc

[36]. Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 20, PL 1, 1332 A. Cyril of Jerusalem also speaks of pre-baptismal confession: "The present is the season of confession: confess what you have done *in* word or deed, by night or by day." *(Cat. I,* 5, PG 33, 376 A). Though pre-baptismal confession may seem strange to us today, we must remember that confession of sins was part of the moral change of heart when John the Baptist baptised in the Jordan (Mt 3:6).

it condemns, it absolves. The less you spare yourself, believe me, the more will God spare you." [37]

The less you spare yourself, believe me, the more will God spare you. That, in short, was the theme of *exomologesis*. That it humiliated the prospective Christian, no one doubts. It probably left him prostrate! Though the full extent of *exomologesis* may or may not have been applied to the candidates confessing their past sins prior to baptism, it still was a painful, humiliating experience. It was part of the process of emptying the soul, of putting off the old man, in preparation for putting on the new.

Another important part of putting off the old man were the frequent exorcisms. Modern man scoffs at the idea of the devil as a personal being. Yet, the Scriptures leave little doubt.[38] In the world of the occult, excluding the many cases of fraud, a hard core of inexplicable phenomena, ancient or contemporary, still remains. An unbeliever is left with more questions than the believer. How to explain, for example, the very real world of Ju-ju witchcraft in the jungles of West Africa where primitive and modern meet? Crocodiles called out of the water at will? Death induced from a distance? Ju-ju priests calling upon snakes or ants to attack man and home? Perfectly healthy trees splitting down the middle? Or the puzzling fact of a small tree, which could not be budged by a bulldozer, and yet was moved by a Ju-ju priest (" who removed its stubborn * spirit"")? Or again, a police inspector being "pushed" by an unseen hand off the bleachers of a stadium?[39] Who can explain satisfactorily the well-documented cases even in civilized countries of poltergeists or spiritualistic phenomena?

The world of the ancients was rife with diviners, spiritualists,

[37] Tertullian, *de Poenitentia,* 9, PL 1, 1354 B-1355 A.

[38] E.g., Mt 8:16, 22 ff.; 12:24, 27; 15:22 ff.j Mk 1:24; 3:225 7:25; 9:24; Lk 8:28 ff.; 11:5, 19, etc.,; Ac 5:16; 16:18; 19:12, etc.

[39] All these incidents are recounted by James H. Neal, former Chief Investigations Officer of the Government of Ghana, in *Jungle Magic, My Life Among the Witch Doctors of West Africa* (Paperback Library Edition, New York, 1969); when he first heard of Ju-ju black magic, he, too, scoffed. Similar incidents are recounted by Frank Hives, District Commissioner in Nigeria where he was one of the pioneers of British administration, in *Ju-ju And Justice in Nigeria* (Ballantine Books, New York, 1940), written in collaboration with G. Lumley.

seers and magicians, many undoubtedly fake, but some certainly genuine. Tertullian writes of magicians who "evoke spirits and dishonor the souls of the dead," "through whom even goats and tables have become accustomed to utter prophecies...,"[40] and Minucius Felix writes of others who, apparently, could "direct the flights of birds." [41] Not all the early Christians were credulous or naive: "Christians are the only ones to see through this fraud..." [42] Some certainly were aware that many of the " marvels" were mere trickery, but there were also genuine cases of spirit-possession: "I think we can prove from the facts that come to light in exorcisms," says Tertullian, " that the evil spirit tries to deceive us by hiding in the persons of dead men. We know that the demon tries to pose as a relative of the person possessed, or sometimes as a gladiator, or as a fighter of beasts, or even a god... Yet, the devil, after trying to deceive the bystanders, is overcome by the power of Divine Grace, and finally, much against his will, admits that he is an evil spirit." [43]

Tertullian was an intelligent man by any standard and he writes that" we have come to know the evil spirits, not of course by consorting with them, but by the knowledge that unmasks them; not by trying to solicit their aid, but by a power which subjugates them." [44] Minucius Felix writes: "All this, as most of you know, the demons themselves admit is their work every time they are driven out by us from men's bodies through the torture of exorcism and the fervor of prayer... the entire host of demons that you worship collapse under the strain of vexation and say plainly what they are; they certainly do not lie to bring disgrace upon themselves, especially when some of you are standing around." [45] Tertullian also uses the tangible results of exorcism for apologetical purposes: "So at our touch and breathing, overwhelmed by the thought of those judgment fires, they

[40] Tertullian, *Apol.,* 23, PL 1, 470 A-471 A; cf. Tatian, *Orat. adv. Graecos,* 18, PG 6, 845 B-848 A.

[41] Minucius Felix, *Oct.,* 27, PL 3, 337 A.

[42] Tertullian, *De anima,* 57, PL 2, 793 A.

[43] *Ibid.,* 793 AB.

[44] *Ibid.,* 793 A.

[45] Minucius Felix, *Oct.,* 27, PL 3, 339 A.

[the evil spirits] at our command leave the bodies that they had entered; unwilling and distressed they are put to open shame before your very eyes."[46]

Even if such manifestations were not common, exorcisms impressed prospective converts. The ancient Church believed that, in consequence of original sin,[47] and of adult personal sin, all candidates to baptism were to some degree subject to the power of the devil. That is why not only those rescued from heathen divination, but all candidates were required to be thoroughly purged through frequent exorcism. " All this is done also now," says Cyprian, " in that the devil is scourged, burned, and tortured by exorcists both through human voice and through divine power; and, although he often says that he is going out and will leave the men of God, yet in what he says he deceives and puts into practice what was done before by Pharaoh with the same obstinate, fraudulent deceit." [48] Finally, he adds, that the devil is completely "beaten down" in the waters of baptism.

The exorcism itself was usually performed over each candidate individually, " one by one," [49] through different formulae of adjuration, [50] coupled with insufflation or breathing upon the face,[51] imposition of hand, and the sign of the cross.[52] At first, the

[46] Tertullian, *Apol.,* 23, PL 1, 475 AB.

[47] This is the reason why, according to Augustine, even little children were breathed upon and exorcised, that the hostile power of the devil be driven out of them; *Contra secundam Juliani Resp. imperfection opus,* III, 199, PL 45, 1333.

[48] Cyprian, *Ep. 76, ad Magnum,* 15, PL 3, 1198 B. These exorcisms were performed daily according to the *Apost. Trad.,* XX, 3, *edit, cit.,* p. 31.

[49] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 14, PG 33, 353 C-356 A; cf. Augustine, *Sermo de Symbolo,* 2, PL 40, 1191; *Apost. Trad,* and cognate *Church Orders (edit. cit.,* XX, 3, p. 31, and note 3 of p. 31).

[50] Origen, *Contra Cels.,* IV, 34, PG 11, 1081 AB; Lactantius, *Inst.,* 4, 27, PL 6, 531 f.; Athanasius, *De Incarn. Verbi,* 47, PG 25,180; Basil, *In Isai.,* 11, 249, PG 30, 557; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carm. adv. iram,* 5, 415 f., PG 37, 842; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 9, PG 33, 349 A; *Cat.* XIII, 3, PG 33> 773 C-776 A; *Cat.* XX, 3, PG 33, 1080 B.

[51] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat., 9,* PG 33, 348 A, etc.

[52] Lactantius, *Inst.,* IV, 27, PL 6, 531 f.; Athanasius, *De Incarn. Verbi,* 47, PG 25, 180; Basil, *In Isai.,* 11, 249, PG 30, 557; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carm. adv. iram,* 5, PG 37, 842; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* XIII, 3, PG 33, 773 C-776 A; Gregory of Nyssa, *De Vit. Ephr.,* PG 46, 848 A; *Apost. Trad.* and cognate *Church Orders (edit. cit.,* XX, *3,* p. 31, and note 3, of p. 31).

formulae were probably simple adjurations, calling upon the divine names, especially the name of Christ Jesus, [53] but gradually longer forms were composed, " collected out of the Sacred Scriptures." [54] Most of these ancient features stand out today in the regular baptismal ritual of the Byzantine Church. The priest breathes three times into the face of the candidate, signs his forehead and chest three times with the sign of the cross,[55] and lays his hand on his head, while saying the "Prayer for Making a Catechumen." This prayer, addressed to God the Father, pleads, "in the name of the only-begotten Son and in the name of the most Holy Spirit," that the " primeval fault" be taken away from the catechumen and that he " be filled with faith, hope and charity." It pleads for understanding, for enlightenment; it asks for help in walking "in the way of God's commandments," for doing " what is pleasing" to God—and for everything one would expect in a prayer " for making a catechumen." [56] Its composition certainly dates from the days of the formal catechumenate; this is evident not only from its title but also from internal evidence, especially the phrase " inscribe him into the book of life"—an evident allusion to the ὀνοματογραφία, the registration of names. [57]"Three exorcisms follow,[58] corresponding

[53] Origen, *Contr. Cels.,* IV, 34, PG 11, 1081 A; Lactantius, *Inst.,* 4, 27, PL 6; 431 f.; Athanasius, *De Incarn. Verbi,* 47, PG 25, 180; Basil, *Isai.,* 11, 249, PG 30, 557; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carm. adv. iram,* 5, 415 f., PG 37, 842; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* XIII, 3, PG 33, 773 C-776 A, etc.

[54] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 9, PG 33, 349 A; cf. also Athanasius, *Ad Mar-cell,* 33, PG 27, 45.

[55] This is the ancient " sealing with the cross " (cf. pp. 133 f. below), recalling the sign T *(tau),* the mark of the elect in Ezk 9:4 and Rv 7:3.

[56] For the Greek rubrics and text, see Goar, *Euchologion Sive Rituale Graecorum* (Graz reprint, 1960), pp. 274-275; for the English, cf. J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, in Russia* (London, 1772), pp. 203-204, or the more readily available *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church,* by I. F. Hapgood (Boston and New York, 1906), p. 273.

[57] The oldest extant text of the prayer, however, is from the 8th-9th century *Codex Barberini gr.* III. 55 (77), now *Vat. gr.* 336; at that time the consignations were made on the forehead, mouth, and chest (cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 278, note a);. thus also, *Codex Bessarionis* (Grottaferrata Γ.β.I.) of the nth century (Goar, *ibid.) Codex Falascae* (Grottaferrata Γ.β.ιι.) of the 13th century has only two: the forehead and mouth (Goar, *ibid.).*

[58] Greek texts in Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 275-276; English, in King, *op. cit.,* pp. 204-206 or in Hapgood, *op. cit.,* pp. 272-274.

to those frequently or daily performed during the Lenten preparation for baptism in the ancient Church. They, too, are " collected out of Scripture," permeated with biblical expressions. Lenten preparation for baptism appears as a transition between the ancient and the modern practice. In adult baptisms,[59] this consisted either in performing the exorcisms on a given number of days prior to the baptism,[60] or in repeating the exorcistic formulae eight or ten times.[61] In the fifteenth century, the usual practice was to repeat them three times;[62] in the sixteenth century, only once,[63] as the present practice has it.

Modern convert instructions, mainly didactic, have generally lost the practice of moral discipline. By contrast, the ancient Church trained its candidates intensively: religious exercises, common prayer meetings, all-night vigils, fasts and exorcisms were designed to purge, empty the soul of self and all evil influences, to make it ready for illumination and to harden the will. It's attitude was uncompromising. Permissiveness had no place in the early Church. Baptism was the first repentance. A second repentance (the sacrament of Penance) was accorded but once in a lifetime. There was usually no third repentance.

Generally, there was no need for it. With the grace of God, the

[59] Not, however, in infant baptisms.

[60] This *is* best seen in the practice of performing the exorcisms for forty days prior to baptism, no matter when it was administered; this was still being done during the 11th-12th century among the Bulgars and others (cf. XL Response of Niphont, Bishop of Novgorod, to the hieromonk Kirik in 1158; S. A. Pavlov, *Pamiatniki drevne-russkago kanonicheskago prava,* Part I [St. Petersburg, 1880], col. 33); cf. also N. Odintzov, *Poriadok obschestvennago i chastnago bogosluzhenia v drevnej Rossii do XVI v.* (St. Peterburg, 1881), p. 74; A. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie v russkoj tserkvi v XVI v.* (Kazan, 1894), p. 278; A. Almazov, *Istoria chynoposlidovanij kreschenia i myropomazania* (Kazan, 1865), pp. 184-185.

[61] Thus, Simeon of Thessalonica, PG 155, 212 CD; Ms. N. 3416 of Coutloumousi Monastery of Mount Athos and all the sources cited in P. Lambros (*Catalogue of the greek manuscripts on Mount Athos,* Vol. I [Cambridge, 1895] p. 311), in N. Odintzov *{op. cit.,* pp. 74, 147), in A. Dmitrievsky *{op. cit.,* p. 278 and in his *Opysanie liturgicheskikh rukopisej khraniaschikhsia v bibliotekakh pravoslavnago vostoka,* Vol. 2, *Euchologia* [Kiev, 1901] p. 949)·

[62] Thus, Ms. N. 950 (88), fol. 387 of the Grand Laura of the year 1475 (A. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 438); also all the mss. cited in A. Almazov *{op. cit.,* pp. 185-186), N. Odintzov *{op. cit.,* p. 254), A. Dmitrievsky *(Bogosluzhenia,* p. 278).

[63] Cf. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenia,* p. 277.

rigorous training forestalled grave unfaithfulness in most Christians. They had been transformed psychologically, morally and spiritually through a process begun long before baptism and completed by it. They had been recruits and came out soldiers. Perhaps m any had defected, but many more walked with God and his Church all their lives because of their training. The phenomenal spread of Christ's revolution, the miraculous growth of his Church may be due to it (see above, pp. 11 ff.).

CHAPTER X

ANCIENT BAPTISMAL RITES

The simplicity of early days gave way to more elaborate sacramental ritualism during the first two centuries of the Christian era. By the fourth and fifth centuries, most of the ritual had received its final form. Liturgical areas within the universal Church were then sufficiently differentiated to warrant separate classification.[1] The ritual elements vary little, but their order is different within the sacramental liturgy. Reconstruction of the ancient baptismal liturgy, therefore, centers on the ritual elements and their meaning, rather than on the order of their succession.

Preliminaries

During the intensive training, immediately preparing the candidates for baptism, periodic examinations or scrutinies were held, aimed at weeding out the unworthy (see above, p. 91). Those successfully passing the final screenings were readied for the great moment of baptism with a final exorcism, usually performed by the bishop.[2]

This is expressed in today's Byzantine ritual by the final, solemn exorcism, consisting of a prayer and three insufflations (on the mouth, forehead and chest) at the words," Drive out from him (her), O Lord, every evil and unclean spirit that lies concealed and is making its lair within his (her) heart," repeated for each

[1] I.e., the Egyptian (Alexandrian), the Syrian (Antiochene), the Byzantine, and the Roman (Western).

[2] Thus, the *Apostolic Tradition* (XX, 3) has: "And when the day draws near on which they are to be baptised, let the bishop exorcise each one of them, that he may be certain that he is purified. " (edit. G. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome,* London, 1937, p. 31)· The *Testament of Our Lord* (II, 7) is explicit: the candidates are exorcised by the bishop on Holy Saturday after the deacon's litany. The rest of the cognate *Church Orders* imply the same (A. J. Maclean, *The Ancient Church Orders,* Cambridge, 1910, p. 97).

inflation.[3] It was still clearly distinguished from the preceding triple exorcism in the oldest *Codices* by its title: to be said, " over the one about to be baptised," or " in the same hour." [4]

In the early Church, if baptism took place on Easter Sunday (see above, p. 92), the candidates observed a strict fast on Friday and Saturday.[5] They began by taking a bath.[6] They spent the Holy Saturday vigil listening to Scriptural readings and instructions. [7] These retraced the chief stages in the history of salvation. The prayerful vigil contrasted sharply with the all-night revelries that preceded pagan initiations. Referring to both, Gregory of Nazianzus exclaims, "My Jesus is here again and a mystery is here again; no longer the mystery of Hellenic error and drunkenness, but a mystery from above, a divine mystery...!" [8]

Blessing of Baptismal Water

Very early on Easter morning, the baptismal water was blessed: "At the hour when the cock crows, they shall first pray over the

[3]The Greek text and rubrics in Goar, *Euchologion sive Rituale Graecorum* (Graz reprint, 1960) pp. 276-277; the English in J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church,* in Russia (London, 1772), pp. 206-207, or in I. F. Hap-good, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church* (Boston and New York, 1906), pp. 274-275.

[4] Thus, the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini gr.* III, 55 (77), now *Vat. gr.* 336 (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 278 c); the 9th-10th century *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 (cf. A. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie liturgicheskikh rukopisej khraniaschikhsia v bibliotekakh pravoslavnago vostoka,* Vol. II, *Euchologia* [Kiev, 1901], p. 1); the 14th century *Cod.* N. 279 of Moscow Synodal Library (A. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie v russkoj tserkvi v XVI v.* [Kazan, 1884], *Suppl.* p. 10, and n. 1).

[5] All later regulations go back to the *Didache's* injunction (chap. 7) which stipulated: "Require the candidate to fast one or two days previously. " Cf. Justin, I *Apol.,* 61, PG 6, 420 B; Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 20, PL 1, 1332 A; the various *Church Orders,* see A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* pp. 97, 137.

[6] Thus, the *Apostolic Tradition,* XX, 5 (edit. Dix, p. 31); the cognate *Church Orders* (see Dix, *op. cit.,* p. 31, note 5); Augustine, *Ep.* 54, 10, *ad Januarium,* PL 33, 204.

[7] *Apost. Trad.,* XX, 9 (edit. Dix, p. 32); also the cognate *Church Orders* (cf. A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 97). For a description of the Easter vigil at Jerusalem, see Etheria, *Peregrin.,* 8 (English trans. in L. Duchesne, *Christian Woship, Its Origin and Evolution* [London, 1923], Appendix, pp. 560-561).

[8] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 39, PG 36, 336 A.

water.” [9] Whether pre-Nicene Christians believed as firmly as their pagan contemporaries in the presence of demons in certain waters[10] is unknown, but they certainly gave it some credence. [11] They definitely believed that the good spirits could be present in water: they were familiar with the Pool of Bethsaida (Jn 5:1-16). Tertullian seems to reflect the opinion of his day when he says: “Lest anyone think it too difficult to believe that a holy angel of God should be present in water to temper it to man's salvation, he should remember that an evil angel holds frequent profane commerce with the same element to man's ruin.” [12]

Tertullian appears to be the first writer to indicate an “ invocation to God “ being “ pronounced over “ the water used for baptising.[13] Cyprian, in mentioning that” water must first be purified and sanctified by the priest,” gives a somewhat different reason for it: that” “ it may wash away by its baptism the sins of the person baptised.” [14] If the blessing of baptismal waters was not universal by that time, it soon became so, for Basil regards it as one of the items of unwritten tradition.[15] Jerusalem had it in Cyril's time,[16] Egypt had it in Serapion's day,[17] and Milan, when Ambrose was alive.[18]

The oldest known formularies for blessing water are those in Serapion's *Euchologion* and in the *Apostolic Constitutions,* (VII, 43).

[9] *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, I (edit. Dix, p. 33); the cognate *Church Orders* (see A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 98).

[10] Cf. Tatian, *Orat. adv. Graecos,* 19, PG 6, 849 B.

[11] E.g., “Witness all shady founts, and all unfrequented brooks, the ponds in the baths, and the conduits in private homes, or the cisterns and wells which are said to have the property of' spiriting away', through the power of a hurtful spirit. Men whom waters have drowned or affected with madness or with fear, they call nymph-caught, or 'lymphatic,' or ' hydrophobic.' “ Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 5, PL 1, 1313 B; cf. Tatian, *Orat. adv. Graecos,* 20, PG 6, 851 B.

[12] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 5, PL 1, 1313 B.

[13] *Ibid.,* 4, PL I, 1312 A.

[14] Cyprian, *Ep. 70, ad Januarium,* 1, PL 3, 1077 A; also the Council of Carthage (A.D. 251), VII, in Routh, *Bell. Sacr.,* III, p. 120, where Sedatus of Tiburbo speaks of “ water sanctified in the church by the priest's prayer. “

[15] Basil, *De Spirit, s.,* 27, PG 32, 187 AB.

[16] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* III, 3, PG 33, 429 A.

[17] Serapion, *Euchologion,* 7 (edit. J. Wordsworth, *Bishop Sarapioris Prayer-Book* [Hamden, Connecticut reprint, 1964], pp. 68-68).

[18] Ambrose, *de Myster.,* III, 8, PL 16,408 B; III, 14, PL 16,410 B; Ps-Ambrose, *de Sacram.,* I, 5, 18, PL 16, 441 A; II, 5, I4, PL 16, 446 BC.

Both the *disciplina arcani* and the semi-extemporaneous character of most pre-Nicene liturgical prayers explain why more such “ model” texts have not been found.[19] Serapion's text as well as that in the *Apostolic Constitutions* contain pre-Nicene elements: that is, both are essentially in the form of a *berakah,* the Jewish blessing or benediction, but adapted to Christian theology.[20] Like the *berakah,* they contain the glorification of the Divine Name and the divine economy: the list of God's works from creation to redemption. Such a plan is seen also in the Eucharistic anaphoras, but instead of consecrating the elements, the water-blessing formularies call upon the divine presence to enter the waters.[21]

Such a plan is also seen in the present-day lengthy Byzantine ritual of blessing the baptismal water: first, the glorification of the Divine Name, then the divine economy, followed by what is essentially an *epiclesis, “* Be present (πάρεσο) therefore, O King, Lover of mankind, and sanctify this water through the coming (ἐπιφοιτήσεως) of the Holy Spirit.” The whole process is typically ancient, much older than the earliest extant Codices containing it:[22] the water is

[19] Except for the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the interpolated *Ethiopic Statutes,* the other cognate *Church Orders* do not contain any formularies for blessing baptismal waters; however, the *Egyptian* and *Ethiopic Church Orders* mention the blessing, while the *Canons of Hippolytus* imply it in the epithet “ *sacram* “ (XIX, 112); cf. A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 98.

[20] For English translations of complete texts of blessings in Serapion, see J. Wordsworth, *op. cit.,* pp. 68-69, in the *Apostolic Constitutions,* see *The Ante Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.) p. 477.

[21] Characteristically, Serapion's formulary invokes the presence of the Logos (a pre-Nicene trait), while that in the *Apostolic Constitutions,* the presence of the Holy Spirit, third Person of the Trinity (a post-Nicene development).

[22] Except for minor details all the prayers and rubrics are the same as those of today: e.g., 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 292-295), *Cod. Bessarionis* of the 11th century (Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 291-292), etc. The litany preceding the blessing exhibits the greatest diversity both in the kind and number of its petitions: compare, e.g., *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 292-295); *Cod. Bessarionis* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 291); the 9th-10th century *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 (A. Dmi trievsky, *Opysanie,* Vol. II, pp. 1-2); the 11th-12th century *Cod. Sin.* N. 962, the 14th century Ms. N. 491 of Coutloumousi Monastery, Mount Athos, and the 15th century *Cod.* N. 8 (162) of Met. Library of Holy Sepulchre, Constantinople (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* Vol. II, pp. 69, 357, 457). Cf. also A. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* pp. 285-286; A. Almazov, *Istoria chynoposlidovanij kreschenia i myropomazania* (Kazan, 1865), pp. 261, 265; and N. Odintzov, *Poriadok obschestvennago i chastnago bogosluzhenia v drevnej Rossii do XVI v.* (St. Petersburg, 1881), pp. 148, 256.

first exorcised from all evil influence by a triple consignation with the sign of the cross, with dipped fingers, and a triple insufflation; each time the priest breathes upon the water, he says, " Let all adverse powers be crushed beneath the sign of the image of thy cross." Only after all possible evil is expelled from the water is it sanctified " to be the water of redemption, of sanctification, the purification of flesh and spirit, the loosing of bonds, the remission of sins, the illumination of the soul, the laver of regeneration, the renewal of the Spirit, the gift of adoption to sonship, the garment of incorruption, the fountain of life." Even then, the blessing of the water is not absolute, but is interrupted with a brief benediction of the oil of catechumens.[23] This done, the priest completes the blessing of water by pouring the oil of catechumens into the water, making a triple sign of the cross as he pours.[24]

Renunciation of the Devil

" First you entered the vestibule of the baptistry and there, facing westward, you listened to the command to stretch forth your hand and, as though in presence of Satan himself, you renounced him." This is the description of Cyril of Jerusalem.[25] On entering the vestibule, the candidates stripped to their underwear, the

[23] Again, the same plan is used for the blessing of oil: first, the glorification of the divine Name, followed by a recitation of the divine economy and, finally, the epicletic formula, " Bless this holy oil with the power, operation and indwelling of the Holy Spirit." (Greek, in Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 289-290; English, in King, *op. cit.,* p. 213, and in Hapgood, *op. cit.,* p. 280). The prayer is preceded by a triple insufflation and a triple signing with the sign of the cross, performed by the priest, and followed by the pouring of the oil into the waters. These actions are found in the earliest extant Codices: i.e., in *Cod. Barberini* of the 8th-9th century (Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 294-295); *Cod. Porphyries* of the 9th century (A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* p. 274, Suppl. pp. 21-22); *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 of the 9th-10th century (Dmitrievsky *Opysanie,* Vol. II, p. 2); *Cod. Bessarionis* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292). In some places during the 15th and 16th centuries, only one insufflation was made (cf. A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* p. 275).

[24] Complete Greek texts and rubrics of the blessing is found in Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 287-290; for the English cf. King, *op. cit.,* pp. 208-213, and Hapgood, *op. cit.,* pp. 277-280.

[25] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX (mystag. I)*, 2, PG 33, 1068 A; also cf. *ibid., II*, PG 1076 A which says " outer chamber."

chiton;[26] this was done in preparation for the anointing with oil and the immersions—and also to symbolize the stripping of the old man.

The renunciation of the devil must have been adopted in all the Churches prior to Nicaea, for it keeps recurring in sermons and writings from Tertullian on. Its question-and-answer form does not seem to vary much from Church to Church either. The account in the *Apostolic Tradition* reads:" And when the presbyter takes hold of each one of those who are to be baptised, let him bid him renounce, saying, I renounce thee, Satan, and all thy service and all thy works." [27] The North African Church in Tertullian's day had: "I renounce the devil, his pomp, and his angels." [28] Ambrose's Church in Milan had the candidate renounce, " the devil and his works, the world, its luxuries and pleasures." [29] In Gaul, the renunciation included " the devil, the world, and sins." [30] At Jerusalem, as reconstructed from Cyril's works, it was: "I renounce you, Satan, and all your work, all your pomp, and all your service." [31] According to Chrysostom, at Antioch it was:" I renounce you, Satan, and your pomp, and your service," [32] and at Constantinople, " I renounce you... and your pomps, and your service, and your angels." [33] The North Syrian Church, as represented by the *Apostolic Constitutions,* had a similar but slightly more elaborate form: "I renounce Satan, and all his works, his pomps, his service,

[26] The χιτών.

[27] *Apost. Trad.* XXI, 9, edit. Dix, p. 34. For collation of the renunciations in the cognate *Church Orders,* see J. M. Hanssens, *La Liturgie d'Hippolyte* (Rome, I959), p. 452.

[28] As reconstructed from Tertullian's *de Cor.,* 3 PL 2, 98 C *de Spect.,* 4 PL 1, 709 BC, and *de Anima,* 35, PL 2, 754 A.

[29] Ambrose, *de Myster.,* II, 5, PL 16, 407 B. According to Ps.-Ambrose *(de Sacram.,* I, 2, 5, PL 16, 437 B), the renunciation was in question and answer form: "Do you renounce the devil and his works? *Answer,* I do renounce. Be mindful of the above (renunciation)." This form is still used in the Milanese rite today (cf. *Manuale Abrosianum,* edit. M. Magistretti [Milan, 1905], II, 467).

[30] Hilary of Poitiers, *Comment, in psalmos, In ps. XIV,* 14,4, PL 9, 306 D-307 A. For testimony of Caesarius of Aries, see *Sermo* XII, 3 (edit. G. Morin, *Sanct. Caesarii Opera omnia nunc primum in unum collecta,* Vol. I [Maretioli, 1937], p. 58).

[31] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX, (mystag. I),* 4, PG 33, 1068 C-1069 A; 5, PG 33, 1069 B; 6, PG 33, 1069 C; 8, PG 33, 1072 B.

[32] Chrysostom, *Ad illumin. catechumenos,* II, 4, PG 49, 239; cf. *ibid.,* 5, PG 49, 240 D.

[33] Chrysostom, *Homil. in ep. ad Coloss., homil. VI,* 4, PG 62, 342 C.

his angels, his inventions, and all things that are under him." [34] That in the Alexandrian Church was not much different from the others: "I renounce you, Satan, and all your works, all your angels, all your pomps, and all your service." [35] At the baptism of infants, parents or some relative (γένος) made the renunciation for them.[36]

The renunciation was very personal: Satan is addressed directly as if he were present and visible—he is defied " to his face," by having the candidate face the West during the renunciation, a custom apparently universal by the fourth century.[37] The West was symbolic of darkness and evil, the place where Satan dwelt: "Since the West is the region of visible darkness, and he [the devil] being darkness itself, has his empire also in darkness; therefore, with symbolic significance looking toward the West, you renounce the dark and gloomy potentate." [38] In many places hands were outstretched towards the West, " toward the devil," " as though he were present himself." [39] In some Churches the candidates were even made to spit toward the West.[40]

Originally, the word *pompa* referred to the solemn procession with which the official circus games were opened. The procession was headed by the " Giver of the Games," followed by images of the gods borne on carriages or litters and escorted by the *collegia,* various classes of priests, etc. These festive processions soon spread to the major cities and towns of the Empire. The early Christians regarded them as idolatrous. Since they were the occasion for all kinds of pageantry and display, the *word, pompa* acquired the sense of" pride " and " display," [41] as in our expression " pomp and circumstances."

When the Christian renounced the devil and all his pomp, he

[34] *Apost. Const.,* VII, 41, *edit, cit.,* Vol. VII, p. 476.
[35] Cyril of Alexandria, *In Ps. XLV,* 2, PG 69, 1044 B.
[36] E.g., the various *Church Orders* (A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 98).
[37] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX (mystag. I),* 2, PG 33, 1068 A; Ambrose, *de Myster.,* II, PL 16, 408 A; *Canons of Hippolytus* and the *Testament of Our Lord* (cf. A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 98).
[38] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX (mystag. I),* 4, PG 33, 1069 A.
[39] *Ibid.,* 2, PG 33, 1068 A.
[40] E.g., Ambrose, *de Myster.,* II, 7, PL 16, 408 A.
[41] Cf. Tertullian, *de Cor.,* 3, PL 2, 98 *C;* Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX (mys tag. I),* 6, PG 33, 1069 C; Chrysostom, *Ad illumin. catechumenos,* II, 5, PG 49, 239.

was dropping out of Satan's triumphal retinue, out of his procession, out of his camp (τάξις) represented by the West. Greek-speaking Christians used the word ἀπόταξις (a "setting apart," from the devil's camp) for the renunciation itself.

Today's Byzantine ceremonial has preserved the ancient ἀπόταξις. The candidate (or the sponsors in the case of an infant) expresses his renunciation of Satan both by deed and word. Unclad and barefoot, the candidate faces the West and lifts up his hands as if breaking the shackles of sin, while the priest asks: "Do you renounce Satan, together with all his works, all his angels, all his pomps, and all service to him?" He answers, "I do renounce him." This is repeated three times. Priest: "Have you renounced Satan?" Candidate: "I have renounced him." Then the priest bids the candidate: "Breath and spit upon him." To show his contempt for Satan, as symbolized by the West, the candidate exhales and expectorates in that direction.[42]

Adhesion to Christ and Profession of Faith

After forsaking Satan's ranks or camp, the candidate entered those of Christ by turning around and facing the East. This was called the σύνταξις, " joining the camp " of Christ. Jesus, the Sun of justice and truth, like the natural sun, comes from the East to bring the illumination (φωτισμός) of baptism.[43] Basically, the σύνταξις is an expression of faith in him.

[42] Greek text and rubrics in Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 277; English, in King, *op. cit.,* p. 207, or Hapgood, *op. cit.,* p. 275. This ceremony has not changed much through the centuries, except that older *Codices* had the candidate (or sponsors) repeat the whole formula, " I do renounce Satan, together with all his works, all his angels... ", etc. all three times in response to the priest's questions; e.g., the *Euchologion* of Porphyrios of the 9th century (Ms. N. 226 of St. Petersburg Imperial Library, in Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* p. 281); *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 of the 9th-10th century (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, p. 1); other Mss. in Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 278, notes h and i. The present arrangement dates from the 12th century (cf. N. Odintzov, *op. cit.,* p. 75; A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* pp. 205-209; Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, p. 373 and *Bogosluzhenie,* pp. 279-281).
[43] F. Dolger explains the whole mystery of light and darkness beautifully in " Die Sonne der Gerechtigkeit und der Schwarze: eine religionsgeschichtliche Studie zum Taufgelobnis," (LITURGIEGESCHICHTLICHE FORSCHUNGEN, II [Munster, 1918]).

Origen may have known the custom at Alexandria in his day (ca. 185-254), since he says: “When we come to the grace of baptism, renouncing all the gods and [other] masters, we confess only God the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. But in confessing this, unless we love our Lord God with our whole heart and soul and unless we adhere to him with all our strength, we are not made part of the Lord.” [44] Later, Serapion calls the practice an “ acceptance “ (άνάλήί^ς) of Christ.[45] Rome had incorporated it into its baptismal ceremonial quite early, for Hippolytus (c. A.D. 236) in his *Discourse on the Holy Theophany* mentions that the neophyte “ joins himself to Christ. “ [46] At Antioch in Chrysostom's time the formal declaration was: “I join the ranks of Christ;” [47] in North Syria, it was almost identical: “I associate myself with Christ.” [48]

Many Eastern Churches joined a brief but explicit profession of faith to the action. Thus, at Jerusalem in Cyril's day, the candidate, after making the renunciation and turning from West to East, was told to say: “I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, and in one baptism of repentance.” [49] All the versions of the so-called *Church Orders* likewise expressed belief in the three persons of the Trinity.[50] Some expressed both allegiance to and faith in the triune God. The *Testament of Our Lord,* for example, had the candidate say: “I assent to you, Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, by whom all nature is moulded anew and whom it fears; grant that I do all things which are pleasing to you without stain;” [51] and the *Canons of Hippolytus: “*I believe and bow before thee and all thy service, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” [52]

[44] Origen, *Homil. in Exod., homil VIII,* 4, PG 12, 354 D-355 A.
[45] Serapion, *Euchologion,* No. 10 (edit. J. Wordsworth, p. 71).
[46] Hippolytus, *Sermo in s. theophania, 10,* PG 10, 861 A.
[47] Chrysostom, *Ad illumin. catechumenos,* II, 5, PG 49, 240.
[48] *Apost. Const.,* VII, 41, *edit, cit.,* Vol. VII, p. 476.
[49] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XIX (mystag. I),* 9, PG 33, 1073 BC. Jerome, who lived several decades in Palestine, describes the ceremony in these words: “ In the mysteries we renounced the one who is in the West... and turned to the East, we made a pact with the Sun of Justice and we promised to serve him... “ *{In Amos prophet, comment.* III, 6, PL 25, 1068 B.
[50] For versions and expansions of the “ adhesion “ and confession in the various *Church Orders,* see A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* pp. 100-103.
[51] *Test.,* II, 8 (cf. J. M. Hanssens, *op. cit.,* p. 457)
[52] Cf. A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 100.

Indeed, the “ adhesion” and profession of faith are so close in meaning that some sources have the whole Creed rendered (the *redditio symboli* or ομολογία) during the adhesion.[53] Others, however, have it said at the immersion. No matter where the Creed was placed, it sealed the new alliance or covenant (another meaning of σύνταξις) with God, which was engraved in the heart, not merely underlined with ink, as Chrysostom tells us.[54]

A rudimentary profession of faith was probably demanded of the convert even in apostolic times: “You submitted without reservation to the creed you were taught,*”* Paul tells the Romans (6:17),[55] while the *Didache* alludes to it with the words, “ Having first declared all these things, baptise... “ etc.[56] Jewish converts, since they believed in the one true God, were asked to recognize Jesus as the Messiah, the Christ, and quite possibly, the three Persons of the Trinity. For gentile converts, with their background of polytheism, belief in the one true God and the Christ-Saviour concept certainly must have been stressed, but the essential Trinitarian aspect could not have been neglected.

By A.D. 150, five basic themes appear: belief “ in the Father, the Ruler of the universe, and in Jesus Christ our Saviour, in the Holy Spirit the Paraclete, in the holy Church, and in the remission of sins.” These form the nucleus of all later baptismal creeds. [57]. As errors and heresies arose, one or the other of these basic articles was emphasized and elaborated. Thus, when Gnosticism, an especially potent threat in the late second century, denied Christ's true humanity, the portion of baptismal creeds pertaining to the Son of God was expanded to stress his human nature: i.e., his “ becoming flesh,” his conception and birth from a human virgin mother, his suffering at a specific time in history—under (the governorship of) Pontius Pilate—his death and burial (not, as Gnosticism

[53] E.g., the various *Church Orders,* cf. Maclean, *op. cit.,* pp. 101-103.
[54] Chrysostom, *Ad illumin. catechumenos,* II, 5, PG 49, 239-240.
[55] Allusions to a “ confession of faith “ can be seen in Rm 10:9, 2 Co 4:5, *1* Tm 6:12.
[56] *Didache, 7;* cf. also Justin, I *Apol.,* 61 and 62, PG 6, 420 BC and 428 A.
[57] For an excellent, thorough study of the baptismal creeds, see J. Crehan, *Early Christian Baptism and the Creed* (London, 1950).

claimed, that Christ was assumed into heaven from the cross or even before his crucifixion). This expansion is seen in the formalized baptismal questions and answers in the *Apostolic Tradition,*[58] as well as in the baptismal creed quoted by Tertullian.[59]

Suitable additions were also made to counteract the heresies of Sabellianism and Arianism. This is seen in creeds quoted by Epiphanius and Cyril of Jerusalem.[60] When the Macedonian heresy denied the divinity of the Holy Spirit, the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381) added articles precisely defining it. All these modifications are part of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

During the immediate preparation for baptism, the Creed was explained thoroughly to the candidates. Cyril of Jerusalem's whole series of preparatory lectures are based on it, " the holy and apostolic faith delivered to you to profess," " which we rehearse." [61] All the candidates were expected to memorize it: "They who are to be baptised must learn the faith-Creed by heart, and recite it to the bishop or to the presbyters on the fifth day of the week." [62]

While the complete Creed was recited " on the fifth day of the week " or on Holy Saturday, there was always an abbreviated form of it during the baptismal ceremonial, either immediately following the renunciation and paralleling it,[63] or in the form of interrogations accompanying the actual immersions.[64] It was all part of the process called σύνταξις, " joining the ranks " of Christ.

[58] *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, 12-18 (edit. Dix, pp. 36-37)·

[59] Tertullian, *de Praescr.,* 13, PL 2, 30 B-31 B.

[60] Epiphanius, *Ancoratus,* 118 (Lietzmann, *Symbole der alten Kirche* [4th edit.; Berlin, 1935], 19 f.); Cyril de Jerusalem, *Cat.* VII-XVIII (Lietzman, *op. cit.,* 19).

[61] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat.* XVIII, 22 and 32, PG 33, 1044 A and 1053 A.

[62] Canon 46 of Laodicean Synod (A.D. 343-381) in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* Series II, Vol. 14 (W. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids Mich.), p. 154; cf. also Etheria, *Peregrin.,* VII, 4 (edit. Duchesne, p. 569). Those baptised in an emergency, such as serious illness, were required to learn the Creed later when they recovered (cf. Can. 47 of Laodicean Synod, *edit, cit.,* p. 154).

[63] As in Cyril of Jerusalem: "Then you were told to say, ′ I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, and in one baptism of repentance. ' " (*Cat. XIX [mystag. I],* 9, PG 33, 1073 BC), and in the *Apost. Const.,* VII, 41 (Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 102). As in Tertullian, in the *Apost. Trad,* (see below, p. 117), and some of the *Church Orders* (cf. Maclean, op cit. p. 101).

[64] As in some of the *Church Orders* (cf. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 101).

The whole ancient process is preserved intact in the Byzantine Church today.[65] The candidate (or the sponsors in the case of an infant) turn towards the East, towards Christ, and the priest asks: "Do you join yourself to Christ?" He answers: "I join myself to him.*"* Priest: "Are you joined to Christ?" Candidate: "lam joined to him." Priest: "Do you believe in him?" Candidate: "I believe in him as King and God. I believe in one God, the Father almighty... (and he proceeds to recite the whole Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed). Then, for the third time, the priest asks: "Are you joined to Christ?" The candidate replies: "I am joined to him." [66] Priest: "Worship him then." [67] Candidate: "I worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the consubstantial and indivisible Trinity." The priest adds a prayer in which he begs God to account the candidate worthy of holy baptism, to put off the old man, to renew him unto everlasting life, and to fill him with the power of the Holy Spirit unto union with Christ. Finally, the priest places the end of his stole on the candidate and leads him into the baptistry.

The Anointing With Oil

Going from the outer to the inner chamber of the baptistry, the candidates stripped for the anointing of the whole body with oil and for the triple immersion.[68] Women sometimes wore an undertunic (χιτώνων). Modesty dictated that men be separated from

[65] Greek, in Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 277-278; English, in King, *op. cit.,* pp. 207-208, or in Hapgood, *op. cit.,* pp. 275-276.

[66] The earliest *Codices* had a simpler arrangement: the candidate merely repeated (three times) the formula, " I join myself to Christ and I believe in one God almighty... " etc.; thus, *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 278, note q); *Cod. Porphyries* (A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* p. 205); *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 of the 9th-10th century (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* Vol. II, p. 1); *Cod. Sin.* 991 of the 14th century (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* Vol. II, pp. 331-332), etc.

[67] In the 15th century, at this point the priest led the candidate and his sponsor into the church and up to the sanctuary where they made three profound bows; thus, Simeon of Thessalonika, (PG 155, 220 CD), and other sources (cf. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* Vol. II, p. 438).

[68] E.g., *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, 3 (edit. Dix, p. 33); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat XX (mystag. II),* 2, PG 33, 1077 A, etc.

women and children from adults.[69] Later, a wall was built in some churches to separate men from women.[70] Many Eastern Churches also appointed women or deaconesses to anoint the women and to assist in their baptism. The presbyter or bishop, however, did the actual baptising after all were in the water.[71]

By the fourth century, stripping assumed a symbolic meaning. "As soon, then, as you entered, you took off your tunic," says Cyril of Jerusalem. "This was an image of putting off the old man with his deeds. After stripping yourselves, you were naked; in this also you were imitating Christ who was stripped naked on the Cross and by his nakedness put off from himself the principalities and powers, and openly triumphed over them on the tree." [72] In another passage, Cyril adds: "O marvelous thing! You were naked in the sight of all and you were not ashamed; for truly you bore the likeness of the first-formed Adam who was naked in the garden and was not ashamed." [73]

A threefold symbolism appears: putting off the old man and his deeds; imitating Christ who died naked on the Cross; and Adam naked in paradise without being ashamed.

The anointing with oil was a final exorcism. This is evident in Hippolytus, one of the first to mention the ceremonial: "And when he has said this [the renunciation], let him anoint him with the Oil of Exorcism, saying: ' Let all evil spirits depart from thee'." [74]Additional meanings were put into the rite later, but its exorcistic

[69] Cf. *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, 4-5 (edit. Dix, p. 33); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 14, PG 33, 356 A, etc.

[70] Chrysostom, *Homil. in Matt., homil LXXIII,* 3, PG 57, 677. For seating arrangements in the early Church, see *Apost. Const.,* II, 57 *(edit, cit.,* Vol. VII, p. 421).

[71] Cf. *Didascalia Apostolorum,* 16, edit, and trans. R. H. Connoly (Oxfords 1929), 146 f.

[72] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XX (mystag. II),* 2, PG 33, 1077 A. Interestingly enough, Juvenal (VI, 521 f.) pictures the worshipper of the Magna Mater divesting himself of his beautiful garments and giving them to the archigallus to wipe out all the misdeeds of the year *(ut totum semel expiet annum).* The idea of a mechanical transfer of pollution by relinquishing the clothes is also frequent among savages; see L. R. Farnell, *The Evolution of Religion* (London- New York, 1905), p. 117; also J. G. Frazer, *Golden Bough,* I (2) (London, 1911), p. 60.

[73] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XX (mystag. II), 2,* PG 33, 1080 A.

[74] *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, 10 (edit. Dix, p. 34).

powers continued to be stressed. [75]· Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, calls the oil "a charm to drive away every trace of hostile influence. For as the breathing of the saints and the invocation of the Name of God, like the fiercest flame, scorch and drive out evil spirits, so also this exorcised oil receives such power by the invocation of God and by prayer that it will not only burn and cleanse away the traces of sins, but also it will chase away all the invisible forces of the evil one." [76]

The whole body was anointed. "Then, when you were stripped, you were anointed with exorcised oil, from the very hairs of your head to the soles of your feet," says Cyril. [77] No part of the body was to be left in which the forces of evil could remain.

This abundance of oil suggested other meanings: healing, royalty, and priesthood, partaking of the good olive-tree, Jesus Christ. The ancients used oil, especially olive oil, to soothe and heal; Christ mentioned it in the parable of the good Samaritan. From physical healing to spiritual healing was but a step, already taken in Genesis (8:6-21). To find dry land after the deluge, Noah sends out several birds, but only the gentle dove returns with an olive twig—a sign from God that his wrath is ended. The dove with an olive branch in its beak still serves as a sign of peace. In the Old Testament, moreover, oil poured on the heads of kings and priests serves as the image of God's grace which comes down and flows on them (Ps 133:2), empowering them to transcend mere human capability. From this idea, it seems, stems the use of oil for all later Christian anointings.

Pre-baptismal anointing heals spiritually but also physically. Exorcism was often connected with physical healing, since the ancients believed that many forms of sicknesses were caused by the forces of evil (see below, p. 243). The formulary in Serapion's *Euchologion,* one of the oldest extant, makes this clear when it first quotes the promise of Christ "whosesoever sins ye forgive, they are

[75] Thus, almost all of the so-called *Church Orders* have the same formula for anointing as the *Apost. Trad.: "*Let every spirit depart from thee." Cf. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 99.

[76] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XX (mystag. II),* 3, PG 33, 1080 AB.

[77] *Ibid.,* 1080 A; also cf. Ps.-Ambrose, *de Sacram.,* I, 2, 4, PL 16, 437 AB.

forgiven them" (Jn 20:23) and then petitions "that our Lord Jesus Christ may work in them healing and strength-making power," and "heal away from their soul, body, spirit, every mark of sin and lawlessness or satanic fault, and by his own proper grace may afford them remission..." [78]

Because Christians are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart" (1 Pt 2:9), this pre-baptismal anointing took on the fullness of royal and priestly anointments with all their implications.[79] Pseudo-Justin explains: "We are anointed with simple oil that we may be made Christs (χριστοί = literally, the anointed ones)." [80] According to Cyril of Jerusalem, the baptizands became "partakers of the good olive-tree, Jesus Christ; for you were cut off from the wild olive-tree and grafted into the good one and made to share the fatness of the true olive-tree. The exorcised oil, therefore, symbolized participation in the fatness of Christ..."[81] The allusion is to Romans 11:17.

Whereas the ancients anointed the whole body, the present Byzantine ritual calls for an anointing of the main parts of the body only. Taking some of the oil with two fingers, the priest makes the sign of the cross on the candidate's forehead, chest, and between the shoulder-blades, while he says: "The servant (handmaid) of God, N..., is anointed with the oil of gladness in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever." According to the oldest *Codices,* these were the only parts anointed by the priest (using the same formula as today); the rest of the body was anointed by the deacon (or deaconess in case of women).[82] Today, the priest performs the rest of the anointings:

[78] Serapion, *Euchologion,* N. 15 (edit. Wordsworth, p. 75). The same elements are seen in the formulary of the *Apost. Const.,* entitled, " A thanksgiving concerning the anointing with the mystical oil: "it beseeches God the Father to sanctify the oil in the name of the Lord Jesus and to impart to it spiritual grace, efficacious strength, the remission of sins, etc. (VII, 42, *edit, cit.,* pp. 476-477).

[79] E.g., *Apost. Const.,* III, 15 *(edit, cit.,* p. 431).

[80] Ps.-Justin, *Responsiones ad Orthodoxos,* Resp. 137, PG 6, 1390 B.

[81] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XX (mystag. II),* 3, PG 33, 1080 A.

[82] Thus, the 8th-9th cent. *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 294); *Cod. Bessa rionis* of the nth cent. (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292); *Cod. Barberini* N. 329 (88) of nth cent. (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 295); Ms. N. 17 (473) of Rumiantsev Museum,

when signing the chest, he says, "For the healing of soul and body;" when signing the ears, "For hearing the faith;" when anointing the hands, "Thy hands have made and fashioned me;" and the feet, "So that he (she) may walk in thy footsteps."[83] These secondary formulae cannot be traced beyond the sixteenth century.[84]

The Baptismal Rite

In the earliest days of the Church, baptism probably consisted in the washing and the Trinitarian formula. The New Testament does not say how this washing was to be done. Washing is washing, whether by immersion and emersion, or by the pouring of water. The preferred way was immersion, the meaning of the word βαπτίζω used by Christ. The expressions λούω and λουτρόν sometimes mean washing the whole body, but not always. The symbolism of being baptised into Christ's death, burial and resurrection (cf. Rm 6:33 f.) is best served by immersion and emersion.

At the turn of the first century, the *Didache* points to immersion as the normal way of baptising. In cases of necessity, pouring is allowed: "Baptise thus... baptise into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, in living water (ἐν ὕδατι. ζώνη). But if you do not have living water, baptise in other water; and if you cannot (baptise) in cold, then in warm. But if you have neither, pour water on the head three times in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." [85] The phrase "living water" may at first seem puzzling but it means flowing water; the amplified text given in the so-called *Egyptian* and *Ethiopia Church Orders* makes this clear, i.e., that water must flow.[86] Actually, this requirement of baptising by immersion in "living water" comes from Jewish

I5th-16th cent. (A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* p. 275), etc. Such an arrangement dates back to the instruction contained in the *Apost. Const.,* III, 15 *(edit, cit.,* p. 431).

[83] For complete ceremony of anointing, see Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 290; the same in English, cf. King, *op. cit.,* pp. 213-214, or Hapgood, *op. cit.,* pp. 280-281.

[84] Cf. A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* p. 76.

[85] *Didache, 7.*

[86]. Cf. A. J. Maclean, *op. cit.,* p. 104.

practice,[87] ultimately from the *Torah* (Lv 14:50-52; cf. Lv 14:5; 15:13). Jewish baptism by immersion in living water probably dates from the Persian period (the Persians were baptising by aspersion only).[88] The *Didache's* instruction, however, is flexible, for if "living water" is unavailable, baptism may be performed in other water.[89] Tertullian also does not deem this requirement essential. [90]

Describing the rite to his pagan contemporaries (c. A.D. 150), Justin says merely: "Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we ourselves were regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water." [91] Tertullian's description is much clearer. The rite, he says, is performed" with very great simplicity, without pomp, without any large amount of novel preparation, finally, without expense: a man is dipped in water and is sprinkled while some few words are spoken, and then rises again, though not much cleaner, the consequent attainment of eternity is esteemed the more incredible." "Is it not wonderful, too," he adds," that death should be washed away by bathing?" [92] He gives the essential requirements in another passage: "The law of baptising has been imposed and the formula prescribed, * Go, * he says, 'teach all the nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."" [93] The act of baptising was done

[87] Cf. Abrahams, *Studies in Pharisaism and the Gospels,* Series I (Cambridge, 1917), pp. 38-40; also W. Brandt, *Die judische Baptismen oder das religiose Waschen und Baden im Judentum mit Einschluss des Judenchristentums* (Giessen, 1910), especially pp. 46 ff.

[88] Cf. Katzenelson, *Monatsschrift far die Geschiechte und Wissenschaft des jfudentums,* Part V, 1900 (44:10), pp. 433-451.

[89] Contemporaneous Jewish practice seems not to have been as flexible: a treatise of the Mishna, the *Mikwaoth,* carefully stipulates the quantity and quality of water for purificatory baths. Bet Hillel and Bet Shammai, however, differed in their opinions regarding the quantity of "artificial" (i.e., drawn) water which would invalidate the purification (cf. *Sab.* 15a).

[90] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 4, PL 1, 1311 B.

[91] Justin, I *Apol.,* 61, PG 6, 421 B.

[92] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 2, PL 1, 1309 AB.

[93] *Ibid.,* 13, PL 1, 1323 C-1324 A.

with three immersions, for he says, "Thrice we are plunged, answering somewhat more than the Lord ordained in the Gospel." [94] The latter phrase seems to refer to the interrogatories: at each immersion, a question was asked and the candidate answered; the first concerned belief in the Father; the second, in the Son; the third, in the Holy Spirit. The last question generally seems to have been expanded to include belief in eternal life and remission of sins through the Holy Church. [95]

A similar arrangement is seen in Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition,* with its triple immersion, triple interrogatory and confession:

" Then after these things (the anointing with the Oil of Exorcism), let him give him over to the presbyter who stands at the water; and let them stand in the water naked. And let a deacon likewise go down with him into the water.

" And when he goes down to the water, let him who baptizes lay hand on him saying thus: Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? And he who is being baptized shall say: I believe. Let him forthwith baptize him once, having his hand laid upon his head.

" And after this let him say: Dost thou believe in Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified in the days of Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose the third day living from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, and will come to judge the living and the dead? And when he says: I believe, let him baptize him a second time.

" And again let him say: Dost thou believe in the Holy Spirit in the Holy Church, and the resurrection of the flesh? And he who is being baptized shall say: I believe. And so let him baptize him the third time." [96]

The absence of the usual baptismal formula in this description (and in some of the cognate *Church Orders)* has led some scholars to question whether these interrogations expressly mentioning the three

[94] Tertullian, *de Cor.,* 3, PL 2, 98 C.

[95] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 6, PL 1, 1315 A; cf. also Council of Carthage (A.D. 255) in Cyprian, *Ep. LXXI, ad Januarium, 2,* PL 3, 1078 A.

[96] *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, 11-18 (edit. Dix, pp. 35-37).

divine Persons constituted the essential formula.[97] The arrangement is clearly the same as that given by Tertullian (and "answering somewhat more than the Lord ordained in the Gospel") and, like Tertullian, Hippolytus himself seems to stress the customary trinitarian formula in his work *Against the Heresy of one Noetus: "*The Father's Word, therefore, knowing the disposition and will of the Father, to wit, that the Father seeks to be worshipped in no other way than this, gave this charge to the disciples after He rose from the dead: 'Go ye and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.' And by this He showed, that whosoever omitted any of these, failed in glorifying God perfectly. For it is through this Trinity [τριάδος, the earliest word for the Trinity] that the Father is glorified. For the Father willed, the Son did, the Spirit manifested. The whole Scriptures, then, proclaim this truth." [98] The usual trinitarian formula, therefore, would seem to have been used in the baptismal rite, probably after each confession during the actual immersions.

Northern Italy had similar interrogatories connected with the immersions: "Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? Dost thou believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and in his cross? Dost thou believe also in the Holy Spirit?*" [99]* This passage by the author of *de Sacramentis* also omits the usual formula, yet Ambrose says, "Unless a person has been baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, he cannot obtain the remission of sins." [100]

At Jerusalem, Cyril tells of the triple interrogatory and confession, just as Hippolytus and Pseudo-Ambrose do: "You were led to the holy pool of divine baptism... and each of you was asked, whether he believed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and you made that saving confession, and descended three times into the water, and ascended again. " [101] Here the

[97] The best documented opinion is that of Dom P. de Puniet in his article, " Bapteme, *Dictionnaire de Thiologie Catholique,* Vol. II, (1910), PP· 340-344·

[98] Hippolytus, *Adv. Haeres. Noet.,* I4, PG 10, 821 BC.

[99] Ps. Ambrose, *de Sacram.,* II, 7*, 20,* PL 16, 448 B.

[100] Ambrose, *de Myster.,* IV, 20, PL 16, 412 A.

[101] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XX (mystag. II),* 4, PG 33, 821 BC.

absence of the usual trinitarian formula leaves the same impression as the *Apostolic Tradition* and the pertinent passage of *de Sacramentis.* Yet, Cyril's other passages show that the usual formula was employed:" .. .the Holy Spirit himself, who together with the Father and the Son is honored, and at the time of holy baptism is included with them in the Holy Trinity. For the only-begotten Son of God said plainly to the apostles, Go ye, and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." [102] Later, in the same lecture, he goes on, " and fittingly we are baptised into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit " [103]

Unless the interrogatories are considered as " baptising into the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,*"* one cannot escape the conclusion that the essential rite consisted of the washing and the usual trinitarian formula, enjoined by Christ in Matthew 28:18-19. Most evidence favors the latter. The triple interrogatory and confession between the actual immersions was later abandoned in all the Churches, perhaps because of the confusion it may have engendered—or because of the inconvenience and waste of time. Certainly, it was not done because of the predominance of infant baptism after the conversion of the Empire; after all, the child's sponsors could have made the responses as they do with the promises in the name of the child.

In the Byzantine Church today, the act of baptising is made by a threefold immersion and the typical Eastern passive formula: "The servant (handmaid) of God N..., is baptised in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." [104] The "Amen" had only found its way into the text in the sixteenth century.[105]

[102] *Ibid., Cat. XVI,* 4, PG 33, 921 A.

[103] *Ibid.,* 19, PG 33, 945 A.

[104] Cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 290; King, *op. cit.,* p. 214, or Hapgood, *op. cit.,* p. 281.

[105] *Cf.* A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* pp. 343 f.; Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* p. 288. The " Amen " is not found in the oldest Codices: e.g., *Cod. Barberini* of the 8th-9th cent. (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 294); the nth century *Cod. Barberini* N. 329 (88), (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 295); *Cod. Bessarionis* of the nth cent. (Goar, *op. cit,.* p. 292), etc.

Post-Baptismal Practices

In the Latin Churches of the West, in the Egyptian and Ethiopic Churches, another anointing followed baptism. Done by the priest with the "Oil of Thanksgiving" (or Chrism), it represented the adherence of the newly baptised to Christ; it was the " consecration of body and soul" to God, as Tertullian explains, for the chrism "gave its name to the Lord" (Christ means "anointed one").[106] As described by Hippolytus, it came immediately after the immersions: "And afterwards when he comes up [from the water], he shall be anointed by the presbyter with the Oil of Thanksgiving, saying: I anoint thee with the holy oil in the Name of Jesus Christ. And each one drying himself they shall now put on their clothes and after this let them be together in the church." [107]

The post-baptismal anointing in the *Egyptian* and *Ethiopic Church Orders* and in the *Testament of Our Lord* is much the same, differing only in details.[108]

After the persecutions, the practice of putting on white garments as a sign of restored innocence and grace was common in both East and West.[109] Actually, the symbolism varied, but in one way or another it was always indicative of the same reality: the new life caused by grace. Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, tells his newly baptised:" Now, after having taken off your old garments and put on those that are spiritually white, you must continually be robed in white. By this, of course, we do not mean that you are always to dress in white, but only that you must be clad in the garments which are truly white, shining and spiritual, that you may say with blessed Isaiah, My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me

[106] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 7, PL 1, 1315 AB.

[107] *Apost. Trad.,* XXI, 19-20 (edit. Dix, pp. 37-38); also cf. Ambrose, *de Myster.,* VI, 29-30, PL 16, 415 AB.

[108] Cf. J. M. Hanssens *(op. cit.,* p. 141) and A. J. Maclean *(op. cit.,* p. 105) for exact formulae.

[109] E.g., Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat XXII (mystag. IV),* 8, PG 33, 1104 B; Chrysostom, *Ad illumin. catechumenos,* II, 2, PG 49, 234; Augustine, *Sermo 223,* 1, PL 38, 1092; also *Sermo 120,* 3, PL 38, 678, and many others.

with a garment of salvation, and put a robe of gladness around." [110] Chrysostom, on the other hand, sees in the practice the wedding garment (sanctifying grace) which gives the wearer the right to be present at the spiritual marriage, at the royal banquet: "Keep this garment, because, if you lose it, you will no longer be able to buy or borrow another one; this precious garment is not sold anywhere." [111]

The distinctive white garments were a striking feature in the observance of Easter week. In the West, the Sunday after Easter derives its name, Sunday *in albis,* from this custom. It was called originally Sunday *in albis depositis* because the newly baptized, after wearing these white garments during all of Easter week, took them off on the preceding Saturday. [112]

The Byzantine Church has preserved the post-baptismal ceremonial of vesting the newly baptised, usually in a white garment (or symbolically, with a piece of white cloth). Immediately after the immersions, the priest washes his hands as he sings with the people Psalm 32 (Douay 31):" Happy the man whose fault is forgiven..." [113] Then, clothing the newly baptised, the priest says: "The servant of God is clothed with the robe of righteousness, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Finally, the *tropar(ion),* a hymn, is sung in Tone VIII: "Grant to me a robe of light, O most merciful Christ our God; thou who dost clothe thyself with light as with a garment." [114]

Another ancient custom, fairly general in the west (in Milan, Gaul, Ireland, Africa and Spain) was the washing of the feet. Usually performed by the bishop whenever he was the minister of baptism, this practice imitated Christ's action at the Last Supper (Jn 13:4-17).

[110] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XXII (mystag. IV),* 8, PG 33, 1104 B. The Scriptural quotation he uses is from Is. 61:10.

[111] Chrysostom, *Ad illumin. catechumenos,* II, 2, PG 49, 234.

[112] Cf. Alciun, *de Off. eccl.,* c. 21, *de sabbato in albis,* PL 101, 1223 B.

[113] Formerly, this psalm was sung three times: e.g., the 9th-10th century *Cod. Porphyrios* (A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* Suppl. p. 24); *Cod. Bessarionis* (Grottaferrata, Γ.β.I.) of the nth century (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292); *Cod. Barberini* N. 329 (88) of the year 1041 (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 295); also cf. A. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* Suppl. pp. 14-15.

[114] For the whole ceremony in Greek cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 290; in English> cf. King, *op. cit.,* p. 214, or Hapgood, *op. cit.,* p. 281.

As Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, his representative washed the feet of his newest disciples. With the spread of Roman influence (Rome never had the washing of the feet as a baptismal practice), this custom gradually died out.

Another distinctive custom, this one in the East, was the practice of placing garlands of flowers on the heads of the newly baptised. Probably borrowed from secular life, it was widespread already in the fourth century, so its origin was probably much earlier. [115] In secular life, garlanding was a sign of victory, triumph and joy (e.g., winning sports events in the arena, etc.). The same idea was transferred to the spiritual realm where the garland signified the heavenly crown of glory and incorruptibility, the crown of invincible faith, of strength and of justice, imparted through baptism. This is evident from the various prayers connected with the bestowal of the garland. [116] The custom died out in many churches after the conversion of the Empire, when adult baptism became a rarity. Infants could not be made to wear garlands, so the practice disappeared in fact, while surviving in some service books.[117]

Auxiliary ceremonial, of secular or religious origin, sought to bring out the peripheral meanings of baptism, to express more vividly the hidden meaning of the central act: the redemption-salvation mystery inherent in the laver of regeneration. The ancients tried to lift the veil a little from the mystery—to glimpse, as it were, another facet of the reality hidden there. Yet, the full effect of the mystery of baptism cannot be comprehended. The genius of St. Paul could not understand it completely, nor could the goldentongued ability of Chrysostom ever give it adequate expression.

[115] The first allusions to garlanding the neophytes are found in the 2nd century *Odes and Psalms of Solomon* (edit. J. Rendel Harris [Cambridge, 1909]), Od. I, 1; V, 10; IX, 8; XVII, 1; XX, 7; since the language is vague and figurative, the allusions are not certain.

[116] For the Egyptian Church, cf. H. Denzinger, *Ritus Orientalium,* I (Wirceburgi, 1863), pp. 211, 231; for the Syrian Church, cf. Denzinger, *op. cit,.* pp. 288, 327; for the Armenian Church, cf. F. C. Conybeare, *Rituale Armenorum* (Oxford, I905), PP· 99-101.

[117] E.g., Coptic Church (Denzinger, *op. cit.,* p. 211; the Ethiopic Church (Denzinger, *op. cit.,* p. 231; the Syrian, according to the *Ordo* of James of Edessa (Denzinger, *op. cit.,* p. 288), etc.

Even so, what comes through is breathtaking as we hear Chrysostom speaking to the newly baptised:

> Let us say again: *Blessed be God, who alone does wonderful things* (Ps 135:4), who does all things and transforms them. Before yesterday you were captives, but now you are free and citizens of the Church; lately you lived in the shame of your sins, but now you live in freedom and justice. You are not only free, but also sons; not only sons, but also heirs; not only heirs, but also brothers of Christ; not only brothers of Christ, but also joint heirs; not only joint heirs, but also members; not only members, but also the temple; not only the temple, but also instruments of the Spirit.
> *Blessed be God, who alone does wonderful things!* You have seen how numerous are the gifts of baptism. Although many men think that the only gift it confers is the remission of sins, we have counted its honors to the number of ten. It is on this account that we baptise even infants, although they are sinless, that they may be given the further gifts of sanctification, justice, filial adoption, and inheritance, that they may be brothers and members of Christ, and become dwelling places for the Spirit." [118]

[118] *Homily to the Newly-Baptised (Neophytes),* 1. Though of disputed authorship, it is generally attributed to Chrysostom. Not in Migne's Greek Patrology and existing only in a Latin translation of the 16th and 17th century editions, it was unearthed at Mt. Athos in Greek manuscript form by Pere A. A. Wenger (cf. *Jean Chrysostome: Huit Catiches baptismales inidites [Sources Chretiennes,* 50, Paris, 1957]). Complete English translation by P. Harkins, *Ancient Christian Writers,* 31 (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland), 56-66; his translation is used here.

CHAPTER XI

CONFIRMATION-CHRISMATION IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Before Christ suffered, he promised that those who believe in him would receive the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16). After he rose from the dead, he repeated this promise (Lk 24:49),[1] a promise he kept to the apostles when " they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" on that first Pentecost (Acts 2:4). That he intended this not merely for his apostles but for all the faithful is clear from John 7:37 ff.[2] Peter understood this, for he told the crowd:" You must repent and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (την δωράν του αγίου πνεύματος). The promise (ή επαγγελία) that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself" (Acts 2:38 ff.).

This, of course, does not tell us whether the Holy Spirit was to be given to the faithful in baptism or in a special rite distinct from baptism. But there is an interesting passage in Acts (8:14 ff.) which indicates a separate rite: "When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samarians to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.[3]

[1] And now I am sending down to you what my Father has promised (τήν έπαγγελίαν τοϋ πατρός μου). Stay in the city then, until you are clothed with the power from on high.' "

[2] " ' If any man is thirsty, let him come to me! Let the man come and drink who believes in me!' As scripture says: From his breast shall flow fountains of living waters. He was speaking of the Spirit (περί τοϋ πνεύματος) which those who believed in him were to receive; for there was no Spirit as yet because Jesus had not yet been glorified. " This was foreshadowed by the prophets, e.g., Is 44:3; 59:21; Ezk 11:19; 36:25 ff.; 39:29; Joel 2:28, etc.

[3] Τότε έπετίθεσαν τάς χείρας έπ' αυτούς καΐ έλάμβανον πνεύμα άγιον. The apostles proceeded to lay their hands upon various groups of converts since the verbs are in the imperfect tense.

When Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the imposition of hands by the apostles,[4] he offered them some money."

The special rite, therefore, through which the Holy Spirit was given was the laying-on of the hands. Since the Samarians had been previously baptised by Philip, a mere deacon, the rite was certainly distinct from baptism. The power of imparting the Holy Spirit was reserved to the apostles (or to those who had received the fullness of the priesthood), for Peter and John risked their lives to go to Samaria at this time to perform the ceremony. Their prayer that the converts receive the Holy Spirit contradicts any idea of magical efficacy, which Simon Magus had erroneously attributed to the rite.

Baptism and imposition of the hands were performed consecutively but distinctly at Ephesus by Paul: "When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus, and the moment Paul had laid hands on them the Holy Spirit came down on them, and they began to speak with tongues and to prophesy " (Acts 19:5 f.). Could the rite have been performed to confer certain charismata, that is, such special gifts as prophesying, speaking in various tongues, etc.? Throughout Christian antiquity, such gifts were regarded as manifestations of the Holy Spirit independent from any rite. They were not a necessary accompaniment of any sacrament.[5]

Referring to the reception of the Holy Spirit, Paul writes to the Christians at Corinth: "Remember it is God himself who assures (βέβαιων) us all, and you, of our standing in Christ, and has anointed (χρίσας) us, marking us with his seal (σφραγισάμενος) and giving us the pledge (αρραβώνα), the Spirit, that we carry in our hearts " (2 Cor 1:21 f.). The language (anointing, marking with seal, etc.) may be figurative, but the passage contains four expressions which keep recurring later in the Fathers in connection with the sacrament of imparting the Holy Spirit, and may have influenced its administration. The same may be said of Paul's oblique reference in his *Letter to the Ephesians: "*And you too have been stamped with the seal (έσφραγίσθητε) of the Holy Spirit of the Promise, the pledge of our inheritance..." (Ep 1:13-14).

[4] *ότι* δια της επιθέσεως των χειρών των αποστόλων δίδοται τδ πνεύμα το άγιον. Cf. Acts 11:15-17·

[5] Cf. Acts 10:44 ff·; I Co 12:30; also 2 Co 1:21 f.; Heb. 6:2 ff.; I John 2:20, 27.

Among the fundamentals of the Christian faith listed by Paul in his *Letter to the Hebrews,* baptism and the laying-on of hands stand separate: “Let us leave behind us, then, all the elementary teaching about Christ and concentrate on its completion, without going over the fundamental doctrines again: the turning away from dead actions and towards faith in God; the teaching about baptism (βαπτισμών) and the laying-on of hands (επιθέσεως τε χειρών)...” (Heb 6:1-2). The aorist participial forms point to the definite acts of baptism and confirmation, done and completed; this too is brought out in the next verse where Paul indicates that some, despite having been “ once brought into the light” (άπαξ φωτισθέντας = baptised) and having “ received a share of the Holy Spirit” (μετόχους γενηθέντας Πνεύματος 'Αγίου = confirmed), fell away (Heb 6:4-6).

Here the question may be asked: if the sacraments were so important, why do Paul and other early Christian writers say so little about them? The more one ponders the question, the more obvious the answer becomes: they take for granted whatever was commonly accepted and discuss only controversial or difficult points. Questions, doubts, disorders, disputes occasioned comment and explicit teaching. The sacraments, important and fundamental as they were, simply did not. Paul's *Letters* answered only the special needs of the faithful. If no disorders, for example, had occurred in connection with the Eucharistic celebration at Corinth, we probably would not have had his explicit comments on the Eucharist.

Even so, almost every page of Paul's *Letters* contains oblique references to the initiatory mysteries. Commentators have rightly emphasized the “baptismal aorists.” The frequent use of the aorist tense points to a definite, all-pervading religious experience of critical importance which all Christians had undergone in their spiritual life. This can only be the initiation into the community of the faithful, into the Body of Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Just to mention a few of the passages in the aorist tense referring to the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we have, for instance: “The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us (δοθέντος) “ (Rm 5:5); “The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives again; it is the spirit

of sons you have received (έλάβετε) and it makes us cry out, ' Abba, Father!'“ (Rm 8:15); “We have received (έλάβομεν)the Spirit that comes from God” (1 Cor 2:12); “In the one Spirit we were all baptised (έβαπτίσθημεν), Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink (και πάντες εις έν πνεῦμα έπιτίσθημεν)” (1 Cor 12:13); “Let me ask you one question: was it because you practised the Law that you received (έλάβετε) the Spirit...?” (Ga 3:2); “God has sent (έξαπέστειλεν) the Spirit of his Son into our hearts: the Spirit that cries, 'Abba, Father... '“ (Ga 4:6);” And you too have been stamped with the seal (έσφραγίσθητε) of the Holy Spirit of the Promise...” (Eph 1:13); “Otherwise you will only be grieving the Holy Spirit of God who has marked you with his seal (έσφραγίσθητε) for you to be set free when the day comes.” (Eph 4:30);” It was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us (έξέχεεν έφ' ημάς) through Jesus Christ our saviour” (Tt 3: 5-6). To these passages we may add some from the Catholic Epistles: “Each one of you has received (έλαβεν) a special grace...” (1 P 4:10); “But you have not lost the anointing that he gave you (έλάβετε),” *(1* Jn 2:27); “We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us (εδωκεν)” (1 Jn 3:24).

According to the New Testament, an essential part of the sacramental sign for imparting the Holy Spirit is the imposition (“ laying-on”) of hands.[6] Some may ask: would not insufflation (or “breathing upon”) have been a more appropriate sign of imparting the Holy Spirit? God could have done what he wished, of course, but the choice of laying-on hands was a good one, considering its history both in the Gentile world and in the Jewish. Greek and Roman art frequently depict gods with hand outstretched to heal or bless. According to mythology, Asclepius was a special healing god who laid his hands on men.[7] Philostratus relates that Apollonius of

[6] Cf. above, pp. 124 f.

[7] An inscription from the 4th century B.C. and another from the early imperial period tell of the god coming and laying his hand upon a sufferer who had come to sleep in the temple in hope of a cure.

Tyana raised an apparently dead girl to life at the mere touch of his hand.[8] The incident, spurious or not, does illustrate the fact that pagans on occasion regarded man's hands as instruments of miraculous powers and healing. Christ and his disciples, when they laid their hands upon people, whether in healing or in imparting the Holy Spirit, were merely employing a rite or gesture familiar to the world of their day—just as they used washing or baths for baptism, ordinary bread and wine for the Eucharist, etc. Analogy never proves origin: all these actions were in common and universal use. More direct antecedents of the use of hand(s) for healing and imparting spiritual power are contained in the Old Testament Scriptures: the hand is the instrument of healing in 2 Kings, 5:11, of blessing imparted to a congregation without physical contact in Leviticus, 9:22, and to an individual by contact in Genesis, 48:14 ff, in "ordination" and in imparting the spirit of wisdom in Deuteronomy, 34:9, and of course, in various other ways. All these use the verb *samakh,* to rest (the hand) upon.[9] In the Gospels, Christ often laid his hands on people to heal and to bless: a leper,[10] the mother of Peter's wife,[11] two blind men,[12] at Jericho again two blind men,[13] some sick people at Nazareth,[14] the man with a speech impediment,[15] the blind man at Bethsaida,[16] the woman with a

[8] "Merely touching her and whispering in secret some spell over her, he at once woke up the maiden from her seeming death" (Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.,* iv, 45). The account of Philostratus is so full of the miraculous that many have regarded Apollonius as an imaginary character. Could reports of similar miraculous revivals by the Christians have influenced this account? Even if the incident is true, the young lady could have been in deep coma and Apollonius could have revived her naturally. He studied at the temple of Asclepius at Aegae and many other places; he learned the oriental mysticism of the magi, Brahmans, and gymnosophists in Asia, especially at Nineveh, Babylon, and India, which included the medical knowledge of the day.

[9] A similar word *Semikah* is used also for the rite obligatory on all who offered sacrifices and for ordinations.

[10] Mk 1:41; Mt 8:3; Lk 5:13.

[11] Mt 8:15.

[12] Mt 9:29.

[13] Mt 20:34.

[14] Mk 6:5.

[15] Mk 7:32.

[16] Mk 8:23, 25.

crippling spirit,[17] the servant of the high priest,[18] and the children, who apparently were not ill but who were brought to him simply for a blessing.[19]

Both ideas, spiritual healing and blessing, are inherent in imparting the Holy Spirit and his gifts—giving new strength, wisdom, understanding, etc.—gifts lost through original sin, but now restored in abundance through the Holy Spirit; hence the appropriateness of employing the age-old, familiar gesture of healing and blessing, the imposition of hand(s), as the outward sign of bestowing the Holy Spirit. Even if the Lord had not instructed the apostles about any specific method of imparting the Spirit, given their Jewish background and the example of the healing Christ, probably this would have been the first method to have entered their minds.

Another method of healing and well-being, a natural one, is the application of oils, ointments or salves. The medicinal use of unguents seems to be as old as the world itself. The transfer of like ideas to the spiritual sphere was but a step. Smearing with oil, fat, or melted butter has been used ritually in almost all religions from the pre-dawn of history, both to rid persons or things of dangerous influences and diseases caused by "demons," and to introduce "divine" emanation, spiritual power, into such persons or things. Some unguents actually contained ingredients of medicinal value and provided some restoration to health when applied by the witch-doctor. The primitive mind, unaware of such medicinal properties, attributed the healing to spirit-powers. Ridding the object of an evil influence or power was often synonymous with introducing the good principle into it.

Though Christ's and the apostles' usual method of curing the sick was the laying-on of hand(s)—perhaps to forstall any impression of magical potions or medicinal ointments—the apostles did use anointing as an alternate means when sent out in pairs by Christ on special mission: "So they set off to preach repentance; and they

[17] Lk 13:13.

[18] Lk 22:51.

[19] Mt 19:13; Mk 10:13; Lk 18:15. Jesus stretched out his hands to bless the apostles as he was about to ascend into heaven. (Lk 24:50). Cf. Rv 1:17 when he lays his hands upon John.

cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them" (Mk 6:12 f.).[20] Early Christian initiatory ceremonial had a pre-immersion anointing, exorcistic in form, the post-baptismal anointing which was consecratory, and/or the unction connected with the bestowal of the Holy Spirit.[21] Again, analogy never proves origin, only that such practices were of common use in the ancient world, and that they were utilized for Christian ends. Besides, the Mediterranean people, Jews and Gentiles alike, used oil as the normal accompaniment of the bath which induced a sense of well-being. [22]

The Christian post-baptismal anointing, however, probably had a more direct antecedent in the anointings of Old Testament priests and kings. Again, royal and priestly anointing reaches back into prehistory when various tribes and cities were ruled by kings who discharged priestly duties.[23] Even in the Late Bronze Age (c. 1550-1200 B.C.), the kings of Assyria were priests of Assur (Asur). TiglathPileser I (c. 1100 B.C.), for example, calls his predecessors, Samsi-Ramman and Ismi-Dagan, "priests" *(issakku)* of the god Assur.[24] A letter addressed to the Egyptian king by Ramman-nirari of Nu-hassi indicates anointing of kings as being practiced in Egypt or or Syria in 1450 B.C.[25] Whatever the relations between the Egyptians and the Hebrew people, the Old Testament recounts the religious use of unction in the consecration of both Aaronic

[20] Cf. also Mk 8:23, where Christ uses saliva (πτύσας) on the blind man's eyes, in addition to the laying-on of hands (8:25); also Jn 9:6, where Jesus uses clay made of saliva and earth (Ιπτυσε χαμαί, και έποίησε πηλδν εκ τοϋ πτύσματος, και έπέχρισε τδν πηλδν έπί τους οφθαλμούς) without any laying-on of hands, but the blind man had to wash in the pool of Siloe. The passage from James (5:14), though it refers to another sacrament, does illustrate the point that the apostles used anointing to cure the sick. Finally, Rv 3:18 may also be cited here.

[21] The Christian consecration of church-buildings, altar, etc., also parallels these ideas.

[22] No less familiar was the rubbing of athletes with oil to prepare and condition them for contests.

[23] Cf. J. G. Frazer, *Lectures on the Early History of Kingship* (London-New York, I905), P· 31; cf. *ibid.,* p. 127.

[24] Prism-insc. col. vii 62, 63.

[25] *The Tell el-Armana Tablets,* letter 37.

priests,[26] and Hebrew kings by anointing.[27] The anointing made the king sacrosanct and endowed him with special virtue or a kind of divine power; thus, anyone cursing the king was stoned as if Yahweh himself had been cursed (cf. 2 s 19:22).[28]

Since several New Testament passages assert the royal priesthood and kingship of all Christians,[29] the initiatory or confirmatory unction could have easily originated with these Old Testament precedents. Certainly, later writers believed this.[30] In becoming Christians, the faithful became priests and kings in a certain sense, so they were anointed as such. In fact, St. John refers to the anointing with the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 2:20), and Paul says that it is God himself who "has anointed us, marking us with his seal and giving us the pledge, the Spirit*"* (2 Cor 1:21). The language may be figurative, but the figure would be much more telling if indeed real unction were used. The same applies to Paul's expression of "sealing" with the Holy Spirit in other instances. The idea, in fact, assumed such importance later that the "seal" (σφραγίς, *signaculum),* its verbal form "to seal" (σφραγίζειν, *signare),* or even the related expression "character" (χαράκτη ρ, χάραγμα, χάρασσε) became names for the sacrament itself.

Of all the meanings of "sealing,*"* that of marking with a sign of ownership is basic. The other meanings found in the early Christian writers are related in one way or another to this fundamental notion of marking or "branding" someone as the property of God-Christ, as a sheep of his flock. The background of this expression is rich. It ultimately stems from the secular custom of branding animals or tattooing slaves with the owners mark.[31] Often, prisoners and

[26] E.g., Ex. 24:7; Lv 8:12; Ps 133:2, etc.

[27] E.g., 1 S 10:1 f.,· 16:13; 1 K 1:39; 2 K 9:6; 1:12. The anointing of kings was reserved to the High Priest (Ex 29:7, 29; Lv 4:3, 5, 16; 8:12) but was later extended to the whole priesthood (Ex 30:30; 28:41; 40:15; Lv 7:36; 10:7; Nb 3:3).

[28] Cf. 1 S 26:9, 16; 2 S 1:14, 16, etc.

[29] 1 P 2:5, 9; Rv 1:6; 5:10; 20:6.

[30] E.g., Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 7, PL 1, 1315 A; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XXI (mystag. III),* 6, PG 33, 1093 A (by implication); Ambrose, *De Myst.,* VI, 30, PL 16, 415 B; Augustine, *Civ. Dei,* XX, 10, PL 41, 676 and *De Cataclysmo,* 1, 1, PL 40, 693, etc.

[31] E-g., *Quintil. inst.,* 7, 4, 14; Xen. *Hell.,* 5, 3, 24, etc.

captives taken in war were branded too.[32] The remark about a slave "having a *yod* marked on the arm at the right of a marking in the Aramaic language" reveals a similar practice among the Jews.[33] Later, soldiers were tattooed not only as a precaution against desertion, but as a sign of their service, as a mark of recognition.[34]

The ancients also used branding or tattooing for religious purposes. According to Herodotus (484? - 425 B.C.), fugitives could take sanctuary at a temple in Egypt, have a physical mark set upon them as the god's property, and be protected accordingly.[35] Later, many pagan cults, especially those imported from the East, had the practice of tattooing or otherwise setting a mark upon the body as a sign of consecration or "belonging" to a deity—the mark making the worshipper a slave, the divinity his master. Thus, religious tattooing occurred in the cults of Dionysus,[36] Attis,[37] Mithras,[38] Apollo (among the Ethiopians),[39] etc. The evidence in some of the cults dates from the Christian era, but the custom itself was long established. As far back as Leviticus and Deuternomy, Yahweh commanded the Israelites: "You are not to gash your bodies when someone dies, and you are not to tattoo yourselves," [40] probably because their pagan neighbors were doing such things in their cult of the dead.[41] Such practices were forbidden because of their cultic

[32] For prisoners, see *Legg. Homerit.,* 5, PG 86, 584 B; for prisoners of war, see Herodotus, 7, 233, and Plut. *Nic.* 29, for Athenian prisoners branded by the Syracusans; Quintus Curtius, 5, 5, 6, for mutilation which served the same purpose.

[33] The Elephantine documents, 28, 4 (edit. Cowley); cf. P. Perdrizet, "La miraculeuse histoire de Pandare et d'Echodore"‘ in *Archiv. Fur Religionsms senschaft,* 14 (1911), pp. 54-129.

[34] Cf. Vegetius, *De re milit.,* 1, 8 and 2, 5; Ambrose, *Obit. Valent.,* 58, PL 16, 1437 B; Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps* 59, 1, PL 36, 433 A; Cyprian applies the mili tary practice metaphorically to the Christian militia: "*Tu tantum, quern iam spiritalibus castris caelestis militia signavit" (ad Donat.,* 15, PL 4, 226 A).

[35] Herodotus, 2, 113.

[36] According to an inscription from the environs of Philippi *{Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum,* III, 686); also cf. 3 Macc. II, 29, for branding the Jews who refused to apostatize by order of Ptolemy Philopator.

[37] Prudentius, *Peristeph.* 10, 1076-80, PL 60, 455-459·

[38] Tertullian, *de Praescrip.,* 40, PL 2, 66 A.

[39] Lydus, *mens.,* 4, 53.

[40] Lv 19:28; cf. Lv 21:5; Dt 14:1.

[41] As was certainly the custom later among the worshippers of Isis in Egypt (cf. Firmicus Maternus, *prof. rel. err.,* 2).

significance, not as signs of domestic mourning, for they do not appear unlawful to the prophets.[42]

While the Israelites abhorred the idea of physically marking the body as a sign of belonging to a false deity, they did not reject it regarding the true God; in fact, they utilized it in the practice of circumcision, a marking in the flesh, as a sign by which God recognizes and acknowledges his people—a sign of his Covenant.[43] Indeed, Isaiah prophesied a time when " One man will say,' I belong to Yahweh'... On his hand, another will write * Yahweh' and be surnamed ' Israel."‘ [44] Some kind of marking, too, seems to have been tattooed or incised on the forehead of Old Testament pro-phets, [45] probably serving as a badge of special divine ownership. The Hebrew *tau* sign, mentioned in Ezekiel (9:4-6), marked Yahweh's true worshippers, setting them apart and protecting them against destruction: "Go all through the city, all through Jerusalem, and mark a cross (*tau)* on the foreheads of all who deplore and disapprove of all the filth practised in it. I heard him say to the others,' Follow him through the city, and strike. Show neither pity nor mercy; old men, young men, virgins, children, women, kill and exterminate them all. But do not touch anyone with a cross *(tau)* on his forehead. Begin at my sanctuary."‘ [46]

Against this background of "signing" God's people, marking them as his own, stands the Christian concept of" sealing" the faithful "for a day of redemption," whether by baptism, confirmation chrismation or merely with the sign of the cross.[47] It, too, evoked a plethora of meanings and nuances. In one way or another, however, all of them are related to the basic meaning of marking or

[42] Am 8:10; Is 22:12; Jr 41:5; Ezk 7:18.

[43] Cf. Gn 17:11. The Hebrew apocryphal work, *Jubilees* (XV, 26) makes this clear when it says that the uncircumcised "belongeth not to the children of the Covenant which the Lord made with Abraham, but to the children of destruction; nor is there, moreover, any sign on him that he is the Lord's..."

[44] Is 44:5.

[45] Cf. 1 K 20:41; Zc 13:6.

[46] The same eschatological idea of a sign marking the godly and protecting them from divine wrath visited upon the ungodly occurs in the apocryphal Psalms of Solomon (c. 1st century B.C.), where fire and wrath shall not touch the righteous because " the sign of God is on the righteous for their salvation " (XV, 8, 10).

[47] In the first four centuries, the term "sealing" was applied almost inter changeably to all three.

"sealing," indicating divine ownership. Thus, when the Fathers used the expression "seal" (σφραγίς, *signaculum)* denoting a signet ring's stone, its inscription, or the stamp made with it upon wax, and applied the simile to confirmation-chrismation, they could apply the same variety of meanings which the signet ring's "seal" had (and as wax seals have today): i.e., as stamp or proof of ownership, authentication, guarantee; as a seal of agreement or affirmation; as a seal giving authority, ratification, affirmation; as a safeguard or protection against unauthorized tampering, etc.

If "sealing with the Holy Spirit" did not originally include real unction in addition to the imposition of hand(s), it soon did. Evidence of both is abundant in ancient writers: sometimes one method seems indicated, sometimes the other, sometimes both.[48] Anointing, like laying-on of hands, is directly related to the idea of spiritual healing and giving of strength.[49] The act of anointing often implies the "laying-on of hand(s)," since both acts take place simultaneously. In anointing the forehead, for example, the hand is laid on that forehead by the very act of applying the unction. Many Eastern Churches have kept only the anointing with chrism, or *chrismation.*

This explains why some fourth-century sources refer only to the laying-on of hand(s), others, only to the anointing or "sealing," while still others clearly mention both. Nor is there unanimity concerning the accompanying words, but in the early sources they always express at least two concepts: *signing* or *sealing* (σφραγίς, *signo te)* and the *grace* or *gifts of the Holy Spirit* (δωρεάς πνεύματος, *confirmo te)*. In other words, the verbal formulation varies but the concepts remain the same. Unity of concept but variety of expression is characteristic of all truly ancient prayer before the crystallization of liturgical formulas.

[48] All later theological difficulties regarding the "matter" of this sacrament stem from the confusion of this early evidence, resulting in the following opinions: that the essential matter consists in 1) the imposition of hand(s) alone, 2) in the anointing with chrism only, 3) in either of the acts, and 4) in both acts (i.e., the imposition of hand(s) and the anointing done separately).

[49] Just how close these two acts were related to healing may be seen from the fact that certain medicines were called "God's hands." Cf. Plutarch, *Sympo siaca,* IV. i. 3: "But if, Philinus, you are against all mixtures, do not chide Philo only for the variety of his dishes or sauces, but also for using many mixtures in his sovereign antidotes, which Erasistratus calls God's hands."

CHAPTER XII

CONFIRMATION-CHRISMATION IN THE PRE-NICENE CHURCH

Thoughout the first four centuries, baptism and the rite of imparting the Holy Spirit (confirmation-chrismation) were administered in close succession as they are today in Eastern Churches. Yet, they are clearly distinct from the very beginning. Writing some time between A.D. 182 and 188, Irenaeus comments on the shortcomings of the Corinthians for which Paul had reproved them (1 Cor 3) and supposes, no doubt mistakenly, that they had not received the Holy Spirit because Paul did not lay his hands on them, " for those upon whom the apostles laid hands received the Holy Spirit, who is the food of life [eternal]" (in constrast with the "milk" which Paul said he fed them).[1] Despite his mistaken supposition, two facts emerge from this passage: the Holy Spirit was bestowed by the imposition of hands, a rite different from baptism, and, since this bestowal of the Holy Spirit was the "food of life," it certainly was not meant for conferring miraculous powers or special charismata. In writing about the Gnostic Marcosians, Irenaeus mentions that they anointed the initiated person with balsam.[2] Since they parodied Christian baptism, the inference may be that they also caricatured chrismation by anointing with balsam. He does not say, however, whether unction was used in the Christian Church.

For this we turn to Theophilus (A.D. 115-168 or 181), the bishop of Antioch where "the disciples were first called Christians" (Acts 11:26). He explains to a pagan friend that their name derived from an anointing with the oil of God (Christians = the anointed): "You laugh at me when you call me a Christ, but you do not know what you are saying. First of all, what is ' anointed' (χριστόν) is sweet and serviceable (εὔχρηστον), and not to be laughed at. What ship can be serviceable and seaworthy unless it first be caulked

[1] Irenaeus, *ad. Haeres.,* IV, 38, 2, PG 7, 1106 CD; cf. also *op. cit.,* I, 23, 1, PG 7, 670 C.

2 Irenaeus, *adv. Haeres.,* I, 21, 3 f., PG 7, 664 B.

[anointed]?... What man when entering this life or when contending in the games is not anointed with oil? And what work is embellished or beautiful unless it be anointed and burnished?... We therefore are called Christians for this reason." [3] Theophilus may be referring to the baptismal anointing, not to confirmation-chrismation, but at least we know that the Church of Antioch did have an anointing in connection with the initiatory ceremonial during sub-apostolic times; indeed, since this name was applied at Antioch to Christ's followers in Acts 11:26, the apostolic use of unction is implied.

Tertullian (c. A.D. 150-230) offerts a similar explanation of the word Christian: "The word ' Christian' as far as its meaning is concerned, is derived from ' anointing.'" [4] He also indicates that anointing took place after the immersions: "Immediately after coming out of the laver, we are thoroughly anointed with a blessed unction *(benedicta unctione)*—according to the ancient practice by which men who were entering the priesthood used to be anointed with oil from a horn, ever since Aaron was anointed by Moses. Whence Aaron is called 'Christ,' from the ' chrism ' which is ' the unction.' When made spiritual, it furnished an appropriate name to the Lord because he was ' anointed' with the Spirit by God the Father." [5]

Did this anointing with chrism belong to the baptismal ceremonial or did it belong to the rite of imparting the Holy Spirit? No one knows for certain, but probability leans toward the latter conclusion. After all, why would Tertullian point out that the Lord was "anointed with the Spirit of God the Father" if this unction were not analogous to the reception of the Holy Spirit? [6] Certainly, the

[3] Theophilus of Antioch, *Ad Autolycum, 1*, 12, PG 6, 1041 C. He says nothing, one way or another, about the laying-on of hands, but this is not strange since he is not describing the initiatory rites in detail.

[4] Tertullian, *Apolog.,* 3, PL 1, 330 A-331 A.

[5] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 7, PL 1, 1315 AB; in another work *{adv. Marcionem,* I,, 14, PL 2, 587 A), he also speaks of " the oil with which God anoints his people. "

[6] Especially since he regards baptism negatively in the previous chapter (c. 6, PL 1, 1314 B) and maintains that the Holy Spirit was given *after* the baptised had come up out the waters: "Not that in the waters we obtain the Holy Spirit; but in the water, under (the witness of) the angel, we are cleansed, and prepared for the Holy Spirit." Cf. also chap. 3, PL 1, 1316 A-1317 B.

effect of this anointing was spiritual, for Tertullian adds: "Thus, too, in our case the unction runs carnally [i.e., on the body] but profits spiritually; just as the act of baptism itself is also carnal in that we are plunged in water, but the effect is spiritual in that we are freed from sins." 7

Any doubt concerning the distinctness of the two rites is removed by Tertullian when he says about the imposition of the hand: "Next the hand is laid on us invoking and inviting the Holy Spirit through benediction.*"*[8] Later, he tells us of the effects of this rite: "Then, over our cleansed and blessed bodies, the Holiest Spirit willingly descends from the Father,*"* [9] and "the dove of the Holy Spirit flies to our flesh as it emerges from the laver... and brings us the peace of God, set out from the heavens."[10] The post-immersional anointing (" the Holy Spirit flies to our flesh *as it emerges* from the laver") and the laying-on of hand seem to be intertwined in effecting the bestowal of the Holy Spirit.

Later sources clearly indicate two post-immersional anointings in the Western Church (see below, pp. 139 f.): the first, belonging to baptism, is done to consecrate the person; the second, belonging to the confirmation rite, is done to fortify and strengthen the soul. This helps us to interpret another passage from Tertullian when he groups these rites together, but distinctly: "Indeed, the flesh is cleansed [the laver of baptism]; the flesh is anointed that the soul may be consecrated [the first post-immersional anointing]; the flesh is signed (with the cross) that the soul may be fortified [the second post-immersional anointing, belonging to confirmation]; the flesh is shadowed with the imposition of hands that the soul also may be illuminated by the Spirit..." [11]

In the Eastern tradition, greater emphasis was placed on chrismation than on the laying-on of hands. Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 150-211) seems to be the first to designate the rite of confirmation-chrismation as the "seal" (σφραγίς) which later became its

[7] Tertullian, *de Bapt.,* 7, PL 1, 1315 B-1316 A.
[8] *Ibid.,* 8, PL 1, 1316 A.
[9] *Ibid.,* 8, PL 1, 1316 B.
[10] *Ibid.,* 8, PL 1, 1317 A.
[11] Tertullian, *De resurr. earn.,* 8, PL 2, 852 A.

common name. His references to the "seal" are many, some pertaining to baptism, others to confirmation-chrismation. Christians, for example, possess the image of God,[12] their souls being stamped with a spiritual seal by Christ who himself is the "express image of the glory of the Almighty;[13] they are "the Lord's coin," impressed with a "royal stamp" (χάραγμα).[14] The seal or sign enables the soul to be recognized in the hereafter.[15] The indwelling Spirit, in fact, is the "shining character" (χαράκτηρ) received.[16] His allusion to the "house, empty, swept, and garnished," symbolizes the soul purged of evil (by the laver of baptism); when what was empty has been filled with the goodness of God," *then the seal follows,* in order that it may be preserved in holiness for God." [17]

Origen (A.D. 185-254), too, used the term "seal" in various senses, [18] but he seems to identify it with confirmation-chrismation in his typology of the oil in Leviticus, 14:26. This oil typified the believer's anointing with the Holy Spirit and the bestowal of the prodigal son's robe and ring (the latter symbolizing the restoration of God's image to fallen man).[19] His phrase "all those baptised with visible water

[12] Clement of Alexandria, *Prot.,* 4, PG 8, 157 C.

[13] Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.,* 7, 3, PG 9, 421 A.

[14] *Ibid.,* 6, 7, PG 9, 281 B.

[15] *Ibid.,* 4, 18, PG 8, 1325 A.

[16] Cf. *Strom.,* 4, 18, PG 8, 1325 A and *exc. Thdt.* 86, 2, generally ascribed to Clement.

[17] *Ecl.,* 12, 9, PG 9, 704 C. Though all of Clement's references to "sealing" may be interpreted spiritually or metaphorically, a physical unction was probably used. Also a separate imposition of hand seems indicated: Arguing against the use of wigs, he asks: "On whom does the presbyter lay his hand? Whom does he bless? Not the woman decked out, but another's hair, and through it, ano ther's head!" *(Paedag., III*, II PG 8, 637 B). This, of course, can refer to any blessing, but confirmation seems indicated, since he goes on to speak of the soul being adorned by the Holy Spirit and the gifts proceeding from him: righteous ness, wisdom, fortitude, temperance, love of good, and modesty *(Paedag.,* III, 11, PG 8, 640 A).

[18] E.g., in a metaphorical sense *(Schol. in Cant.* IV, 12, PG 17, 273 A; cf. VIII, 6, PG 17, 285 B); as the "seal" of Christian profession, consisting of the convert's renunciation of the devil and his acceptance of Christ *(Homil. 12, 4 in Num.,* PG 12, 665 C); as the "seal" of God's ownership through the invocation of the Threefold Name in baptism *(De princ,* I, 3, 2, PG 11, 147 C; *Jo.,* 6, 33, PG 14, 257 A; cf. *Cels.,* I, 6, PG 11, 665 B; *ibid., I,* 25, PG II, 798 A), etc.

[19] Origen, *Homil. 8, 11 in Lev.,* PG 12, 508 A; later, he uses the "ring" of this parable as an illustration of the seal or stamp of the divine image restored to the soul in baptism *(Homil. 8, 11 in Lev.,* PG 12, 507).

and visible chrism "may refer to the anointing with the Holy Spirit. [20] He refers twice to the bestowal of the Holy Spirit by the apostles: "In the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit was given in baptism through the laying-on of the apostles' hands."[21] From his description, the two sacraments (baptism and confirmation) almost seem like one, but what Origen obviously means is that they comprise the initiatory rites, for he himself clarifies the distinction later in the same treatise: "The grace and revelation of the Holy Spirit was delivered through the laying-on of the apostles' hands *after* baptism." [22]

The fullest description of the confirmation rite is given in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus. In itself, the rite described by him merely represents the Roman tradition of about the year 215, but with his great love for ancient practices, his description may reach far back in time. This is the first complete formulary of confirmation to come down to us. Its importance for liturgical studies is incalculable.[23] It may compare with the impact of the Dead Sea scrolls on scriptural studies.[24]

The *Apostolic Tradition* delineates two post-immersional anointings. The first, given by the priest to the baptised as he comes up from the font, belongs to the administration of baptism (see above, p. 120). The second, performed by the bishop, belongs to the rite of confirmation, since it is done after the imposition of the hand. The complete confirmation rites are described thus:

> " And the bishop shall lay his hand upon them invoking and saying: O Lord God, who didst count these [Thy servants] worthy of the forgiveness of sins by the laver of regeneration, make them worthy to be filled with Thy Holy Spirit and send upon them Thy grace, that they may serve Thee according to

[20] Origen, *In Rom.* 5, *8,* PG 14, 1038 C; cf. also, *Homil. 8, 11 in Lev.,* PG 12, 508 A.

[21] Origen, *De princ,* I, 3, 2, PG 11, 147 B.

[22] Ibid., I, 3, 7, PG 11, 153 A.

[23] At the time the name *confirmation* was not yet used in the technical sense for this sacrament even in the Western Church.

[24] It may even represent the pre-Nicene tradition of both East and West. The fact that it was incorporated into the so-called *Church Orders, Egyptian* and *Ethio pic,* into the *Canons of Hippolytus,* and the *Testament of Our Lord* further strengthens this thesis.

> Thy will; [for] to Thee is the glory, to the Father and to the Son with the Holy Ghost in the Holy Church, both now and ever and world without end. Amen.
> " After this pouring the consecrated oil and laying his hand on his head, he shall say: I anoint thee with holy oil in God the Father Almighty and Christ Jesus and the Holy Ghost. And sealing (σφραγίζειν) him on the forehead, he shall give him the kiss and say: The Lord be with you. And he who has been sealed shall say: And with thy spirit. And so he shall do to each one severally."[25]

Confirmation in the Roman tradition was imparted both by a separate laying-on of the hand and by anointing or "sealing" with consecrated oil (presumably with chrism)—and it Was done by the bishop.[26] The verbal form for the imposition of hand is epicletic, calling upon the Holy Spirit to be present in the candidate together with divine grace. For the unction, the wording expresses that the anointing is being done in the name of the three divine Persons. Simple and forthright, the semi-extemporaneous character of this pre-Nicene liturgical prayer explains the lack of uniformity in all early formularies and the variety in later forms.[27]

After the description by Hippolytus, other pre-Nicene references to confirmation are anticlimactic, useful only for their emphasis that confirmation "completes" or "perfects" baptism. Thus, Pope Cornelius, in delivering his judgement on the infamous Novatian (A.D. 251-253), says: "And as he seemed about to die, he received

[25] *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome* (edit., G. Dix, London, 1937), xxii, 1-4, pp. 38-39. For discussion on textual reconstruc tion of the first paragraph, see E. Hauler, *Didascalia Apostolorum fragmenta Veronettsia Latina* (Leipzig, 1900), p. III. For alternative readings of same, cf. G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit* (London-New York-Toronto, 1951), pp. 139 ff·

[26] Both are done in church after the post-baptismal anointing and clothing of the baptised.

[27] The celebrant could probably use his own words provided he included the essential notions, as was the case with the Eucharistic Prayer (the Canon of the Mass): "It is not altogether necessary for him to recite the very same words which we gave before... but let each one pray according to his own ability. If indeed he is able to pray suitably with a grand and elevated prayer, this is a good thing. But if on the other hand he should pray and recite a prayer according to a fixed form, no one shall prevent him. Only let his prayer be correct and right [in doctrine]." *Apost. Trad. (edit, cit.),* x, 4-5, p. 19.

baptism by affusion on the bed where he lay;[28] and when he got well, he did not receive the other things necessary according to the canon of the Church, even the being sealed by the bishop (του τε σφραγισθηνοα ύπό του επισκόπου). And as he did not receive this, how could he receive the Holy Spirit?" [29] In such cases of mortal illness, baptism was sufficient to save the sick person, for it effected the remission of his sins.[30] But if such a person became well, he was to have been "sealed by the bishop" (confirmed) afterwards, for the confirming gift of the Holy Spirit was meant to properly fit a person for the Christian life, to sustain him while he lived in the world. Confirmation, in a very definite sense, was regarded as the completion of baptism in which the fullness of the Holy Spirit was received. That is why Pope Cornelius asks rhetorically, "How could he receive the Holy Spirit?" In other words, he was merely regarding baptism in the negative sense of washing away all sins.[31] This is confirmed by the Synod of Elvira (A.D. 306) which decreed that a sick person may be baptised by a layman in cases of necessity, but on recovery he is to be taken to the bishop in order that the baptism "be perfected" by the laying-on of hands.[32]

Cornelius' phrase "being sealed" refers to the whole rite of confirmation, as does Cyprian when he writes to Jubaianus (A.D. 256),

[28] This refers to clinical baptism; therefore, it was by affusion.

[29] In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl,* VI, 43, PG 20, 624 A.

[30] In no way was baptism considered invalid by the omission of "sealing" (if a person died before a bishop could administer it).

[31] As Tertullian had regarded it in *de Baptismo,* c. 6 (PL 1, 1314 B).

[32] Canon 38. The same Council decreed (in Canon 77) that the same procedure be followed in cases of baptism performed by a deacon, but specifically declared that if the baptised person dies before the imposition of hands, he is to be regarded as saved in virture of the faith confessed in his baptism. According to Canon 8 of the Synod of Aries in Gaul (A.D. 314), heretics who had been baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (and there was proof of it) were to be received into the Church with the imposition of hands only (cf. C. J. Hefele, *A History of the Christian Councils,* 2nd edit. [Edinburgh, 1872], p. 188). Firmilian, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, is not as generous. Writing to Cyprian over the dispute regarding the reception of heretics (A.D. 256), he insists that only the "presiding elders" (a generic word used for all the clergy superior to deacons) of the true Church have the "power of baptising, of laying-on of hands, and of ordaining." *(Ep. 75* [Oxford 75], 7, PL 3, 1209 A). Any doubt of this, he says, was settled previously in a council at Iconium in Phrygia," when we were assembled together with those gathered from Galatia, Cilicia, and other neighboring countries " *(ibid.,* 7, PL 3, 1209 A).

a little after the seventh Council of Carthage: "The Samaritans had already received legitimate ecclesiastical baptism, and hence it was not fitting that they should be baptised anew; Peter and John merely supplied what was lacking, viz, that with a prayer being said for them and hands imposed, the Holy Spirit should be invoked and poured forth upon them; this is now done among us too, so that they who are baptised in the Church are presented to the bishops of the Church, and by our prayer and the imposition of hands, receive the Holy Spirit and are perfected by the seal of the Lord." [33]

[33] Cyprian, *Ep. 72* (Oxford 73), *ad Iubaian.,* 9, PL 3, 1160 C. Cf. also, *Ep. 69* (Oxford 70), *ad Januarium, 2,* PL 3, 1078 A-1079 A.

CHAPTER XIII

CONFIRMATION-CHRISMATION IN THE POST-NICENE CHURCH

Until the fourth century, baptism without confirmation was conferred only on the sick. As the civilized world became christianized, adult-convert baptisms decreased in number, while infant baptism increased.[1] Infants were to be baptised shortly after birth, usually on the eighth day. This necessitated the bishop's presence at each baptism if he were to confirm the child immediately afterwards—an almost impossible task. The East solved this problem by having the baptising presbyters impart confirmation-chrismation. The Western Church, which stressed the bishop's role in imparting confirmation and wanted to retain the practice, obviously had difficulties. The tendency, therefore, was to separate the two rites: baptism was administered by presbyters soon after birth, while confirmation was deferred until the bishop came for his next pastoral visit to the parish. In many places, this happened as early as the fourth century. The Council of Elvira (c. A.D. 305), for example, decreed that infants baptised by deacons and laymen were to be brought to the bishop later for the laying-on of hand.[2] The author of the *de Rebaptismate,* possibly an Italian bishop, while asserting that baptism and confirmation were normally joined, speculates about the case of a baptised person dying without being confirmed; this, he says, happened frequently.[3] Without going into his curious reasoning, we may conclude that in his day the two sacraments were often separated. Jerome (A.D. 346-420) attests to the practice in smaller towns and

[1] I.e., children of parents who were already Christians. From the earliest days, there was always baptism of infants in the Church; for a recent discussion of this problem, see J. Jeremias, *Infant Baptism in the first Four Centuries,* trans, from the German by D. Cairns (London, 1960), and K. Aland, *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?,* trans, from the German by G. R. Beasley-Murray (London, 1963).

[2] Canons 38, and 77.

[3] *De Rebaptismate,* 4, PL 3, 1236 CD.

remote communities: "I do not deny that this is the usage of the churches, that the bishop should make excursions to those baptised a long way off in the smaller towns by presbyters and deacons to lay his hands upon them for invoking the Holy Spirit. But if the bishop lays on his hands, he lays them upon those who have been baptised in the right faith." [4] The separation of the two sacraments in the West is clearly indicated in the Council of Orange (A.D. 441), when it says that the anointing (chrismation), if done at baptism, need not be repeated whenever confirmation is administered separately from baptism.[5]

The delay depended upon the time of the bishop's next visit to the parish, usually within the year,[6] but in medieval times it was extended to seven years.[7] Some parishes with resident bishops retained the ancient practice of imparting confirmation immediately after baptism, especially on Easter eve. That is why liturgical books, for centuries, kept the ancient rule of Easter eve as the normal day for baptising and confirming.[8]

4 Jerome, *Dialog, contra Luciferianos,* 9, PL 23, 164.

[5] Canon 2. By this time in the West, *confirmation* was becoming an accepted technical term for the sacrament. Ambrose (A.D. 374) was one of the first to use it in this sense *(de Mysteriis,* VII, 42, PL 16, 419 A); another was Leo the Great (A.D. 440-461, in *Ep. 159, ad Nic,* 8, PL 54,1139), when he dealt with the reception of heretics. For other early uses of *confirmatio* and *confirmare* in connection with the sacrament of imparting the Holy Spirit, see Hastings, *Encycl. of Rel. and Ethics,* IV, Ia. Even so, for centuries afterwards, *confirmare* was still used to mean " to administer the chalice to " (e.g., the *Ordines Romani,* such as *Ord. Rom. Prim.,* [8th cent.?] edit. E. G. C. Atchley [London, 1905], p. 142; Amalarius of Metz, and Rabanus Maurus in the 9th cent., cf. C. D. Ducange, *Glossarium ad scriptores Mediae et Infimae Latinitatis* [Paris, 1840-50], sv.; while Alcuin [A.D. 735-804] uses the expression to mean administering communion under both species, cf. *Ep. 90,* M. Hittorp, *De divinis Cath. Eccles. Officiis,* [Cologne, 1568], p. 100b).

[6]This, at any rate, seems to be the implication in the King's letter to the Council of Lugo (A.D. 569) in Spain which states that a bishop could not visit every parish annually in remote places (cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio,* IX, 815). A year is the maximum stipulated at Worcester, A.D. 1240 (cf. D. Wilkins, *Concilia Magn. Brit, et Hib.* [London, 1737], i. 667); at Chichester, A.D. 1246 *(ibid.,* i, 686); however, at Exeter, A.D. 1287, it was three years *(ibid.,*
ii, 132)·

[7] Thus, at Durham, c. 1280 *(ibid.,* i, 576), in the *Sarum Manual* (W. Maskel, *Monumenta Ritualia Eccl. Angl.* [London, 1846], i. 14).

[8] Thus, the *Gregorian Sacramentary,* edit. H. A. Wilson (London, 1915), pp. 54 ff.; the *Missale Gothicum,* H. M. Bannister (London, I9I7), i· 75 ff., etc. The *Ordinale Exon.* (edit. J. N. Dalton [London, 1909], i. 323) has vestiges of

Great theological and liturgical changes swept the Church after the persecutions had ended. In liturgical life, Syria and Jerusalem were in the forefront—the doctrine of the Holy Spirit was developed with corresponding prominence given him in the Church's liturgy. [9] Among the innovations introduced into the Eastern Church was the method of administering the sacramental mystery of imparting the Holy Spirit through the unction with chrism only. The separate imposition of hands was dropped, probably because the hand is indeed placed upon a person in the process of anointing, and in order to give prominence to the chrismation itself.

The period of transition was gradual. First, the anointing with chrism was stressed as an outward means of bestowing the Holy Spirit; then it was equated with it and, finally, the imposition of hand(s) was dropped.

At Jerusalem, this seems to have occurred by the time the *Mystagogic Lectures* were delivered, c. A.D. 348. In his description of the rite, Cyril only speaks of the anointing with chrism and considers it as the "imposition of hands" (χεφοθεσία). He alludes to confirmation in his introductory lecture when he extends his wishes to the neophytes, that they may experience first the effects of baptism (forgiveness of sins, membership in God's Church and service, etc.) and then of confirmation, that God "give you the seal of the Holy Spirit indelible throughout all ages..." [10] In preaching to the unbaptised, he cannot reveal the current manner of administration— this secret can only be discussed with the initiated: he merely gives the Old Testament precedent, the "figure," and its fulfillment in the New: "You see everywhere the figure (τύπον) in the Old Testament," he says," it is the same in the New: in the time of Moses the Spirit was given by laying-on of hand (χειροθεσία), and Peter gives the Spirit by laying-on of hands; and his grace shall come upon

the ancient rule which states that in the consecration of the font, neither oil nor chrism be poured in unless there is someone to be baptised. The blessing of the font, of course remained reserved for the vigils of Easter and Pentecost (cf. W. Maskell, *op. cit.,* i. 13*;* also cf. *Miss. Sarum,* edit. F. H. Dickinson [Burntisland, 1861-833, PP. 347 ff·).

[9] Reflected in the introduction of the epiclesis into Eucharistic Liturgy, attributing the consecrating to the operation of the Holy Spirit, etc.

[10] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Procat.,* 17, PG 33, 365 A.

you also who are about to be baptised, but the manner (τδ πώς) I tell you not, for I will not anticipate the proper time." [11] In the last lecture before the candidates' initiation, he again tells them that he will explain these rites after they will have experienced them: first, baptism," how you were cleansed from your sins by the Lord, by the washing of water with the word;" secondly, the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, " how like priests you have become partakers of the Name of Christ—and how the Seal of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit was given to you;" thirdly, the Eucharist," and concerning the mysteries at the Altar of the New Testament.. .and what is the power of these mysteries, and how you must approach them, and when and how to receive them." [12]

Indeed, after they had received these mysteries at Easter, Cyril keeps his word and explains their significance in detail in the *Mystagogic Lectures.* After Christ's baptism, he says in the lecture on confirmation-chrismation, " the Holy Spirit in the fullness of his being, lighted upon him, like resting upon like. And, after you had come up from the pool of the sacred streams, to you in like manner was given an Unction, the anti-type (άντίτυπον) of that with which Christ was anointed; and this is the Holy Spirit."[13] As if to emphasize the spiritual effects of this anointing, he reiterates that this ointment" is made fit to impart his divine nature by the advent of

[11]Cat. XVI, 26, PG 33, 956 BC. Here Cyril's reference is to the *disciplina arcani* which forbade revealing the great mysteries of faith to the uninitiated. This, of course, included the sacramental mysteries of baptism and the bestowal of the Holy Spirit, mysteries which Basil says" the uninitiated (αμύητοι) are not even allowed to look at," and that "the awesome dignity of the mysteries is best preserved by silence [i.e., in reference to the uninitiated]." Cf. *de Spiritu S.,* 27, PG 32, 189 A.

[12]Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XVIII,* 33, PG 33, 1056 AB. By placing "the seal of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit" in the same rank as baptism and the Eucharist, Cyril shows that it was not to be considered merely as an accessory to baptism but a distinct sacramental mystery. He does the same in his very last lecture: "you have heard enough at our former meetings regarding *baptism, chrism,* and the *partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ." {Cat. XXIII [mystag. V],* I, PG 33, 1109 A).

[13] *Cat. XXI (mystag. III),* 1, PG 33, 1088 A-1089 A. The term "anti-type" (άντίτυπος, used also in *Cat. XX,* 6 [PG 33, 1081 B] and in *Cat. XXIII,* 20 [PG 33, 1124 B], as in Heb 9:24 is the copy or figure representing the original pattern, in contrast to "type" (τύπος, used in *Cat. X,* 11 [PG 33, 676 B], in *XIII,* 19 [PG 33, 796 C], in *XXII,* 3 [PG 33, 1100 A], as in Acts 7:44) is the figure which comes before and, indeed, is subsequently realized in the anti-type.

the Holy Spirit... and while your body is anointed with the visible ointment, your soul is sanctified by the Holy and lifegiving Spirit."[14]

The parts of the body anointed were: forehead, ears, nostrils, and chest.[15] He explains, too, that they are now called Christians because of this reception of holy chrism.[16] In pointing out the Old Testament figure (σύμβολον) for chrismation in the New, he gives, not the laying-on of hands by which the Spirit was given in Mosaic times,[17] but Aaron's anointing as high priest by Moses (Ex 29:7), and the anointing of Salomon as king by the high-priest (I K 1:39)—and this, after bathing, thus paralleling the Christian immersions at baptism.[18] But he adds, "these things happened in figure, but to you not in figure but in truth; because you were truly anointed by the Holy Spirit."[19]

Cyril clearly attributes the bestowal of the Holy Spirit to the unction with chrism: "to you was given an unction... and this is the Holy Spirit," "while your body is anointed with visible ointment, your soul is sanctified by the Holy and life-giving Spirit," "after holy baptism and the mystical chrism, after having put on the whole armor of the Holy Spirit, you are to stand against the power of the adversary," and, "you were truly anointed by the Holy Spirit," etc.[20]

In Cyril's detailed account of the rite bestowing the Holy Spirit, nothing is said regarding a separate imposition of hand(s). Since it is a detailed account, only one conclusion is possible: a separate imposition of hand(s) had been dropped and the chrismation is equated with it. Other sources are not as clear.[21]

[14] *Ibid.,* 3, PG 33, 1092 A.

[15] *Ibid., 4,* PG 33, 1092 AB. To each he gives a Scriptural meaning.

[16] *Ibid.,* 5, PG 33, 1092 C.

[17] As he explained in a previous lecture *(Cat. XVI,* 26, [PG 33, 956 B]).

[18] *Cat. XXI (mystag. III),* 6, PG 33, 1093 A.

[19] *Ibid.*

[20] All the references were quoted above, except the second last which is from *Cat. XXI (mystag. III),* 4, PG 33, 1092 B.

[21] E.g., when Egypt had both gestures in its rite of imparting the Holy Spirit, Athanasius leaves the impression that it only had the "imposition of hands" *(De trinitate et Spiritus.,* 21 [PG 26, 1217 *A]; Ep.* 1, *ad Serap.,* 6 [PG 26, 544 B])' and Serapion's *Euchologion,* only the anointing with chrism (No. 15, edit. J. Words-

Of all the so-called *Church Orders,* only Book VII of the *Apostolic Constitutions* had been affected by the new developments.[22] Here, the rite of imparting the Holy Spirit consists of the unction only, but it is still called by the old name, the "laying-on of hands" (χεφοθεσία):" Afterwards, when he has baptised him in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, he shall anoint him with ointment, and shall add as follows: "O Lord God, without generation and without a superior, the Lord of the whole world, who hast scattered the sweet fragrance of the knowledge of the Gospel among all the nations, do Thou grant forthwith that this ointment may be efficacious upon the person who is baptised, so that the sweet scent of Thy Christ continue upon him firm and fixed; and that after dying with Him he may rise and live with Him.' Let him say these and similar things,[23] for this is the efficacy of the laying-on of hands (χεφοθεσία) on every one." [24]

worth [reprint, Hamden, Conn., 1964], pp. 76-77). Spain had both, yet Pacian of Barcelona (before A.D. 392) indicates only the unction: "The bath of water purifies us from our sins. The holy anointing pours down the Holy Spirit on us." *(Serm. de Bapt.,* 6 [PL 13, 1093 B]). Ambrose (A.D. 374) gives the same impression for Milan: "Remember that you have received the spiritual seal, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Strength, the Spirit of Knowledge and Godliness, and the Spirit of Holy Fear *(de Mysteriis,* VII, 42 [PL 16, 419 A]), etc.

[22] Being based on Hippolytus' *Apostolic Tradition,* all have a separate imposition of the bishops hands sandwiched between two post-immersional anointings: thus, the *Egyptian Church Order* in its Sahidic, Bohairic, and Arabic versions, the *Ethiopic Church Order,* the *Canons of Hippolytus,* etc. (cf. A. J. Maclean, *The Ancient Church Orders* [Cambridge, 1910], pp. 106 ff., where their prayer-formulas are conveniently included).

[23] The prayer-text here is clearly only a suggested one which the minister may use verbatim or he may extemporize along the same ideas.

[24] *Apost. Const.,* Book VII, 43 (end) and 44 (cf. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII [Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.], p. 477). The same expression (χεφοθεσία) is used in Book III, 15 (from the *Older Didscalia)* in speaking about the services of deaconesses in the baptism and anointing of women, " but only *in the laying-on of hands* (χεψοθεσία) the bishop shall anoint the head;" it says nothing about a separate imposition of hands (cf. *edit, cit.,* p. 431). Nor does Book VII, 22 *(edit, cit.,* pp. 476 f.): "But thou shalt beforehand anoint the person with the holy oil, and afterward baptize him with the water, and in the conclusion shalt seal him with the ointment; that the anointing with oil may be the participation of the Holy Spirit, and the water the symbol of the death of Christ, and the ointment the seal of the covenants." Book II, 22 *(edit, cit.,* p. 412) is the only one in the *Apostolic Constitutions* which seems to indicate both acts—a sealing with ointment and a separate imposition of hands—when it says: "by whom

Later writers in the East seem to regard the separate imposition of hands as an anachronism, a piece of antiquarianism, and certainly equate it with the "signing," or chrismation—John Damascene, for example, in the eighth century.[25] Theophylact, exarch of Bulgaria in the eleventh, cites the laying-on of hands by the apostles at Samaria and says "the same order" is still being observed—centuries after the separate imposition of hands had disappeared from the Byzantine rite![26]

Often, the stage of transition in a given Church may be guaged by the manner in which validly baptised heretics were being received into that Church's membership. Where confirmation was by unction only, or where unction was stressed rather than the separate imposition of hands, heretics were received by the anointing with unction. For the Church of (the diocese of) Asia, this is seen already in the legislation of the Laodicean Synod (A.D. 343-381); [27] for the Caesarean Church, Basil testifies to the same;[28] for the Alexandrian, Didymus (fourth century),[29] etc. The practice was probably universal in all the Eastern Churches during the next century, since Theodoret, the Church historian, writes that the Novatians were anointed in being received into the Church because they did not use unction at baptism,[30] and Pope Gregory the Great (A.D. 590-604) mentions that the Easterners received heretics by unction.[31] Indeed, many other sources corroborate it. The so-called Canon VII, for example, of the Second General Council (I of Constantinople, A.D. 381) regards the Arians, Macedonians, Sabbatians, Novatians, Quartodecimans, and Apolinarians as validly baptised, and decrees

[the bishop] ye were sealed with the oil of gladness and the ointment of understanding, by whom ye were declared to be the children of light, by whom the Lord in your illumination testified by the imposition of the bishop's hands... "Even so, the "imposition of the bishop's hands" here may be the old name applied to the unction, as in Book VII, 43, and in Book III, 15.

[25] John Damascene, *de Haer.,* I, 97, edit. M. Le Quien (Paris, 1712).

[26] Theophylact, *in Act.,* viii, 8, PG 125, 629 B.

[27] Canon VII. This concerned the Novatians, Photinians, and Quartodecimans, who were communicants in their respective sects (and, therefore, validly baptised).

[28] Basil, *Ep. 188 (Canon, prima),* 1, PG 32, 669 C.

[29] Didymus of Alexandria, *de Trin.,* II, 15, PG 39, 720 A-721 A.

[30] Theodoret, *Haer. Fab. Compend.,* III, 5, PG 83, 408 C.

[31] Gregory the Great, *Ep. XI, ad Quiricum,* 67, PL 77, 1206 A.

their reception into the Church by "sealing" or anointing" with the holy oil upon the forehead, eyes, nostris, mouth, and ears," and the formula, "The Seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit." [32] Substantially the same Canon is found in the Trullan Synod in A.D. 692.[33]

The formula given by Asterius, bishop of Amasia in the Pontus, about 400 A. D.,[34] is still used in the Byzantine Church when it chrismates the forehead, eyes, nostrils, lips, ears,[35] chest, hands and feet.[36] A single prayer precedes the unction,[37]

[32] On the authenticity of this Canon, cf. C. J. Hefele, *History of the Christian Councils,* II, pp. 368 f., and W. Beveridge, *Syndicon,* Vol. II (Oxford, 1672), *in loc.* Though Canon VII in no way belongs to the second General Council nor even to the Synod of Constantinople (A.D. 382), its material can be traced back to the middle of the 5th century, i.e., to a letter from the Church of Constantinople to Bishop Martyrius of Antioch.

[33] Canon 95. On the other hand, in the Western Church and in Africa where the imposition of hands was always stressed in confirmation, the reception of validly baptised heretics was through the laying-on of hands: e.g., Cyprian, *Ep. 73* (Oxford edit. 73), *ad Jubaianum,* 9, PL 3,1160 BC; the author of *de Rebaptismate,* 1, PL 3, 1233 A; 10, PL 3, 1243 D; 4, PL 3, 1236 CD; Canon 8 of first Council of Aries (A.D. 314); Leo the Great, *Ep. 166, ad Neonem,* 2, PL 54, 1194 B and *Ep. 167, ad Rusticum,* 18, PL 54, 1209 A; Gregory the Great, *Ep. II, ad Quiricum,* 67, PL 77, 1206 A, etc. The exceptions were the Council of Orange (A.D. 441), Canon 1, which has "chrism and benediction," and the Council of Epaon (A.D. 517), Canon 16.

[34] Cf. *Homilia in duos filios Evangelii Lucae,* in A. Bretz, *Studien und Texte zu Asterios von Amasea* (Texte und Untersuchungen, Vol. 40 (1914), pp. 113-114; cf. also *Biblioth. Photii, cod.* 271, PG 104, 213.

[35] These were the only parts anointed with chrism according to the oldest *Codices;* e.g., the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini,* III, 55 (77), now *Vat. gr.* 336 (Goar *Euchologion Sive Rituale Graecorum* [Graz reprint, 1960], p. 294); the 9th-10th cent. *Cod. Porphyrios* (A. Almazov, *Istoria chynoposlidovanij kreschenia i myropomazania* [Kazan, 1865], App., p. 28); *Cod. Bessarionis* (Grottaferrata, Γ.β.I.) of the nth cent. (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292).

[36] The earliest source, stipulating the unction of these additional parts (chest> back, hands, and feet), seems to be the 9th-10th century *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 (A. Dmi trievsky, *Opysanie liturgicheskikh rukopisej khraniaschikhsia v bibliotekakh pra voslavnago vostoka,* Vol. II, *Euchologia* [Kiev, 1901], p. 3; for the other Mss., cf. A. Dmitrievsky, *op. cit.,* p. 25, note 1, and his *Bogosluzhenie v russkoj tserkvi v XVI v* (Kazan, 1884), pp. 295-296. In addition, the abdomen and loins were also to be anointed according to some Mss. (A. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* Suppl. pp. 22-23). Some of these sources have special formulas for such addi tional unctions.

[37] For centuries, the Byzantine bishop's part has been confined to making and consecrating the *myron* (chrism). In Orthodox Churches, this is a privilege of patriarchs. Fifty-seven different aromatic substances, symbolizing the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit, are added to the oil in a long process of mixing, heating and cooling, usually lasting several days.

ting chrismation-confirmation with baptism, thereby preserving the ancient immediate sequence of the two sacramental mysteries.[38] The prayer recounts the effects of baptism, and petitions for an effective bestowal of gifts proper to chrismation-confirmation and the Eucharist: "Grant him, O Lord., the seal of the holy, omnipotent, and adorable Spirit, and the participation of the holy Body and precious Blood of thy Christ; keep him in thy holiness; confirm him in the true faith, deliver him from the evil one and all his insidious snares; and by a salutary fear of thee, preserve his soul in purity and righteousness; that he may please thee in all his actions and words, and that he may be thy child and an heir of thy heavenly kingdom."

What follows the unction with chrism (μύρον) is actually a vestige of the Eucharistic Liturgy which used to be celebrated immediately afterwards,[39] and at which the newly baptised received their first Communion. What used to be the entrance of the baptised into the church for the Eucharistic Liturgy is now a threefold circuit of the font—the priest preceding the newly baptised who holds a lighted candle (or, in cases of infant baptism, the sponsors carry

[38] This prayer is, therefore, much older than the first extant *Codices* containing it: e.g., *Cod. Barberini* III, 55 (77), now *Vat. gr.* 336 of the 8th-9th century (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 294); *Cod. Bessarionis* (Grottaferrata Γ.β.I.) of the nth century (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292); *Cod. Barberini* N. 329 (88) of the nth cent. (Goar, *op. cit,.* p. 295), etc. Several synods of the Catholic Melkite Church prescribed the imposition of hand during the recitation of this prayer (apparently, to allay scruples regarding the validity of confirmation-chrismation conferred without a separate laying-on on hands); e.g., the Synod of Karkafah (1806), P. II, chap. III, can. 4; the Synod of Ain-Traz (1835), can 2; the Synod of Jerusalem (1849), not in its acts but in Maximos III Mazlum's notification, I, 2 and 3 (cf. I. B. Martin - L. Petit, *Collectio conciliorutn recentiorum Ecclesiae universae,* Vol. 10, *Synodi Melchitarum* 1716-1902 [Mansi Vol. 46 Paris, 1911], col. 729, 935, 1142-1143).

[39] I.e., from the Little Entrace onwards: thus, the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 294); the 9th-10th cent. *Cod. Sin.* N. 957 (A. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, p. 3); *Cod. Bessarionis* of the nth century (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292); *Cod. Barberini* N. 329 (88) of the nth century (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 296); the 13th century *Cod.* N. 189 of the Grand Laura (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, p. 177), etc. Cf. also A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* pp. 457, 459. A passing custom (15th and 16th centuries) had the newly baptised, candle in hand, precede the priest as the latter brought the bread and wine from the table of the *prothesis* to the main altar at the Great Entrance (in the case of infants, their sponsors would carry them and candle); cf. A. Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* p. 305, and N. Odintzov, *Poriadok obschestvennago i chastnago bogosluzhenia v drevnej Rossii do XVI v* (St. Petersburg, 1881), p. 151.

both baby and candle)—while all sing, "As many as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia," three times. [40] The rest of the ceremonial consists of a blessing, the prokeimenon (gradual), the epistle (Rm 6:3-11), the Alleluia chant, the Gospel (Mt 28:16-20), a litany into which are inserted petitions for the newly baptised, and finally the dismissal.[41] This has been more or less standard procedure since the sixteenth century.[42] The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were a period of transition from ancient practice (when the whole Eucharistic Liturgy was celebrated): this was marked by a variety of ceremonial, such as ritual ablution of the child, tonsuring, etc.,[43] which are now performed on the eighth day after baptism.[44]

The brief scope of this study does not enter into theological controversies, especially those dealing with the gift of the Holy Spirit in Christian initiation—how the Holy Spirit is given in baptism and in confirmation-chrismation. It is easy to pick out patristic texts consistent with one's own theories, while ignoring the inconsistent. A great mass of patristic literature is indeed confusing and seemingly

[40] The triple circling of the font with lighted tapers or candles signifies the illumination received in the initiatory mysteries (here provided by the illumination of the candles) and eternal union (circle = eternity) of the newly initiated with Christ, the Light of the world (typified by the candles or tapers themselves). The triple circuit is a fairly late addition to the ceremonial. The oldest Codices have the versicle sung before the unction with chrism; e.g., the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 294); the 9th century *Cod. Bessarionis* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 292); *Cod. Barberini* N. 329 (88) of A. D. 1041 (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 296); *Cod. Porphyrios* of the 13th century (Almazov, *op. cit.,* Suppl., p. 24).

[41] For complete ceremonial in Greek, cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 290-291; in English, cf. J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, in Russia* (London, 1772), pp. 214-216, or I. F. Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Graeco-Russian) Church* (Boston-New York, 1906), pp. 281-283.

[42] Cf. Almazov, *op. cit.,* p. 460, and Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie,* p. 299, for sources; however, there were exceptions, e.g., *Cod.* N. 324 (955) of Vatopedi Monastery, Mount Athos, year 1404 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, p. 374); *Cod.* N. 68 of the Metropolitan Library of the Holy Sepulcher, Constantinople (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, pp. 811-812), etc.

[43] Cf. 13th century *Cod. Patmos* N. 104; *Cod. Sin.* N. 966 of same century; *Cod. Sin.* N. 981 of the 14th (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, pp. 154, 209, 340); the 15th century *Cod.* N. 324 (955) of Vatopedi Monastery, Mt. Athos; Mss. N. 615 (757) and N. 68 of the Metropolitan Library of the Holy Sepulcher, Constantinople, all of the 16th century (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* II, pp. 374, 739, 811-812).

[44] For these ceremonies today, see Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 303-307; King, *op. cit.,* pp. 217-220, or Hapgood, *op. cit.,* pp. 284-286.

inconsistent on the question of the Holy Spirit's relationship to Christian initiation. As long as the initiatory rites remained combined, comprising baptism and confirmation-chrismation, ancient writers did not attempt to resolve the role of the Holy Spirit in these sacraments; there was no pressing need.

Only after the conversion of the Empire, when the bulk of baptisms were those of infants, did the need for clarification arise. Even then, the question did not really concern the Eastern Churches, for they continued to impart chrismation-confirmation immediately after baptism, even in the case of infants. They allowed priests to impart both sacraments—the bishop's part being confined to the blessing of chrism (μύρον). The Western Church, however, since it wished to reserve to the bishop his ancient function of imparting confirmation, began deferring it until later in the child's life—until the bishop was available. The separation of confirmation from baptism, in turn, necessitated the task of working out an intelligible and consistent doctrine regarding the role of the Holy Spirit in each.

Defining spiritual realities in finite, temporal terms is impossible: it can only touch upon the human aspects, not the divine. The Aristotelian categories of being can only fail us, since they are based on quantity, quality, time, place, position, action, etc. Analogously applying these to God and his "operations," or "actions," especially in the sacramental mysteries, can only result in confusion.

God, for example, is omnipresent, permeating all and everywhere. Yet, when two or three are gathered together in his name, he is present there in a different, special way—the Jews of old called it the *Shekinah.* He is present in still more different, more intimate ways in the newly baptised, in the newly confirmed, in the Eucharist, in those ordained to the priesthood, to the episcopacy, etc. For centuries, Western theologians have preferred to call this divine presence *sanctifying grace,* with qualifiers like "increase," "fuller," or "lesser." Besides the danger of depersonalizing the workings of the gracious Spirit (the "author" of "grace"), such expressions have a connotation of quantity which is impossible to predicate of the divine.

Using the Scriptural concept of divinization (θέωσις, see below, pp. 359 ff.) or merely understanding sanctifying grace as the

mysterious presence or life of God in his various manifestations is helpful, since it does away with many apparent inconsistencies in patristic literature, especially those relating to baptism and confirmation-chrismation. And it gives new insight into their terminology.

God's presence or life is eternal, unchangeable, inaccessible, etc., whether or not subjects exist to enjoy it—or, to borrow a simile from the Fathers, the sun's rays shine even if there were no one to enjoy them. Only after the existence of created beings can we speak of enjoyment or the participation of God's presence or life, and this is always conditioned by their capacity for such participation.

Divine life, in itself always existent, begins to exist in the recipients of baptism; thus, relative to the recipients, it is a completely new life, a new birth, indeed, regeneration. Because God himself is or "indwells" in them, we can thereby truly speak of them being his temples. This divine life is what makes them God's, his children no less, and incorporates them into Christ, into his mystical Body, into the Church, into his resurrection, into his eternal life. Sharing the same divine life, they are brothers, as natural brothers and sisters share the characteristics of the same human parents. Receiving this divine life from God, all of them can truly call him Abba, Father.

Confirmation-chrismation can be distinguished from baptism insofar as mature life can be distinguished from birth; in this sense, it is said to "perfect" or "complete" baptism. The life of the newly-born is not the same as that of the healthy, robust adult. A baby cannot walk, speak, work, reason, study, love, and lacks many of the qualities of the adult. Analogously, the newly baptised, though full Christians, do not share God's life or its attributes as intimately as do confirmed Christians. These, through the Holy Spirit and his gifts received at confirmation, participate in the attributes of God's life—virtue being the possession of God's attributes by created being—to a more intense degree than if they had remained unconfirmed; thus, confirmation makes them wiser, stronger, more understanding, pious, etc. Divine life is present in both confirmed and unconfirmed Christians, but the degree of participation in that life is different. It is the difference between new-born and mature life, between what the apostles were before Pentecost and after it.

Confirmation-chrismation is the personal Pentecost of individual Christians, preparing them for living in the world, for loyal service to God. It makes raw, untrained recruits into full-fledged soldiers, proficient and ready for combat—as the Fathers never tired of pointing out—their σφραγίς, mark or tattoo, forestalling desertion, serving as a sign of their proficient service in the never-ending process of divinization, not only in earthly life but in a changed way for all eternity.

CHAPTER XIV

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EUCHARIST

Through water and the Holy Spirit, baptism cleanses a man from all his sins and gives him a completely new *life,* a participation in the very life of God. Confirmation-chrismation completes baptism by "sealing" or "confirming" man in this new life through the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and his gifts. The Eucharist nourishes man through the reception of the body and blood of Christ and continues to change man, uniting him ever-closer to the Godhead and giving him a foretaste of heaven. All these comprised the initiatory process in the ancient Church, making mere human beings, "partakers of the divine nature" (cf. 2 P 1:4 and pp. 359 if. below). The Eucharist has been compared with the rites of primitive religions, Asiatic, Orphic and Dionysiac, in which eating the flesh of a sacred animal or drinking its blood was supposed to confer divine qualities upon man. Union with the divinity has always been man's noblest and highest aim, springing from psychological depths common to all mankind. Jesus, the Son of God, gave the Eucharist in order to satisfy such universal hunger. But claiming any dependence of the Eucharist upon barbarous forms of "god-eating" and literal "blood-drinking" is, to borrow a phrase from von Harnack, "spinning combinations out of superficial similarities" and "tearing down solid barriers, bridging chasms as though it were child's play." 1 By such methods, indeed" it is possible in the twinkling of an eye to turn Christ into a sun god.*"*

Whole worlds of meaning separate the one from the other. The Eucharistic rite re-enacts an actual happening, recorded by eyewitnesses, while the pagan mysteries played out a vague myth—and this, symbolically, e.g., the tearing of Zagreus by the Titans, the abduction and rape of Kore, etc. The first represented the sacrifice of an innocent person; the second, the death and rebirth of nature. In the Eucharistic rite, there is none of the emotional storm or

[1] Adolf von Harnack, *Wissenschqft und Leben,* II (Giessen, 1911), p. 191.

psychedelic frenzy of the pagan mysteries, in the course of which the raptured initiate drank blood or ate raw animal flesh.

In the Christian Communion, the fact of mastication remains, but is extended to a spiritual participation in God; there is no magic operation conferring divine attributes upon the initiate. Union with God in the Eucharist requires much more: a spiritual intention and purification underlined by an even more spiritual will to love.[2] Early Christians saw no parallel with the practices of the pagan mysteries, since they held the latter in extreme abhorrence. They saw the real antecedents of the Eucharist in the Old Testament and its Jewish observances: the expiatory holocausts, the oblation of Melchisedech, the paschal lamb and ritual meals, the manna given in the desert to the people of God, etc. Christ himself and Paul point to the manna as a figure of the Eucharist.

The institution of the Eucharist is historical. Its unique meaning was given by Christ himself before he instituted it. In answer to the people's plea to show them why they should believe in him (as if the miracle of the loaves and fishes were not enough), Jesus told them: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert and they are dead; but this is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that a man may eat it and not die. I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world" (Jn 6:48-51).

How could he give them his flesh to eat?"I tell you most solemnly, if you do not eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will not have life in you. Anyone who does eat my flesh and drink my blood has eternal life, and I shall raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him. As I, who am sent by the living Father, myself draw life from the

[2] Besides Paul's remonstrances to the Corinthians (1 Co 11:17-34) about the lack of moral and spiritual courage, there are the Lord's words at the Last Supper stressing the spiritual and moral requirements for union with him: faith, believing and trusting him despite all adversity, abiding in his love which entails keeping his commandments, loving one another, doing good works, bearing the hatred of the world, suffering and even dying for him (cf. Jn chaps. 13-17). Nothing like it has been found in any of the pagan mystery religions.

Father, so whoever eats me will draw life from me. This is the bread come down from heaven; not like the bread our ancestors ate: they are dead, but anyone who eats this bread will live for ever" (Jn 6:53-58).

Many of his followers did not believe his words and "left him and stopped going with him." Jesus calmly maintained the truth of his words. They were hard to believe and still are. Yet, in the face of unbelief, Jesus did not call anyone back to change the meaning of what he had said. The apostles took him at his word; he would have it no other way if they wanted to stay with him.

The miraculous transformation came at the Last Supper, the night before he died. Paul says so explicitly (1 Cor 11:24). He and the synoptics relate what happened:

Mt 26:20, 26-28	Mk 14:17, 22-25	Lk 22:14, 19-20	1 Co 11:23-24
When evening came he was at table with the Twelve disciples.	When evening came he arrived with the Twelve. And while they were at table ...	When the hour came he took his place at table, and the apostles with him.	For this is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the Lord took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it,
Now as they were eating, Jesus took some bread,	And as they were eating, he took some bread,	Then he took some bread,	
and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to the disciples "Take it and eat, "he said, "this is my body."	and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them. "Take it, "he said, "this is my body. "	and when he had given thanks, broke it and gave it to them, saying, " This is my body which will be given for you; do this as a memorial of me."	and he said, " This is my body, which is for you; Do this in memorial of me." In the same way he took the cup after supper,
Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them. "Drink all of you from this," he said, " for this is my blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin."	Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks, he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them, " This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many."	He did the same, with the cup after supper, and said, " This cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be poured out for you. "	and said, " This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me."

The paschal meal framing the institution of the Eucharist was a grateful commemoration of the Israelites' deliverance out of Egypt— the type and image of salvation. The institution of the Eucharist at such a meal was especially appropriate: the ancient rites which prefigured and foretold the Eucharist were replaced by it. Though the paschal meal was a ritual, religious meal par excellence, the Jews had another religious meal, the *chaburah*—a formal supper in which a small group, family and friends, took part on the Sabbath or on the eves of holy days. In both the paschal and *chaburah* meals, there was a ritual taking, blessing, breaking and sharing of bread and wine. Partaking of the one bread and one cup gave the entire group a sense of being drawn together into one company *(chaburah).* These meals were traditional, but at the Last Supper, there was something radically different which warranted Christ's command to do what he had just done: the real transformation or change of the bread and wine into his body and blood, the action which effected a genuine identity between "this" (what Jesus held in his hand for them to partake) and his body, between "this" and his blood. There is no other valid interpretation of Christ's words. He did not say, "This takes the place of (stands for, represents, shows) my body," or "This is a figure (likeness, representation, symbol, memorial) of my body." He said, "This is my body—this is my blood." While the copula " is " may sometimes have an allegorical significance (as obviously in Gn 41:26 ff., or in Ga 4:24), the reasons involving the acceptance of an allegorical sense do not apply here at all.[3] Also, the idea that" my body" meant the " likeness," "figure," or "symbol," of my body is impossible on philological grounds: the words" body" (τό σώμα) and " blood" (το αίμα) in Greek never mean "figure" or "representation" of the body and blood;[4] furthermore, there is no symbolic resemblance between bread and the human body.[5] Be-

[3] Whenever Jesus uses expressions in a figurative sense, it is made clear by the context; for example, he says, "I am the true vine," but not, "this vine is myself, is my body, " etc.

[4] C. Dyobouniotes, Τα Μυστήρια της ανατολικής ορθοδόξου Εκκλησίας εξ έπόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1912 [1913]), P· 93·

[5] In Scripture, the only other meaning given to the expression " eat my flesh, " besides the literal one, is " to slander " (e.g., Ps. 27:2 [LXX 26:2]; Mi 3:3; Ezk 59: 17, 18; Jm 5:3); its inapplicability here is obvious.

sides, to suppose that in an event of such supreme importance the Lord did not clearly state what he wanted to say, using the obvious meanings of ordinary words, would be unthinkable, especially in view of what happened at Capernaum when so many left him on this very account. The meaning of the institution is literal.

The apostles clearly understood. When John reports Christ saying, “This bread which I am to give is my flesh,” he takes these words in their literal sense. When Paul describes what happened at the Last Supper and at the Eucharistic meals at Corinth, he does the same:” anyone who eats the bread and drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will be behaving unworthily towards the body and blood of the Lord” (1 Cor 11:27); and, “a person who eats and drinks without recognizing the Body [of Christ] is eating and drinking his own condemnation” (1 Cor 11:29-30).

There are other passages in Paul's epistles that make the same point: “The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ. The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf” (1 Cor 10:16-18).[6] The traditional signs of unity effected by the ceremonial actions of bread-breaking and partaking of the one cup were transformed by the Eucharist into real union and oneness in Christ.

Christ's explicit statement of his blood being the blood of the covenant, found in Matthew and Mark, are of extraordinary importance: “This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many.” Matthew is writing to the Jews, and his meaning would not be lost on them since it refers to the Passover.

According to Exodus 24:8, the Old Testament covenant between Yahweh and his people was consecrated by the blood of victims: “And taking the Book of the Covenant he read it to the listening

[6] He goes on to contrast the Eucharist with the food sacrificed to idols: “Does this mean that the food sacrificed to idols has a real value, or that the idol itself is real? Not at all. It simply means that the sacrifices that they offer *they sacrifice to demons who are not God.* I have no desire to see you in communion with demons. You cannot take your share at the table of the Lord and at the table of demons “ (1 Co 10:19-22).

people, and they said, ' We will observe all that Yahweh has decreed; we will obey.' Then Moses took the blood of the Covenant and cast it towards the people. ' This,' he said,' is the blood of the Covenant that Yahweh has made with you, containing all these rules.'“

The Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. 9) explains the parallel between the two covenants, showing that the blood of the ancient victims was figurative and of itself powerless, while the blood of Christ “won an eternal redemption for us.” The one restores only the holiness of outward lives, while the other, as a “perfect sacrifice to God through the eternal Spirit, can purify our inner self.” That which Jesus held in his hands and gave to drink was not merely a figure of his blood, otherwise it would have been no more effective than its Old Testament symbol.

The Eucharist was the fulfillment of the Passover; if it bestowed nothing more than the Passover, how could it be its fulfillment? The Passover was a symbol of Christ's body and blood, a comprehensible one. Why, then, substitute a less obvious one, the bread and wine, unless they ceased to be mere bread and wine? Only then would Christ's statements recorded in John 6:51 ff. come true: “The bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world,” and, “my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink,” etc.; only then would the bread and wine—Christ's flesh and blood—have the power to give true, eternal life, in contrast with material bread and wine, or even with the manna of old which could give only physical and transitory life. Then only could Christ have spoken the truth when he said: “He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood lives in me and I live in him.”

CHAPTER XV

THE BASIC MEANING OF THE EUCHARIST IN THE EARLY CHURCH

The early Church understood the presence of Christ in the Eucharist in a literal way, preached it and wrote about it. At the beginning of the second century, St. Ignatius, the martyred bishop of Antioch, wrote to the Church of Smyrna: "The Docetists abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ that suffered for our sins and that the Father, out of his goodness, has raised from the dead." [1] If the Christians had believed that the Eucharist was only a symbol or appearance, the Docetists would not have been heretics. To the Philadelphians, Ignatius wrote: "Be careful, then, to have but one Eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup for [demonstrating] the unity of his blood." [2]

Some fifty years later (c. A.D. 150), Justin Martyr explains the doctrine of the Eucharist to Emperor Antoninus Pius, the Senate, and Roman people: "Not as ordinary bread and common drink do we partake of them, but just as, through the word of God, our Savior Jesus Christ became incarnate and took upon himself flesh and blood for our salvation, so, we have been taught, the food which has been made the Eucharist by the prayer of his word... is the flesh and blood of this Jesus who was made flesh." [3]

In the late second century, Gnosticism was becoming a special threat to the Christian Church since it assimilated many Christian beliefs and practices into its own system. The Gnostics believed in the Eucharist in much the same way as the Christians, but insisted that matter was evil, a corruption of the divine. They denied that Christ was Son of God who created the world, and rejected the resurrection of the body and other points of Christian doctrine.

[1] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Smyrn.,* 7, PG 5, 713 A.

[2] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Philadelph.,* 4, PG 5, 700 B.

[3] Justin, I *Apol.,* 66, PG 6, 428 C; cf. also *Dialog, cum Tryphone*$_t$ 41, PG 6, 564 B-565 A.

Irenaeus (fl. A.D. 177), their fierce antagonist, tried to show the inconsistencies of their teachings: "How can they be consistent with themselves [when they say] that the bread over which thanks have been given is the body of their Lord, and the cup of his blood, if they do not call him the Son of the Creator of the world, that is, his Word...,[4] and, "Then, again, how can they say that the flesh, which is nourished with the body of the Lord and with his blood, goes to corruption, and does not partake of life?"[5] When they deny the salvation of the flesh, he tells them: "Then neither did the Lord redeem us with his blood, nor is the cup of the Eucharist the communion of his blood, nor the bread which we break the communion of his body." [6] Created things cannot be evil of themselves, he further argues, since God the Creator takes the cup which is a part of creation and "declares it is his own blood, and through it he finds his way into our blood." And he assures us that "the bread [also a part of creation] is his own body with which he feeds our bodies. When, therefore, the mingled cup and the hand-made bread receive the Word of God and the Eucharist becomes the body of Christ, from which the substance of our flesh is increased and nourished, how can they affirm that the flesh is incapable of receiving the gift of God, eternal life—the flesh which is nourished from the body and blood of the Lord, and is a member of him?"[7] As if to avoid any possible misinterpretation of this last phrase, he repeats it several times in the same paragraph," the same flesh is nourished by the cup which is his blood, and receives increase from the bread which is his body." He asserts that the product of the vine and the wheat not only serve the needs of man, but" after receiving the Word of God, become the Eucharist which is the body and blood of Christ," etc.[8]

Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 150-211) explains many Christian truths by his allegories. Unraveling them from the realities which he preaches is often difficult because we know so little about his

[4] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haeres.,* IV, 18, 4, PG 7, 1027 AB.

[5] *Ibid.,* 5, PG 7, 1028 A.

[6] *Ibid., V, 2, 2,* PG *7,* 1124 B.

[7] *Ibid.,* 2 and 3, PG 7, 1125 A-1126 A.

[8] *Ibid.,* PG 7, 1126 B-1127 B.

time. Yet, he clearly teaches the literal sense of the Eucharist. In one of his better-known passages, for example, he states: “The Word is everything to the child, father, mother, tutor and nurse. * Eat my flesh,' he (God the Word) says, ' and drink my blood.' Such is the food suited to one's needs which the Lord ministers; he offers his flesh, pours forth his blood, and nothing is lacking for the children's growth. O amazing mystery!” [9]

For all his allegories, Origen (c. A.D. 185-254), too, teaches that the heavenly food is literally the body and blood of Christ when he compares the Old Testament antecedents with their fulfillment in the New: “Formerly, baptism took place enigmatically in a cloud and in the sea, but now regeneration clearly takes place in water and the Holy Spirit. Then, in an enigmatic way, manna was food, but now, in a clear way, the flesh of the Divine Word is the true food, as he himself says, ' My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink."“[10]

Receiving Communion in the hand was customary in the ancient Church. Origen refers to it as receiving the body of the Lord: “When you receive the body of the Lord, you do it with all caution and reverence so that not even the tiniest particle of it fall to the ground, so that not a bit of the consecrated gift be lost.”[11]

Dionysius of Alexandria (A.D. 264) speaks of the same practice as a partaking of Christ's body and blood when he tells of a man who doubted the validity of his baptism though he “had stood at the holy table, had stretched forth his hand to receive the holy food, and had been a partaker of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ for a very long time.” [12]

. Tertullian (A.D. 222) writes of the same custom when he bewails the reception of idol-makers into the Church and the fact that they “would apply to the Lord's body those same hands which fashion bodies on demons.”[13] Christ's words, recorded in Matthew 18:8, he

[9] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedag.,* I, 6, 41, 3, PG 8, 300 AB.

[10] Origen, *In Numer., homil.* 7, 2, PG 12, 613 C.

[11] Origen, *Homil. 13, in Exod.,* 3, PG 12, 391 A.

[12] In Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* VII, 9, PG 20, 656 AB.

[13] Tertullian, *De idolol.,* 7, PL 1, 745 A.

says, should be taken literally: “What hands should be cut off quicker than those in which scandal is done to the Lord's body?” [14] Had it been done to a mere symbol or figure, such radical correction would have been unwarranted. Tertullian describes the inner-outer reality of several sacramental mysteries in these words: “The flesh, indeed, is washed, that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed, that the soul too may be fortified; the flesh is shadowed with the imposition of hands, that the soul may be illuminated by the Spirit; the flesh feeds on the body and blood of Christ, that the soul likewise may fatten on God.” [15]

Reconciling the lapsed was a burning issue in North Africa in Cyprian's day. Until then, A.D. 252, the Church's discipline imposed strict, long years of penance before they could be reconciled (see below, pp. 228 ff.). Theirs was a lapse of courage, not of faith. Cyprian and the North African bishops knew this well and, with another persecution imminent, decided in a synod to ease the conditions for readmission of the lapsed. Writing to Pope Cornelius, Cyprian indicates the strengthening of soul through Communion as one of the main reasons, so that “we may not leave those whom we arouse and exhort to battle unarmed and naked, but may fortify them with the protection of Christ's body and blood. The Eucharist is designated for this very purpose that it may be a safeguard to those who receive it....”[16]

Many of those readmitted later sealed their faith with martyrdom— but some were receiving Communion without confession, absolution, or expiation. Quoting Paul's condemnation of the Corinthians (1 Co 10:21 and 11:27), Cyprian minces no words: they have received “before their sin is expiated, before confession has been made of their crime, before their conscience has been purged by sacrifice and by the hand of the priest, before the offence of an angry and threatening Lord has been appeased; thereby violence is done to his

[14] *Ibid.,* 745 AB.

[15] Tertullian, *De carn. resur.,* 8, PL 2, 852 AB; cf. also *De oratione,* 19, PL I, 1287 A, and *De pudicitia,* 9, PL 2, 1051 A.

[16] Cyprian, *Ep.* 54 (Oxford edit. 57), 2, PL 3, 883 A.

body and blood, and now they sin against their Lord more with their hand and mouth than when they denied their Lord." [17]

East, West, North and South—the testimony of early Christian writers is always the same: the Eucharist is literally the body and blood of Christ. Not one dissenting opinion! The evidence of the fourth and fifth centuries is the same, but much more abundant.[18] A few typical texts will suffice.

Cyril of Jerusalem (A.D. 348) introduces his *Lecture on the Body and Blood of Christ* by citing the Scriptural account of the institution, then he asks, "Since he himself (Jesus) declared and said of the bread, *This is my Body,* who shall dare to doubt any longer? And since he has himself affirmed and said, *This is my Blood,* who shall ever hesitate, saying that it is not his blood?"[19]

His vigorous realism shines through the entire Lecture: "Therefore, let us share in Christ's body and blood with complete conviction. For in the ' figure' of the bread the body is given to you and in the 'figure' of the wine is given to you the blood, so that, by sharing in the body and blood of Christ, you may become one body and blood with Christ. Thus we become χριστοφόροι [lit., Christ-bearers], since the body and blood are shared among our members. Thus, according to blessed Peter, we become sharers in the divine nature [through the medium of Christ' body and blood]...."[20]

"Consider therefore the bread and wine, not as bare elements," he continues," because they are Christ's body and blood according to the Lord's own assertion.... Judge not the matter from the taste but from faith; be completely certain, without any misgiving, that you have been given the body and blood of Christ."[21]

" Instructed as you are in these matters and convinced," he tells

[17] Cyprian, *De lapsis,* 15-16, PL 4, 493 AB. For more detail on the first three centuries regarding the Eucharist, see I. I. Dollinger, *Die Lehre von der Eucharistie in den drei ersten Jarhhunderten* (Mainz, 1826); still an excellent survey.

[18] Cf. *La perpetuiti de la Foi,* edit. Nicole, Arnaud, and Renaudot, 5 Vols (Paris, 1669-1713).

[19] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XXII (mystag. IV),* 1, PG 33, 1097 A.

[20] *Cat. XXII,* 3, PG 33, 1100 A.

[21] *Ibid.,* 6, PG33, 1101 A.

his audience, "that what seems to be bread is not bread, though it tastes like bread, but is the body of Christ, and what seems to be wine is not wine although it tastes like it, but is the blood of Christ." [22]

Cyril attributes the change to the operation of the Holy Spirit: "We beseech the merciful God to send forth his Holy Spirit upon the gifts lying before him, that he may make the bread the body of Christ and the wine the blood of Christ, for certainly whatsoever the Holy Spirit has touched, is sanctified and changed (ήγίαστοα καΐ μεταβέβληται)." [23]

Chrysostom (A.D. 345?-407), in his *Homily XXIV on First Corinthians,* paraphrases Paul's words to them (1 Co 10:16 ff.): "This which is in the cup is that which flowed from his (Christ's) side, and of that do we partake,"[24] and, "What is the bread? The Body of Christ."[25] Explaining the phrase "communion with the altar," he says, "It is a communion of the Lord's Body. For not with the altar, but with Christ himself, do we have communion."[26] To induce great reverence in receiving the Eucharist, he urges the faithful Christian to consider the effects of communion: "And when you see It [the Eucharist] placed before you, say to yourself, 'Because of this Body, I am no longer earth and ashes, no longer a prisoner but free; because of this Body, I hope to reach heaven and receive its goods, immortal life, the portion of angels, intimacy with Christ. This very Body the sun saw sacrificed and turned aside its beams.... This is that very Body, bloodstained, pierced, and out of which gushed the saving fountains.... This Body he has given to us to hold and to eat, a thing appropriate to intense love for those whom we kiss vehemently, we often even bite with our teeth!"[27]

From Cappadocia and Milan, his contemporaries teach the same doctrine. Basil (A.D. 372) writes, "It is beneficial and good to communicate every day, to partake of the Holy Body and Blood of Christ, for he distinctly says,' He that eateth my flesh and drinketh

[22] *Ibid.,* 9, PG 33, 1104 BC.

[23] *Ibid.,* 7, PG 33, 1113 C-1116 A.

[24] Chrysostom, *In I Cor. Hotnil. 24,* 1, PG 61, 199.

[25] *Ibid.,* 2, PG 61, 200.

[26] *Ibid.,* 201.

[27] *Ibid.,* 203.

my blood hath eternal life.'"[28] No less forcefully does Ambrose (A.D. 340-397) point out: "Jesus Christ himself cries out, *' This is my body*.' Before the blessing with the heavenly words, it is another kind of thing which we distinguish by name, but after the consecration, it is the body that is meant. He himself said that it was his blood. Before the consecration, it had another name; after it, it is called blood. And you say, *Amen,* it is true."[29]

From Nyssa, the power of Gregory's words is precise: "Up to a certain point of time, the bread is common bread, but when the sacramental action consecrates (ίερουργ-ήση) it, it is called and moreover is the body of Christ."[30] In his magnificent *Great Catechism* (A.D. 385), he develops the doctrine of substantial change very much akin to what was later called transubstantiation: "Rightly, then, do we believe that now also the bread which is consecrated by the Word of God is changed into the Body of God the Word. For that Body was once, by implication, bread, but has been consecrated by the inhabitation of the Word that tabernacled in the flesh. Therefore, from the same cause as that by which the bread that was transformed in that Body was changed to a Divine potency, a similar result takes place now. For as in that case, too, the grace of the Word used to make holy the Body, the substance of which came of the bread, and in a manner was itself bread, so also in this case the bread, as says the Apostle [1 Tm 4:5], ' is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer'; not that it advances by the process of eating (δια βρώσεως) to the stage of passing into the body of the Word, but it is at once changed into the body by means of the Word, as the Word itself said,' This is My Body.'"[31] He also explains how the Eucharist will impart immortality to man: "...the God who was manifested infused Himself into perishable humanity for this purpose, viz., that by this communion with Deity mankind might at the same time be deified, for this end it is that, by dispensation of His grace, He disseminates Himself in every believer through that flesh,

[28] Basil, *Ep. 93, ad Caesariam,* PG 32, 484 B.

[29] Ambrose, *De Mysteriis,* 9, 50-54, PL 16, 405 f.

[30] Gregory of Nyssa, *In Bapt. Christi,* PG 46, 581 C.

[31] Gregory of Nyssa, *Oratio Cat.,* 37, PG 45, 96 D-97 A.

whose substance comes from bread and wine, blending Himself with the bodies of believers, in order that man, too, may be a sharer in incorruption by this union with the immortal. He gives these gifts by virtue of the benediction through which He transelements (μεταστοιχεοώσας) the natural quality of these visible things to that immortal thing."[32]

By using the expression "to be transelemented," (μεταστοιχει-οΰσθοα), Gregory defmies more clearly perhaps than some of the other early writers the mode of change from common bread and wine into Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist. The, expressions used by others, however, are quite sufficient to disprove the figurists, memorialists, symbolists, etc., of the last few centuries. Chrysostom, for example, uses the expression, "to be transformed "(μεταρρυθμίζεσθαι);[33] Ambrose, "to be converted" *(convent);*[34] Cyril of Jerusalem and John Damascene, "to be transmuted" (μεταβάλλεσθαι);[35] Cyril of Alexandria, "to be converted" (μεταποιεΐσθοα),[36] etc. Many also illustrated this change (μεταβολή) by comparing it to that which takes place when bread is assimulated into the human body, or that which took place at Cana when the Lord changed water into wine, etc. The changing from bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ was later called transubstantiation. The reality of this change is reflected also in the ancient Eucharistic Liturgies, both Eastern and Western (see below, pp. 184 ff.).

The explicit statements cited above—only a few out of many— are representative of the early Christians' convictions regarding the Eucharist: that in the Eucharist, bread and wine really become Christ's body and blood. Some Fathers and writers also used spiritual explanations which may seem to have a symbolist tendency.

[32] I*bid.,* 97 B.

[33] Chrysostom, *De proditione Iudae, Homil. 1,* 6, PG 49, 380.

[34] Ambrose, *De mysteriis,* 9, 52, PL 16, 406; cf. also *De fide ad Gratianum,* IV, 10, 124, PL 16, 641.

[35] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XXII (mystag. IV),* 7, PG 33, 1116 A; John Damascene, *De Fide Orth.,* IV, 13, PG 94, 1145 A.

[36] Cyril of Alexandria, *In Matt.* 26, 27, PG 72, 452 C. For a more complete list, cf. C. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907), P· 353; also I. E. Mesolora, Συμβολική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής 'Εκκλησίας; Τα συμβολικά βιβλία, Vol. IV (Athens, 1904), P. 271, n. 2.

This is not surprising when we consider their audience. In those days, no Christian denied the reality of Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist, so there was no need for a particularly careful choice of words. The question of interpreting any doubtful or inconclusive expression must always be measured against clear assertions in other parts of their works regarding the true presence. Anyone who prefers to interpret otherwise must always remember one supremely important fact: not one of these writers explicitly argued against the belief that Christ's body and blood are truly, really and literally present in the Eucharist, nor has any one of them expressed any doubt concerning it! In a matter of such paramount importance, they surely would have done so if they had had the slightest doubt!

When some of the Fathers and early writers sometimes speak of the bread and wine being "figures," "types," "symbols," of Christ's body and blood, the context always makes it clear that they are not using the terms as we generally understand them today, as empty symbols of something which is not there: they mean something present, yet invisible. We cannot impose our meanings on them. In the Eucharist, there are two elements, one earthly and visible—since all appearances of bread and wine remain—and the other, heavenly, the invisible reality of Christ's body and blood. Nothing is more natural than that expressions "sign," "image," "figure," "symbol," etc. be used in reference to the outward, visible part. In the Greek Fathers generally, we have a further distinction between "type" (τύπος), and "antitype" (αντίτυπος), with definite, clearly delineated meanings. What did they mean when they sometimes spoke of "the antitypical body and blood of Christ," or "the antitype of Christ's body and blood"?

Cyril of Jerusalem uses this expression also in regard to baptism and chrismation (confirmation). He calls baptism the "antitype (άντίτυπον) of Christ's sufferings,"[37] but before that he emphatically and repeatedly contrasted the reality of Christ's sufferings with the figurative representation of the same.[38] Furthermore, he contrasts, no less emphatically, this figurative representation with the real and

[37] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XX (mystag. II),* 6, PG 33, 1081 B.
[38] *Cat. XX,* 4 and 5, PG 33, 1080 B-1081 A.

actual bestowal of the grace of salvation.[39] Thus, he clearly distinguishes what the Latins later called (1) the "res sacramenti," Christ's actual, historical death and redemption; (2) the "external sign," the outward form of baptism, and (3) the "virtue of the sacrament," our very real participation in the benefits of that death and redemption, "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness. "So he concludes that baptism" as it purges our sins, and ministers (πρόξενον) to us the gift of the Holy Spirit, so it is also the antitype of the sufferings of Christ."

Cyril makes the same distinctions regarding chrismation (confirmation), when he says, "Now you have been made Christs (χριστοί) by receiving the antitype (άντίτυπον) of the Holy Spirit, and all things have been wrought in you by imitation, because you are images of Christ," and "there was given to you an unction, the antitype of that with which Christ was anointed, and this is the Holy Spirit." [40] Thus, again, he has (1) the "res sacramenti," Christ being anointed with the Holy Spirit at his baptism, (2) the external sign or figure, the anointing of the person confirmed, and (3) the spiritual benefit or "virtue," his participation in the Holy Spirit, or the very real reception of the actual Holy Spirit, as as he put it himself," while your body is anointed with the visible ointment, your soul is sanctified by the Holy and Life-giving Spirit." [41]

Cyril's distinction between type and antitype, therefore, is quite clear: the former is simply the outward sign of the sacrament; the latter includes with the sign the actual, spiritual, inner reality or counterpart in us of the thing signified, i.e., the benefits of Christ's death and redemption in the case of baptism, and the Holy Spirit himself in the case of chrismation (Confirmation).

Cyril uses the same distinction regarding the Eucharist. Referring to the words of Psalm 34:9," O taste and see that the Lord is good," sung during the distribution of Communion, he says, "In tasting, we are bidden to taste, not the bread and wine, but the antitypical body and blood of Christ."[42] This "antitypical body," it follows,

[39] *Ibid.,* 6 and 7, PG 33, 1081 B-1084 C.
[40] *Cat. XXI (mystag. III), 1* and *2,* PG 33, 1088 A and 1089 A.
[41] *Cat. XXI,* 3, PG 33, 1092 A.
[42] *Cat. XXIII (mystag. V),* 20, PG 33, 1124 B.

is not the mere sign or figure (τύπος) of Christ's natural body (Christ's natural, historical body, crucified for us, is the "res sacramenti"), but the sacramental counterpart (antitype) of it, or, in other words, the actual participation of his real body by the recipient (i.e., the benefit). That is why he could say with complete conviction, " Let us share in Christ's body and blood. For in the ' figure' of the bread the body is given to you and in the ' figure' of the wine is given to you the blood, so that by sharing in the body and blood of Christ, you may become one body and blood with Christ. Thus we become χριστοφόροι (lit., Christ-bearers), since the body and blood are shared among our members." [43] The body which is given cannot be an *absent* body of Christ, but in reality *is* his body. That is why we become one body and blood with Christ and sharers in the divine nature.

Catholics and Orthodox who believe that Christ's true body and blood are found under the appearances of bread and wine in the Eucharist have some difficulty, even today, when referring to the appearances. They call them visible, sensible signs of what is invisibly present. But the expression" signs "is not much better than "symbols," "types," "figures," or "representations." Extreme caution must be exercised when speaking of these realities, [44] especially in the light of recent history; for example, saying that "bread and wine are the visible signs of Christ's body and blood," can still be misinterpreted to mean that the bread and wine remain what they were, and that they are mere signs of Christ's body which is now not here. That is why the Schoolmen found it convenient to call the change transubstantiation—a process through which

[43] *Cat. XXII (mystag. IV),* 3, PG 33, 1100 A.

[44] As early as A.D. 410, Macarius the Great warned against the possible misinter pretation of type (figure) and antitype: "Thus in taking the bread and chalice, he [Christ] said, ' This is my body and my blood.' Therefore, it is not a type (figure) of the body nor a type (figure) of the blood, as certain people with foolish minds have been talking such nonsense, but it is truly the body and blood of Christ." Cf. Pitra, *Spicileg. solesm.,* I (Paris, 1852), 548 b, or C. Blondel, Μακαρίου Μαγνήτου 'Ανακριτικός ή Μονογενής (Paris, 1876), 105; so John Damascene: " Now, you ask how the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine and water his blood? I answer the Holy Spirit descends and achieves it—above reason and comprehension... The bread and wine are not' types ' of his body and blood but the deified body of Christ himself" *(De Fide Orth.,* IV, 13, PG 94, 1145 A 1148 A).

the "substance " of the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of the Lord, while the "accidents" (or "appearances") of bread and wine remain.

Clothing immeasurable, spiritual realities with measured, palpable words is always difficult, even for us who have vast storehouses of accepted terminology culled from centuries of usage. For the early writers and Fathers who had to borrow terms from paganism and Judaism and put the new Christian meaning into them, it was a superhuman task. It took centuries for some of the Christian terminology to become settled. Yet, while using different terms, they managed to preach a single doctrine. The Eucharist is at once material and spiritual. Christ's body, truly present in the Eucharist, is itself the symbol and the real cause of another reality, that of the mystical body. It was quite impossible to write about all this without occasionally giving rise to misinterpretations.[45] All things considered, it is amazing that there were so few.

Had the early Christians believed that the Eucharist was a mere symbol, figure or memorial of Christ's body and blood, the accusation of cannibalism would not have been leveled against them. But it was, time and time again.[46] The gruesome charges, stories and rumors of Christian ritual murder, based on a misunderstanding of the Eucharist, were believed not merely by a few fanatically cruel

[45] Thus, for example, Augustine who clearly teaches the true presence in such statements as, "It is because he [Christ] lived in the flesh and it is this flesh which he has given us to eat for our salvation, that no one must eat this flesh if he has not first adored it," may sometimes give a cursory reader occasion to misinterpret his teaching. In commenting on the sixth chapter of John's Gospel, he rejects the crass cannibalistic misinterpretation of the people at Capernaum and stresses the spiritual sense of the Eucharist (*In Joan.* tr. XXVI, 13 f., PL 35, 1612 ff., and tr. XXVII, PL 35, 1617). A careful reader, however, will see immediately that he rightly presupposes the real, true body and blood of Christ as the cause of union between Christ and the faithful; he wishes the faithful not only to eat the body of Christ materially, but also spiritually by uniting themselves with him and with each other by a mutual bond of charity. To have the desired, good effects, the sacrament must be received worthily: "This, then, will take place," he says in another work, "the body and blood of Christ are life for everyone, if what is consumed visibly in the sacrament, in truth itself is spiritually eaten and is spiritually drunk" *(Serm. 131,* 1, PL 38, 729).

[46] One only has to read Tertullian to see what went on in the public's mind, and his caustic defense against such charges. Cf. *Apolog.* 2, PL 1, 318-321 and 8, PL 1, 363-365·

and ignorant pagans. In spite of all the fury, scorn and hatred heaped against them under the pretext of these supposed cannibalistic orgies, not once did a Christian writer explain that the Eucharist was not really Christ's body and blood, but merely a memorial, a symbol or figure of it. This in itself is proof enough that the early Christians believed in the Real Presence.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ANCIENT CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

The prominence given the Eucharistic celebration in the ancient Church leaves no doubt that at the time it was the most important part of Christian liturgical life. It originated in the simple rite instituted by Jesus at the Last Supper the night before he died. The paschal ritual framing the Eucharistic rite was not considered essential to it, otherwise the Gospel account would not have omitted so many of its details.

Still, the oldest sources, the *Acts* and Paul's *First Epistle to the Corinthians,* call this celebration, "The Breaking of the Bread,"[1] suggesting the Jewish preliminary ceremony of bread-breaking at a meal (with the usual Jewish blessing of bread and the giving of thanks). At Corinth, Paul refers to the Eucharistic rite and the meal simply as "the Lord's Supper" (1 Co 11:20). Frequent repetition of the paschal ritual is out of the question: it is too complicated and its repeated performance would have contradicted the prescriptions of the Old Law to which the apostles still clung. But pious Jewish households had other solemn religious suppers, especially the *chaburah* which was furnished with formality and consecration. Held on Sabbath and holyday eves, its ritual could be used with as much effect as the paschal rites in the celebration of the Eucharist, for it, too, included the ceremonies of bread-breaking and of the cup of the blessing which could be shared with family and friends as a sign of unity. During its course, the head of the family or host took bread, broke it, while pronouncing the customary blessing of bread, and gave a fragment to each person at table. This blessing and sharing of the one loaf drew the entire group into a unit, into "one company." After the meal, he pronounced a solemn benediction over a special cup of wine, called the Cup of the Blessing, sipped a little from it, and passed it around to each of those

[1] Acts, 2:42, 2:46, 20:7 and I Co. 10:16.

present. Again, this common cup gave a sense of oneness to the whole group.

At the Christian Suppers of the Lord, these ceremonials, present in both the paschal and in the *chaburah* suppers, were made into the Eucharistic celebration by the re-enactment of what Christ had said and done at the Last Supper. What among the Jews had been a mere sign of unity and fellowship was transformed into real union and oneness by sharing in the one body and blood of Christ.[2]

Abuses soon crept in, especially among gentile converts, whose previous background included only religion-sponsored meals that were a pretext for merry-making and drunkenness. This happened at Corinth. Paul's words of reproof thunder down through the centuries. He condemns, not the meal itself, but the shocking selfishness of the participants who ate their own provisions, leaving nothing for the poor, and sometimes even ended in drunkenness.

Later, the meal was separated from the Eucharistic celebration,[3] perhaps because of abuses or on account of the increased number of participants. With the tables removed, a room could accommodate many more people. Only one table remained, at which the bishop or presbyter presided. This now became the focal point known as the "Lord's table," the *mensa Domini*—the altar. Instead of reclining or sitting at supper, the worshippers stood for the whole service, "gathered together for the one common Eucharist." Deprived of most characteristics of a meal, the independent Eucharistic service lost its original designation as "the Lord's Supper," or "the Breaking of Bread," and became known as *Encharistia* (from the prayer

[2] The meal itself was a good way for the richer Christians to share some of their provisions with the poor who had little or none to bring.

[3] The custom of having a common meal, separated from the Eucharistic service, lasted for centuries in form of the *agape,* e.g., cf. Tertullian, *Apologeticus,* chap. 39, PL 1, 538-541; also the various versions of the *Apostolic Tradition,* i.e., the Coptic, Arabic, and Ehiopic (nn. 48-52, 36-38, 37-39, Horner, *The Statutes of the Apostles or Canones Ecclesiastici* [London, 1904L PP. 159-161, 321-323, 103-104, 25-39; the *Canons of Hippolytus,* canons 32-34, cf. W. Riedel, *Die Kirchenrechtsquellen des Patriarchats Alexandrien* [Leipzig, 1900], pp. 221-223, etc.). Even today, traces of it are evident in the Byzantine Church on occasion of funerals, anniver sary Liturgies for the dead, etc., when a common meal is served, or food is distri buted to those attending the service.

of thanksgiving into which the words of institution were inserted).[4] It could now be held at any time of day. Mornings began to be favored, probably for symbolic reasons, in order to have Christ the Sun of Justice and Truth come upon the altar as the natural sun arose in the East.[5]

Since the service was now brief, it usually was held immediately after the catechetical assembly, an instruction and prayer service modeled on the *Morning Service* of the synagogue (and, on occasion, after baptisms, consecration of bishops, etc.). Eventually, the catechetical service was molded into one liturgical whole with the *Eucharistia,* but for years they were two services, the one open to all, including potential converts and penitents, the other, only for the faithful.

In the first detailed descriptions of these services, which Justin (A.D. 148-155) provides, the *Eucharistia* follows baptism on one occasion and the catechetical assembly on another. His descriptions are far from complete, but they are good summaries of what went on in the mysterious gatherings of the Christians:

After Baptism

"Thus, after baptising him that professes his faith and assents to our doctrine, we lead him into the assembly of those called the brethren to say earnest prayers in common for ourselves, for the newly baptised, and for all others all over the world so that we who have come to the knowledge of the truth

[4] Ignatius of Antioch (A.D. 30-107) is one of the first to use the term *Eucharistia (Ad Philad.,* c. 4, PG 5, 821 C). The *Didache* (c. 14) uses the old term "to break bread" and the new one side by side.

[5] Probably after Sunday, the day of the Resurrection, began to be sanctified in addition to Saturday. Since Christ had risen from the dead before sunrise, it probably seemed natural for the early Christians to begin their service then and have the Eucharistic Christ, the Sun of Truth and Justice, come to them just as the natural sun appeared. Cf. F. Dolger, *Sol salutis, Geget und Gesang im Christ-lichen Altertum* (Munster, im W., 1920), 364-379; cf. 123 f. H. Lietzmann, however, theorizes that the reading and prayer service held on Sabbath mornings influenced the shift of the Eucharistic celebration from the evening to morning (cf. *Messe und Herrentnahl. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der Liturgie* [Bonn, 1926], 258).

may also by the grace of God be found worthy to live a good life by deed and to observe the commandments by which we may gain eternal life.

" After finishing the prayers, we greet each other with a kiss. "Then bread and a cup of wine [κράμα, lit.: mixture, but usually used for wine into which a little water has been mixed] are brought to the one presiding over the brethren. When he takes it, he gives praise and glory to the Father of all in the name of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks at length because he considered us worthy of these gifts. "After he finishes the prayers and thanksgiving, all the people present cry out in agreement: ' Amen.' *Amen* is a Hebrew expression and means *So be it.* After the one presiding has given thanks [εύχαριστήσαντος, "has eucharistized"] and all the people have cried out in agreement, the deacons, as they are called by us, distribute the Eucharistic bread and the wine-and-water to every one present so that each may partake, and they [the deacons] carry them to those who are not present."

After the Catechetical Assembly

" And on the day which is called after the sun, all who are in the towns and in the country assemble together in one place and the commentaries of the Apostles or the writings of the Prophets are read, for as long as time permits. When the reader finishes, the one presiding gives a speech in which he admonishes and exhorts [all] to imitate these beautiful teachings [in their lives]. We all then stand up together and recite prayers. And when we have finished the prayers mentioned above, bread and wine-and-water are brought [άρτος προσφέρεται και οίνος και ύδωρ] and the one presiding offers up prayers and likewise thanksgivings as much as he can, and the people chime in with 'Amen.' Then to each is distributed a portion of the things over which the thanksgiving had been spoken [άπό τών εύχαριστηθέντων έκάστω γίνεται, lit.: *over which the eucharistizing was made]* and each one partakes of them, and a share is brought by the deacons to those who were absent." [6]

[6] Justin, 1 *Apol.,* chaps. 65 and 67, PG 6,428 AB and 429 BC. These chapters, unlike chapters IX and X of the *Didache,* definitely refer to the celebration of the Eucharist, for inserted in between (chap. 66, PG 6, 428 BC-430 A) is the following passage: "And this food itself is known among us as the Eucharist... For we do not receive these things as common bread or common drink... so we have learned that the food, made Eucharist by a word of prayer... by change is the flesh and the blood of the incarnate Jesus."

The Eucharistic liturgy as reconstructed from writers of the next two centuries and a half contain all the salient features described by Justin. What preceded the Eucharistic portion of the liturgy need not concern us here, only that at which the initiated alone could participate: (1) Common, Intercessory Prayers of the Faithful; (2) the Kiss of Peace; (3) the Presentation of Bread and Wine or the Offertory; (4) the Eucharistic Prayer; (5) Fraction; (6) Communion; (7) Ablutions and Dismissal.

1. Common, intercessory prayers were said by "those called the brethren,"[7] while they stood,[8] with uplifted hands.[9] Their content must have been similar to the petitions included in Clement of Rome's *Letter to the Corinthians:* for the sick and weak, for those in need, for the erring, the faint-hearted, for peace, for princes, governors and all civil authority, etc.[10] As summarized by Tertullian, there were petitions" for all emperors, that they may have a long life, loyal people, a quiet territory and whatever else may be desired by men and by Caesar." [11] Those given in Sarapion's *Euchologion* are similar: the well-being of the faithful, the peace of the state, tranquillity of the Church, for slaves, the poor, the aged, travelers, the sick, etc.[12] By the fourth or fifth century, these intercessions were well-developed and lengthy. The Syrian Church, as represented by the *Apostolic Constitutions* and corroborated by

[7] Cyprian calls this prayer the *communis oratio (Or. Dom. c. 8,* PL 4, 541 A); also cf. Justin, 1 *Apol.,* c. 67, PG 6, 429 B.

[8] Justin, *J Apol.,* c. 67: "We all then stand up together and recite prayers..." (PG 6, 429 B).

[9] Tertullian *(De orat.,* 17, PL 1, 1278 A; also *Apolog.,* 30, PL 1, 503 A). This was characteristic of all early public prayer, probably dating from apostolic days (1 Tm 2:8).

[10] Clement of Rome, *Ep. ad Corinth.,* 59 and 61*;* edit. F. X. Funk, *Patres Apostolici,* Vol. 1 (Tubingen, 1919), pp. 176-180.

[11] Tertullian, *Apolog.,* chaps. 30, 31, and 39, PL 1, 504 A, 508 A and 532 A; *De Orat.,* 29, PL 1, 1303 A-1304 B.

[12] N. 27; cf. J. Wordsworth, *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer-Book* (London, 1923), P· 39.

Crysostom's writings at Antioch, seem to be the fullest.[13] By this time, they are definitely in litanic form with the deacon announcing the petitions, the faithful replying with a short refrain (usually *Lord, have mercy),* and the celebrant "collecting" them into a formal prayer and directly presenting them to God.

2. The Kiss of Peace, the kiss of the baptised as brothers and sisters, was designed both to put a "seal" on the prayers just recited, [14] and as a sign of belonging to one family under God the Father. Even outside liturgical services, the faithful were not allowed to exchange the kiss with the uninitiated because *"*their kiss is not as yet pure."[15] The new Christian received the kiss for the first time from the bishop, immediately after chrismation-confirmation following baptism.[16] Since the kiss of peace preceded the Eucharistic sacrifice, one meaning eventually overshadowed all its other meanings: reconciliation with one another, in accordance with the Lord's injunction that one has to be reconciled with one's brother before bringing a gift to the altar (Mt 5:34 ff.).

Reconciliation before the sacrifice had always been stressed. At the end of the first century, for example, the *Didache* insists on it "in order that your sacrifice may not be profaned.*"* [17] This is the reason why, after the second century in the East, the kiss of peace was generally regarded as a preliminary to the oblation.[18] What had been a private affair became beautifully expressed publicly by the kiss.

Both the Eastern and the Western Churches later changed the position of the kiss of peace. The Eastern Churches, following

[13] *Apostolic Constitutions,* Book VIII, 10 (edit. *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII [Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.], pp. 485 f·)· Chrysostom, *De prophet, obscurit.,* 2, 5, PG 56, 182-183; *In Matt.* 71 al and 72, 4, PG 58, 66ı-668ȷ *de incompre. Dei not.,* 3, 6, PG 48, 725-726.

[14] Tertullian calls it the *signaculum orationis, De or.,* 19, PL 1, 1281 A.

[15] Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* xviii, 3 (edit. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome* [London, I937], 29)·

[16] Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* xxii, 3 (edit. Dix, 39).

[17] *Didache,* c. 14, 2.

[18] Thus, Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* iv, 1 (edit. Dix, 6); Canon 19 of Laodicean Council (A.D. 363), cf. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio,* Vol. II, 567; *Apost. Const.,* VIII, 11, 7-9, cf. edit. F. X. Funk, 494; Chrysostom, *De compunctione,* 1, 3, PG 47, 398, etc.

Jerusalem's lead, transferred it from before the offertory to after it, but still before the Eucharistic Prayer.[19] The Western Church, with Africa leading, changed it to its present place before Holy Communion,[20] for which it was deemed a good preparation.[21]

In the ancient Church, the kiss of peace was exchanged between bishop and presbyters: in the congregation, from man to man and from woman to woman,[22] probably because of the fear of abuse.[23]

3. Presentation of Bread and Wine — Offertory. "Then bread and a cup of wine are brought to the one presiding over the brethren. When he takes it, he gives praise and glory to the Father...*"* This is how Justin describes the primitive offertory,[24] and he calls it the προσφορά, the offering or oblation.[25] By this, he says. "We refer to the sacrifices which we gentiles offer to him everywhere, the Eucharistic bread and the Eucharistic chalice."[26] Προσφέρειν τά δώρα" to offer the gifts," Clement of Rome tells us about a half century

[19] Thus, Cyril of Jerusalem, (Car. *XXIII,* 3, PG 33, 1112 A) already has it after the offertory. At Antioch, (c. A.D. 390, Chrysostom still places it before the offertory *{De compunctione,* 1, 3, PG 47, 398), but in fifth-century Syria the kiss comes after the offertory, like Jerusalem's (cf. Ps. Dionysius the Areopagite, *De hierarchia eccl.,* chaps. 2 and 3, in Brightman, LEW, Appendix E, p. 488); southern Asia Minor followed suit (cf. Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Catecheses, v;* edit. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* [Cambridge, 1933], p. 92).

[20] E.g., cf. Augustine, *Sermo 227,* PL 38, 1101. For Rome, the change came before A.D. 416 (cf. Innocent I, *Ep. 25,* 1, PG 20, 553; also, Gregory the Great, *Dial,* III, 36, PL 77, 304 C and *In ev.,* II, 37, 9, PL 76, 1281 A; Sophronius, *Vita s. Marieae Aeg.,* 22, PL 73, 687 B). The Milanese Church held off until much later but before the 9th century, though it still kept the early invitation to it, *Pacem habete,* in the ancient position (cf. *Missale Ambrosianum Duplex,* p. 236). The Mozarabic Rite, probably due to the influences of the Byzantines in the sixth-century when they temporarily occupied Spain, adopted what is essentially the Byzantine position of the kiss in its Mass.

[21] E.g., cf. Gregory the Great, *Dial.,* III, 36, PL 77, 304 C.

[22] E.g., Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad,* xviii, 4 (edit. Dix 29); Canon 19 of Laodicean Synod, c. A.D. 363 (Mansi, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, 567).

[23] Apparently, abuse led some of the Fathers to urge great reserve and modesty in imparting the kiss of peace, e.g., Clement of Alexandria *(Paedagogus,* III, II, 81, 2-82 [PG 8, 660 B]); Origen *(In Rom. homil. X,* 33 [PG 14, 1282-1284]); hence, fear of abuse was probably the greatest reason for its discontinuance among the laity later.

[24] Justin, J *Apol.,* c. 65, PG 6, 423 A.

[25] Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.,* c. 41, PG 6, 564 B.

[26] Justin, *Dial. Tryph.,* c. 41, PG 6, 564 C.

before, was the "bishop's office."[27] Hippolytus gives a little more detail: the deacons bring up the oblation (προσφορά) to the bishop, the gifts are placed on the altar, and he and the presbyters lay their hands over the oblations in silent prayer.[28] The diaconal and episcopal offices in the offertory are even more clearly distinguished by him in his version of the ordination prayer of a deacon: "the office of deacon is" to bring (ἀναφέρειν) that which is offered (προσφέρεται) to you by the ordained high-priest." [29]

The Canons of the Council of Ancyra (c. A.D. 314) are even more emphatic about the distinction of liturgical offices regarding the offertory: the bishop is" to offer" (προσφέρειν) the oblation (τά προσφορά); the deacon is "to bring it up" or "present it" (ἀναφέρειν); and the faithful, the communicants, are "to bring" (προσενέγκειν) it to the church or to the deacon.[30] Thus, all have their own part to fulfill in the ancient rite, a true, corporate offering by the Church in its organic, hierarchic unity.

During the first two centuries, the acts of offering by faithful, deacons, presbyters or bishops were simple and unceremonious, perhaps to distinguish them from pagan and Jewish sacrificial practices. At this time, the infant Church emphasized the spiritual character of the offering as the Gift from heaven. With increased threats from Gnosticism (the complex Greco-Oriental system of beliefs in the essential antithesis of matter and spirit) and Docetism (the exaggeration of the spiritual nature of Christianity to the extent of denying the reality of Christ's human nature), the Church began to stress the value of material creation, the goodness of earthly gifts bestowed by God, and not by some malign power, and offering them back to him as the "first-fruits of his creation." This can be detected already in Irenaeus who asks the Gnostics how they can believe that the bread over which thanks has been given is the Lord's body and the cup his blood if these are the creation of some inferior or malignant power.[31]

[27] Clement of Rome, *Ad Cor.,* 44, PG 1, 300 A; cf. *ibid.,* 36, PG 1, 280 B.

[28] Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* iii, 2 and ix, 11 (edit. Dix 6, and 17-18).

[29] Cf. Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* ix, 11 (edit. Dix, 17-18), for full prayer.

[30] Council of Ancyra, Canons 1, 2, 3; cf. Mansi, *op. cit.,* II, 513 ff.; or NPNF, Series II, Vol. XIV, pp. 63-64.

[31] Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.,* IV, 18, 5, PG 7, 1028 B-1029 A.

To emphasize the goodness of earthly, created gifts, the Church began also to embellish with ceremonies the proper liturgies for the different classes of the *eccksia's* members. In the Western Church, for example, greater stress was given to the laity's part in offering the gifts by having an offertory procession in which the faithful brought their gifts to the altar as if to God himself.[32] In the East, special rooms, the *diakonia,* were provided where the faithful deposited their gifts. Then the deacons solemnly brought them to the altar, originating the formal Great Entrance. The celebrant's part was enriched with more prayer, *ektenys,* and the like.

4. The Eucharistic Prayer (Anaphora or Canon). At the Jewish *chaburah,* a dialogue between the presiding host and his guests preceded the *berakah* or thanksgiving-blessing. At small intimate suppers, the host would begin: "Let us give thanks to the Lord." [33] When at least a hundred people were present, the phrase" our God "was added.[34] The assembly gave its "assent" and the host would go on with the *berakah.* In separating the Eucharistic celebration from the formal supper, the Christians kept the dialogue and the "thanksgiving" into which they wove the narrative of the institution and the words of the Lord. The Christian counterparts of the Jewish thanksgiving consisted in praise, glorification, and an expression of gratitude to God for all his gifts—a grateful recital of God's beneficence to mankind from creation, through deliverance.[35] Sometimes this first part was elaborated to stress the glorification of the divine name, sometimes the divine "economy," i.e., the dispensation of salvation in creation and redemption.

The primitive Eucharistic Prayer was more than a prayer of thanksgiving. It served as an introduction, arousing a sense of

[32] From an era as early as Constantine's, for example, a fully developed offertory-procession is seen in the floor mosaic of the church at Aquileia, in which the people are bringing bread, wine, grapes, flowers, and even a bird; cf. illustration in Righetti, *Manuale di storia liturgica,* II (Milan-Genoa, 1945), 29.

[33] According to rabbinical prescription, this formula was to be used" whenever there are ten in company;" cf. Tractate, *Berakdth,* vii, 5.

[34] *Berakdth,* vii, 4 and 5.

[35] See C. Kucharek, *Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (Allendale, N. J., 1971) for comparison of Jewish *berakah-prayer* with its Christianized counter part, pp. 553 f.

gratitude, and praising the works of God. It always mentioned the greatest work of all: the incarnation and redemption and the institution of the Eucharist, which made these mysteries effective for us, that is, "making the Eucharist" again through the consecratory formula in accordance with Christ's command, "Do this for an *anamnesis* of me." The verbal prayer always developed into an act: the reenactment of the Last Supper.

The first Christians believed that "making the Eucharist" was a true sacrifice with an aura of gratitude. The *Didache* refers to an assembling in common on the Lord's day to break bread and to offer thanks, with prior confession of one's sins, "so that your sacrifice may be pure." [36] Insisting on previous reconciliation with one another, it reiterates categorically: "your sacrifices must not be defiled,"[37] and quotes Malachy's prophecy to underscore the sacrificial concept: "In every place and time offer me a pure sacrifice; for I am mighty King, says the Lord; and my name spreads among the nations." [38] Justin, too, connects the prophecy of Mala-chy with the Eucharistic sacrifice: "Malachy has prophesied about the sacrifices which we offer in every place, that is, about the bread and the chalice of the Eucharist." [39] So did Irenaeus,[40] and other Fathers after him: Cyprian,[41] Cyril of Jerusalem,[42] Gregory of Nys-sa,[43] Chrysostom,[44] Ambrose,[45] Augustine,[46] etc.

A doxology always ended the Eucharistic Prayer, which the people confirmed with an Amen. Justin accords the Amen great importance.

The oldest extant Eucharistic formulary is that of Hippolytus of Rome:

[36] *Didache,* c. 14, 1.
[37] *Didache, c.* 14, 2.
[38] *Didache,* c. 14, 3.
[39] Justin, *Dial. c. Tryph.,* 41, PG 6, 564 C.
[40] Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.,* IV, 16, 6, PG 7, 1024.
[41] Cyprian, *Ep. LXIII, ad Caecilium,* PL 4, 384 AB.
[42] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XXIII,* 4-10, PG 33, 1112 B-1117 A.
[43] Gregory of Nyssa, *In Christi resur.,* orat. I, PG 46, 612.
[44] Chrysostom, *Homil. in ep. ad Hebr. XVII,* 3, PG 63, 131*; De sacerdotio,* 3, 4, PG 48, 642.
[45] Ambrose, *Enarr. in Ps. 38,* 25, PL 14, 1102.
[46] Augustine, *Cont. Faustum,* 20, 21, PL 42, 385.

— The Lord be with you.
— And with thy spirit.
— Lift up your hearts.
— We have them with the Lord.
— Let us give thanks unto the Lord.
— [It is] meet and right.

" — We render thanks unto thee, O God, through Thy Beloved Child Jesus Christ, Whom in the last times Thou didst send to us [to be] a Saviour and Redeemer and the Messenger of Thy counsel; Who is Thy Word inseparable [from Thee], through Whom Thou madest all things and in Whom Thou wast well-pleased; [Whom] Thou didst send from heaven into [the] Virgin's womb and Who conceived within her was made flesh and proved to be Thy Son being born of Holy Spirit and a Virgin; Who fulfilling Thy will and preparing for Thee a holy people stretched forth His hands for suffering that He might release from sufferings them who have believed in Thee; Who when He was betrayed to voluntary suffering that He might abolish death and rend the bonds of the devil and tread down hell and enlighten the righteous and establish the ordinance and demonstrate the resurrection: Taking bread [and] making eucharist to Thee said: Take eat: this is My Body which is broken for you. Likewise also the cup, saying: This is My Blood which is shed for you. When ye do this ye do My *anamnesis.*

" Doing therefore the *anamnesis* of His death and resurrection, we offer to Thee the bread and the cup making eucharist to Thee because Thou hast bidden us to stand before Thee and minister as priests to Thee.

" And we pray Thee that (Thou wouldst send Thy Holy Spirit upon the oblation of Thy holy Church) Thou wouldst grant to all the holy ones who partake to be united [to Thee] that they may be fulfilled with the Holy Spirit for the confirmation of their faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify Thee through Thy Child Jesus Christ, through whom glory and honor be unto Thee, with the Holy Spirit, in Thy holy Church, now and for ever and world without end. Amen."[47]

[47] *Apost. Trad.,* iv, 3-13, edit. Dix. 7-9. Bracketed words are supplied to make the meaning of the original clearer. The clause in parenthses indicates a probable fourth-century addition.

In accordance with the semi-extemporaneous character of primitive prayer, uniformity of ideas or themes, not of text,[48] was expressed in the whole Eucharistic prayer. This is what Justin meant when he said that the one presiding offers up prayers and thanksgivings" as much as he can," [49] and Hippolytus," And the bishop shall give thanks according to the aforesaid [models]. It is not altogether necessary for him to recite the very same words which we gave before as though studying to say them by heart in his thanksgiving (ευχαριστία) to God; but let each one pray according to his own ability." [50]

Absent from the original nucleus of themes in the Eucharistic prayer, but soon inserted, was the *Sanctus* hymn of Isaiah 6:3, listing the heavenly choirs. [51] Other elements were added in the third, fourth, and fifth centuries: the entreaty for the miraculous conversion of bread and wine,[52] the *anamnesis,* the *epiclesis* proper, and the anaphoric intercessions.[53]

The Eucharistic prayers of the different Churches (Egyptian, Antiochene, Roman, etc.) became fixed in the West earlier than in the East. [54]

[48]· See C. Kucharek, *op. cit.,* pp. 55 f.

[49]· Justin, J *Apol.,* c. 67, PG 6, 429 C.

[50] Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* x, 3-4, edit. Dix, 19.

[51] The recognizable parallel to the *sanctus* hymn in the post-exilic Jewish Morning Prayer (in the solemn *Jozir* prayer, blessing God as Creator and listing the celestial choirs and their triple *sanctus),* was probably adopted by the Christians first in their catechetical assembly (cf. Clement of Rome, *Ad Cor.,* 34, PG 1, 276 B-277 A) and then in their Eucharistic celebration.

[52]Not to be confused with the epiclesis proper, this developed from the prayer beseeching God's acceptance of the Eucharistic Sacrifice. In Rome and Alexandria, it preceded the institution narrative; in all other Churches of Christendom it followed that narrative—except in the Spanish and Gallic Churches where it either preceded or followed the narrative.

[53] These are intercessions within the Eucharistic prayer, not the intercessions constituting the prayers of the faithful found at the end of the catechetical assembly and beginning the Eucharistic celebration.

[54] E.g., the Council of Carthage in A.D. 397 which stipulated that celebrants use at the altar only those prayers previously edited by the "brothers" (Canon 23, edit. Labbe and Cossart, *Sacrosancta Concilia* [Paris, 1671], 2, 170) and the Council of Milevius in A.D. 412 was even more strict (Canon 12, cf. J. A. Jungmann, *Gewordene Liturgie* [Innsbruck, 1941], p. 70). By contrast, the West Syrian still had anaphoric formularies composed by its bishops until the late Middle Ages; it seems to have been the last to do so, with the exception of the Latin Church in the post-Vatican II era.

5. Fraction. At first, following Jewish *chaburah* custom, one loaf was broken and the fragments shared among the participants, thus expressing unity and union. Ignatius of Antioch (c. A.D. 112) uses the idea to demonstrate the unity of the Church: "one loaf also is broken to all (the communicants) and one cup is distributed among them all." [55] Even after congregations increased to the extent that no one loaf could accommodate all the communicants, the fraction was maintained, but the symbolism was changed, to signify Christ's body " being broken" on the cross.[56]

Another custom, initiated in the early second century and lasting several centuries, was *xhcfermentum:* [57] a fragment of the consecrated bread from the bishop's Eucharist was carried to other, lesser churches of the city in order to express the bishop's supremacy or "presidency" over his whole church.

6. Communion. When the bread was broken, all received a fragment, first the clergy, then the people. The bishop gave the consecrated bread "with his own hand," while the presbyters administered the chalice (deacons administered only if there were no presbyters present).[58] Hippolytus gives a vivid account of the Baptismal Communion rite in his day:

> " And when he [the bishop] breaks the Bread in distributing to each a fragment (κλάσμα) he shall say: The Bread of Heaven in Christ Jesus. And he who receives shall answer: Amen. "And the presbyters—but if there are not enough [of them] the deacons also—shall hold the cups and stand by in good order and with reverence: first he that holdeth the water, second he who holds the milk,[59] third he who holds the

[55] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ep. ad Philadelp.,* 3, 2, PG 4, 821 C.

[66] E.g., Chrysostom, *In I Cor. Homil., XXIV,* 2, PG 61, 200; in Theodore of Mopsuestia (d. A.D. 423), however, it was meant to show how the Lord " distributed" his presence among the many, as after his resurrection he revealed himself and "distributed his appearance among men," i.e., the women at the grave, the disciples at Emmaus, the apostles in the closed room, etc. *(Sermones catech.,* VI [Rucher, *Ritus Baptismi et Missae,* Miinster, 1933, pp. 34 f.]).

[57] Rome itself, however, kept the *fermentum* until the 8th or 9th century.

[58] Hippolytus, *Apost. Trad.,* xxiii, 7, edit. Dix, 41.

[59] Water was given to the newly baptised as "a sign of the laver that the inner man also... may receive the same rites as the body, "and milk-and-honey mixed as a symbol of their entry into the "promised land" of the Church, a land "flowing with milk and honey... making the bitterness of the human heart sweet by the sweetness of His word" (cf. *Apost. Trad.,* xxiii, 2 and 3, edit. Dix, 40-41).

> wine. And they who partake shall taste of each [cup] thrice, he who gives [it] saying: In God the Father Almighty; and he who receives shall say: Amen. [The second says] And in the Lord Jesus Christ; [the recipient shall say]: Amen. [The third says] And in the Holy Spirit and in the Holy Church; and he [the recipient] shall say: Amen.*n* [60]

By the fourth century in the East, the invitation " Holy things to holy people,*"* preceded the distribution of Communion,[6l] and a Communion hymn accompanied it.[62]

Communion was carried to the sick and to those who could not be present.[63] Taking some of the consecrated bread home for weekday Communion was another ancient Christian practice.[64] It began during the persecutions when attendance at the weekday Eucharist was impossible. In most Churches, the practice ceased when the persecutions ended, but some Churches kept it till the seventh century. [65]

7. Ablutions and Dismissal. The Eucharistic service was completed in ten to fifteen minutes. One of the prescribed customs after the Jewish *chaburah* supper was the tidying up of the room;[66]

[60] *Apost. Trad.,* xxiii, 5-10, edit. Dix, 41-42.

[61] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XXIII,* 19, PG 33, 1124 A; the *Apost. Constitutions,* VIII, 13, *edit, cit.,* Vol. VII, p. 490; Chrysostom, *In Matt, homil, VII,* 6, PG 57, *79,* etc.

[62] Chrysostom, *In Ps. 144, expos., 1,* PG 55, 464.

[63] Justin, / *Apol.,* chaps. 65 and 67, PG 6, 428 B, 429 C.

[64] E.g., Tertullian avers to the practice when he asks the wife of a pagan: "Will not your husband know what it is that you secretly consume before any other food? " *{Ad uxor.* II, 5, PL 1, 1408 AB; cf. also *De or.,* 19, PL 1, 1287 A). Cyprian also writes of a woman keeping the Eucharist in an *area* in order to receive Communion in her home during the week *{De lapsis,* 26, PL 4, 500 B-501 A).

[65] Thus, Basil's letter of A.D. 372 to the Patrician Caesaria (or Caesarius) still has: "All the solitaries in the desert, where there is no priest, take Communion themselves from the sacrament they keep at home. And at Alexandria and Egypt, each one of the laity regularly keep it [the Eucharist] in his own home and partake of it whenever he wishes *{Ep. 92,* PG 32, 485 A). John Moschus, too, tells of the faithful being accustomed to take home with them on Holy Thursday enough of the Eucharist to last the whole year *{Pratum spirituale,* 79, PG 87, 2936 f.). As late as A.D. 692, the Trullan Synod stipulated: "None of those who are in the order of laymen may distribute the Divine Mysteries to himself if a bishop, presbyter, or a deacon be present " *{Can.* 58, Mansi, XI, 969).

[66] *Berakoth,* vii, 3.

the Christian counterpart, dictated both by practical necessity and by profound respect for the sacrament, was the cleansing of the sacred vessels. The dismissal of the assembly formally closed the service before the people left.

Everything about the ancient Eucharistic liturgy suggests simplicity and forthrightness. Its actions were performed in the simplest, most practical way. Devotional elaboration came after the fourth century. Before then, the Christian sacrifice contrasts completely with the pagan mysteries. It sought to impress the mind, not the senses; to arouse the will, not the emotions. The near-hypnotism, the psychological thrills of the pagan mysteries (see above, p. 35) had no place in the ancient Eucharistic celebration. Its inner meaning was spiritual, notear thly. The outward forms of the Christian sacrifice were deliberately de-emphasized in order to show this difference. In pagan and in Jewish sacrifices, the material actions, the tangible efforts, and especially the quantity and value of the gift (goats, calves, oxen, etc.), were thought to influence the deity. In the Christian sacrifice, the material components were almost insignificant: they are but shadows of the inner reality.

Probably because the word θυσία, "sacrifice," had always been associated with pagan or Jewish worship, early Christians used it sparingly. When they did, they qualified it with the adjective λογική, "spiritual." For them, the true sacrifice was always something spiritual, heavenly and sublime, something immeasurable by earthly standards. They believed that the Word Incarnate "once and for all by offering himself" (Heb 7:27), by dying on the cross, had redeemed mankind. In the Eucharistic sacrifice, he was being offered anew in *anamnesis*—not mentally in an empty commemoration or memorial, but in the Scriptural sense of*anamnesis,* of" recalling," "remembering," or "representing" before God a past event operative in its effects here and now.[67] As such, the *Eucharistia* was designated from its earliest days as the λογική θυσία or θυσία του Λόγου, a sacrifice that is completely spiritual, or the sacrifice of the Word of God himself.

The pagans had no intellectual foundation for their mystery-rites,

[67] Cf., Ill Kings 17:18] Heb. 10:3-4.

but the Christians insisted on it, constantly stressing it, teaching and explaining the doctrinal content of their beliefs. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the baptismal and Eucharistic mysteries. Λογική θυσία, however, connotes even more: it implies a mind wholly given to God, an inner surrender, adoration in spirit and in truth, which expands into a holy life—or what Paul calls worshiping God "in a way that is worthy of thinking beings; by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God" (Rm 12:1). The same concept is echoed by Peter: "you too, the holy priesthood, offer the spiritual sacrifices which Jesus Christ has made acceptable to God." Hence, Christians "may be living stones making a spiritual house" (I Pt 2:5).

The moral change of life, so insisted upon as a prerequisite for baptism, was a living process ending only in death. It formed an intimate part of the λογική θυσία offered by Christians. Nothing faintly resembling this ideal has been found in the pagan mysteries, the supposed efficacy of which depended solely on outward rites without a corresponding change of heart. This reveals the chasm existing between the pagan mysteries and those of the early Christians—and precludes any borrowing from the former.

The present Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Church, despite the riches of its ceremonial, has preserved the original structural unity and all the ancient constituent parts. Essentially, it follows the simple pattern outlined above (pp. 179 if.), which Christian communities followed in the early days. Detailed studies are available. [68]

[88] E.g., C. Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (Allendale, N. J., 1971); M. M. Solovey, *The Byzantine Divine Liturgy* (Washington, D.C., 1970); A. A. King, *The Rites of Eastern Christendom,* Vol. II (Rome, 1948), pp. 151 if., etc.

CHAPTER XVII

THE POWER OF REMITTING SIN GIVEN TO THE APOSTLES

The power to remit and to retain sins is God's. Christ, his Son, clearly used this power when he forgave the sinner-woman her sins at Simon the Pharisee's house (Lk 7:36-50), and the paralytic's at Capernaum (Mt 9:2-8, Lk 5:17-26). There, he cured the paralytic precisely "to prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..."

Did he share this power with his apostles? If he did, was it meant only for them or also for their successors? If their successors had acquired this power, they would have used it. Did they? What did the early Christians believe regarding this power? For answers we must turn to the historical evidence of the first centuries.

The authority for administering the sacrament of forgiveness rests on the commission of Christ to the apostles to remit and to retain sins. Without it, forgiveness of sins would be a pretense or, at best, simply a penitential system invented by the Church to keep her members in disciplined subjection. The commission, however, is an historical fact. St. John was in the closed room with the apostles on that first Easter Sunday evening when it was given. He describes the event in simple language: "Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them ' Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again,' Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained "' (Jn 20:19-23).

Shalom alecham, Peace be with you. In order to emphasize the transfer of this divine power, Jesus made it a solemn ritual. His breathing on the apostles symbolized the Holy Spirit (" breath" in Hebrew [1]) which they were receiving: Λάβετε πνεϋμα άγιον," Receive

[1] Cf. Gn 1:2, 2:7, Ezk 37:9, Ws 15:11. Also, see Jn 19:30 f., and Mt 3:16 f.

the Holy Spirit." His words show that he is acting with supreme authority: he is the authorized Legate of God, sent from the Father.[2] The power of forgiving sins, by its very nature, belongs to God, but God can delegate it. By his solemn formula, "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you," Christ makes it known that he is doing so. Then he specifies the kind of power they were receiving through the Holy Spirit: the divine power to forgive and to retain sins, no less! He places no limitations on this power: "For those whose sins you forgive they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained." [3] With emphatic universality, his words embrace all men in the state of sin, no matter how great the sin, provided they truly repent (see below, pp. 194 ff.).

A little over a year before, when Peter confessed that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:16), Christ had promised to confer this very power of God upon him: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven" (Mt 16:19). The metaphor of the keys implies authority over the whole house of which one is master. If I give someone the keys to my house, he certainly has the authority to use it in any way he reasonably wishes. The same metaphor is found in Isaiah (22:22-24): "I place the key of the House of David on his shoulder; should he open, no one shall close, should he close, no one shall open." In Rev 3:7, this passage is applied to Christ.

Later, when dealing with fraternal correction, Jesus again outlines this same power. If the wrongdoer refuses to listen to the *qahal,* the gathering of the brethren, he tells his disciples, then he should be treated like a pagan, an outcast, or like a tax collector. The Jewish people were a separate and exclusive people as God had commanded them to be. Pagans and the tax collectors were considered unclean. [4]

[8] Also, as the Son of God, he is equal to the Father both in nature and power.

[3] The Revised Standard Version's translation of the Greek, "Whosesoever sins you forgive... "also brings out the sense of unrestricted power, without limitation to any particular class of sin.

[4] In accordance with the law of Dt 19:15 when any criminal charge is made, " A single witness cannot suffice to convict a man of crime or offence of any kind; whatever the misdemeanour, the evidence of two witnesses or three is required to sustain the charge. "

Christ gave similar instructions to his own: any wrongdoer refusing to hear the *ecclesia* was to be treated by the Christians in the same way as the pagan and tax collector was among the Jews. Such treatment, accorded only at last resort to the recalcitrant, indeed would be confirmed in heaven: "I tell you solemnly whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound (ἔσται δεδεμένα) in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed (Ισται λελυμένα) in heaven." (Mt 18:17-18). The renewed promise of power to bind and to loose this time refers to all the Twelve in contrast to chapter 16:19 where the promise was made to Peter alone. In both instances, the Greek perfect participal forms (δεδεμένον, λελυμένον) indicate a state of being completely settled, i.e., it shall be a thing bound or loosed once for all.

In both passages the "binding" and "loosing" are technical rabbinic terms, the Jewish *asar* and *shera.* Their primary meaning is disciplinary: a person was "bound" (condemned to) or "loosed" (absolved from) concerning excommunication. The terms could also be used in a broader sense in reference to doctrinal and juridical decisions: an opinion was "bound," forbidden, or it was "loosed," or allowed. In either capacity, disciplinary or doctrinal, these powers of binding and loosing will be ratified in heaven.

When these powers were handed to the aposdes, as narrated by John (20:19-23), much more was included in the commission. Christ said, [M] For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained." Here, the power is being extended to the interior forum, the soul-change. The power being offered was not only the practical authority needed for excluding the offender from the fellowship of the *ecclesia,* or for reinstating him in it with effect for the hereafter, but also for actually forgiving the sins themselves or retaining them. Though the difference between loosing-binding and forgiving-retaining may appear minor, it is not. The former, the loosing-binding, are chiefly disciplinary, concerned with reconciliation of the offender with the Church—a determination of who is to be excluded from or readmitted to the communion of the *ecclesia.* The forgiving-retaining of sins has to do with the actual remission of guilt before God— the reconciliation of the offender with God, or the withholding of

it. These two effects are not the same: a person may be excluded from the *ecclesia* for life, yet may be reconciled with God—the state of his soul being left to God. The converse is also true: a person may not be reconciled with God, yet be a member in good standing in the *ecclesia.* Only in the light of the distinction between the internal and external forum will historical comments and references , become clear.

The burden of determining whether to forgive or retain was left with the apostles. Such a decision presupposes acknowledgement of wrongdoing on the part of the sinner—confession—otherwise, how would those using this power know whether to forgive or to retain? Some exterior manifestation of repentance is also required. These prerequisites for divine forgiveness were demanded of the Jews before Christ's time. When those being baptised by John in the river Jordan confessed their sins, they were acting on Jewish precedent. Just before the coming of Christ, there was also the confession of sins on the Day of Expiation, as part of the sacrificial rite on that feast.[5] The people in this instance were expected to confess at least those sins by which they had harmed their neighbor, especially those committed during the year.[6] In addition to the sin-confession, rabbinical authorities also insisted on reconciliation with the neighbor and reparation of any injustic. Sins would thus be completely wiped away, pardoned, and forgotten.[7] Even the intention of not sinning again was recognized as part of sincere repentance and confession; otherwise, it was mere sham, and God's forgiveness would not be forthcoming. But the sincerely penitent, confessing

[5] Cf. F. Bonsirven, *Le Judaisme palestinien au temps de Jisus Christ* (Paris, 1935), II, pp. 99 ff·

[6] On that solemn day (of atonement), the high priest, as representative of the Jewish nation, spread out his hands over the bullock about to be sacrificed and prayed: "O God, I have committed iniquity, transgressed and sinned before thee, I and my house. O God, forgive the iniquities and transgression and sins which I have committed and sinned and transgressed before thee, I and my house, as it is written in the law of thy servant Moses [Lv 16:30]: *It is a day of atonement on your behalf, to cleanse you from all fault and make you clean in the Lord's sight" Mishnah, Yoma,* 3, 8 (English trans, by J. M. T. Barton, in *Penance and Absolution* [New York, 1961], p. 16 f.).

[7] See P. Galtier, *Aux origines du sacrement de p&nitence* (Rome, 1951), pp. 1-32, for literature of the Jews and other nations regarding confession and the forgiveness of sins before the time of Christ.

fully and earnestly, God would pardon: "He cleanses from sin a soul when it makes confession, when it makes acknowledgment. " [8] Josephus records it as, " God is easily reconciled to those who confess their faults and repent of them." [9]

In granting the divine power of forgiveness to mere man, Christ utilized a practice already existing among the people of his day, as he did with the other sacraments, and transformed it into an effective, divine vehicle of grace. He could have left the Jewish usage alone, allowing the sinner to move God to forgiving by his own efforts at repentance—as a matter to be concluded simply between God and the sinner—somewhat like the reformers of the sixteenth century would have it. In such a case, his commission, " For those whose sins you forgive they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained," would have no meaning. Through this commission, he made forgiveness a matter of mediation of the Church, of which Christians become members through baptism, and which they have dishonored and defiled by their sins. Furthermore, what Christ seems to have done was to have forgiveness of sins brought from the realm of the completely invisible to something more concrete and tangible. When the penitent confesses his sins, manifesting his repentance, he can also then hear the comforting voice of God's minister actually imparting forgiveness upon his bruised and bleeding soul, wiping away all sin against God and man; thus, the penitent obtains the fulfillment of a deep psychological need.

Though the state of the recidivist is worse than it was before his conversion (Mt 12:43 ff), and a merely passing conversion avails nothing (Mt 13:3 ff.), no sincerely repentant soul is excluded from forgiveness, even those who sin after baptism. The Lord himself exemplified this by forgiving the apostasy of Peter and the infidelity of the other disciples—he restored them to grace and to their vocation of leadership in the *ecclesia.* In the *Our Father*, he taught us that the Father in heaven will forgive our sins, big or small, in the same measure as we repeatedly forgive our brethren (Mt 18:22).

Only when the sinner refuses to repent and hardens his heart

[8] The so-called Psalms of Solomon, 9:12.

[9] Josephus, *Wars of the Jews,* V, *9,* 4 (Whiston's trans.).

against God, thus committing" blasphemy against the Holy Spirit," of which the Lord spoke, is forgiveness withheld (Mt 12:31 f., Mk 3 31 f., Lk 12:10). This kind of blasphemy has to be understood in its primary sense of "slandering," or "calumniating * the Holy Spirit. It is due entirely to willful malice, and to the conscious rejection of God's proffered light. Matthew and Mark make this clear." This was because they were saying, ' An unclean spirit is in him.'" Despite the evidence of divine power, the Pharisees were attributing the effect to Satan; as such, it constituted a calumny of diabolical malice. They persevered in their error, to the point of instigating Christ's death.

As long as such malice and blindness exist in anyone, forgiveness is impossible precisely because such an attitude precludes the dispositions which induce forgiveness. Only he can be forgiven who acknowledges or confesses that he has something for which to be forgiven, and is sorry for it. If not, this amounts to a hatred and a perverse rejection of God's light to one's soul. As long as such a perverse rejection remains, then there are no means by which God can reach man without taking away his free will. Hence, forgiveness is impossible. This fundamental falling away from God, manifested through malice and blindness, makes men "children of the devil," and its consequence is final death.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE APOSTOLIC USE OF FORGIVING AND RETAINING SINS

The clearest case of "binding" in the apostolic era was that of the incestuous Corinthian. It is recorded by Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians. " I have been told as an undoubted fact," he says, "that one of you is living with his father's wife.[1] This is a case of sexual immorality among you that must be unparalleled even among pagans. How can you be so proud of yourselves? You should be in mourning. A man who does a thing like that ought to have been expelled from the community. Though I am far away in body, I am with you in spirit, and have already condemned the man who did this thing as if I were actually present. When you are assembled together in the name of the Lord Jesus, and I am spiritually present with you, then with the power of the Lord Jesus he is to be handed over to Satan so that his sensual body may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord... You must drive out this evil-doer from among you" (1 Cor 5:1-13).

If anything is clear and unequivocal about this message, it is the formal use of the power to "bind," to cast the offender from the Church, or in modern parlance, to excommunicate the evil-doer. Permanent or temporary excommunication *{harem* and *niddui)* was well known among the Jews both in Palestine and in the diaspora.[2] Paul applies a similar "binding" in this instance. The scandalous nature of the case is obvious: living with one's stepmother. Marriage between persons of such close affinity was prohibited even by Roman civil law—which was the law of Corinth at the time.[3] No mitigating circumstances are mentioned; nor is it known whether the woman's husband was alive or dead. At any rate, the sexual immorality of the case was such that it was unparalleled even among

[1] I.e., his stepmother; cf., Lv. 18:8.

[2] Cf. C. Spicq, *Les dptires pastorales* (Paris, 1947), p. 51.

[3] Most Greek cities and towns had similar laws, though some in Egypt and Asia Minor permitted such marriages.

the pagans. [4] The sentence of excommunication is pronounced "with the power of the Lord Jesus," and, therefore, essentially exceeds any human power. The guilty man is to be expelled from God's kingdom on earth, the *ecclesia,* (" You must drive out this evil-doer from among you") and thrust into "the kingdom of darkness" where "the god of this world" holds sway (" handed over
to Satan")·[5]

The man had already been deprived of grace and is, in a sense, therefore, in Satan's power, but Paul's other words point to some physically punitive effect of Satan's might: the New Testament often ascribes bodily suffering, ailments and sickness to Satan.[6] The apostles occasionally pronounced punitive sentences in the physical sphere which took immediate effect, as in the case of Ananias

[4] Paul uses the word πορνεία. Though usually meaning *fornication,* it includes all sexual relations, even μοιχεία, *adultery.* The case here is even worse, because it is incestuous adultery. The strictest moralists among the pagans tended to excuse mere πορνεία (fornication), but even the most lax abominated incest, χοιχεία. Cicero brands it as "*scelus incredibile, et praeter hanc unam in omni vita inauditum" (pro Cluent.,* 6, 15), while the ultra-lax Catullus says, "*Nam nihil est quidquam sceleris quo prodeat ultra"* (76, 4); for the Greek view of the matter, cf., Euripides, *Hippolytus.* Certainly, both Greek and Roman law stamped it with infamy, and Jewish law even more (cf. Lv 18:7 f., Dt 22:30, Gn 49:4, etc.).

[5] Paul recounts another instance of binding in his letters to Timothy, in which he uses similar language: "Some people have put conscience aside and wrecked their faith in consequence. I mean men like Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to teach them not to be blasphemous" (1 Tm 1:19 f.). Later, we learn why he did it: "Have nothing to do with pointless philosophical discussions... they only lead further and further away from true religion. Talk of this kind corrodes like gangrene, as in the case of Hymenaeus and Philetus, the men who have gone right away from the truth and claim that the resurrection has already taken place. Some people's faith cannot stand up to them" (2 Tm 2:16-18). The Greek mind found the resurrection of the body particularly hard to accept (e.g., Acts 17:32,1 Co 15:12). Hymenaeus and Philetus probably had given corporal resurrection a purely spiritual interpretation, engendered perhaps by misunderstanding and misrepresenting the Apostle's doctrine of mystical resurrection occurring at baptism (Rm 6:4 f., Eph. 2:6 f.). Whatever the details of their teaching, it was false, heretical, and Paul formally excluded the teachers of such doctrine from the Church. Again he uses the expression of " handing over to Satan " in the sense of excommunication. To him, the Church, Christ's kingdom on earth, is obviously the realm of grace, and the world outside, that of Satan, in which the latter has power to cause even physical affliction (cf. 2 Cor 4:4, Eph 2:2, 6:12, Col 1:13, 1 Tm 1:20, etc.). Here pastoral prudence dictates the act of binding, to effect emendation (" to teach them not to be blasphemous "), and to remove the danger of corrupting others in the Church.

[6] E.g., 2 Cor 12:7, Lk 13:16, Jn 8:44, Heb 2:14.

and Elymas (Acts 5 and 13). Here, Paul seems to impose a severe physical affliction, something certainly short of death but probably long-lasting, to give the sinner time to repent so that "his spirit be saved on the day of the Lord."[7] Emendation, not final condemnation, is obvioulsy the object of the sentence. The duty imposed by fraternal charity,[8] is applied in its severest form here: "give a heretic one warning, then a second, and after that avoid his company" (Tt 3:10).[9]

The expulsion from the Church has more than just temporal consequences. Paul presses the use of the binding power "in the name of the Lord Jesus"; hence, the effects will be ratified in heaven, according to Christ's commission (Jn 20:23). The same would apply to readmission or reconciliation with the Church, following the sinner's repentance. Hope for his final repentance and for divine pardon, at least "on the day of the Lord," is held out. God can and does forgive the sincerely repentant at any time. But sin also offends the Church, so it is necessary that the Church grant pardon and reconciliation too. According to Paul, the Church is not merely an external association, but the body of Christ and the living instrument of his grace,[10] responsible for the holiness of its members—otherwise, the sacrament of reconciliation established by Christ would be meaningless.

Did the Church in the era of the apostles grant reconciliation to all who repented after sinning seriously? No one can say for certain, but in some cases it did. St. Paul, in his Second Letter to the Corinthians, tells of a person who "has been the cause of pain; and the cause of pain not to me, but to some degree...not to overstate it...to

[7] According to Tertullian, the Christians of the third century connected the phrase" destruction of the flesh" with the office of repentance, "in that fasts, squalor, every kind of neglect and studious ill-treatment aimed at eradicating the [lusts of the] flesh appear to make satisfaction to God, "and thus obtaining pardon; *Depudicitia,* 13, PL 2, 1057 A. After becoming a Montanist, he naturally repudiated such an interpretation. Cf. B. Poschman, *Paenitentia secunda* (Bonn, 1940), 27 f., for various interpretations.

[8] Ga 6:1 f., 2 Tm 4:2, 2 Th 3:6, 14-16, etc.

[9] Typically, he adds that "The evidence of three, or at least two, witnesses is necessary to sustain the charge" (2 Cor 13:1).

[10] Cf. L. Cerfaux, *The Church in the Theology of St. Paul* (NewY ork, Edinburgh^ 1959).

all of you. The punishment already imposed by the majority on the man in question is enough; and the best thing now is to give him your forgiveness and encouragement, or he might break down from so much misery. So I am asking you to give some definite proof of your love for him. What I really wrote for, after all, was to test you and see whether you are completely obedient. Anybody that you forgive, I forgive; and as for my forgiving anything.. .if there has been anything to be forgiven, I have forgiven it for your sake in the presence of Christ. And so we will not be outwitted by Satan...we know well enough what his intentions are" (2 Cor 2:5-11).

It seems the offender is the same incestuous Corinthian mentioned in I Cor: after being immediately excommunicated as Paul had directed, he quickly repented and separated from his stepmother. The sentence was allowed to stand until Paul could be consulted; in the meantime he was excluded from the Church. Paul now asks the Corinthian Church to forgive him and receive him back at once. Some scholars believe Paul refers to another person. Whether the same person or not, this offender's sin had been serious enough to warrant excommunication, "the punishment already imposed by the majority," in the Corinthian Church. Paul is convinced that the absolving power he uses is Christ's (εν προσώπω Χρίστου, literally, *in the person of Christ),* thus supratemporal consequences are clearly involved in his act. Still, he wishes to exercise this power also on their account (δί ύμας) and to act in concert with the Church of Corinth. Theological considerations aside, this is prudent pastoral policy.

Reconciling sinners guilty of serious sins of impurity is also clear from 2 Cor 12:21,13:1-2. Paul expresses the hope that on his next visit he will not have to "mourn "over those guilty of "impurities, fornication and debauchery" who have not yet done penance nor set aright their relationship to the Christian community. He warned them before, and he sternly warns them now, that on his third visit he will be harsh to those who had sinned heretofore (i.e., before his second visit) and to all the rest (τοις λοιποΐς πασιν), i.e., to any more recent offenders. [11] He, therefore, expects them to repent and to

[11] C.f. Poschman, *op. cit.,* I, 350.

put their relationship to the community in order before he comes; obviously, this would not be possible if at the time the Church did not reconcile sinners guilty of serious offenses against chastity.

Interior repentance was necessary for any reconciliation. In Hebrews 6:4-8, for example, the impossibility of repentance for apostates stems, not so much from any supposed apostolic praxis of refusing them absolution, but rather from their moral dispositions in continuing their breakaway from Christ:

" As for those people who were once brought into the light, and tasted the gift from heaven, and received a share of the Holy Spirit, and appreciated the good message of God and the powers of the world to come and yet in spite of this have fallen away—it is impossible for them to be renewed a second time. They cannot be repentant if they have wilfully crucified the Son of God and openly mocked him. A field that has been well watered by frequent rain, and gives the crops that are wanted by the owners who grew them, is given God's blessing; but one that grows brambles and thistles is abandoned, and practically cursed. It will end by being burnt."

The passage deals wich formal apostates, i.e., those once illumined by faith and baptism (φωτισθέντας)[12] who have partaken of the charismata by which the presence of the Holy Spirit was felt in the assembly—probably those who had received the Eucharist and Confirmation. The nature of the impossibility rests with the words "to renew" (άνακαινίζειν)—somewhat less literally rendered in the Jerusalem Bible as "to be renewed" — "unto penance" (εις μετά-νοιαν). Here μετάνοια must mean inner conversion or repentance, for μετάνοια surely had not yet acquired its later technical significance, the penitential status wherein the repentant performed their assigned penance for a given period of time in hope of being restored to the Church's membership. The problem is psychological, not disciplinary. The parable which follows (verses 7 and 8) shows that this impossibility is indeed connected with the moral disposition of those who have willfully crucified the Son of God by their own personal doing (lit. for themselves) and are continuing in their rejection of him. Perhaps the truest way of rendering this passage

[12] Indeed later one of the names for the sacrament of baptism was φωτισμός.

would be, “Really it is impossible to bring back to a state that leads to repentance those who were once enlightened...”[13] That the passage deals with repentance, not pardon, is also clear from the statement, “They cannot be repentant.”[14]

The same can be said of Hebrews 10:20-31. This also deals with deliberate and persistent rejection of the truth once received. Only the dreadful wrath of God awaits such sinners on account of their moral disposition. “Anyone who tramples on the Son of God and who treats the blood of the covenant which sanctified him as if it were not holy, and who insults the Spirit of grace“ is really blaspheming the Holy Spirit, the unforgivable sin of which the Lord spoke (cf. Mt 12:31 f., Mk 3:31 f., Lk 12:10).

Another passage of Hebrews (12:16-17) warns against tolerating anyone impure or irreligious in their midst: “And be careful that there is no immorality (lit. no fornicator) or that any of you does not degrade religion like Esau, who sold his birthright for one single meal. As you know, when he wanted to obtain the blessing afterwards, he was rejected and, though he pleaded for it with tears, he was unable to elicit a change of heart.” It is not clear to whom the change of heart refers: either on the part of Esau who could not bring himself to the dispositions that genuine repentance demands, or on the part of Isaac, who refused to retract the blessing already bestowed upon Jacob. In any case, the passage refers to opportunities irreparably lost by the sinner. The dangers of a mentality steeped either in profane low-mindedness (irreligion) or in fornication, are very real, for the sinner imbued with such a spirit will be unable to elicit the moral dispositions necessary for a change of heart, whether on his own or God's part. God will not pardon the unrepentant. Again, the problem is the psychological difficulty of true inner repentance, not of reconciliation.

Besides Paul's testimony, a few other indications regarding the praxis of the apostolic Church are given in the Book of Revelation. In writing a letter to the Church at Pergamum, John, ever gentle and

[13] J. A. Kleist and J. L. Lilly's translatin *(The New Testament, Rendered from the Original Greek* [Milwaukee, Wis., I954L P· 572)·

[14] Cf. B. Poschmann, *Paenitentia secunda* (Bonn, 1940), 39~43i also C. Spicq, *L'ipitre aux Hetreux* (Paris, I933)> PP· 167-178.

understanding and speaking for the Lord, first says, “I know where you live, in the place where Satan is enthroned,” and commends them because they still hold firmly to God's name; but then he sternly warns: “some of you are followers of Balaam, who taught Balak to set a trap for the Israelites so that they committed adultery by eating food that had been sacrificed to idols; and among you, too, there are some as bad who accept what the Nicolaitans teach. You must repent, or I shall soon come to you and attack these people with the sword of my mouth” (Rv 2:14-16).

Pergamum was a center of paganism. The cult of the healer-hero, Asklepios, had its center there. Many sick pilgrims slept in his temple, hoping for a cure. Pergamum also boasted a colossal altar of Zeus dominating both city and plain. Emperor-worship warranted the assertion that it was “the place where Satan is enthroned“ and “the town where Satan lives.”[15] Most Christians there remained faithful to God, but some fell into idolatry,[16] one of the deadliest sins, and probably immorality as well — they shared in the feasts of food from pagan temple-sacrifices. Such banquets often ended in drunkenness and immorality. Whatever the circumstances, John regarded it as idolatry. The threatened visitation of the Lord, he promised, would be averted upon immediate repentance. No less did he promise for those guilty of embracing the Nicolaitan heresy, which tolerated some compromise with pagan cults.

Repentance, of course, did not necessarily include reconciliation with the Church, but in view of what follows, it may be implied. John tells the victors, presumably both those who never fell into such a sin and those who successfully extricated themselves from it, that God “will give the hidden manna and a white stone...a stone with a new name written on it, known only to the man who receives it” (Rv 2:17). The victorious would be given “the hidden manna,” an evident allusion to the bread of heaven, placed in the ark (Ex 16:23-

[15] Emperor-worship is always represented in Revelation as the worship of Satan, the “prince of this world.”

[16] Among the prophets, adultery was the usual figure of speech for idolatry or religious infidelity] cf. Nb 25:1-3. One Jewish tradition, however, has it that Balaam advised Balak to use the help of the women of Moab in enticing Israel to idolatry; cf. Nb 31:16.

35; Heb 9:4), and later hidden together with the ark by Jeremiah (2 M 2:4-8). Manna was but a figure of the Eucharist, as Christ himself indicated (Jn 6). [17] In the catacombs, the Christians symbolized the Eucharist with a manna-jar. Admission of the repentant to the Eucharist, therefore, certainly meant full membership or complete reconciliation to the Church.[18]

Presumably the same would apply to the inhabitants of Thyatira who repented after having followed Jezebel: "You are encouraging the woman Jezebel who claims to be a prophetess, and by her teaching she is luring my servants away to commit adultery of eating food which has been sacrificed to idols. I have given her time to reform, but she is not willing to change her adulterous life. Now I am consigning her to bed, and all her partners in adultery to troubles that will test them severely, unless they repent of their practices; and I will see that her children die" (Rv 2:20-22).

Whether Jezebel was an actual person,[19] or a symbol of collective evils at Thyatira makes little difference: she was luring some of the Christians there into sins of idolatry. The city was organized into numerous trade-guilds, one for practically every trade—potters, bakers, dyers, workers in bronze, wool, leather, linen, etc. To survive in such a commercially active center without belonging to a trade-guild would have been very difficult for the average man. But belonging to such a guild meant joining in its feasts with the attendant dangers of immorality and idolatrous worship. Obviously,

[17] A more eschatological interpretation is also possible: manna will be given as food in the heavenly kingdom for the saved.

[18] The "white stone" and the "new name" engraved on it allude to popular ancient usages and beliefs. Each thing had an "inner self" with a corresponding secret name. Knowing the name was the same as having mysterious power. Many engraved such secret and divine names in magic characters on pieces of ivory or stone and wore them around their neck or in rings, in hope of enabling them to foil evil spirits and enter the presence of the deity. The amulet-conception of white stones, to the ancient mind, represented variously acquittal, admission to a feast *(tessera hospitalis),* good fortune, etc. In Rv. 2:7, the prophet employs an usage popular in the world of his day to teach real spiritual truth: the victorious Christian would be given manna (the Eucharist) and a white stone, a symbol of entry into the kingdom, into bliss and the feast of God. For the Christian, the new name was his "new self" (of its nature, incomprehensible to the senses), his spiri tual rebirth, union with the Lord, especially through the Eucharist.

[19] The city of Thyatira did boast of a female Sibyl who "prophesied" there; it could also have been a self-styled prophetess of the Nicolaitan sect.

many Christians succumbed. Despite the difficulties involved, the Lord's warning is clear: desist and repent. Jezebel was given time to reform, but she would not. Punishments, "troubles that will test them severely," are threatened also to her followers unless they too repent. Reconciliation of the repentant with the Church may also be inferred, though this is by no means certain.

These examples show that the apostles and their immediate successors clearly believed that the power of loosing and binding was given to them by the Lord, and that they used it accordingly. In their use of this power, certain practices stand out. The Church's rulers have a duty to admonish the guilty to repent and desist from sin, especially in cases of grave sin. If the sinner continues in his evil way, he is to be cut off from the church-community—he is to be "bound" or excommunicated. If he sincerely repents and amends his way, the Church receives him and forgives him even the gravest sin. In accordance with the promises of the Lord, such forgiveness is also guaranteed in heaven. In addition to prayer, fasting, and the works of mercy,[20] repentance consists in acknowledging one's wrongdoings, in confessing one's sins. Indeed, unless a sin became known from other sources, some kind of confession is necessary in making the decision either to forgive or to retain particular sins.

Certainly, Jewish precedents for divine forgiveness demanded confession of sins (see above, p. 194). In describing the baptism of penitents by John in the Jordan River, the evangelists use the expression "while they were openly confessing their sins," (ἐξομολο-γούμενοι τάς αμαρτίας αυτών).[21] The same phrase is found in some passages penned by the apostles and, in the sub-apostolic era, by other writers. In Acts (19:18), for example, we read of the "open confession" of some Christians at Ephesus, which may have been

[20] Thus, *Second Clement* puts these in perspective when it says: "Almsgiving therefore is a good thing, as repentance from sin; fasting is better than prayer, but almsgiving better than both;' but love covereth a multitude of sins ' [ι P 4:8]. But prayer out of a good conscience delivereth from death " (16, edit. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII [Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.], p. 522). According to Barnabas, almsgiving is a "ransom for sins" *(Ep. Cath.,* 19, PG 2, 780 A).

[21] Mk 1:5, Mt 3:6.

part of the sacramental rite of Penance. Ephesus, described by Seneca as one of the most beautiful cities in the world, was among the most important political and commercial centers of the Empire. Its influence also rested on its fame as a great center of magical and occult arts. Paul spent two years evangelizing there, but magic was so ingrained among its citizens that many Christians had not given it up. After two Jewish exorcists, trying to imitate Paul's miracles by casting out evil spirits, were badly mauled by a possessed man, all Ephesus heard about it and was awed. As a result some Christians who had been practicing magic came forward, "openly confessed" (ἐξομολογούμενοι και ἀναγέλλοντας) their practices, and burned their magical books publicly;[22] this was probably done for the sake of obtaining forgiveness.

The same expression is used by the apostle John (I Jn 1:9) when he counters those heretical Christians who maintained they had no sins at all. Declaring those who make such claims victims of self-delusion, he says that only if "we openly confess our sins" (όμολο-γώμεν τάς αμαρτίας ημών) will God forgive them. John certainly meant a frank interior acknowledgment of sin before God and, when his expression is compared to the same in James, in the *Didache,* in Barnabas, etc., he may easily have meant also an exterior acknowledgment of sin before others, such as the rulers of the church or the community.[23] After all, in writing about the anointing of the sick, James indicates exterior confession when he ends his directives to the presbyters, saying: "if he [the sick man] has committed sins, he will be forgiven. So confess your sins to one another" (ἐξομο-λογεοσθε ουν άλλήλοις τάς αμαρτίας).[24] No less does the *Didache* (c. 14) when it enjoins assembling in common on the Lord's day to

[22] The treatises on magic were rare enough to be worth 50,000 silver pieces, a handsome sum by any standards. Livy mentions a similar burning of magical books in XL, 29.

[23] In the last several centuries, Catholics have made use of this passage (1 Jn 1:9) as "proof" for sacramental confession. Actually, such an exegesis is far from certain; however, comparison of contexts in which this expression occurs in the very early writers does induce a certain degree of probability in its favor.

[24] Even if the Epistle of James is taken, not as part of the Scriptures, but purely as an historical document, it rightfully belongs among the oldest Christian writings and, hence, is an invaluable source of primitive Christian teaching.

break bread and offer thanks "but after first confessing your sins (προσεξομολογησάμενοι τα παραπτώματα υμών), so that your sacrifice may be pure," and, "In the church-assembly confess your sins (εξομολόγηση τα παραπτώματα σου) and do not come to your prayer with a guilty conscience" (c. 4).[25] Barnabas urges the same in almost identical words: "Confess your sins; you shall not go to prayer with an evil conscience" .[26]

Obviously, such confession was made for the forgiveness of sin, with or without sacramental absolution, and served as a preparation for the Eucharistic celebration as well as for communal prayer. It probably consisted of a general self-accusation made before the congregation and the rulers of the Church. Specific, detailed confession by all would hardly have been practicable even in moderate-sized communities—unless the bishop or presbyter had recited a list of sins to which everyone present responded with a brief, "I have sinned," or some other such phrase of admission of guilt. In such a case, the confession could have been sacramental with absolution given. The "bound" or excommunicated, of course, could not have been included in such an absolution, for they were not allowed to be present at the Eucharist; first, they would have to rectify their personal relationship with the *ecclesia.* Nor would the general confession-forgiveness at the beginning of the Eucharist have pardoned those guilty of deadly sin but not condemned ecclesiastically, for a warning against receiving Communion unworthily is given by the *Didache* (10,6) at the end of what seems to be a Eucharistic prayer: "He who is holy [that is, free from sin], let him approach; he who is not, let him do penance."[27] Mortal sinners, therefore,

[25] Obviously, some kind of individual or general confession, with or without sacramental absolution, is meant here. Cf. K. Prumm, *Christentum als Neu-heitserlebnis* (Freiburg i. Br., 1939), 339; B. Poschmann, *Paenitentia secunda* (Bonn, 1940), 88-92.

[26] Barnabas, *Ep. Cath.,* 19, PG *2,* 780 AB.

[27] Later, in the 4th and 5th centuries, this directive was incorporated into the Eucharistic Liturgy itself in form of the acclamation, " Holy things to the holy. " Thus, Cyril's rite has it at Jerusalem *(Cat. XXIII,* 19, PG 33, 1124 A); Chrysos-tom, at Antioch *(In Matt, homil. VII,* 6, PG 57, 79; *In Hebr. homil. XVII,* 4-5, PG 63, 132-133); the *Apostolic Constitutions,* VIII, 13, edit. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich.), p. 490. Today, all the Eastern Eucharistic Liturgies have it.

could not have been forgiven as a matter of course at the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration by the public confession. The same applies to Paul's warning that "everyone must judge himself" before receiving the Eucharist (i Cor 11:28). From what is known of ancient Christian penitential procedure, it seems the person guilty of deadly sin but not ecclesiastically condemned would be required, like the excommunicate, to submit himself separately, confess his wrongdoing, accept his penance, and be excluded from the Eucharist until he had offered full satisfaction.

At this early date, however, no class of sin seems beyond forgiveness, provided the sinner repent and submit himself to penance. Clement of Rome (c. A.D. 96), for example, writes to the leaders of the Corinthian schism, which was quite deadly: [28] "You, therefore, who were responsible for beginning the schism, submit yourselves to the presbyters (ὑποτάγητε τοις πρεσβυτέροις), and be disciplined to penitence (παιδεύθητε εις μετάνοιαν), bending the knees of your, hearts."[29]

A few years later, Ignatius, the martyred bishop of Antioch (f A.D. 107), stressing the necessity of being united with the bishop, also holds out reconciliation to those guilty of schism, provided they repent and return to the unity of the Church: "As many as are of God and of Jesus Christ are also with the bishop. And as many as shall, in the exercise of penitence (μετανοήσαντες), return into the unity of the Church, these, too shall belong to God, that they may live according to Jesus Christ." [30] This, too, involved submission to the bishop and his council: "To all who repent (μετανοουσιν), the

[28] The strife in the Corinthian Church at the time was deadly, as is evident from Clement's words in chap. 56: "Why do we divide and tear to pieces the members of Christ, and instigate strife against our own body; have we reached such a height of madness as to forget that ' we are members one of another '? Remember the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, how he said,' Woe to that man (by whom offences come)! It were better for him that he had never been born, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my elect. Yes, it were better for him that a millstone should be hung about (his neck) and he should be sunk in the depths of the sea, than that he should cast a stumbling-block before one of my little ones,' Your schism has subverted (the faith of) many, has discouraged many, has given rise to doubt in many, and has caused grief to us all. And still your sedition continues."

[29] Clement of Rome, J *Ep. ad Cor.,* 57, PG 1, 324 A.

[30] Ignatius of Antioch, *ad Philad.,* 3, PG 5, 820 C.

Lord grants forgiveness, if they turn in penitence (μετανοήσωσιν) to the unity of God and to the council (συνέδριον) of the bishop." [31]

The decisions as to be severe or mild, when to impart forgiveness and reconciliation with the Church, what kind of penance to impose, were at this early date left entirely to the individual "ruler" of the Church, bishop or presbyter. Polycarp (f A.D. 155-156), reflecting the attitude of the primitive Church in Asia Minor, counsels presbyters to be impartial, mild in judgment and ready to forgive:" The presbyters should be compassionate and merciful to all, bringing back those that wander..." and "Be not severe in judgment, for we know that we are all under the debt of sin; if, then, we entreat the Lord to forgive us, we ought also ourselves to forgive, for we are before the eyes of the Lord and God." [32]

Only to the obstinate, obdurate sinner is excommunication necessary and imposed as a normal procedure;[33] still, exclusion is not irrevocable, for they are not to be treated as enemies, but reclaimed as "straying members." [34] Prayer is offered for them, even while they are still excluded from the Church.[35]

About A.D. 135, the Church in Rome exemplified such an attitude regarding the heretic Cedron who came there when Hyginus was bishop. According to Irenaeus, Cedron would come often into the -church and "making *exomologesis* (ἐξομολογούμενος), he thus continued, sometimes teaching in secret, and again sometimes making *exomologesis',* but at last, after being exposed for corrupt teaching, he was separated from the assembly of the brethren (ἀφιστάμενος της των αδελφών συνοδίας)." [36] Evidently at Rome, prior to Hermas, even a heretic was accepted repeatedly for public penance if he showed signs of repentance. Because he was incorrigible, Cedron was finally " bound" separated from the brethren.

[31] Ignatius of Antioch, *ad Philad.,* 8, PG 5, 833 A.

[32] Polycarp, *Phil,* 6, PG 5, 1009 C-1012 A.

[33] Cf. *Didache* 4, 3; 15, 3; Ignatius of Antioch, *ad Smyrn.,* 4, PG 5, 845 B; *ad Eph.,* 7, PG 5, 737 B; Polycarp, *Phil.,* 6, PG 5, 1012 AB; Barnabas, *Ep. Cath.,* 19, PG 2, 777 B; II Clement, 17, *edit, at.,* p. 522.

[34] Polycarp, *Phil.,* 11, PG 5, 1013-1014.

[35] Ignatius of Antioch, *ad Smyrn.,* 4, PG 5, 845 B.

[36] Irenaeus, *Contra haer.,* Ill, 4, 3, PG 7, 857; the Greek from Eusebius, *Hist, eccl.,* IV, 11, PG 20, 328 BC.

Another case of" binding," or excommunication, which happened about A.D. 141, is related by Epiphanius.[37] Marcion, the influential heretic of later years, defiled a Christian virgin in his younger years. The disgrace prompted his father, the bishop of Sinope on the Euxine, to refuse his son admission to penance. Marcion went to Rome to seek reconciliation. Arriving there, he "betook" himself to the presbyters (πρεσβύταις),[38] who ruled the vacant see after the death of Hyginus. They refused him also, probably because of the unusual circumstances of the case. Marcion's attempts at penance and reconciliation indirectly proves that the Church at this time was granting pardon in similar cases; otherwise, he would not have even tried.

All in all, the primitive Church (until A.D. 150) seems to have been much milder in its exercice of binding and loosing than it would be in the era about to begin, molded by Hennas and his doctrine of *Paeni-tentia una.*



[37] Epiphanius, *Adv. haer.,* 42, PG 41, 695.

[38] The expression here may be translated better perhaps by *"* presbyter-elders " since the context lays stress on their seniority.

CHAPTER XIX

THE RISE OF RIGORISM IN LOOSING AND BINDING

The general guidelines given in the Scriptures regarding repentance and reconciliation left considerable room for interpretation in favor of leniency or rigorism. Bishops or presbyters relied on their own judgment whether to pardon or not the sinners found among their own faithful.

Leniency, however, can beget laxity. Indeed, the lines between one and the other can often be blurred; hence, the difference of judgment even among sincere, zealous men. The problem, ever new, ever old, plagued pastors of souls in the early centuries no less than it does today. Then as now, there were rigorists and there were laxists. Until Hermas wrote his *Shepherd,*[1] no common policy had been evolved concerning the exercise of binding and loosing. Almost singlehandedly, Hermas established a rigorist policy which was to last for several centuries.[2]

[1] It was probably written during the reign of Antonius Pius, i.e., A.D. 138-161. The anonymous author of the Muratorian fragment, c. A.D. 165, states: "Very recently in our own times, in the city of Rome, Hermas compiled *The Shepherd;* his brother, Bishop Pius of Rome [A.D. 158] was at the time seated in the cathedra of the Roman Church.

[2] The influence of the *Shepherd* was overhelming because the ancients believed it was divinely inspired. Irenaeus, for example, quotes it as Sacred Scripture *{Contra Haer.,* IV, 20, 2, PG 7, 1032 BC). Clement of Alexandria regards its statements as "divinely expressed" *(Strom.,* VI, 15, PG 9, 356 A; II, 1, PG 8, 933 B; I, 29, PG 7,928 A); even the great Origen regards it as "divinely inspired" *(Com. in Rom.,* X, 31, PG 14, 1282 B), though sometimes he seems to qualify this with some doubt. At the time of Eusebius it was still read publicly in the churches, though by now some opposed its claim of divine origin *(Hist, eccl.,* III, 3, PG 20, 217 B). Virtually the only voice decidedly opposed to the *Shepherd* was that of Tertullian who called it apocryphal but since he was a Montanist, his opposition was suspect and had little influence (cf. *De Pudicitia,* 20, PL 2, 1075 A; also *De Orat.,* 16, PL 1, 1217 A). Modern scholarship takes a measured view of the *Shepherd.* The very character of the work, with its allegories and elaborate imagery, gives rise to controversy. Hermas' lack of literary skill and meager theological training add to the ambiguity and uncertainty of the work. His errors and inconsistencies have to be taken into consideration when dealing with his doctrine. For an excellent critique of Hermas, see R. van Deemter, *Der Hirt des Hermas Apokalypse oder Allegorie?* (Delft, 1929) and the special studies cited there.

Almost obsessively convinced that the end of the world was near, Hermas pressed sinners to seize the final chance of forgiveness. This is the last chance—he has God's word for it. His aim is immediate, mass repentance defore the world ends. Repentance consists of a complete change of heart—a traditional point. The changed penitent, even if guilty of adultery or apostasy,[3] must be reconciled.[4]

Hermas' alleged "revelation" in *Visio II* on the possibility of penance for Christians, implies he is the first to teach such a doctrine. But New Testament and other sources (see above, p. 199 ff.) contradict this. So does the *Shepherd's* evidence: from the very onset, he himself takes for granted the practice and efficacy of penance;[5] he himself writes about an already existent penitential procedure,[6] and admits that repentance had been previously established by the Lord: "The Lord, knowing the heart and foreknowing all things, knew the weakness of men and the manifold wiles of the devil... The Lord, therefore, being merciful, has had mercy on the work of his hand, and has set repentance for them." [7] What Hermas announces is actually not basic possibility of penance and pardon (as if these have not been practiced prevoiously), but their limitation. For him, a complete change of heart means a person will not sin again; if he does, his repeated sinning (υπό χείρα άμαρτάνη) clearly shows that his change of heart was not sincere.[8] This is why, according to Hermas, there can be only a single repentance after

[3] *Vis.* II, chaps. 2 and 3 (edit. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. II [Wm. B. Eerd-mans, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1962], p. 10); *Mand.* IV, 1 *{edit, cit.,* p. 21); *Sim.* VIII, 11 *(edit, cit.,* pp. 42-43) and they had been expelled from the community *(Mand.* IV, I, *edit, cit.,* p. 22)

[4] *Mand.* IV, 1 *(edit, cit.,* p. 21).

[5] He does this in *Visio* I, while the alleged revelation is first mentioned in *Visio* II *(edit, cit.,* pp. 9-10).

[6] E.g., *Mand.* IV *(edit, cit.,* pp. 21-22).

[7] *Mand.* IV *(edit, cit.,* p. 22).

[8] Hennas differentiates, not the sins according to their objective gravity, but groups of sinners according to their degree of attachment to evil and alienation from God (cf. *Sim.* VIII *[edit, cit.,* pp. 39-43] where the various kinds of willow rods signify different groups of sinners). In other words, he regards as pardonable or unpardonable not the type of sin committed but rather the type of sinners who are disposed or indisposed for true repentance and penance. This distinction helps clear up many apparent inconsistencies in his doctrine.

baptism. The impossibility of repeated repentance, therefore, stems from moral and psychological reasons, not from a dogmatic principle.

There is apparent inconsistency between what Hermas considered the "sound doctrine" of "certain teachers who denied forgiveness and repentance to all sins committed after baptism," and his own doctrine conceding one pardon and penance to sinful Christians.[9] The key for resolving it lies in the policy of the early Church to withhold the doctrine of a second repentance (the first being baptism) from the catechumens and the newly-baptised in order to forestall any further sin on their part.[10] The catechum-enate training was rigorous and careful: all was geared to trans-form completely the heart of the convert, to wash all traces of sin from him in baptism, and to keep him from sinning in the future. There were many things the faithful had been forbidden to discuss with those under instruction or with converts, for fear of doing them harm (see above, pp. 58 if.). A person convinced that once" he has obtained remission of sins (in baptism), he must sin no more, for there is no other repentance," will undoubtedly be more careful than one who knows a second chance will be given him. On the other hand, pastors were no less emphatic in arousing confirmed sinners to repentance and penance. A second forgiveness of sins was openly held out to them. Hermas had heard both types of "teachers." A trained theologian would have made the two positions clear, but Hermas was only a simple, pious man with limited experience and skill. Such an explanation accords with what we know about repentance and pardon from other sources. [11]

If Hennas' doctrine of a single penitence after baptism seems stern by modern standards, the rigid stance of Montanism in refusing even a single pardon to those guilty of grave sin is even harsher. Beginning as a legitimate revivalist movement within the Church, and ending outside of it as full-fledged heresy, Montanism reached its

[9] *Mand.* IV, 3 *(edit, cit., p.* 22), the passage occasioning the most controversy.

[10] Or, as Hermas himself puts it: "not as giving occasion for error to those who are to believe, or have lately believed in the Lord " *(Mand.* IV, 3, *edit, cit.,* p. 22).

[11] A. d'Ales was the first to introduce this solution in his *U£dit de Calliste* (Paris, 1914), pp. 67 ff.

highest point in Latin Africa during Tertullian's lifetime. He was also its most eloquent spokesman. Its penitential doctrine is expressed in the "Oracle" of the Paraclete, supposedly speaking through Montanus, and reported by Tertullian: "The Church can forgive sins, but I will not do so, lest others also commit sin." [12] This is more than an admission that the Church in principle has the power of forgiving sins; indirectly, it is an affirmation that the Church was using this power then and had been exercising it previously. [13]

There were rigorist bishops in the Church before and during Tertullian's time: their policy was nearly the same as his. Cyprian, for example, tells of certain of his predecessors in the African Church who were convinced that "they should not grant peace (pardon) to adulterers, and that they absolutely barred admittance to penance in cases of adultery." Yet in spite of this rigorist policy (differing from that of the majority of bishops), he adds, these bishop did not think it necessary to separate themselves from the Church.[14] Two facts are evident from Cyprian's words: (i) reconciliation of adulterers was the ancient practice, and (2) the majority of bishops, even in the rigorist African Church, still maintained a more lenient policy. This is confirmed by contemporary sources. About A.D. 182, for example, Irenaeus writes about Marcus, a Gnostic heretic, and the women he defiled in Asia Minor c. A.D. 150. These women, guilty of the sins of the flesh with him, "made confession (ἐξωμολογήσαντο) when on several occasions they returned to the Church of God." Here, even repeated confession is indicated! Among these women was a deacon's beautiful wife who was" corrupted alike in doctrine and in body by this charlatan." Later, when other Christians brought her back after much difficulty, "she continued making

[12] Tertullian, *De pud.,* 21, 7, PL 2, 1078 B.

[13] In all of chap. 21 *(fie pud.,* PL 2,1077 B-1080 B), Tertullian gives the Church's position quite clearly, and attempts to refute it with arguments that are weak and inconsistent. He claims that the power of forgiveness was given to Peter personally and not to the Church, then contradicts himself by conceding this power to the Church—but to the Church of the Spirit, not to the "Church which consists of a number of bishops." After denying any power of pardon to the bishops, he falls into another contradiction by conceding to them the power to forgive venial sins.

[14] Cyprian, *Ep.* 52, *ad Antonianum* (Oxford 55), 21, PL 3, 811 A.

confession all the time, mourning and weeping over the defilement she had suffered at the hands of the impostor."[15]

Similar incidents happened in the Rhone district where Irenaeus was pastor. Some of these sinners, he says, "confess openly, but others are ashamed to do this and have silently despaired of the life of God. Some apostasized altogether; others waver between the two courses, exemplifying the proverb neither out nor in.*n* [16]

In Corinth, bishop Dionysius, a contemporary of Pope Soter (c. A.D. 165-174), writes to the Church of Amastris in Bithynia and to the Churches in the Pontus, pressing them "to receive those who come back again after any fall, whether it be grave offenses (πλημμελείας) or heresy."[17] About the same time (A.D. 177), according to Eusebius, the churches of Lyons and Vienne were receiving apostates back into the Church[18]—probably the earliest instance of confessors and martyrs interceding on the apostates' behalf, a privilege which later became commonplace. Whether these apostates by their reconciliation acquired merely the status of penitents or of full members of the Church is unknown but, since they were regarded as "being made alive again," full forgiveness may be inferred. Some of these were martyred later.

All these sources, indicating the Church's possession and use of the power to loose and to bind, help with the problem of interpreting what Tertullian had written about penance. The difficulty of interpretation stems from Tertullian's contradictory statements in his works *On Repentance {De paenitentia),* written when still in the Church, and *On Modesty {De pudicitia),* composed when he was a Montanist. The one, an assertive call to penance, bolstered by scriptural arguments, is an assurance to all sinners that they will be pardoned if they are sincerely penitent: the other, a polemical, venomous work against the non-Montanists, is an outright denial of the Church's power to forgive any grave sin.

In the latter, Tertullian blames a bishop he calls *Pontifex Maximus*

[15] Irenaeus- *Contra Haer.,* I, 13, 5, PG *η,* 588 AB.

[16] Irenaeus, *Contra Haer.,* I, 13, 7, PG 7, 592 A.

[17] See Eusebius' description of Dionysius' letters in *Hist. Eccl.,* IV, 23, PG 20, 385.

[18] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, 1, PG 20, 425.

for having ruled that adulterers were to be readmitted into the Church. This *Pontifex Maximus* was thought to be the Bishop of Rome, Callistus.[19] Far-reaching implications were seen in such a supposed papal ruling, not only for the administration of penance, but for the whole concept of the Church. Recent studies, however, no longer attribute such an edict to the pope.[20] No other trace of it is found—and Tertullian himself does not say that *Pontifex Maximus* is Bishop of Rome. The Liber Pontificalis (the *Book of Popes,* in which biographies of the early popes date back to at least the sixth century) notes such lesser items as the remission of fasting under Callistus, the ordinations performed by him, and the buildings erected by him,[21] but omits any reference to a matter that would have been momentous in any papal career, had there not been pardon for adulterers before. Nor does Hippolytus mention such a "new" ruling when he attacks Callistus for alleged laxity.

The absolute silence of history regarding a decision of such import is explicable only if the edict was important, not for the Church universal, but for a local church, in this case, probably for the African Church.[22] There were rigorist bishops in the African Church; these were Tertullian's contemporaries and Cyprian's predecessors who absolutely refused adulterers admission to penance. Tertullian's attack and ironic use of the title *Pontifex Maximus* in all liklihood refers to an influential bishop of the region who refused to go along with the rigorist position and issued an edict of his own, admitting adulterers to penance and to reconciliation, as had been the earlier practice (see above, pp. 200, 210).[23]

Tertullian's polemics in his work *On Modesty* present another problem which is even more difficult to solve: his charge of inconsistency against his opponents for granting forgiveness to the

[19] At first it was thought that the *Pontifex Maximus* in question was Pope Zephyrinus (A.D. 198-217); after the discovery of Hippolytus' *Philosophumena* in 1850, opinion shifted to Pope Callistus, the successor of Zephyrinus; hence, the edict was called "Edict of Callistus."

[20] Cf. B. Poschmann, *Paenitentia secunda* (Bonn, 1940), 349 f. for details.

[21] Cf. *Liber Pontificalis,* edit. Duchesne, I, 141.

[22] Cf. B. Poschmann, *op. at.,* 302.

[23] Solid reasons point to Agrippinus, Bishop of Carthage, as the author of the edict; cf. K. Adam, *Das sog. Bussedikt des Papstes Kallistus* (Munich, 1917), 56 if.

unchaste, yet refusing it to apostates and murderers. He must have had some grounds for his assertion, though Hermas provides evidence that this was not true for Rome, Dionysius for Corinth, and Clement for Alexandria.[24] The churches to which Tertullian refers must have been local churches in Africa. Some of Cyprian's predecessors in Africa had adopted a policy of lifetime exclusion for adulterers. A possibly greater number of them had taken the same position as regards apostasy and murder which were deadlier sins and far more rare. But there could not have been any traditional common policy among the African bishops regarding apostasy and murder: the very rarity of these two sins argues against it. The few who committed such sins were probably refused admittance to penance, and Tertullian, therefore, could make his charge of inconsistency without giving lie to the known facts. Perhaps, in the very few instances of apostasy and murder, most African bishops deferred reconciliation until the sinner's deathbed. Since this involved no public menace, Tertullian could have regarded it as a denial of peace.[25]

The non-Montanist bishops energetically defended the universality of forgiveness, and Tertullian admitted that he formerly shared their view,[26] so no charge of innovating can be leveled against them. Rather, it was Tertullian and the Montanists who were innovating when they taught their doctrine of irremissible sins.[27] The Church had always made a distinction between venial and grave sins, threatening expulsion from its midst for many of the latter. But, provided the sinner repented sincerely, he was forgiven and received into the fold after a suitable penance.

On becoming a Montanist, Tertullian excluded all grave sins *(capitalia,*[28] *mortalia,*[29] *maiora,*[30] *graviora et exitiosa* [31]*)* from ecclesiastical forgiveness, therefore classifying them as "irremissible."

[24] See above, pp. 212, 215, and p. 225, note 5, below.

[25] Cf. H. Koch, *Kallist und Tertullian* (Heidelberg, 1920), 45; A. d'Ales, *L'Edit de Calliste* (Paris, 1914), 204.

[26] Tertullian, *De pud.,* 1, PL 2, 1033 B.

[27] *Ibid.,* 2, PL 2, 1036 C.

[28] *Ibid.,* 9, PL 2, 1051 B; and 21, PL 2, 1079 B.

[29] *Ibid.,* 3, PL 2, 1037 B; and 19, PL 2, 1074 C; and 21, PL 2, 1077 B.

[30] *Ibid.,* 18, PL 2, 1070 C.

[31] *Ibid.,* 19, PL 2, 1074 A.

Yet, he says, penance should be done for them in the hope of divine pardon, for "if it reaps not the harvest of peace here, it sows the seed of it with the Lord."[32] Sexual perversions *(monstra),* however, are excluded even from ecclesiatical penance.[33] His list of grave, unpardonable sins is not exhaustive: "murder, idolatry, fraud, apostasy, blasphemy; also, of course, adultery and fornication, and any other "violation of the temple of God." [34] Recent historians of dogma are mistaken, therefore, when, basing themselve on Tertullian, they claim that the primitive Church refused pardon for "three capital sins," only. Two errors of fact stand out in their assertion, for (i) the primitive Church granted pardon to the sincerely repentant sinner, even if guilty of capital sins, on his doing penance (see above, pp. 200 f), and (2) it regarded as capital more than three sins (though idolatry, murder and adultery occupied a primary place among them). Paul himself lists nine which excluded the unrepentant from the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10), but there were others (e.g., Ga 5:19-21).[35] After Tertullian's polemics had led him, through a curious process of reasoning from the Decalogue and Acts, to group three sins, idolatry, murder and adultery as capital, his influence and the Western interpretation of the so-called Apostolic Decree manifested themselves clearly in the significant role the triad played in the organization of penance in later centuries.[36] This was not true, however, of the Eastern Churches. Their penitential legislation, which Tertullian's influence had not penetrated, shows that the term "capital sins" was not taken narrowly: these included everything which today is regarded as grave sin—and all were remissible. The three Canonical Letters of Basil show this clearly when he lists eighty-four canons in which penances were assigned for the most diverse kinds of "capital sins."[37] The only sins which Tertullian as a Montanist holds remissible

[32] *Ibid.,* 3, PL 2, 1038 A.
[33] *Ibid.,* 4, PL 2, 1039 A.
[34] *Ibid.,* 19, PL *2,* 1074 A; cf. also *Adv. Marc,* IV, 9, PL *2,* 404 C.
[35] E. g., see *Didache's* extensive list in its " Way of Death, " chap. 5.
[36] E. g., cf. Pacianus, *Paraen. adpaen.,* 4, PL 13, 1084 AB; Augustine, *De Serm. in Monti,* I, 12, 35-36, PL 34, 1247.
[37] Basil, *Ep. 188 (Can. prima),* PG 32, 664 B-684 B; *Ep. 199,* PG 32, 716 C-732 C; *Ep. 217,* PG 32, 793 B-809 A.

are *the* lesser ones *{leviora,*[38] *modica,*[39] or *mediocria* [40]). For these, the traditional ecclesistical penance retains its efficacy: [41] there is a preliminary exclusion from the church,[42] and forgiveness is imparted by the bishop.[43] The role of penance and reconciliation is thus reduced to insignifiance. The Montanists' total discontinuance of the traditional practice would have made their doctrines suspect. Its minimal retention served their purpose.

Tertullian's description of primitive Christian penitential procedure is second to none in the early history of penance.[44] Interior as well as exterior penitential acts, which he calls *operosa probatio,* are necessary for "satisfaction," for "propitiation," and for "re-reconciliation" with God.[45] Termed *exomologesis,* all the outward acts of abasement and mortification are a veritable "confession" of guilt and repentance: prostrations in sackcloth and ashes, sordid dress, restriction of diet, fasting, weeping, and lamentations, entreaties on bended knees before presbyters and faithful for their prayers and intercession. The most difficult part of the whole exercise, however, was *publicatio sui,* the self-accusation or confession. It is impossible to determine whether the various acts of abasement corresponded to the kinds of sin committed, and therefore constituted the *publicatio sui* or confession, or whether there was actual, verbal self-accusation; if the latter, was it done before the whole congregation including the higher clergy (bishop or presbyters), or before the clergy only? Anyway, the disclosure of sins was part of the exercise, for shame deterred most people from it. Tertullian writes: "Still, I presume that most men either shun or put off from day to day this work, as an open exposure of themselves, because they are more mindful of their shame than of their health; like those who, after contracting some malady in the more private parts of the body, avoid making their physicians privy to it, and so perish with their

[38] *Ibid.,* 18, PL *2,* 1070 C.
[39] *Ibid.,* 1, PL 2, 1034 C.
[40] *Ibid., 7,* PL 2, 1046 B.
[41] *Ibid.,* 18, PL 2, 1070 C.
[42] *Ibid., 7,* PL 2, 1046 BC.
[43] *Ibid.,* 18, PL 2, 1070 C.
[44] In his *De paen.,* chap. 9, PL 1, 1354 A-1355 A.
[45] *De paen., 7,* PL 1, 1352 BCj 8, PL I, 1354 A; 11, PL 1, 1357 B.

bashfulness." [46] Such intense shame is comprehensible only if the sins involved were those of the flesh, or other serious hidden ones—a good indication that penance and reconciliation encompassed sins of unchastity in the primitive Church. Reference to physicians may imply that the disclosure was made only to the clergy, as was the case fifty years later in Africa and in Egypt, as Cyprian and Origen testify.[47] It makes little difference for the dogmatic history of penance whether the manifestation of sins was made within the congregation or apart from it; the sins were made known to the higher clergy, and the higher clergy imparted reconciliation.

According to Tertullian, only one confession of penance was available for the baptised;[48] here, the influence of Hermas is clear. Hermas denied repeated repentance on psychological grounds; Tertullian, for dogmatic reasons. Tertullian also differed from Hermas by excluding all grave sinners from penance and reconciliation, calling the *Shepherd,* a "shepherd of adulterers!" His Montanist position compelled Christians to support their practice with theoretical foundations and scriptural arguments. This they did by appealing for the first time to Matthew i6:i8f., which promptly became the standard defense.[49]

About A.D. 172, the bishops of the Asian Church condemned Montanism.[50] The Church Universal concurred, but under pressure from the Montanists, many Western clerics tended towards rigorism. The clergy of Rome were no exception, though the milder, more ancient practice shines through in the pardon and reconciliation of the heretic Natalis, recounted by an anonymous writer and preserved by Eusebius.[51]

During the pontificate of Zephyrinus (c. A.D. 198-217), Natalis

[46] *Ibid.,* 10, PL I, 1355 A.

[47] Cyprian, *Ep.* 9, *ad clerum,* 2, PL 4, 492 A-493 B; Origen, *In Lev. homil. II,* 4, PG 12, 418 BC; *In Ps. 37, homil. I,* PG 12, 1386 A.

[48] *De paen.,* 7, PL 1, 1352 AB.

[49] So also Jn 20:19-31.

[50] Ecclesiastical limits of jurisdiction for the Diocese of Asia coincided with those of the civil, imperial territory of the same name.

[51] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl,* V, 28, 10-12, PG 20, 513. The account is attributed by some to Hippolytus himself; cf. O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur,* Vol. 2, ed. 2 (Freiburg, 1914), 514; however, cf. A. Puech, *{Hist, de la litt. grecque chrit.,* Vol. 2 [Paris, 1928], 565) who is less certain.

joined the heretical sect of Theodotus.[52] His conscience reproached him to the extent that he had nightmares (" he was often warned by the Lord through visions"); after a particularly difficult night, suffering agonies of remorse (when he was "scourged" by angels), he decided to repent:" As a result, he arose in the morning, put on sackcloth, smeared himself with ashes, and with great earnestness and many tears, prostrated himself before Zephyrinus the bishop, rolling himself at the feet not only of the clergy, but also of the laity. And with tears he moved the compassionate Church of the merciful Christ. After much begging, and showing the welts of the stripes that he had received (for Christ), he was with difficulty admitted to communion (κοινωνηθήναι)."

The acts of humiliation are of *exomologesis.* The term κοινωνηθήναι can probably best be understood as admission to receive the sacrament of Communion, and not merely communion with the Church as a penitent. This is probably why he was admitted" with difficulty."[53]

More importantly, here we have an instance of pardon and reconciliation in Rome accorded for the grave sin of heresy. Zephyrinus was the immediate predecessor of Pope Callistus, who merely conformed to the tradition when he received former heretics into the Church. Hippolytus makes much of this issue: it seems to be his chief complaint against Callistus.[54] If Callistus had reconciled

[52] Asclepiodotus and Theodotus were disciples of a Theodotus, a cobbler from Byzantium, who taught a modified form of adoptianism. He denied the divinity of Christ by declaring him a mere man, teaching that he became the Christ at his baptism through the descent of the Holy Spirit; however, though the Holy Spirit gave him the power to fulfill his special mission and exalted him above all other men, this did not make him divine. Theodotus was excommunicated by Pope Victor and subsequently founded the heretical sect of which Natalis became bishop.

[53] The consideration that Natalis was a bishop, even though a heretical one, may have been the reason why he was directly admitted to communion without undergoing a lengthy public penance. During Cyprian's time a few decades later, the rule was already established that bishops and clergy were not required to perform public penance. Their demotion from clerical to lay state was deemed sufficient penance and reconciliation.

[54] That is, besides charging Callistus of not deposing bishops who were guilty of capital offenses, of accepting bigamists, among the clergy, and of allowing clerics to marry. For full account, see Hippolytus, *Refutatio omnium haeresium,* IX, 12, PG 17, 3386.

heretics and sectaries with the Church, he also asserted his right to do the same with sinners guilty of unchastity, without needing any "new edict," since Hermas had long before advocated the very thing. Belonging to a milder school of thought, Callistus would naturally have imposed lesser penances than the rigorists, including Hippolytus.

Judging from his attitude towards Callistus, Hippolytus, like some of Cyprian's predecessors in Africa, may have refused pardon to adulterers, idolators and murderers, but it is far from certain. He blames Callistus for maintaining that the Church contains both saints and sinners, cockle and wheat, but he does not reveal whether or not he would grant reconciliation to repentant sinners. In the *Apostolic Tradition,* now almost universally ascribed to him, Hippolytus indicates in an ordination prayer that the ordinand "by the high priestly Spirit may have authority to *forgive sins* according to Thy command... *to loose every bond* according to the authority. Thou gavest to the Apostles..." [55] This is indirect proof that the bishops were forgiving sins and that he himself approved it.

Likewise, the prayer for the ordination of bishops and presbyters in the *Canons of Hippolytus* has: "Grant to him, O Lord, the episcopate (priesthood) and a clement spirit, and power to remit sins." [56] These *Canons* were probably compiled for use in the schismatic community at Rome of which he was bishop, though they contain interpolations of a later date. The disciplinary regulations found there list classes of sinners who are not to be received into the catechumenate, nor baptised until they reform; these include"a fornicator or person seeking gain from fornication, or a sodomite, and especially a liar, and every slothful person, or diviner, or magician, or astrologer, or soothsayer, or interpreter of dreams, or juggler, or agitator (who exhorts the common people to rioting or seditions)..." etc.[57] These *Canons* continue: "But if after baptism any are found to have relapsed into those criminal offenses which

[55] Cf. *Apost. Trad.,* iii, 5, edit. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome* (London, I937)> P· 5·

[56] Cf.H. *Achelis,DieCanonesHippolyti,TEXTE* UND UNTERSUCHUNGEN, VI, 4 (Leipzig, 1891), pp. 46, 61.

[57] Cf. H. Achelis, *op. cit.,* xv, No. 76.

we have specified, let them be expelled from the Church till they have done penance with weeping, fasting, and works of mercy." [58] The inference is clear: the offenders, including those guilty of unchastity, will in due course be restored to communion. Hippolytus' disagreement with Callistus involved *serverity of penances,* not the *pardon* itself.

[58] *Ibid.,* 79.

CHAPTER XX

THE DECLINE OF RIGORISM IN LOOSING AND BINDING

Hermas could not have wished better popularizers for his teaching on penance than Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 150-211),[1] and his pupil, Origen (c. A.D. 185-254),[2] Both accept the early Christian differentiation of pardon: the forgiveness of sin (λαβείν άφεσιν των αμαρτημάτων) in baptism, an absolutely gratuitous removal of guilt; and the taking away of sins (άπολαμβάνειν τα αμαρτήματα) in penance, a painful process of purification.[3] Grave sins such as idolatry, murder or bloodshed, adultery and unchastity, heresy, etc are not precluded from penance, at least the first time,[4] and from

[1] Parts of Clement's *Miscellanies (Stromata)* read almost like copies of the *Shepherd;* e. g., the passage concerning a second repentance is a paraphrase of Hermas: "And the Lord, knowing the heart and foreknowing the future, foresaw from the very first, from the beginning, both the fickleness of man and the subtle craftiness of the devil and how the devil, because he envied man the forgiveness of sin, would present certain occasions of sins to the servant of God by skilfully plot ting evil that they might share his fall with him. Accordingly, (the Lord) in his exceeding mercy granted another, a second penitence (μετάνοια) to those of the faithful who fall into some transgression, so that anyone, tempted after his call and overcome by compulsion or guile, may still receive this one penitence..." *(Strom.* II, 13, PG 8, 996 A; cf. Hermas, *Mand.* IV, 3, edit., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. II [Wm B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1962], p. 22).

[2] Interpretations of Origen's penitential doctrine are many and varied; however, his teaching must be the same as that of his teacher, Clement, except when proved different. Some (e. g., B. Poschmann, P. Galtier, J. Stufler), therefore, are convin ced that Origen approved forgiveness of all sins, however grave, at all periods of his life. Others (e. g., P. A. Kirsch, E. Amann, K. Holl) hold this was true of his later writings, but not of his early work where the capital sins are excluded from reconciliation. Others again (e. g., Dollinger and A. v. Harnack), see in him a confirmed rigorist much like Tertullian.

[3] Origen, *In Jer. homil. XVI,* 5, PG 13, 445 (cf. *In Jer. homil. II,* 3, PG 13, 281 A); Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.,* II, 12, PG 8, 993 AB; IV, 24, PG 8, 1364; *Quis div.,* 40, PG 9, 645 AC (cf. *Strom.* VII, 10, PG 9, 480 B).

[4] Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* II, 23, PG 8,1096-1097; VII, 16, PG 9, 541 BC and 545 B; *Quis div.,* 38, PG 9, 644 AB, and *ibid.,* 42, PG 9, 648-652; Origen, *De or.,* 28, PG n, 528 C-529 C; *In Lev. homil. XI, 2,* PG 12, 535 A (cf., *In Exod. homil. VI,* 9, PG 12, 338 *CD* and *In Lev. homil. XV,* 2 PG 12, 560) where he compares penance with the penalty of death imposed in the Old Testament on adulterers: death substituted adequately then for punishment in the hereafter; now in the New Testament this is replaced by penance through which "for giveness can be merited."

reconciliation.[5] For them, the only incurable sin was obduracy-impenitence, which Clement styles "willful and knowing" sin and Origen," a fundamental lack of will (δια τό μή βούλεσθαι) to repent" [6] The public act of penance, or *exomologens,* by now a well-known procedure in the purification process, is under the control of the Church's rulers as pastors of the faithful.[7] Origen gives more detail: as physician-helpers of the supreme physician, Christ, the rulers of the Church are essential in both correction (κόλασις) and the cure. That is why "wounds" (sins) must be shown to the priests .[8] Confession of secret grave sins is obligatory, for the Scriptures teach that "sin must not be concealed within us." [9] The sinner must not be ashamed to indicate his sin to the priest of the Lord and to seek the medicine (penance).[10] Spiritual physicians decide

[5] In Clement, reconciliation of grave sinners is exemplified in his story of St. John the Apostle's former protogo, turned robber-thief, his repentance, and restoration to the Church " as a great example of true repentance, a great instance of regeneration (παλιγγενείας), a trophy of the resurrection..." *(Quis div.,* 42, PG 9, 649 B-652 B). For Origen, cf. C. *Celsum,* III, 51, PG 11, 988 BC, where he regards reconciled sinners " as being risen from the dead, " that is, with spiritual effects in time and eternity. Cf. also *In Num. homil. X,* r, PG 12, 638 A.

[6] Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* II, 13, PG 8, 996 AB (for particulars, cf. B. Poschmann, *Paenitentia secunda* [Bonn, 1940], 230-236); Origen, *Comm. in Jo.,* 19, 3, PG 14, 545 B-548 A.

7 *Strom.,* II, 15, PG 8,1008. Clement did not belittle the spiritual director role of those in authority in the Church as part of their pastoral office, which included the power of excommunication and readmission, but he stressed the fact that any " man of God " not in priestly orders may effectively help the penitent in the healing process of purification by his advice, admonition, prayer and personal direction *(Quis div.,* 31, PG 9, 636-637; 32, PG 9, 637 C; 33, PG 9, 640 AB; 41. PG 9, 645 C-648 A; *Strom.* VII, 12, PG 9, 509; *Eclog. proph.* 15, PG 9, 705 AB). Because much of his success in leading the penitent back to God depends on his own holiness or personal relationship with God, the saintly lay director is in a very real sense on a level with the priest or bishop *(Strom.* VI, 13, PG 9, 328-329) in "saving the sinner, "and in the "forgiveness of sins " In not restricting the role of "director of souls " to the clergy alone, the concepts of Clement (and later, of Origen who styles them "physicians of souls") were taken up by the ancients, especially in Byzantium, and incorporated into their systems of asceticism and penance, giving it an added dimension not usually found in the Western Church. The highly esteemed" staretz" in the Russian Church also traces his origin, via the Greeks, to Clement and Origen.

[8] Origen, *In Ps. 37, homil. I,* 1, PG 12,1369 CD and 1370 BC; cf. also *In Num. homil. X,* 1, PG 12, 638 A.

[9] *Ibid., homil. II,* 6, PG 12, 1386 A.

[10] Origen, *In Lev. homil. II,* 4, PG 12, 418 BC (cf. also *In Ps. 37, homil. I,* 1, PG 12, 1386 A); this is listed as one of the seven ways in which sin after baptism may be remitted.

whether the gravity of the sin is such that it requires public penance," but even for secret sins, if they are grave enough, penance must be done.[12] Since forgiveness in penance is not gratuitous, like that imparted by baptism (άφεσις), but is dependent upon public penance (the forgiveness must be "merited [M])[13] he takes issue with priests who were lax in administering penitential discipline—priests who, instead of insisting on public penance for grave sins, were forgiving them in much the same gratuitous way as in baptism, that is, simply by their prayer.[14] Because Origen appreciates the God-given power of loosing and binding, he insists on holiness in those who use it.[16] A priest or bishop who is holy will be ever-sensitive to the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit regarding the adequate penance in any given case. After this penance has been fulfilled, the priest empowered by the Holy Spirit "forgives whatever God forgives." [16]

Origen, however, does not minimize the human element in reconciliation and pardon; its effect on divine forgiveness is important, otherwise why would he regard exclusion from the Church a dreadful calamity?" It is a disgrace to be cut from the people of God and the Church."[17] Striving to be reconciled to the Church is really striving for salvation, as is indicated by his question, "How can I still attain to happiness... How can I return to the Church?" That

[11] Oigen, *Comm. in Matt.,* 13, PG 13, 1618 AB (cf. 30, PG 13, 1640).

[12] Origen, *In Lev. homil. XIV,* 4, PG 12, 558 C (cf. Ill, 4, PG 12, 429 AC).

[13] *Ibid., homil. XI,* 2, PG 12, 533 D.

[14] Origen, *De or.,* 28, PG 11, 529 B. Origen argued not against any supposed lack of pardoning power on part of the priests, nor, as some have maintained, that capital sins were beyond ecclesiastical forgiveness, but only against the lax admin istration of penitential discipline by some priests: "It seems as if God here sets up an obstacle to penance inasmuch as he holds out no hope of forgiveness. But pay close attention to the word [of the Lord]. What he says is: I do not pardon them their guilt through sacrifice, I pardon it through works and perfect penance "(/ *Sam.,* 3, 14, PG 17, 40 CD). In the New Law, Origen, therefore, insists on a parallel application of the Church's power in forgiving sins, i. e., public penance is a prerequisite for the forgiveness of capital sins, while correction (κόλασις) and prayer, like the Old Testament sacrifices, are sufficient for lesser ones. For details see Poschmann, *op. cit.* 453-460.

[15] Cf. *De or.,* 28, PG 11, 528 BC and *Comm. in Matt.,* 12, 12, PG 13, 1005 f. This is mainly why Origen's criticism of unworthy priests and bishops is biting, why he calls them "hypocritical intruders," on par with persons falsely claiming to be martyrs, *(Comm. series in Matt.,* 24, PG 13, 1620 D).

[16] Origen, *De or.,* 28, PG 11, 528 C.

[17] Origen, *In Ez. homil. X,* 1, PG 13, 740 D.

is why he counts repentant sinners among" the righteous," despite their grave guilt.

The Decian reign of terror (A.D. 250) produced many martyrs,[18] but it also caused a great number of apostasies. The Carthaginian Church may have fared worse than others, though Rome numbered its apostates by the thousands. Tens of thousands of former African Christians sacrificed meat (the *sacrificatt)* or burnt incense (the *thurificati)* to the gods. These became apostates by direct personal act. An even greater number purchased *libelli,* certificates testifying that they had sacrificed even when they had not (the *libellatici).* Some bribed exemption for their whole family. This "lesser offence" was still regarded by the Church as a definite act of apostasy. [19] As soon as the danger was over, most of the apostates clamored for pardon and restoration to the Church, relying chiefly on the "letters of peace" from the martyrs awaiting execution.[20] In Cyprian's words," thousands of certificates were daily being given (by those about to be martyred) to those who sought them."[21] Now they were demanding reconciliation as their "right," in fact, some began to extort it.[22]

[18] The edict of Decius, issued in late A. D. 249 or early A. D. 250, gave extraor dinary powers and specific instructions to the governors and magistrates. The scope of its provisions, as far as can be gathered, was nearly all-inclusive: everyone in the empire was required to sacrifice to the gods and to the deified emperor on a set day under pain of penalty. Since Christianity was opposed to such demands, it was singled out for special attention (see J. A. F. Gregg, *The Decian Persecution* [Edinburgh and London, 1897], pp. 71 f.) The names of those who sacrificed were duly registered and received certificates issued by the local magistrate who presided at the sacrifices. When the time limit expired, non-conformists were searched out; these could be pressured to comply by torture and imprisonment. If they still proved intractable, the proconsul could then pronounce a sentence of death.

[19] The staggering number of those who lapsed may be seen from Cyprian's remarks: "Immediately at the first words of the threatening foe, a very great number of brethren betrayed their faith, and were cast down, not by the onset of persecution, but cast themselves down by voluntary lapse." *(De lapsis,* 7, PL 4, 485 A). He describes some of the events that fateful day: "They ran to the market place of their own accord; freely they hastened to death [of apostasy], as if they had previously wished it, as if they would seize the chance now given which they had always wanted. How many were put off by the magistrates at that time when evening was coming on; how many even asked, that their [spiritual] destruc tion might not be delayed" *(De lapsis,* 8, PL 4, 486 AB).

[20] 1. e., letters written by those suffering in prison for Christ, intervening with Church authorities on behalf of the lapsed, that the latter be restored to the Church.

[21] Cyprian, *Ep. 14, Ad presbyteros et diaconos Romae consistentes,* 2, PL 4, 269 B.

[22] *Ibid.,* 269 C; *Ep. 22, Ad clerum Rom. consistentem,* 3, PL 4, 291 B-292 A.

The difficulty was a lack of uniform policy regarding reconciliation of the lapsed: the decision was left to the discretion of each individual bishop. Perhaps most bishops refused to admit apostates to penance and reconciliation because they believed that apostas y was an irremissible sin. Others, however, were more mild in their judgment and readmitted apostates *after* penance. Still others, like Cyprian in Africa, were reconciling only those who were sick and dying. All were acting on precedent. A uniform policy became necessary. This may have prompted the exchange of letters between Cyprian and Rome.

The decisive ruling of Pope Cornelius regarding the reconciliation of apostates, with which Cyprian agreed, was not an innovation, but a reaffirmation of a principle applied by many bishops, and an effort towards unification of policy. The letters exchanged between Cyprian, Rome, and Carthage make this clear from the very beginning. Cyprian opposes hasty reconciliations,[23] and, more importantly, reconciliation "before the required expiation, before undergoing *exomologesis* for the crimes."[24] Novatian and the Roman clergy concur (the Roman see was vacant at the time). They, too, take for granted the reconciliation of the lapsed as a matter of principle: in fact, they enjoin it, for "it is a matter of geater risk and shame not to have besought the aid of peace (reconciliation)," but reconciliation should be granted only in accord with Church discipline and procedure—and "with humble entreaty, with subdued petition.*3)* [25] God is merciful, but he demands that his precept be obeyed.[26]

Cyprian also explains the matter in a letter to his own people. He objects, not to the reconciliation of the lapsed and their readmission to Holy Communion—" it was fitting that they should attain these things in due course"—but to the absence of the prerequisites: "Yet, I hear that certain presbyters, neither mindful of the Gospel nor considering what the martyrs have written to me, nor reserving to the bishop the honor of his priesthood and his dignity, have already

[23] Cyprian, *Ep. 14,* 3, PL 4, 270 B; cf. *Ep. 31, Cleri Romani ad Cypr.,* 3, PL 4, 318 B; 6, PL 4, 321 AB; 8, PL 4, 323 A.
[24] Cyprian, *De lapsis,* 16, PL 4, 493 B.
[25] *Ep.* 3/, *η,* PL *4>* 322 A; cf. *Ep. 2,* 2 and 3, PL 4> 322 B.
[26] *Ibid.,* 322 B.

begun to communicate with the lapsed, and to offer on their behalf, and to give them the Eucharist, *when it was fitting that they should attain to these things in due course.* For, as in smaller sins which are not committed against God, penitence may be fulfilled in a set time, and *exomologesis* may be made with investigation of the life of him who fulfills the penitence, and no one can come up to communion unless the hands of the bishop and clergy be first imposed upon him [i.e., without absolution]: how much more ought all such matters as these be observed with caution and moderation, according to the discipline of the Lord, in these gravest and extremest sins:"[27] He repeats the same objections in his letters to the clergy,[28] to the martyrs and confessors, adding "let them wait for ripe and peaceable times before giving peace."[29] Reconciling the lapsed before the end of the persecution, he fears, may make it easy for others to apostatize.

To correct the abuses, Cyprian wants to maintain long, hard penances until the end of the persecution when a council could be held.[30] With temporary peace restored to the Church, councils were indeed held in A.D. 252: one at Carthage, with a "large number of bishops present," [31] and the other in Rome where local bishops, "many in number were acting in concert with some of the bishops near to us and within reach and some from afar" [32] At these councils the bishops held to a policy of what was considered moderation.[33] Both councils, however insist on a "long, protracted penance" to be determined by examining each case, the disposition and need of each individual penitent.[34] The dying were to be exempt,[35] and, because the *libellatici* were not as guilty as the *sacrificati,* they could

[27] *Ep. 11, Ad plebem,* 2, PL 4, 263 BC. He is the first to mention explicitly the imposition of the hand by bishop and priests at the conclusion of the *exomologesis* in «he Latin Church, and this as an established practice.
[28] *Ep. 9,* 2, PL 4, 257 B-258 A.
[29] *Ep. 10,* 1 and 2, PL 4, 260 C-261 A.
[30] *Ep. 17, Ad presbyteros et diaconos,* PL 4, 277 A. Immediate reconciliation, however, was to be granted to the repentant sick and dying without the customary penance *{Ep. 12, Ad clerum,* 1, PL 4, 265 B; *Ep. 13, Ad clerum,* 2, PL 4, 267 A). The Roman clergy agreed *(Ep. 31,* 8, PL 4, 323 A).
[31] *Ep. 52, Ad Anton., 6,* PL 3, 791 A.
[22] *Ep. 31, Cleri Rom. ad Cypr.,* 8, PL 4, 322 C.
[23] *Ibid.; Ep. 52,* 6, PL 3, 791 AB.
[34] *Ep. 52, Ad Anton.,* 6 and 13 and 17, PL 3, 791 B, 804 B-805 A, 808 A.
[35] *Ibid.,* 5 and 13 and 17, PL 3, 791 A, 804 B-805 A, 808 A.

now be reconciled on the basis of the penance already done.[36] Nothing really new was decided at these councils, but existing procedures were applied with greater uniformy. The bishops decided it was the "opportune time" to reconcile the *libellatici.*[37] The question of *saarificati* remained open to the judgment of individual bishops or to a later council.

Novatian, piqued at Cornelius'election as bishop of Rome, charged him with indiscriminate reconciliation of those who sacrificed. His charge is groundless, instigated by false reports from the apostates, as Cyprian carefully explains in his superb defense of Cornelius and of the decisions of the councils.[38]

About Easter of A.D. 252, with another persecution imminent, the bishops of the African Church assembled anew. Cyprian decided with them that risk of death by persecuion was the same as that of death by disease. If reconciliation was available to the sick in danger of death, why not grant it to the repentant lapsed in danger of death from persecution, even to those who had actually sacrificed? The idea was approved.[39] Cyprian and the bishops are defining the "opportune time," and not some new powers. The year before, the time had not been ripe. Their belief in the need for *paenitentia plena* remained unchanged, but a new development called for a change in practice. Readmission to the Church was intended to strengthen the repentant" with the protection of Christ's body and blood."[40]

Perhaps they were "yielding to the needs of the time,"[41] but circumstances seemed to warrant it. The more Cyprian experienced the terrors of persecution, the more he became understanding and compassionate regarding human frailty. He seems to have been uneasy in his own conscience regarding some of his solutions when he confesses: "I shut my eyes to many things with the desire and the wish to gather together the brotherhood. Even those things which are committed against God I do not investigate with full

[36] *Ibid.,* 14 and 17, PL 3, 805 B-806 A, 808 A.
[37] *Ibid.,* 12, PL 3, 803 B.
[38] *Ibid.,* 13-17, PL 3, 804 B-808 A.
[39] *Ep. 54, Ad Corn., 1* and 2, PL 3, 880 A and 883 A.
[40] *Ibid., 2,* PL *3*> 883 A.
[41] Cf. *Ep. 4, 2,* PL 4, 236 B.

judgment of religion. I almost sin myself, in remitting sins more than I ought. I embrace with prompt and full love those who return with repentance, confessing their sin with lowly and unaffected atonement." [42] This could have brought about the reproach that he changed his mind. He became more lenient, not about the basic possibility of pardon and reconciliation of the lapsed, but about the harshness of the *paenitentia plena.*[43]

By contrast, Novatian, in order to justify his position as antipope and the formation of a schism, did become an innovator of principle. While still within the Church at the onset of the Decian persecution, he was one with Cyprian and the bishops in opposing, not reconciliation of the lapsed, but excessive laxity regarding the required penance. He agreed, too, that the repentant lapsed in danger of death from sickness be reconciled despite their incomplete penance. After his defeat for the see of Rome, he repudiated these same practices (by now sanctioned by the bishops' councils) and appealed to the purity of the Church, which supposedly prevented any contact with sinners. Cyprian writes of him: "Let him also separate the fraudulent and adulterers from his side and from his company, since the case of an adulterer is by far graver and worse than that of one who has taken a certificate [that he has sacrificed], because the latter has sinned by necessity, the former by free will." [44] In other words, if Novatian continued to exclude the repentant *libellatici* from his church, he should logically expel all repentant adulterers.[45]

The formal act of reconciliation, validly granted, was all important for Cyprian, because it not only effected readmission to the Church, but also gave the penitent the " Spirit of the Father,"[46]

[42] *Ep. 54,* 16, PL *3,* 851 A.
[43] He himself explains: "Lest anyone should think that I have lightly withdrawn from my purpose, and while in the beginning, at first, I maintained evangelical vigour, yet later I seem to have turned my mind from discipline and from its former severity of judgment, so as to think that those who have stained their conscience with certificates or have offered abominable sacrifices, are to have peace made easy to them. Both of which things have been done by me, not without long-balanced and pondered reasons " *(Ep. 52, Ad Anton., 3,* PL 3, 789 AB).
[44] *Ep. 52,* 26, PL 3, 816 B-817 A.
[45] Cf. *Ep. 52,* 26 and 27, PL 3, 816 B-818 A. Later, the Novatianists excluded all grave sinners from their church for life. For this, Novatian" will have to give an account to the Lord" *(Ep. 52,* 21, PL 3, 812 A).
[46] *Ep. 54, Ad Cornil.,* 4, PL 3, 885 A.

the pledge of life [47]—effects clearly of sacramental signifiance. While final pardon lies with the "Lord when he comes to judgment," the reconciled have the hope and expectation of salvation, while those outside the Church are excluded from salvation. [48]

Valuable confirmation of the early Church's doctrine on penance and reconciliation comes from an anti-Novatianist work from Syria, the *Didascalia Apostolorum,* c. A.D. 252-270.[49] The bishop "holds the place of God Almighty [n] and has the prerogative of binding and loosing: "Therefore, O Bishop, teach and reprove and loosen by pardon, and know that thy place is that of God Almighty, and thou hast received power to forgive sins, for it is said to you Bishops, * All that ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in Heaven; and all that ye shall loose shall be loosed.' As therefore thou hast power to loose..."[50]

The *Didascalia Apostolorum* enjoins severity by insisting on excommunication of the grave sinner,[51] but it emphasizes mercy and compassion in receiving him back:" Thou therefore, O Bishop, judge thus, first severely, and afterwards receive with mercy and clemency [him who] has promised to repent; reprove him and make him sorry and persuade him, because of the word that was said in David thus,' Thou wilt not give up the soul of him that confesseth to Thee."" [52] Specifying idolatry and adultery,[53] it puts no sin beyond the scope of forgiveness; in fact, it enjoins the bishop not to hide repentance mercilessly from the people, and warns him, "For if thou forgivest not those that sin, how canst thou receive forgiveness?" "The bishop is not to be deterred by the rigorists from

[47] *Ep. 52, Ad Anton.,* 13, PL 3, 805 A.

[48] *Ep. 54,* i> PL 3, 881 A.

[49] Though an earlier date is possible by as much as half a century, the *Didascalia* could not have been composed later than A. D. 300, since both Epiphanius and the writer of the *Opus Imperfectus in Matthaeum* know and use it.

[50] C. 7, edit., M. D. Gibson, *Horae Semiticae,* No. 2, *{The Didascalia Apostolorum in English* [London, 1903]), p. 34; cf. also C. 5, p. 27; C. 6, p. 28.

[51] Thus, the impenitent sinner must be cast out (C. 10, *op. cit.,* pp. 54, 56; C. 11, p. 58); there must be no fellowship in prayer with the excommunicated (C. 15, *op. cit.,* p. 75); no offerings are to be received from them (C. 18, *op cit.,* p. 83).

[52] C. 6, *op. cit.,* p. 28.

[53] C. 7, in *Cod. Sangermanensis* 38 (Nat. Library of Paris), *op. cit.,* p. 39.

[54] C. 7, in *Cod. Sang., op. cit.,* p. 35.

reconciling the repentant.[BS] The bishop who refuses to reconcile the penitent is threatened with eternal damnation: "He who puts anyone out of the Church and receives him not again, kills verily, evilly, and bitterly for eternity; and God gives as eternal food to cruel fire him who puts out of the Church, and does not look at the mercy of God, and does not remember His goodness to the penitent, and does not bear the likeness of the Christ, nor pay attention to any people who repent of the multitude of their faillings, that they may receive pardon from him." [5β]

The procedure of reconciliation was similar to that of the reception of the catechumen: both are excluded from the Eucharistic Liturgy (which it calls the "Prayer"), but they are permitted to stand outside the doors to hear the Word, " i.e., the didactic part of the Liturgy. After penitents have shown "the fruits of their repentance" (probably by leading a penitential life for several years, as other sources indicate), [58] they are to fast two, three, five, or seven weeks, according to their fault, immediately before reconciliation.[59] As the bishop is the one who receives the catechumen, so is he the one to perform reconciliation:" As therefore thou baptizest a heathen, and thereafter receivest him, so on that man also lay the hand, every one praying for him; thereafter bring him in and let him partake with the Church. Let that laying on of the hand be to him instead of baptism; for if by the laying on of the hand and by baptism they receive the communication of the Holy Ghost..."[60] The *Didascalia* excludes from pardon no sin besides impenitence. The sign of forgiveness is the imposition of the bishop's hand, and its efficacy is equated with that of baptism itself.

The testimony of Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria (A.D. 247-248) and Gregory the Wonderworker (A.D. 213-270) is similar. The former teaches that reconciliation with the Church is to be granted

[55] C. 6, *op. cit.,* pp. 29, 31.

[56] C. 7, in *Cod. Sang., op. cit.,* pp. 35 f.

[57] C. 6, *op. cit.,* p. 32; C. 10, pp. 54, 55.

[58] C. 10, *op. cit.,* p. 55; for length of probationary, penitential life, cf. E. Schwartz, *Busstaufen und Katechumenatsklassen,* (Frankfort am Main, I9H)> 20.

[59] C. 6, *op. cit., p.* 32,

[60] C. 10, *op. cit.,* p. 54; cf. C. 7, p. 34.

to all the repentant lapsed after an appropriate penance—three to ten years—but that those in danger of death are to be pardoned immediately.[61] Gregory the Wonderworker, bishop of Neo-Caesarea, explains how the public system of penance was organized into various groups or categories of penitents: the *mourners* who stood outside the church door, begging the prayers of those who entered; the *hearers* in the porch or narthex who were allowed to remain for the Scriptural readings and instruction, then dismissed; the *kneelers* who remained on their knees in the nave until their dismissal; last of all, the *bystanders* who stood together with the faithful for the entire Eucharistic Liturgy but could not share in the Eucharist.[62] A sinner beginning his penance was probably placed in the lowest category and gradually progressed to the higher grades until, finally, he was absolved and restored to his place among the faithful. Similar systems existed in the other Churches, as later evidence shows.[63]

The public performance of penance did not normaly result in defamation or exposure of secret sins, for it was undertaken for all kinds of sins, even small ones. A public sin merited public correction or rebuke,[64] but for secret sins, even very grave ones, the sinner was admonished privately—"between four eyes"—a principle carried out in Augustine's day (A.D. 354-430).[65] In some places, abuses had to be corrected, as, for example, in Campania,

[61] Cf. fragment of his letter to Bishop Canon, in J. B. Pitra, *Juris ecclesiastici Graeci historia et monumenta,* I (Paris, 1868), 545. He also writes (in a letter to Fabius of Alexandria, preserved by Eusebius) about the deathbed reconciliation of Serapion, an old man who had apostasized by sacrificing (Eusebius, *Hist, eccl.,* VI, 44> PG 20, 629 ff.)·

[62] *Canonica Epistola,* Can. 11, PG 10, 1048; cf. also Can. 8, PG 10, 1041.

[63] Thus, the Council of Ancyra (A. D. 314), Can. 16,20,21, 22 (Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et ampllissima collectio,* Vol. II, 519, 520); the Council of Neo-Caesarea (c. A. D. 320), Can. 5 (Mansi, II, 539); cf. also St. Basil, *Ep. 217, $6,* 75, PG 32, 697 A, 804 AC; Gregory of Nyssa, *De bapt. Christi,* PG 46, 421 C; Chrysostom, *In Matt.* 71 alj 72, 4 (edit. Montfaucon, 7, 699 E); *De incompr. Dei nat.,* 4, 4 (edit. Montfaucon, 1, 477 *C); In II Cor.* (edit. Montfaucon, 10, 568 *B); In Eph.,* 3, 4 (edit. Montfaucon, 11, 23 A), etc.

[64] Augustine, *En. in Ps. 61,* 23, PL 36, 747.

[65] Augustine, *Serm. 82,* 7, 10, PL 38, 511. Both types of rebukes aimed at persuading the sinner to repent and do penance (cf. Augustine, *En. in Ps. 61,* 23, PL 36, 747*1 Serm. 351,* 4, 9, PL 39, 1545).

Samnium and Pecenum where sins of individual sinners were read publicly! Pope Leo I (A.D. 440-461) ordered this intolerable custom *(improbabilis consuetudo)* abolished, declaring that it was quite sufficient to manifest one's sins [u] by secret confession to presbyters alone."[66] He was merely reaffirming the existing procedure of public penance with secret confession of sins.[67] Secrecy, after all, was imperative for saving sinners, not only from defamation but, in some cases, from being handed over to a criminal judge.[68]

What held back most repentant Christians from reconciliation until their dying day was not the danger of defamation or exposure, but the law of *paenitentia una,* only one penance and pardon in a lifetime, as well as the severity of the penances imposed. The principle of a single penance and pardon, introduced by Hermas, and justified on psychological-moral grounds by Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, continued to be rigidly applied in most fifth and sixth century Churches, expecially in the West. When, towards the end of the sixth century, some Spanish churches were granting repeated reconciliations, the Third Synod of Toledo (A.D. 589) condemned it as an "execrable presumption."

The East was more lenient, but repeated reconciliations were still rare enough there at the beginning of the fifth century for Chrysos-tom's enemies to accuse him of laxity when he granted repeated pardons.[69] Hesychius, for all his brilliance, dared to advocate only repeated admissions to penance, but not repeated reconciliations.[70]

The nature and duration of penance for different sins were detailed and harsh. Thus, the councils of Ancyra (A.D. 314), Neo-Caesarea (314-325), Nicaea (325), Laodicea (c. A.D. 344-363) in the East, and the many African, Spanish, and Frankish synods in

[66] Leo I, *Ep.* 168, 2, PL 54, 1211 AB.

[67] Cf. J. Kirsch, *Zur Geschichte der Kath. Beichte* (1902), 83.

[68] E. g., for wilful murder or even homicide, etc. Augustine mentions a case in which the crime of murder was known only to the bishop *(Serm. 82,* 8, 11, PL 38, 5").

[69] According to Socrates, Chrysostom was supposed to have preached: "Come back, even if you have already repented a thousand times." *(Hist. Eccl.,* VI, 21, PG 67, 725 C-728 A).

[70] Cf. K. Jussen, *Die dogmatischen Anschauungen das Hesychius von Jerusalem,* II (Miinster, Westf., X934), 81 if.

the West, produced their own laws,[71] as did the papal decretals of Siricius, Innocent I, Leo I, Felix II, Hormisdas, and Gregory the Great.[72] Many penitential statutes were collected by private bishops and writers: the *Apostolic Constitutions* and the *Apostolic Canons* (the material for both mostly taken from the *Didascalia),* the *Statuta Ecclesiae antiqua* (c. A.D. 500, consisting mostly of imported canons from the African Church), the collection of penitential statutes from the whole Church by Dionysius Exiguus;[73] the wealth of penitential letters and writings, especially of Peter of Alexandria, Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom in the East,[74] and those of Ambrose, Pacian of Barcelona, and Augustine in the West.[75]

[71] Ancyra, Canons 4-6, 16, 20 (Mansi, II, 516, 519-521); Neo-Caesarea, Canons 1-5 (Mansi, II, 539); Nicea, Canons 8, 10-14 (Mansi II, 672-673); Laodicea, Canons 2, 19 (Mansi, II, 563, 567); Elvira, Canons 1-3, 5-8, 10, 12-13, *7, 19, 25, 3°, 3*> 45-47, 53 (Mansi, II, 6-10, 13-14); Axles, Canons 9, 13-14, 16, 22 (Mansi, II, 472-473), etc.

[72] Siricius, chaps. 3, 5, 14 (PL 13, 1136, 1137, 1145); Innocent I, *Ep. 6, Ad Exsuper. episcop. Tolos.,* 2 (PL 20, 498); *Ep. 2, Ad Alexand. Episcop. Antiochen.* (PL 20, 550); *Ep.* 25, *Ad Decent, episcop. Eugubin.* (PL 20, 559); Leo I, *Ep. 10* (PL 54, 635); *Ep. 108* (PL 54, ion f.); *Ep. 154* (PL 54, 1138); *Ep. 167* Ques. and answer 2 (PL 54, 1203), 7, and 9-12, and 19 (PL 54, 1205-1207, 1209); *Ep. 168,* 2, (PL 54> 1210); Felix II, *Ep. 7* (Mansi, VII, 1057); Gregory the Great, Lib. I, 16 and 26 (PL 76, 1137, H99 *Qi* Lib. V, c. 4, § 55 (PL 79, 392); Lib. VI, c. 2, § 33 (PL 79, 439)·

[73] *Apost. Constitutions,* II, 11-16, 18, 20-21, 23, 41, 47 (PG 1, 612 ff. passim, 708, and 1073; *Apost. Can.,* Canons 24, 64, 65 (Mansi, I, 33, 41); *Statuta Eccl. antiqua,* Statutes 68, 74-82 (Mansi, III, 957, 958); African Canons, Canons 7, 27, 43, 45, 132 (Mansi, III, 711, 728, 735, 735a, 827); Dionysius Exiguus, *Codex canonum Eczl. Universae* and *Codex canonum ecclesiasticarum.*

[74] Peter of Alexandria, *Can. Ep.,* Can. 1-2 (PG 18, 468 f.); Can. 3 (PG 18, 472); Can. 5 (PG 18, 473); Can. 6 (PG 18, 477); Can. 7-8 (PG 18, 480); Can. 10 (PG 18 488); Can. 14 (PG 18, 505); Basil, *Ep. canonica prima,* Can. 4 (PG 32, 673); Can. 7 (PG 32, 674); Can. 11 (PG 32, 681); *Ep. canonica secunda,* Can. 21 (PG 32, 721); Can. 22 (PG 32,724); Can. 30 (PG 32,725); Can. 32 (PG 32, 727); Can. 34 (PG 32, 728); Can. 44 (PG 32, 729); Can. 56-59 (PG 32, 797); Can. 71 (PG 32, 801); Can. 73-74 (PG 32, 801, 804); Can. 84 (PG 32, 808); after denning the varying lengths of penance for various sins, Basil at the end sensibly left the final decision to those in authority; Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep. canonica ad S. Letoium Melitines epis.* (PG 45, 225, 228 f., 232 f.); Chrysostom, *Ad Theodorum lapsum,* 4, 6, and 16 (PG 47, 281, 284, 302); *De Sacer.,* ii, 3; iii, 5-6 (PG 48, 634, 643 f.); *De incompr. Dei nat.,* 5 (PG 48, 746); *De beato Philog.,* 4 (PG 48, 754); *De Lazaro, 4,* 4 (PG 48, 1012); *Ad pop. Antioch.,* 3 (PG 49, 50 and 54); *De diabolo tent.,* 2 (PG 49, 263); *De Paenit.,* 2 and 3 (PG 49, 284-285, 287, 289, 292 f.); *In Joan.,* 28 (PG 49, 161); *In Ep. II ad Cor.,* 4 (PG 61, 426 f.); *In Ep. ad Heb.,* 9, 6 (PG 63, 80); *In Gen.,* 30 (PG 53, 273 and 280); *In Matt.,* 10, 5-6 (PG 57, 190), etc.

[75] Ambrose, *De Paenitentia,* I, 2 (7), 3 (10), 8 (36), 11 (49), 16 (90) (PL 16, 488 f., 497, 502, 514 f.); II, 2 (12), 10 (95), 18 (136 and 137) (PL 16, 520, 541);

All of these hardened into law and acquired canonical status.

Depending on the kind of sin, the penance imposed could last from five, ten, twenty, or thirty years to a whole lifetime.[76] For sins of more common occurrence (including some against the Sixth Commandment), the penance was limited to the forty days of Lent. On completing the assigned penance, the penitent was reconciled to the Church, but his juridical status in the Church—at least in the West from the fourth century onwards—remained inferior. He was barred for life from the clerical state, from engaging in military service, from holding public office and, perhaps most difficult of all, from marital intercourse; in a word, his status after having undergone penance, necessitated a renunciation of the world which was tantamount to entering monastic life. Moreover, breaking any of these restrictions was equivalent to "sinning anew." [77]

Reform was effected gradually. In the West, it began when Celtic penitential practice seeped into the continent from the seventh century onwards. Due to its isolation, the Celtic Church did not share in the faulty development of penitential practice in the rest of the Western Church—its principles were probably those which the Church universal used before the onset of excessive rigorism. This was an effective system, consisting of confession, acceptance

Pacian of Barcelona, *Ep. 1, Ad Sympron.* (PL 13, 1055 and 1057); *Ep. 3* (PL 13, 1063, 1067, 1070, 1083-1085, 1087-1089); Augustine, *Ep. 53,* 7 (PL 33, 655); *Ep. 185,* 45 (PL 33, 812); *Ep. 228* (PL 33, 1016-1018); *Ep. 265* (PL 33, 1088); *Sermo 351,* 9-10 (PL 39,1545 f.); *Sermo 351,* 10 (PL 39, 1546); *Sermo 3$2* (PL 39, 1558); *Sermo 392* (PL 39, 1711); *Sermo 393* (PL 39, 1714); *De Symbolo ad Catech.,* 8 and 15 (PL 40, 636); *De Bapt. contr. Donat.,* V, 23 (PL 43, 194), etc.

[76] While most penitential legislation followed the lead of the Nicene Council (A. D. 325) in observing the "ancient canonical law" in not depriving anyone at the point of death "of the last and most indispensable Viaticum" (Can. 13, Mansi, II, 674), some of the Western synods were not as generous; e. g., the Spanish synod of Elvira (c. A. D. 396) listed 18 *crimina* for which forgiveness was to be denied even at the hour of death. Other Western synods which denied communion at the hour of death for certain, specific sins were Aries (A. D. 314, Can. 14 [Mansi, II, 473]), Sardica (A. D. 343, Can. 2, [Mansi, III, 7]), and Saragossa (A. D. 380, Can. 2 [Mansi, III, 634]), etc.

[77] E. g., Pope Siricius' decree on recidivism: "*Qui acta paenitentia tanquam canes et sues ad vomitus pristinos et ad volutabra redeuntes et militiae cingulum et ludicras voluptates et nova coniugia et inhibitos denuo appetivere concubitus. Quorum professam incontinentiam generati post absolutionem filii prodiderunt (Ep. 1,* 5, PL 13, "37).

of private penance fixed by the priest, and finally, reconciliation. Most important of all, it was available to all, at any time, even repeatedly, and carried no lifelong, juridical restrictions.

The East followed its own course towards the decline of excessive rigorism. It never seems to have adopted the lifelong juridical restrictions of the west. Though Patriarch Nestorius' abolition of the office of priest-penitentiary (a priest-expert delegated for hearing confessions after the Decian persecution) did not abolish public penance, it did leave the individual free to decide, according to his conscience, whether to submit or not to the official penitential discipline.[78] In the absence of any official supervision and control over sinners, the need for advice led many to seek it from monks, thus opening the way to a private therapeutic procedure.[79] In their capacity as confessors, the monks tended towards mitigating the duration of the penances (given in the various Canonical Penit-entials) and their public character, according to each penitent's moral earnestness, his personal needs and circumstances. By the eighth century, public penances had been replaced with private ones.

Vestiges of the old system, however, are seen in the *Nomocanons* or *Kanonaria* (eighth to fifteenth centuries) which the priest used for questioning the penitent, selecting the correct *epitimia* or penance, and imparting the proper forms of absolution.[80]

[78] At first, this applied only to the jurisdiction of Constantinople, which was not very extensive at the time; however, with its growing prestige, its influence on other Eastern Churches increased.

[79] The monks were a logical choice. According to the old teaching, stressed by the Alexandrian school of Clement and Origen, a physician of souls must be holy—and monks enjoyed a reputation for asceticism and piety which the common people never quite attributed to the secular clergy and bishops.

[80] These were very useful for the confessor, since they were geared to every class of penitent—from the unlettered, simple man, to the cultured, sophisticated city-dweller, from laymen to the clergy, from monk to priest and bishop—and applied the Church's penitential legislation to each class and kind of sin, assigning the corresponding instruction and penance: e. g., *Cod.* N. 153 (of year 1420) of St. Panteleimon Monastery (Mt. Athos); *Cod.* N. 311 (i5th-i6th cent.) of same monastery; *Cod.* N. 455 (15th cent.) of Moscow Synodal Library; *Cod.* N. 136 (15th cent.) of Met. Library of Holy Sepulchre, Constantinople (Istanbul); *Cod. Barberini* N. 306 (formerly N. 302, 16th cent.) of Vatican Library (A. Almazov, *Tajnaya ispovid ν Pravoslavnoi Vostochnoi Tserkvy,* Vol. Ill (Odessa, 1894), la, Append, no. 1, pp. 2-4, no. 9, pp. 29-36; no. 7, pp. 23-35), etc. For older MSS containing various prayers of absolution, also geared to the particular sins and censures, cf. *Cod. Barberini* III, 55 (77)> now *Vat. gr.* 336 (of 8th-9th cent.) and *Cod. Bessarionis* (Grottaferrata Γ.β.Ι.) of the nth cent. (Goar, *Euchologion*$_3$

True repentance is absolutely necessary for the remission of sins in the Byzantine Church today, as it has always been; this includes (a) contrition and compunction of heart, and (b) a steadfast determination to amend.[81] Besides this, there must be (c) a confession of sins, (d) the laying on of the hands by the priest, and (e) the prayer of absolution—the "visible parts" of the sacramental mystery.[82] Before confession is made, the penitents take part in a service of repentance, more or less standardized, aimed at evoking sincere sorrow for sin and trust in the mercy of God.[83]

This service is attributed to John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople (A.D. 582-595), but it dates probably from the eleventh or twelfth century—an age noted for its tendency to attribute everything connected with penitence to that venerable Patriarch.[84] After the standard prayers beginning every liturgical service, the highlights of this service consist of Psalm 50, three penitential *troparia* (hymns), two prayers beseeching forgiveness ([cc] O God, our Saviour, who didst grant unto repentant David..." and "O Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, both Shepherd and Lamb..."), dating back to the eighth or ninth century.[85] An admonition follows;

pp. 536 f.); *Cod. Porphyrios* of 9th-ioth cent. (A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* Ill, Suppl. II, pp. 42, 45); *Cod. Sin.* N. 958 (10th cent.), N. 959 (nth cent.) and N. 962 (nth-12th cent.); cf. A. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie liturgicheskikh rukopisej khraniaschikhsia v bibliotekakh pravoslavnago vostoka,* Vol. II, *Euchologia,* (Kiev, 1901), pp. 33, 45, 71, 1022.

[81] C. Dyobouniotes, Τα Μυστήρια της ανατολικής ορθοδόξου 'Εκκλησίας εξ έποψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1912)3 n. 33 PP· 136 f.; C. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής 'Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907), ρ. 3&ι.

[82] Cf. C. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 133.

[83] The rich variety of forms which this service had is evident from the various prayers in the *Codices* from the 12th to the 16th centuries: e. g., *Cod. Vat.* N. 1554 (end of 12th cent.); N. 1833 (12th cent.), N. 2111 (A. Almazov, *op. cit.,* Vol. Ill, n. 15, p. 64; n. 16, p. 74, n. 17, p. 76); *Cod. Sin.* N. 966 of the 13th century (A. Dmi trievsky, *op. cit.,* Vol. II, pp. 202 f.); the 15th century *Cod.* N. 105 of the Grand Lavra, Mt. Athos; the 15th century *Cod.* N. 489 of St. Dionysius Monastery, Mt. Athos; the 16th century *Cod.* N. 60 (63) of Castamonitu Monastery, Mt. Athos (cf. A. Dmitrievsky, *op. cit.,* pp. 636 f., 642 f., 849 f.), etc.

[84] Cf. N. Suvorov, "Viroyatnyj sostav drevnijshago ispovidnago i pokayannago ustava ν Vostochnoj Tserkvy, "*Vyzantijskij Vremennyk* (St. Petersburg, Vol. VIII (1901), pp. 398 ff.

[85] E. g., *Cod. Barberini,* III, 55 (77), now *Vat. gr.* 336, of the 8th-9th century; *Cod. Bessarionis* (Grottaferrata Γ.β.Ι.) of the nth century (cf. Goar, *op. cit.*> PP· 536-537).

either extemporaneous or standardized. The penitent is told not to be afraid or ashamed to reveal everything, since it is Christ present who receives the confession.

The confession itself is private, either made spontaneously or in question-and-answer form. Generally, the Orthodox use the latter method, the priest doing the questioning, the penitent, the answering—in line with the old tradition when the *Καηοηαήα* lists were used (they are still included in modern Rituals). Confessions are usually heard before an icon or in front of the inconostas with the priest and penitent either sitting or standing. In Greece, it is customary for the penitent to sit facing the priest. There is no fast rule about non-essentials. In many Byzantine Catholic churches, confession is made kneeling before the priest behind the altar, in the sacristy or, as in the Latin Church, in a confessional. An exhortation follows the confession.

The older Rituals *(Euchologid),* Greek and Slav, give many forms of absolution. All are deprecative, and sufficient for a valid remission of sins—as were the formulae of the Latin Church before the eleventh century. Greek Orthodox confessors are still at liberty to compose their own formulas of absolution, though generally they use the one dating from at least the eleventh century: "Lord, our God, you remitted the sins of Peter and of the harlot because of their tears, and justified the publican who acknowledged his own sinfulness; accept, then, the confession of this your servant. If he has committed any sins, voluntarily or involuntarily, in word, deed or thought, in your goodness, forgive him, for you alone have the power to remit sin, you who are the God of compassion, mercy and love for mankind, to whom we give glory, with your eternal Father and with the holy, good and life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever. Amen." Byzantine Slavs, Catholic and Orthodox, however, generally use the indicative, active form, hardly differing from the Latin West: "May our Lord and God, Jesus Christ, by the grace and goodness of your love towards mankind, forgive you, my child, N..., all your faults; and I, unworthy priest (that I am), by the power given to me from him, forgive and absolve you from all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." This formula was composed by Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kiev

probably under influence of Latin theologians, and inserted into his famous *Trebnyk* (Ritual) of 1646.

In many Slav churches, the priest lays the end of his stole *(epi-trakhil)* on the head of the penitent while pronouncing the absolution, The liturgical dismissal concludes the rite.[86]

[86] For complete penitential rite in the Greek Church, cf. Goar, *op. at.,* pp <4i-542; in the Slav Church, cf. I. S. Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russtan) Church* (Boston and New York, 1906), DD 287 291, or J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, in Russia.* (London-Ï772), pp. 225-228. ^

CHAPTER XXI

THE UNCTION OF THE SICK IN SCRIPTURES

As we have seen in Chapter X, the medicinal use of unguents, oils, ointments or salves, goes back to the predawn of history. The primitive concept that many illnesses and diseases were caused by "demons" gave rise in almost all religions to the ritual use of these medicines both to expel "demons" from people and things, and to usher in "divine" emanations or spiritual powers.

When shrewdly applied by with-doctors or priests, herbal remedies provided some restoration to health in many cases, not because of the expulsion of spirits, but because they actually contained ingredients of medicinal value—even though primitive man could not know the diseases' causes nor could he understand the curative process.

The Jews, chosen people though they were, inherited these pagan concepts. This may have been the reason why God instructed them carefully in Sirach (38:1-15), regarding doctors and apothecaries: "The Lord has brought medicines into existence from the earth, and the sensible man will not despise them." The Lord uses medicines "to heal and to relieve pain, the apothecary makes up a mixture from them."[1]

In some cases, sin may lead to sickness and shorten life. Sexual promiscuity may result in venereal disease; drug addiction and alcoholism may hasten death; gluttony, resulting in overweight, may induce cardiac conditions. Sirach advises, "Do not be greedy over food, for overeating leads to sickness, and gluttony brings on biliousness. Many have died of gluttony; beware of this and you will prolong your life"(37:30 ff.).

Sirach continues: "My son, when you are ill, be not depressed, but pray to the Lord and he will heal you. Renounce your faults, keep your hands unsoiled, and cleanse your heart from all sin. Offer

[1]By trade, the "apothecary" was a perfumer (Ex 30:25; 37:29; 2 Ch 16:14; Si 49:1)5 but he also stocked salves and ointments.

incense and a memorial of fine flour, and make as rich an offering as you can afford" (38:9-11). After putting one's trust in the Lord, one should let the doctor take over (38:12). Insistence on the removal of guilt is quite reasonable even by today's standards: guilt can be productive of neurosis, depression, etc., which in turn may affect physical health.

In later Jewish literature, sin was expected to bring disease—a particular sin resulting in a corresponding disease. Rabbinical teaching pointed out four signs by which it was possible to recognize a sin: dropsy indicated fornication; jaundice, unquenchable hatred; poverty and humiliation, pride; liver complaints, backbiting. *Shabbath* (55 a) gives the general rule: "No death without sin, no chastisement without evil-doing," and *Nedanm* (41 a): "No recovery without forgiveness." Even a hideous disease like leprosy was thought to have been due to one of eleven sins, but the most probable was an evil tongue.[2]

In the Lord's time, this same belief shows itself in the disciples' query: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?" (Jn 9:2-3). That not all sickness results from personal sins is evident from Christ's answer: "Neither he nor his parents sinned." Still, Jesus showed many times that bodily and spiritual recovery are closely connected (Mt 8:1 if.; Lk 17:11 if.; Mt. 9:2, and *passim).*

When Jesus and his apostles cured the sick, it was usually by the laying-on of hand(s), perhaps to forestall any impression of magic potions or medicinal ointments. But the Twelve sent out to preach repentance used unction: "So they set off to preach repentance; and they cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them" (Mk 6:12 f.). It would seem from this passage that sin, and with it the power of the devil, were a factor in some of these sicknesses charismatically healed by the apostles.[3] Jesus in this instance merely adopted the method of anointing with oil, common among pagans and Jews of his day, and enhanced the effect of this anointing charismatically. Such anointing may be regarded

[2] Cf. F. W. Weber, *Judische Theologie,* 2nd edit. (Leipzig, 1897), pp. 245 if.

[3] F. J. Dolger points out that anointing was used especially in cases of possession *(Der Exorzismus in altchristl. Taufritual* [Paderborn, 1909]), 154 ff.

as a sacramental mystery, yet it is not a sacrament since it has no spiritual effect of grace. 4

Spiritual effects are attributed by James (5:14-16) to the anointing of the sick: "If one of you is ill (ασθενεί), he should send for the presbyters of the church, and they must anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord (έν ονόματι του Κυρίου) and pray over him. The prayer of faith will save (σώσει) the sick man (τόν κάμνοντα) and the Lord will raise him up (έγερεῖ αύτον) again; and if he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven. So confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, and this will cure you, the heartfelt prayer of a good man works very powerfully." This is a case of physical illness, for in verse 14, James uses the verb άσθενεϊν, which in profane usage meant to be weak, feeble or sick in body, and seldom refers to sickness of the soul. The word is commonly used in the Gospels and Acts to designate a physical illness which is either certainly grave,[5] or likely to be;[6] sometimes it refers to physical sickness in general, without any indication of gravity.[7] Paul uses the same word twelve times to mean debility, but he also uses it for sickness in general,[8] or sickness that is certainly grave.[9] In James (5:14) the word appears to mean a physical sickness, especially since he contrasts it with spiritual illness (κακοπάθεια, distress, mental worry) in verse 13. That this illness was physical and grave is bolstered by the expression δ κάμνων (the sick man) in verse 15,[10] and his summoning the presbyters instead of going to them himself.

The anointing is performed, not by charismatics, but by officeholders, the presbyters of the *ecclesia* (see below, pp. 262 ff. for meaning). James uses the plural; this probably explains why Eastern tradition has the sacrament administered by several priests, usually seven, if that many are available. The words of James, however, do not necessarily indicate plurality. The Scriptures do on occasion

[4] Many Catholic theologians have regarded this anointing as a sacrament, e. g. Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Scotus, Maldonatus, etc.

[5] Mk 6:56; Lk 7:10; 9:2; Jn 11:2, 3, 6; Ac 9:37·

[6] Mt 25:36, 39; Lk 4:40; Ac 9:12.

[7] Mt 10:3; Jn 6:2; Ac 20:35.

[8] 1 Cor 11:30.

[9] Phm 2:26, 27; 2 Tm 4:20.

[10] In contrast to Mk 6:13.

use the plural for the singular (e.g., Mt 2:20; 9:8; 27:44, etc.), as do other ancient writers, especially in referring to an official or professional to whom recourse is sought. Today we say, "You are sick. Go to the doctor." The ancients would often put it instead, "Go to the doctors." Augustine, for example, does this when he writes of taking the infant "to the presbyters" for baptism. On the other hand, it could have been that James was describing the anointing of the sick as it was being administered in his day, by more than one presbyter.

The whole rite of anointing is done έν τω ονόματι του κυρίου, that is, in the name and with the authority of the Lord; this is the sense in which the expression is commonly used in apostolic writers (cf. 1 Cor 5:4; Ac 3:6) and, indeed, was used by James in reference to the Old Testament prophets in verse 10. This phrase "in the name of the Lord," therefore, indicates the rites's divine institution and efficacy— its triple effect being (1) to save (σώζειν) the sick man, (2) to raise him up (έγείρειν) through the Lord, and (3) to obtain forgiveness of his sins.

The exact meaning of σώζειν and έγείρειν is hard to determine: both can mean either bodily or spiritual healing—and the two senses may be implied in both instances. Jewish tradition connects bodily with spiritual recovery; so does Jesus. James (1:21; 2:14; 4:12, and 5:20) uses the expression" to save " (σώζειν) in the sense of acquiring eternal salvation; hence, spiritual healing may certainly be inferred, especially since the sick man's sins will be forgiven—though bodily recovery is not ruled out if that be salutary to the person in question. Nor does James elaborate on the words "and the Lord will raise him (έγείρειν) up again." Bodily recovery cannot be assured to the faithful in every instance (this would constitute corporal immortality), but spiritual recovery is assured, [11] and seems to be the main purpose of the rite.

The sick man must confess his sins to the presbyters, perhaps in the presence of other faithful. This accords with Jewish custom: as we have seen there were many forms of confession, private or

[11] The whole rite of anointing and the prayer of the presbyters was a sacrament in our technical understanding of the term. This is obvious from the spiritual effects, the bestowal of grace, and the forgiveness of sins.

public, particular or general. It was the duty of the Rabbis to urge the sick to confession. According to *Sanhedrin* (103 a) such a confession enabled the worst sinners to inherit everlasting life.[12] That is the object of the Chrisitian rite, on the authority of the divinely inspired words of James.

[12] Cf. Hamburger, *Realencycl. des Judent,* article " Sundenbekenntniss." Whether or not the confession of sins mentioned by James constitutes evidence for the sacrament of penance is debatable; cf. B. Poschmann, *Paenitentia secunda* (Bonn, 1940X 61.

CHAPTER XXII

THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK IN THE EARLY CHURCH

During the first few centuries references to the anointing of the sick are not entirely clear. Yet, enough is said to warrant the conclusion that the early Christians did indeed use this sacrament.

Many factors explain why the anointing of the sick was seldom mentioned in early Christian literature. First, it was probably adrninistered less often than it is today. Until the end of the persecutions, the many thousands of Christian martyrs had no need or opportunity to avail themselves of it. Also, at this time, Christians were permitted to take the Eucharist home for their daily Communion. Whenever anyone needed the Viaticum, the Eucharist was easily given the sick person from this "home supply," thus obviating the need for presbyters to rush to his bedside and expose themselves and the whole family to arrest. The anointing of the sick, who were in good standing with the *ecclesia,* was certainly omitted in many cases. Among Christians who lived in pagan homes, this was unquestionably standard procedure. With the advent of rigorism in the Church, many deferred baptism until their deathbed, since baptism bestowed pardon of all sins and eternal life. Even today, despite its frequent use among Catholics and Orthodox, the anointing of the sick is seldom mentioned in sermons and articles on religious practice. Then, as now, the unction of the sick was a remedy for a particular situation and certainly subordinate in importance when compared to such sacraments necessary for salvation as baptism, the Eucharist and penance. Besides, its usage was never called into question in these early days, and so it never occasioned special discussion.

Of one thing we may be sure: the Christian unction of the sick, performed in accordance with the directives of James' episde, was even then a sacrament in the strict sense of the word. It was not merely a product of medieval Western theology. Ancient Christian rituals contain formularies of prayer for blessing the oil of the sick.

This in itself presupposes general use. The *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus has such a prayer containing the petition "that this oil... may give strength to all that taste of it and health to all that use it."[1] Even before that, the little-known Coptic fragment (10, 30-12, 2a) of the *Didache,* first published in 1924, contains a blessing for oil: "But for the word of the oil thus shall ye give thanks saying: We thank Thee, Father, for the oil which Thou hast made known to us through Jesus, thy servant. Thine is the glory for ever." [2] This oil was probably the one used in the unction of the sick rather than the one used in baptism and confirmation-chrismation.[3] The phrase God " has made known " the oil to us, i.e., revealed it to us " through Jesus" can only be explained by reference to James 5:14 and the unction of the sick. In the *Didache*$_y$ this blessing is found in the same place after the Eucharistic prayer where other early Christian sources put the blessing of the oil of the sick. The *Apostolic Constitutions* is one of these, incorporating the same prayer after the Eucharistic and post-Communion prayers: "Concerning the ointment, give thanks in this manner: We give Thee thanks, O God, the Creator of the whole world, both for the fragrancy of the ointment, and for the immortaUty which Thou hast made known to us by Thy Son Jesus. For Thine is the glory and the power for ever. Amen." [4]

Serapion's *Sacramentary,* written between A.D. 353 and 356, also contains prayers for blessing the oil of the sick. The one entitled a "Prayer in regard to oil of the sick or for bread or for water," is clearly influenced by the epistle of James, in that it beseeches God to make the oil conducive for "throwing off every sickness and every infirmity," for "warding of every demon," for " good grace and remission of sins, for a medicine of life and salvation, for health and soundness of soul, body, spirit, for perfect streng-

[1] *Apost. Trad.,* V, 2 (edit. G. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome,* [London, 1937L· 10)· The oil offered by the faithful, is blessed by the bishop at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, a position still retained in the Roman rite for consecrating the oil of the sick on Holy Thursday.

[2] Cf K. Bihlmeyer, *Die Apostol. Voter,* I (1924) XX·

[3] Cf. E. Riebartsch, LITURGISCHE ZEITSCHRIFT, I (Regensburg, 1929), 201-206; F. Diekamp, *Kath. Dogmatik,* III (Munster, I93^2)> 3*9·

4 *Apost. Const.,* VII, 27 (edit. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII [Wm. B. Eerd-mans, Grand Rapids, Mich.], p. 270).

thening." [5] The effects, spiritual and bodily, enumerated in the prayer for those anointed with the oil certainly indicate its use in the unction of the sick in accordance with the epistle of James.[6]

Again, some argue that since the prayer, according to its title, could also be used for blessing bread and water, an element of doubt remains whether or not this oil was used exclusively for the sacramental unction of the sick. Actually, there is no reason why this oil could not have been used for other sacred purposes in addition to the priesdy anointing of the sick. There is nothing said about the bread and water in the text of the prayer itself: hence, it could be that these were mixed into the oil or perhaps bread and water somehow figured in the anointing rite as symbols of life, etc. We know, for example, from Irenaeus who accused the Gnostics of imitating the Christian sacramental mysteries that they "smeared the head of the dying with oil and water mixed to the accompaniment of prayers.[7] The apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus also alludes to the "oil of mercy "for alleviating and healing the deathly ill and it connects" a laver of water and the Holy Spirit[5] with the unction. [8] Centuries later, an old Nestorian *rituale,* written in Syriac, has water poured into the oil in confecting it for unction of the sick.[9]

Tertullian alludes to the sacramental unction of the sick when he upbraids heretics for neglecting the distinction between clergy and laity and allowing even women "to teach, to dispute, to perform exorcisms, *to undertake cures (curationes repromittere)*—and it may be even to baptise."[10] Since he well knew that even lay people could cure charismatically, as he himself mentions,[11] and since he

[5] Prayer 17 (edit. J. Wordsworth, *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer-Book* [Hamden, Conn, reprint, 1964], pp. 77 f.).

[6] Likewise, the *Testamentum Domini,* compiled in Greek about the year A. D. 400, and extant in Syriac, Ethiopic and Arabic versions, contains a form for blessing the oil of the sick in which, besides bodily healing, reference is made to the sancti fying power of the oil. Cf. J. Cooper and A. J. Maclean, *The Testament of Our Lord* (Edinburgh, 1902), pp. 77 f.

[7] Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.,* I, 21, 5, PG 7, 665 B.

[8] For the Greek text, see C. Tischendorf, *Evangelia apocrypha* (Leipzig, 1876), 325 f.

[9] Cf. *Cod. Syriaco Vaticano,* 18, fol. 20, in I. A. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticanae,* Vol. Ill, part II, p. 278.

[10] Tertullian, *De Praescript.,* 41, PL 2, 68 B.

[11] Tertullian, *Ad Scapulam, 4,* PL I, 781 C-782 A.

considers" undertaking cures " here as a function reserved to the clergy, it must refer to the sacramental healing of the sick, i.e., to the unction of the sick which must be performed by presbyters. As a major sacramental mystery, it certainly was included under the *disciplina arcani,* the Christian law of keeping the most sacred things secret; this easily explains Tertullian's veiled language. At any rate, it is difficult to imagine any reasonable interpretation of the phrase "undertaking cures" other than the rite of anointing the sick.

In listing the ways by which the remission of sins may be obtained, Origen (A.D. 185-254) has the final (7th),as the "hard and laborious one, penance," but he adds," And in this is fulfilled also what James the Apostle says: if anyone is sick, let him call in the presbyters of the Church, and let them lay hands on him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man, and if he be in sins they shall be remitted to him "[12] Origen is describing both sacramental rites: pardoning with its characterise mark of imposition of hands, and the unction of the sick with its anointing with oil. Many bishops at the time certainly imposed life-long, "hard and laborious penances" on certain grave sinners: however, in times of grave illness or imminent death, many, if not most of them, accorded reconciliation and pardon—and, according to James, grave illness was the time when unction with oil was to be imparted. Today the two sacraments are frequently given to the sick and dying in such close sequence. Origen may have regarded the unction as a supplement or complement to penance. Writing two centuries later, John Cassian lists nearly the same means of obtaining remission of sins as Origen, but he gives the anointing an independent place in the list.[13]

Testimony about the unction of the sick in the Persian Church which has preserved so many original Jewish traits is especially valuable. Between A.D. 336 and A.D. 345, Aphraates writes about the various functions of holy oil in the sacramental mysteries, stating that it contains the sign " of the sacrament of life by which Christians [in baptism], priests [in ordination], kings and prophets are made perfect; [it] illuminates darkness [in chrismation or con-

[12] Origen, *Homil. 2 in Levit.,* 4, PG 12, 419 A.

[13] John Cassian, *Collat.,* 20, PL 49> n6i A.

firmation], anoints the sick, and by its secret sacrament, restores penitents." [14] The unction of the sick obviously holds independent status here as one of the sacramental mysteries on par with baptism, ordination, etc., showing its regular use and the high regard in which it was held in that remote corner of the Christian world.

A few decades later, Ephraem addresses a sick person to whom the priests minister, and says: "They pray over thee; one blows on thee; another seals thee." [15] Anyone acquainted with the liturgical terminology of the Eastern Churches will at once recognize the "sealing" as anointing with oil by making the sign of the cross with it. Several priests perform the rite (as is still customary in the Eastern Churches whenever a number of priests are available). This and the phrase, " they pray over thee," is an evident allusion to the epistle of James." [16] Insufflation is one the means used for exorcising, not an unusual procedure in healing the sick if we take Mark 6:12 f., that the twelve " cast out many devils, and anointed many sick people with oil and cured them," as precedent—and the ancient concept connecting illness with sin and the devil. An identical concept appears in Serapion's *Sacramentary,* where the oil of the sick is intended also "for warding off every demon."

At Antioch, Chrysostom proves the dignity and power of the priesthood by pointing out, among other arguments, that priests by their spiritual ministry do more for us than our natural parents. Parents, he says, can only beget our bodies, but they cannot save them from death and disease. Priests, on the other hand, regenerate our souls in baptism and have power, moreover, to forgive sins, a power which he proves by quoting the text of James' epistle. [17] Like Origen, he is probably referring to the forgiveness of sins in both rites (in pardon-reconciliation, and in the unction of the sick) as they were usually administered to the sick and dying in his day.

Victor of Antioch (f A.D. 460) also quotes James, but he comments:" Oil both cures pains and is a source of light and refreshment. The oil, then, used in anointing signifies both the mercy

[14] Aphraates, *Demonstr.,* 23, 3, *Patrologia Syriaca,* edit. R. Graffin (Paris, 1907), II, 10.

[15] Ephraem, *Opera* (Rome, 1740), II, p. 541.

[16] Cf. G. Bickell, *S. Ephraem Syri, Carmina Nisibena* (Leipzig, 1866), pp. 223 f.

[17] Chrysostom, *De sacred.,* Ill, 6, PG 48, 644.

of God and cure of the disease, and the enlightening of the heart. For it is clear to all that the prayer effected all this; but the oil, I think, was the symbol of these things."[18] Here Victor distinguishes between signification and causality, attributing the sacramental effects to the "form" or prayer, which later sources elucidate more clearly and correctly perhaps, but there is no doubt that he is writing about the unction of the sick as a living usage.

About the same time, Isaac of Antioch (f A.D. 460) warns the faithful that in sickness they should have recourse to the unction enjoined by James, and not to the venous superstitious practices to which some were resorting.[19] Procopius of Gaza (c. A.D. 465-525) does the same,[20] as well as Patriarch John Mandakuni in the Armenian Church (his term of office lasted from A.D. 480 to 487).[21] A little before this, Koriun, an Armenian bishop (c. A.D. 450), mentioned the "office of holy oil" (the equivalent of the Greek ή ακολουθία του άγιου ελαίου) and wrote about it in a way which cannot refer to any other anointing than the unction of the sick.[22]

Very enUghtening evidence comes from Bithynia, from the life of St. Hypatius (f about A.D. 446), whose biography was written by his disciple Calinicus. Before Hypatius became a priest, he was appointed infirmarian in his monastery. He used to go out, search for sick people needing help, and bring them to the monastery. "But if the necessity arose," says his biographer," of anointing the sick person, he reported to the abbot who was a priest (ήν γάρ πρεσβύτερος), and had the unction with blessed oil performed by him. And it often happened that in a few days, God cooperating with his endeavors, he sent the person home restored to health." [23] Since

[18] Victor of Antioch, *Commentano in Evang. s. Mara,* in I. A. Cramer, *Catenae graecorum Patrum in Novum Testamentum,* Vol. I, (Oxford, 1844), p. 324.

[19] Isaac of Antioch, *Disquisitio de potestate diaboli in tentando homine,* in G. Bickell, *S. Isaac Antiocheni opera* (Gissae, 1873), I, 187.

[20] Procopius of Gaza, *Comm. in Levit.,* PG 87, 762.

[21] John Mandakuni, *Homil.* 26, in I. M. Schmid, *Heilige Reden des Johanness Mandakuni* (Ratisbon, 1871), pp. 222 if.).

[22] Koriun, *Vita s. Mesrop,* cited in I. Nirschl, *Lehrbuch der Patrologie und Patristik,* Vol. Ill (Mainz, 1885), 230. Probably the passages from Eusebius *(Comment, in Isaiam,* 25, PG 24, 268) and from Gregory Nazianzen *(Carmen de vita sua,* 50, PG 37, 1392) alos refer to the unction of the sick.

[23] *Vita s. Hypatii,* c. 1, n. *9,* ACTA SS, JUNIUS, Vol. Ill, 313.

this unction was reserved for a priest and was distinct from the charismatic one (which the saint himself used to perform while still a layman), it clearly was regarded as a sacrament in the strict sense of the word. Only the gravely ill were anointed—and with oil that was blessed. Bodily healing was not regarded as miraculous though it frequently followed.

In Egypt, Athanasius (A.D. 344) alludes to the sacrament of the Sick when he complains of the evils caused by the Arians: among other things, he says, many catechumens were left to die without baptism and many sick and dying Christians chose to forego priestly ministrations "which they considered a more terrible calamity than the disease itself" rather than allow "the hands of the Arians to be laid on their heads."[24] Like some of the others, Cyril of Alexandria (patriarch, A.D. 412-444) warns the faithful not to seek help from superstitious usages, but to have recourse to the remedy in James' epistle.[25]

In the Latin Church, there are allusions by Ambrose and Augustine. [26] Pope Innocent I writes of this sacrament clearly and unequivocally in his reply of A.D. 416 to Decentius, bishop of Eugubium. Certain priests pressed excessive claims in regard to independent control over penance, quoting the text of James. Innocent I answers: "There is no doubt that this text must be received or understood of the sick faithful [as opposed to penitents], who may be anointed with the holy oil of chrism; which, after being blessed by the bishop, not only priests but all Christians are permitted to use for anointing in their own need or that of their families... For this unction may not be given to penitents [i.e., to those undergoing canonical penance], seeing that it is a sacrament *{quia genus sacramenti est).* For how is it imagined that one kind of sacrament *(unum genus)* may be given to those to whom the other sacraments are denied."[27]

We know from many sources that primarily the Eucharist and, obviously, Holy Orders, were denied to those undergoing canonical penance. Certainly, these were included in what Innocent I puts

[24] Athanasius, *Epist. encycl.* n. 5, PG 25, 234 C.

[25] Cyril of Alexandria, *De adorat. in Spiritu et veritate, 6,* PG 68, 472 A.

[26] Ambrose, *De poenit.,* I, 8, PL 16, 497 C; Augustine, *Specul. de Script,* s., PL 34, 1036.

[27] Innocent I, *Epist. 25, ad Decentium,* n. 8, PL 20, 561.

as "other sacraments." Even though at time the word "sacrament" had not yet acquired the narrow sense of later times, by placing the unction of the sick into the category. Innocent shows the high regard in which the priestly anointing of the sick was held. Because other sacraments were being denied the penitent, so also the unction of the sick, being of the "genus of sacrament," was to be held back from him. Judging from his instruction that Communion, however, be given to a penitent even before the annual Easter reconciliation if the danger of death was imminent,[28] the unction of the sick was not to be denied in such extreme cases either.

For private anointing by lay people, attested by many early sources, the oil consecrated by the bishop was used. This, however, was never considered the same as the anointing performed by priests, since priestly anointing of the sick fulfilled the conditions of the text of James and brought about the effects listed by him.

Later texts show the use and effects of the priestly unction of the sick much more abundantly and clearly. Yet the sources prior to the sixth century when taken together, prove that, far from being an invention of the middle ages, the priestly anointing of the sick was known and used in the early centuries of the Church, with effects in both time and in eternity—and that a common usage was divinely elevated to produce these effects.

The Byzantine rite of anointing the sick has evolved into a solemn, lengthy and complex office. The injunction of St. James is taken literally, since a number of priests, generally seven (as the name τό έπταπάπον indicates) are required for the administration of this sacramental mystery.[29] If several priests are not available, one suffices.[30]

[28] *Quando usque ad desperandum venerit ante tempus paschae relaxandum [est] ne de saeculo [aegrotus] absque communione discedat* (PL 20, 559).

[29] Conforming to very ancient tradition, the 8th or 9th century *Codex Barberini* III, 55 (77)3 now 336, calls for seven priests to administer this sacramental mystery. The administration by more than one priest used to be stringent in the Byzantine Church. As late as the fifteenth century, Simeon of Thessalonika, for example, states flatly that one priest is not allowed to administer alone—there must be at least two or three (PG 155, 517). Three priests are deemed sufficient in *Cod. Sin.* N. 973 of year 1153 (A. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie liturgicheskikh rukopisej khraniaschikhsia v bibliotekakh pravoslavnago vostoka,* Vol. II, *Euchologia* [Kiev, 1901], p. 103.

[30] Because of the unavailability of more priests, one usually administers as a matter of course, especially among Byzantine Catholics.

The ritual presupposes that the rite takes place in the presence of an assembly of faithful, either in church (if the sick person can be taken there) or in a house. In any case, on a small table prepared for the service lies the Gospel Book, a vessel containing wheat (signifying the embryo of new life, the resurrection, cf. Jn. 12:24; 1 Cor 15:36 ff.), and on the wheat, an empty shrine-lamp.[31] Thrust into the wheat are seven wands wrapped with cotton. The priest(s), dressed in stoles and *phelonions* (chasubles), hold seven tapers,[32] symbolizing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The ceremony consists of three parts: (1) an "office of comfort"; (2) the blessing of oil; and (3) the anointings.

1. The "office of comfort" (Greek, ποφάκλησις; Slav, *Moleben,* modeled on the morning office,[33] consists of the standard liturgical beginning, Psalm 143, a small *ektene* (litany), three *troparia* (hymns), Psalm 50, and a *Kanon.* The *Kanon,* an impressive ensemble of nine canticles, pleads with God in various touching ways to heal the sick person in both body and soul.

2. The Blessing of oil. The oil (pure olive oil), symbolizing God's mercy, is poured into the shrine-lamp,[34] together with a little

[81] Wheat, as part of the ceremonial, dates back only to the 13th century; e. g., cf. *Cod.* N. 189 of St. Athanasius Monastery, Mt. Athos (Dmitrievsky, *op. cit.,* p. 185); *Cod.* N. 279 of Moscow Synodal Library (Dmitrievsky, *Bogosluzhenie v russkoj tserkvi v XVI v.* [Kazan, 1894], Suppl. IX, p. 107), etc.

[32] Seven lamps, containing oil, are prescribed in the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* III, 55 (77), now 336 (Goar, *Euchologion* [Graz reprint, i960], p. 346).

[33] This office is merely a vestige of an even more elaborate arrangement for anointing the sick prior to the 8th or 9th century. The proceedings, according to *Cod. Barberini,* began the night before with Vespers, continued through the night with a vigil service, then the morning office and, finally, the Eucharistic Liturgy and the anointings; cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 346-348.

[34] When the oil was blessed after the preparation of bread and wine *(prothesis)* for the Eucharistic Liturgy, the main celebrant would pour the oil into the shrine-lamp during the recitation of Psalm 50 (e. g., *Cod. Paris* N. 213 of year 1026; cf. Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 1018); at the recitation of the prayer blessing the oil, each priest, in turn, would also pour a little oil into the shrine-lamp, e. g., the 13th century *Cod.* N. 189 of St. Athanasius Monastery, Mt. Athos (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 185); the 14th century *Codices* N. 1053 (19-22) and N. 1054 (23-28) of Sophia Library, St. Petersburg (N. Odintsov, *Porjadok obschestvennago i chastnago bogosluzhenia v drevnej Rossii do XVI v.* [St. Petersburg, 1881], p. 167) *Cod.* N. 133 (274) of Vatopedi Monastery, Mt. Athos (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 276); the 14th century *Codices Sin.* N. 965 and N. 981 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* pp. 320, 334); also, the 15th century *Cod.* N. 280 of Moscow Synodal Library (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* Suppl. X, p. 121).

water, or, in some churches, a little wine. “All the priests present bless the oil silently reciting the Prayer of Oil (“ O Lord, who in mercy and compassion curest the suffering of our souls and bodies...”), while the main celebrant says it aloud.[36] In the meantime, hymns *{tropana)* are sung in fitting tribute to the compassionate Christ who cured the man born blind and the paralytic, as well as to St. James, St. Nicholas of Myra, St. Demetrius the Great Martyr, St. Panteleimon the Healer, to the Holy Physicians Cyrus and John who took no fees for their medical help, and to St. John the Divine, the “chaste one.”

3. The anointings. The ritual for each of the seven anointings is constructed along the lines of the Eucharistic Liturgy: [37] a blessing, *prokeimenon* (gradual), an epistle reading, alleluia with psalm verses, a Gospel reading, a short *ektene* (litany) and the prayer of anointing taking the place of the Eucharistic Prayer *{anaphora* or canon).[38] Each anointing, therefore, has its own distinct miniature liturgy. Their texts are distinctly penitential, the emphasis smoothly changing from bodily sickness to spiritual illness, sin; from physical suffering to atonement and expiation for wrongdoing.

Since the senses (forehead, nostrils, cheeks, lips, chest, and both

[35] The water is that blessed solemnly on Epiphany; this was already in vogue in the year 1152, cf. *Cod. Sin.* N. 973 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* pp. 101-102); also see 14th century *Cod. Sin.* N. 965 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 320). The adding of a little wine to the oil seems to have begun in the 14th century; cf. *Cod. Sin.* N. 965 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 320).

[36] The present practice of using this common formula of blessing dates back at least to the 12th century (e. g., *Cod. Sin.* N. 973 [Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* pp. 101-102]); however, this prayer is found already in the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* as one of three to be recited. After the last prayer of blessing, each of the seven priests traced the sign of the cross with a taper (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 34). Candles, instead of tapers, were adopted later, e. g., the 15th century *Cod.* N. 19 (20) of Costamonitu Monastery, Mt. Athos (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 499), which is still done today. In some places, the priests breathed upon the oil—also in form of a cross, e. g., the 13th century *Cod. Sin.* N. 960 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 199).

[37] This is not surprising, since the anointings used to take place after the dismissal of the Eucharistic Liturgy, e. g., the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 348).

[38] The seven epistles and gospels are as follows: (1) Jm 5:10-17; Lk 10:25-38; (2) Rm 15:1-8; Lk 19:1-11; (3) 1 Co 12:27-13:1-8; Mt 10:1, 5-9; (4) 2 Co 6:16-7:1; Mt 8:14-24; (5) 2 Co 1:8-12; Mt 25:1-14; (6) Ga 5:22-6:1-2; Mt 14:21-29; (7) 1 Th 5:14-24; Mt 9:9-14·

sides of the hands) are anointed seven times,[39] the solemn prayer of anointing is also repeated seven times: “Holy Father, Physician of souls and bodies, who didst send thine only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, to heal every evil and to deliver us from death: cure this thy servant, N..., of his weakness of body and soul by the grace of thy Christ...”[40] The prayer goes on to invoke the intercession of the Mother of God and a number of saints. The anointings are always done in the form of a cross.

After the anointings, the senior priest takes the Gospel Book, opens it, with the writing face downwards, and lays *it* on the head of the sick person.[41] While the book is held by all the priests (actually, an imposition of hands), the chief celebrant prays for the forgiveness of sins,[42]

When we remember that the reconciliation of penitents used to be accompanied by an imposition of hands, and sometimes also by an unction or anointing, we can understand why the testimony of some ancient authors, such as Origen and Chrysostom, group together both ways of remitting sins—sacramental absolution in confession and the anointing of the sick. It is also easy to see why the Greek Church has long ago introduced the practice of celebrating the office of Holy Oil during penitential seasons, especially during Holy Week.

[39] The Scriptures do not state which parts of the body were to be anointed. The early Church anointed the whole body and only after the 5th century were some parts of the body chosen for anointing—generally, corresponding with those done at baptism. Different manuscripts stipulate various senses and parts of the body: e. g., the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini,* the forehead, ears and hands (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 348); *Cod. Paris* N. 213 of year 1027, the forehead, ears, chest, hands (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 1019); *Cod. Sin.* N. 973 of year 1153, the forehead, nostrils, chin, neck, ears, hands (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 109); *Cod. Sin.* 994 of the 14th century, the forehead, top of the head, chest, hands, knees, and, if possible, the whole body (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 324); Simeon of Thes-salonika, the forehead, face and hands (PG 155, 528 D), etc.

[40] The vast majority of manuscripts give this prayer as the anointing formula; however, in Simeon of Thessalonika's minute description of the anointing rite, this prayer was accompanied by the imposition of hand on the sick person, while the actual anointings were done at the words, “Our help is in the name of the Lord... “(PG 155, 528 C); also *Cod. Sin.* N. 698 of year 1426 (Dmitrievsky, *Opysanie,* p. 406).

[41] This was being done already in the 8th-9th century before the Eucharistic Liturgy and the anointings, e. g., *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 348).

[42] For the complete rite of anointing the sick, in Greek, cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 332-346; in English, I. F. Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic (Greco-Russian) Church* (Boston and New York, 1906), pp. 333-360, or J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, in Russia* (London, 1772), pp. 309-333.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIESTLY ORDERS

All primitive religions had their priests, shamans, witch-doctors, etc., with cultic or semi-cultic duties and functions. Some of the more developed religions had a certain hierarchy of clergy, major priestly officials, lesser clergy, attendants and helpers. Yet, the Christian priesthood was not patterned on any Greco-Roman prototype, nor even on the Jewish priesthood: it was modeled on two venerable Judaic institutions: the body of *zeqenim*$_3$ "elders" or "presbyters," and the *shelihim,* "envoy-representatives," reshaped to fulfill Christian needs and functions.

As Jesus took familiar usages and put new reality into them when he established the other sacraments, so did he do with Holy Orders.

We have already seen (pp. 68 if. above) how the principle or concept behind the Jewish office of *shaliach* provided the base for establishing his "apostles" as his envoy-representatives, "sent" as plenipotentiaries not only "in the name" but "in the person" of Christ-God. Whatever they were charged to do as his *shelihim,* they were exercising his divine powers "as it were himself." The Lord specifically charged them to use these divine powers to a degree no man dared to imagine. To forgive sins was beyond human dreams, yet he charged them: "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you... Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven..." (Jn 20:21 if.). No man could have thought of regenerating other men, making them "sons of God," "participators in his divine nature," through water and the Holy Spirit, through baptism, yet he commissioned them to do so: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore... baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:18 if.). The absolutely unimaginable feat of making it possible for mere man to literally partake of the body and blood of the God-man is even incomprehensible today, yet at the Last Supper, after changing bread and wine into his own body and

blood, Jesus charged the apostles to do the same: "Do this in *anamnesis* of me[55] (Lk 22:19).

In these and all the other sacramental actions, the apostles were indeed *shelihim* of the Lord, his plenipotentiaries, doing, acting in his name and in his person, committing him as if he himself were personally present and effecting these things. They were his agents, obeying his instructions, irrevocably committing him to accomplish whatever effects their actions entailed: forgiving sins, imparting the Holy Spirit of Pentecost, transelementing bread and wine into his body and blood, etc. Theirs was the earthly action, his the spiritual effect.

Though a Jewish *shaliach* could not pass on to another the authority and power committed to himself, the plenipotentiaries of Jesus could and did transfer their powers to others. These, in turn, acted in the Lord's name and in his person. Preaching the gospel message, performing the sacramental mysteries, etc., were essential functions in the Church's mission and, therefore, had to be handed on.

Thus, other "apostles" were made who carried on the same functions (e.g., Ac 1:15; 9:18, etc.). In James, we read that presbyters should be called in to anoint the sick "in the name of the Lord," so that the Lord would save and raise up the sick man and his sins be forgiven (Jm 5:14 f.). These presbyters had already been made *shelihim* of the Lord.

In Jewish communities, both in Palestine and in the Diaspora, the *presbyteroi,* the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *zeqenim,* formed the body of "elders" administering Jewish community affairs. They were elected and ordained to this office for life by the laying-on of hands. Generally, in large communities of the Diaspora, an executive committee *(arckontes),* consisting of a chairman *(gerousiarchos),* treasurer *(phrontistes),* and other officers, was elected annually from among the "presbyters." "Not connected with the Aaronic priesthood, their functions were primarily civil, administrative, financial and judiciary, including all corporate dealings with Gentile author-

[1] For details, see J. B. Frey, *Recherches de science religieuse,* XX, 269 if., and XXI, 129 ff.; also Strack-Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum N.* Г., II, 647-661.

ities on behalf of the Jewish community.[2] Though the presbyterate may be called a civil administration, it was far from being a totally secular one, for we must remember Judaism was an *eccksia* precisely to the extent that it was a nation, the people of God. Therefore, in a very real way, their civil government was regarded as a religious function.[3] The law of the community was the *Torah,* primarily a religious code, even in its civil application, and in all the rabbinical minutiae added to it. The elders or presbyters administered this law and addenda, taught and explained it to the people; again, this work was fundamentally spiritual and, like the judges of the Old Testament, the presbyters were regarded as divinely endowed and set apart for it.[4]

Moses is credited with instituting the presbyterate. When the burden of leading Israel became too much for him, Moses gathered seventy elders of the people on instruction from Yahweh, who then "took some of the spirit that was on him [Moses] and put it on the seventy" (cf. Nm 11:14-25). The Scriptures are more specific in the "ordination" of Joshua by Moses who did it by the laying-on of hands: "Moses did as Yahweh had ordered. He took Joshua and brought him before Eleazar the priest and the whole community, laid his hands on him and gave him his orders" (Nm 27:22 f.). From then on, the laying-on of hands was used to "ordain" other presbyter-elders for their functions, and this, by those who had them-

[2] They obtained or defended particular privileges and exemptions of the Jews before Gentile laws of the Roman administration and Hellenistic municipalities—whatever was necessary to secure due observance of the *Torah.* Imperial law respected the right of the Jewish presbyteries to decide who did and who did not enjoy these exceptions. Their sentence of *heretn* (excommunication) or of *niddui* (temporary exclusion from the synagogue) not only brought civil and religious ostracism by Jews, but also suspended all special Jewish privileges before Gentile authorities.

[3] The presbyteries also administered communal taxes for works regarded as eminently religious: the care of the Jewish poor and Jewish strangers, the expenses incurred by local synagogues and schools, and help in upkeeping the temple at Jerusalem.

[4] Yet, strange as it may seem to us, the Jewish presbyters by virtue of then-office had no liturgical functions in the synagogue. These could be performed by any male adult Jew. Even a layman was elected by the congregation for the post of *archisynagogos, "* ruler of the synagogue." He was responsible for the choice of readers, preachers, etc. Jewish presbyters or elders had no direct authority over worship, only precedence in the congregation.

selves been ordained in the same way. The action was designed to "transmit" the spirit received by Moses to successive elders: Moses transmitted the spirit to Joshua, Joshua, to his successor, and so on to all the elders of Israel.[5]

In Jerusalem, the high-priest was the permanent menber of the Great Sanhedrin of seventy-one members chosen from the Aaronic priesthood and rabbinically recommended laymen. Though their functions as *zeqenim* of the Great Sanhedrin were chiefly judiciary and legal, the religious implications of the law were such that essentially it was a spiritual work. As late as the second century A.D., we read of the patriarch of Jamnia and two of his presbyters imposing hands on recently elected members of the Sanhedrin. This "ordination" could have been in an unbroken line of succession from Moses and Joshua.

Even when the high-priest was president of the Sanhedrin, however, the ordination conferred by him had no relation with the Aaronic priesthood, an office of hereditary right to official religious tabernacle and temple worship: in the sanctuary, the offering of incense twice daily (Ex 30:7), the weekly renewal of the loaves of proposition (Lv 24:9), the cleaning and filling of the oil-lamps (Lv 24:1); in the outer court, the maintaining of the sacred fire on the altar for burnt sacrifices (Lv 6:9 flf.), and the daily offering of the morning and evening sacrifices (Ex 29:38 if.). As subsidiary services, the Aaronic priests had to sound the trumpets announcing the holy-days (Nm 10:1 if.), declare lepers clean or unclean (Lv chaps. 13 and 14; Dt 24:8; cf. Mt 8:4), appraise all objects vowed to the sanctuary (Lv 27), offer sacrifice for those who broke the law of the Nazarites (that is, the vow to avoid all intoxicating drinks and every unclean-ness, especially contact with a corpse, letting ones hair grow long, Nm 6:1-21). They also acted as teachers by explaining the law to the people (Lv 10:11; Dt 33:10) and as judges, settling difficult lawsuits among the people (Dt 17:8; 19:17; 21:5)

The solemn consecration of the Aaronites to the priesthood was performed about the same time as the anointing of Aaron as high-priest with almost the same ceremonial (Ex 29:1-37; 40:12if.; Lv

[5] Cf. Nm 27:18 ff.j Dt 34:9; also *Sifre Num.* XXVII, 18, section 140, 52b and other references in Strack-Billerbeck, *op. cit.,* II, 647-648.

8:1-36). The consecration was unique in that it was never repeated: it included all the descendants of the priests, so that the priesthood was hereditary. This was probably one of the reasons why the Aaronic priesthood did not serve as a model for the Christian priesthood: confined exclusively to the house of Aaron, it could hardly serve the universal scope of Christianity. The Aaronic priestly ministrations were local: their liturgical functions were confined first to the tabernacle, then to the Temple at Jerusalem, but never extended to any synagogue in Palestine or the Diaspora. Christian worship, on the other hand, as Jesus told the Samaritan woman, was not to be confined to Jerusalem or to Mount Gerizim (where the Samaritans had built a temple rivaling that of Jerusalem).

All indications point, not to the Aaronic priesthood, but to the Jewish "presbyterate"or body of elders, as the pattern on which the Christian priesthood was founded, even to the extent of borrowing its original name from it. Thus, we have a body of "presbyters" (or elders) governing each Christian community both in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30; 15:2 f.; 21:18) and in the Dispersion (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Tt 1:5). For centuries, priests in the Christian *ecclesia* were known as "presbyters."

Most of the apostles probably acted as Paul did in evangelizing a locality: starting the work, then leaving it to others (cf. 1 Cor 3:6, 10; Col i:7f.; Rm 15:23) appointed by him. He writes to Titus (1:5-7): "The reason I left you behind in Crete was for you to get everything organized there and appoint presbyters (πρεσβυτέρους) in every town, in the way that I told you; that is, each of them must be a man of irreproachable character...[5'] Since, as president (επίσκοπος), he will be God's representative (θεοῦ οικονόμος). "He writes likewise to Timothy (1 Tm 5:17, 22): "The presbyters (πρεσβύτεροι) who do their work well while they are in charge are to be given double consideration, especially those who are assiduous in preaching and teaching... Do not be too quick to lay hands (χείρας ταχέως μ,ηδενί έπιτίθει) on any man... "Timothy had been consecrated by a similar rite: "Make use of the time until I arrive by reading to the people, preaching and teaching. You have in you a spiritual gift (grace, χάρισμα) which was given to you when the prophets spoke, and the body of presbyters laid their hands (μετά

επιθέσεως τών χειρών του πρεσβυτερίου) on you, do not let it lie unused. Think hard about all this and put it into practice" (1 Tm 4:13-16; cf. Ac 13:3; 14:22). Paul (and the presbyters) had laid hands on Timothy, for in another passage he reminds Timothy:" That is why I am reminding you now to fan into a flame the gift (grace, χάρισμα) that God gave you when I laid my hands (δια της επιθέσεως τών χειρών μου) on you. God's gift (grace, χάρισμα) was not a spirit of timidity but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control" (2 Tm 1:6-7).

These passages contain the essential elements of the sacrament of Holy Orders. The imposition of hands by those already ordained is the outward sign. This imposition of hands was productive of grace necessary for the ministry, since Paul warns Timothy to fan into a flame the gift of grace and charges him to teach and preach as a necessary consequence of this grace. Furthemore, this gift was the Spirit of power, which can only be interpreted as that promised by the Lord and realized by the apostles collectively (Ac 4:33; 1 Cor 4:20; 5:4) and individually (Ac 6:8; ι Cor 2:4; 2 Cor 6:7; 12:9), and was now part of the general stream of the Pentecostal gift poured out by the ascended Lord through the imposition of hands. This gift was given for the rightful discharge of official duties. There must have been an element of timidity in Timothy's natural disposition which, it seems, was prejudicial to his efficiency as a Church ruler. This will be counteracted if he fans into a flame the gift of God. Timothy's duties, like those of the presbyters, were not only practical, but also didactic (1 Tm 3:2; 5:17; Tt 1:9), administrative (1 Tm 3:5; Tt 1:7), and undoutedly sacred and religious, as instituted by Christ.

As we have seen, the imposition of hands was a gesture of blessing (Mt 19:15), of healing (Mt 9.18 f.; Mk 6:5; 7:32; 8:23 ff.; 16:18; Lk 4:40; Ac 9:12, 17, etc.), or of imparting the Holy Spirit to the newly baptised (Ac 1:5 fF.). Here, it is used in consecrating Timothy for a particular ministry, endowing him with a permanent grace-gift for it (as was also the case of the seven in Ac 6:6, and of those mentioned in Ac 13:3).

Paul seems to use word *episcopos* (επίσκοπος) and *presbyteros* (πρεσβύτερος) interchangeably in the passage where he tells Titus (1:5,7)[t0] appoint" presbyters "and goes on to say," For as *episcopos*

he will be God's representative." Or, to cite another example: in Acts (20:17, [2]8) we read "he sent for the *presbyters* of the church of Ephesus," and in his speech to them he calls them *episcopous*: "Be on your guard for yourselves and for all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you *episcopous,* to feed the Church of God." [6] Greek word *episcopos* taken over from the pagan world, probably as an equivalent for a Semitic title,[7] means overseer, supervisor, watcher, guardian. It has been argued persuasively that *episcopos* indicated the duty or function of the Christian officer, while *pres-byteros* indicated the status or dignity of the same officer. While this may be true, it is not certain that every *presbyteros* necessarily fulfilled the function of an *episcopos.*

To summarize: on the basis of New Testament sources, it is easy to trace Jewish antecedents to the apostolic Christian community. Where Judaism had *shelihim,* Christianity had apostles, true *shelihim* appointed by Christ himself. They were in a category by themselves. They in turn as *shelihim* of the Lord commissioned their successors— called presbyters (or *episcopoi)*— by the imposition of hands bestowing on them the Holy Spirit who, as the divune principal, made them his true *shelihim.* The process was repeated in turn with their successors. Where the Jewish prototypes, the *zeqenim* (elders, presbyters) were "ordained" for their duties by the laying on of hands, conceived to "transmit" the spirit received by Moses and given by him to Joshua, and by him again to all the elders of Israel, the Christian *presbyteroi-episcopoi* were ordained also by a laying on of hands, at first by the apostles, then by their successors—but the spirit transmitted was that of Pentecost.

We read in the New Testament of another office, the *diaconia* (διακονία). The *diaconoi* (διάκονοι), deacons, are mentioned as specific office-holders of the Church (together with the *episcopoi)* at Philippi (Phil 1:1). In his letter to Timothy (1 Tm 3:8-11), Paul clearly distinguishes them from the *presbyteroi* who preside (1 Tm 5:17) and exercise supervision (επισκοπής όρέγετα, ι Tm 3:1-2).

[6] See also summary of evidence in J. B. Lightfoot, *Philippians* (London^ 1895), pp. 96 if.

[7] Cf. *Mebaqqer* of the Essenes and cf. Nb 4:16; 31:14; Jg 9:28; 2 K u:ĭ5, 18; 12:11, etc.

Obviously, the *presbyteroi-episcopoi,* exercising the office of [M] ruler-ship, "could not easily fulfill all the subordinate duties to the Christian faithful; hence the *diaconoi.* Their functions were probably those of "helpers," or "attendants," though at this early stage no specific duties are listed. We read in Acts (6:2-6), for example, that the aposdes found it difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill their office and still perform menial tasks: "It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food." Seven were chosen and presented "to the apostles who prayed and laid their hands on them." Whether these were ordained deacons or presbyters matters little: they were ordained for helping with such services as feeding the poor—serving and superintending the tables at which the poor were fed, or supplying the things necessary for sustenance. Such functions were similar to those of the seven *parnashim* who superintended Jewish relief for the poor.[8] Other functions, of course, were incumbent upon the Christian *diaconoi* or deacons, for every work in the Church was a *diaconia,* whether high or low as the expression "*diaconia* (service) of the word" indicates. That is why Paul could apply the word *diaconos* to himself and Apollos (1 Cor 3:5). The twelve apostles did not object to the work of ministering to the poor, but only to the neglect of the higher office for the sake of the lower.

In the Septuagint, the word *diaconos* refers to the king's chamberlains and servants (four times in Esther 1:10; 2:2; 6:3,5); *diaconia* refers to their service (Es 6:3,5), but also to the sending of gold by Jonathan to Antiochus (ι M 11:58). In the New Testament, both the noun διακονία and its verbal form διακονεῖν usually refer to divine worship, but sometimes also to human service: for instance, the helpers of Paul (Ac 19:22), the service rendered to the brethren of Judaea in the famine (Ac 11:29; 12:25), the Gentile collections for the same purpose (Rm 15:25, 31; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:1, 12, 13), and probably also the service rendered by Stephanas to traveling Christians (1 Cor 16:15; cf. Rm 16:1). In the Gospels, the verbal form indicates the ministering to Christ's earthly needs.[9]

[8] *Mishnah, Megilla,* iii, 74a. Cf. also Josephus, *de hello Judaico,* II, xx, 5 (571).

[9] Lk8:3; 10:40 (both noun and verb); Jn 12:2; also cf. Lk 12:37; 22:27; Mt 4:11; Lk 4:39.

In Philippians (1:11) and Timothy (i Tm 3:8 if.), Paul seems to refer to a specific office concerned with subsidiary tasks: rendering whatever help was needed by the *episcopoi* or *presbyteroi* to free them from time-consuming chores for the higher duties of their "ruler-ship."

The "offices" of *episcopoi, presbyteroi,* and *diaconoi* are the only ones discernible in the New Testament sources. Jewish rabbis or scribes, though regarded with reverence, were never religious officers. They had no public function or authority. Their personal competence qualified them for "ordination" through the impostion of hands by rabbinic teachers—but this may be seen as a kind of graduation. The Christian counterparts of rabbis were the διδάσκαλοι or teachers, but these had no official status in the Church either, unless they were also ordained to the official teaching office of presbyter. When Christians recognized that the Law was abrogated—which was very early[10]—there was no reason for maintaining Christian" rabbis. "In the second century. Christian διδάσκαλοι, "teachers," if these were not *presbyteroi* or *episcopoi,* were similar to the heathen philosophical "lecturers." Perhaps the modern counterparts would be the lay theologians.

Christians endowed with charismatic gifts, prophets, "speakers with tongues," or "workers of miracles," were not officers in the primitive *ecclesia.* Theirs were valued functions, but not offices. Anyone might prophesy—an apostle, like Paul (cf. 1 Cor 14:6), women (1 Cor 11:5), new converts (Ac 19:6), or any member of the congregation (1 Cor 14:29). Manifestations of such powers by increasing a man's reputation as a "prophet," or "speaker for God,*"* might lead to his selection for the presbyterate—but only if he possessed the qualifications listed by Paul.

Paul's passage to the Corinthians (1 Cor 12:28) listing various kinds of people and functions and comprising the mystical body of Christ is quoted in support of a "charismatic*"* or "missionary*"* ministry. Here, however, Paul is merely illustrating the different functions of members of a single body, the *ecclesia,* without any reference to Church order, government, or official function. He

[10] Indications are already seen in Acts chaps. 15 and 21.

puts the apostles at the head of the list, but evidence from his own writing shows this has nothing to do with a hierarchy of functions, especially if we compare this list with that in Romans (12:6 if.), and with his remarks about glossolalia: "Now suppose, my dear brothers, I am someone with the gift of tongues and I come to visit you, what use shall I be if all my talking reveals nothing new, tells you nothing, and neither inspires you nor instructs you?" (1 Cor 14:6).

If we subscribe to the theory that prophets and teachers here indicate offices, then we must also conclude that "single-minded givers," and "cheerful showerers" along with "prophets, ministers, teachers, exhorters and rulers (in Rm 12:6 if) are also "Orders" in a charismatic or missionary hierarchy with the ordained presbyterate or episcopate — an obviously absurd position. [11]

[11] After meticulously analyzing the New Testament evidence, F. J. A. Hort arrives at substantially the same conclusion *(The Christian Ecclesia* [London, 1914], pp. 157 f. and especially p. 160), though his authority has been claimed for the opposite view.

CHAPTER XXIV

PRE-NICENE BISHOPS

Trouble at Corinth! And this within the generation of the first-fruits of apostolic ministry! As usual, Paul began the work of evangelization there, then left others in charge. He did this in Crete, leaving Titus to get everything organized and to "appoint presbyters" as God's representatives through the laying on of hands. Compared to Paul who spoke with the fiery tongue of the Holy Spirit, these were frail, fallible men, but they were men of God, honorably exercising the ministry to which they had been ordained. At Corinth, they were doing their job well too. [1] But some ambitious malcontents undermined their authority, displaced several lgitimately appointed "rulers," and formed a schism.[2]

Pope Clement, shocked that a few could disgrace the Church of Corinth, writes an epistle to restore peace and unity. He addresses the letter, not to the malcontents directly, nor even to the legitimate leaders, but to the whole "Church which sojourneth in Corinth." He writes, not in his own name nor even in the name of the Roman clergy, but in the name of the whole "Church which sojourneth in Rome. "[3] No reference to a bishop as sender was made in the letter. In this, Clement was following the convention of the period;[4] hence,

[1] Even the deposed clergy were "of excellent behaviour," and had fulfilled their ministry "blamelessly and with honor. " Cf. Clement of Rome, / *Ep. ad Corinth.,* 44, PG 1, 297 A-300 A.

[2] *Ibid.,* 3, PG 1, 213 A.

[3] *Ibid.,* 1, PG 1, 205 A-208 A.

[4] Thus, " the Church of God which sojourneth at Smyrna " wrote " to the Church of God which sojourneth at Philomelium " about the martyrdom of its late bishop Polycarp: neither one mentioned either their correspondents' bishop and presbyters or their own *(Martyr. Poly carpi,* tit., PG 5, 1029 A); so "the servants of Christ sojourning in Vienne and Lyons in Gaul" wrote to " the brethren in Asia and Phrygia" (in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, 1, PG 20,408 C); so also Irenaeus" writing in the name of the Christians in Gaul whose leader he was," to Pope Victor (in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, 24, PG 20, 500 A); Denys of Corinth, on receiving a letter from Pope Soter, regarded it as a letter from the Roman Church collectively to the whole Corinthian Church, exactly like that letter from Rome to Corinth" which was formerly sent to us through Clement" (in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, 23, PG 20, 388 B-389 A).

The case was different with the personal correspondence of a bishop who was absent from his Church. Then, obviously, he could not be writing in its name. Thus, Ignatius wrote letters to the other Churches in his own name, and he wrote them from prison (hence, away from his Church). But note that Ignatius addresses his epistles to the whole Church in a given locality without references to its bishop or presbyters, i.e., " to the Church which is at Ephesus in Asia," " to the holy Church which is at Tralles in Asia, " " to the Church...which presides in the place of the region of the Romans, " " to the Church of God...which is at Philadelphia in Asia, " " to the Church of God...which is at Smyrna in Asia," etc.

no inference can be drawn that Rome did not as yet have a "monarchic bishop."

There is little dogmatic teaching in the epistle: Clement is not writing a theoretical treatise on Holy Orders, but is dealing with a lack of respect for constituted Church authority. To convince the dissidents, he uses historical facts known to him and to them, from which he draws consequences which were not as clear to the malcontents as they were to him: this (chapters 42-44) is the heart of the epistle.

> " The apostles have received the Gospel for us from *[or* by the command of] our Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ was sent forth from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles from Christ. Both these appointments *[lit.* both things were done], then, were made by the will of God in due order. After receiving their orders (παραγγελίας), therefore... they went forth with the full assurance *[or,* equipment, πληροφίας] of the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel that the Kingdom of God was at hand (μέλλειν εργεσθαι). So proclaiming (κηρύσσοντες) everywhere in the countryside and in the cities, they appointed their firstfruits after having proved them (δοκιμάσαντες) by the Spirit to be *episcopoi* and *diaconoi* unto them that should believe..." And what wonder is it if those who were entrusted in Christ with such a work by God appointed the above-mentioned ministers (τους προεφημένους), seeing that even the blessed Moses... [then Clement proceeds to give the example of what Moses did when the tribes, despite the clear injunctions given to them, argued about which one of them should be given the honor of the priesthood, and how the rod of Aaron was the only one to blossom and bear fruit, thus proving that God had chosen him " to be priest and perform the liturgy unto him "]. What do you think, beloved? Did not Moses know beforehand that this would happen? Undoubtedly he knew it; but he acted thus so that no sedition arise in Israel...

> " And our apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that there would be strife regarding the dignity of the episcopacy. For this reason, therefore, inasmuch as they had received complete foreknowledge of this, they appointed the aforesaid persons [the *episcopoi* and *diaconoi],* and afterwards gave instructions, that when they should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their liturgy *[or* ministry]. Those, therefore, who were appointed by them or afterwards by other men who were appointed in turn with the consent of the whole Church, and who have blamelessy ministered [lit. *liturgized]* to the flock of Christ in a humble, peaceable, and disinterested spirit, and have for a long time possessed the good opinion of all, cannot be justly thrust out of their ministry *[lit.* liturgy]. For it will be no small sin for us if we thrust out from the episcopacy (επισκοπής) men who have holily and blamelessly fulfilled their sacred office *[lit.* offered the gifts, προσενεγκόντας τά δώρα]. Blessed are those presbyters who, because they had finished their course before the present time, have obtained a fruitful and perfect departure [from this world]; for they have no fear lest anyone deprive them of the place now alloted them. But we see that you have removed some men of excellent conduct from the ministry *[lit.* liturgy] which they fulfilled blamelessly and with honor."[5]

Clement, we must remember, is writing about a generation after the apostolic events he describes, recalling facts which some Christians, still alive, could remember, and therefore could dispute if they were not true. But Clement is sure of his ground. Some of his readers may have remembered the very appointments made by the aposdes or their immediate successors. The three messengers sent with the letter are described as "faithful and prudent men who have walked among us unblamably from youth to old age, who shall also be witnesses between you and us." [6]

Clement mentions presbyters several times, but no bishop at Corinth. Was there no bishop there? Was every presbyter a bishop? Everything points to the "leaders" there as presbyters who corporately exercised *episcope* (the office of overseeing). Was

[5] Clement of Rome, / *Ep. ad Corinth.,* 42-44, PG 1, 292 A-301 B.

[6] Their names were Claudius Ephebus, Valerius Bito, and Fortunatus (/' *Ep. ad Corinth.,* 59> PG *h* 3^8 AB.)

there an executive committee of *episcopoi* among them? No certain answer can be given to these questions. Whatever the interpretation, one thing is clear: the apostles provided successors to themselves in "liturgizing," and whether the presbyters collectively or individually exercised the office of *episcope* at the time Clement wrote makes little difference. The apostles as *shelihim* of the Lord appointed others to act as *shelihim* when they died. Here, we are not concerned with the strict meaning or office of the "apostolate" as uniquely applied to the twelve, but only with the *shaliach* principle enabling other appointees to act in the person of Christ when performing their proper sacred functions, when "liturgizing."

Clement applies the term *Leiturgia* to a wide range of activities, from Enoch and Noah as "liturgizing" to the angels of heaven "liturgizing" there, i.e., worshipping God.[7] From this broad meaning we may infer that all the sacred functions performed by the apostles in the name of Christ were to be continued by their successors. Clement mentions only a few: preaching the gospel, appointing *episcopoi* and *diaconoi,* offering the gifts or "making" the Eucharist.[8] Undoubtedly, whatever else the Lord commissioned the apostles to do was included in their successors' *leiturgia:* forgiving sins, baptizing, etc.

"The apostles left further instructions *(or* "made further enactment") that when they should fall asleep, other approved men should succeed them in their liturgy." In whatever sense this sentence is understood—whether " they "refers to the apostles or to the first generation of local *episcopoi*— the point is made that "continuance" of successors was provided. In other words, we are not concerned whether at Corinth the original "apostolate" as a distinct office had passed away with original twelve, therefore, leaving its special power of giving *katastasis* (the power of "appointing" or ordaining other *shelihim)* to the local *presbyteroi-episcopoi;* or whether

[7] Clement of Rome, / *Ep. ad Corinth.,* 9, PG i, 228 B and 34, PG 1, 276 A; cf. also 8, PG 1, 225 A.

[8] In general, the pre-Nicene distinction of functions in the corporate Eucharist is clear enough: the lay Communicant's "to bring" (προσενέγκειν) to church bread and wine from his home for the sacrifice; the deacon's "to bring up " (άναφέρειν) these gifts to the celebrant at the altar; the celebrant's "to offer" (προσφέρειν) the gifts to God or formally " make" the Eucharist.

the dual constitution of the apostolic age (the "apostolate" as distinct from the local presbyteries) survived for another generation. In the latter case, the power of giving *katastasis* and of "making" other *shelihim* would still have come from outside the Corinthian clergy. Both interpretations are consonant with the text. Whatever the case, whether from inside or outside the Corinthian Church, "continuance" of apostolic successors was provided: "Those, therefore, who were appointed by them [either by the apostles or their immediate successors] or afterwards by other men who were appointed in turn [further successors]... cannot justly be thrust out of their ministry."

Till the middle of the second century, the terms *episcopoi* and *presbyteroi* may seem to be synonymous, but they probably were not. A simple priest with no supervisory duties was certainly called a presbyter. A priest who was also an "overseer" was sometimes called an *episcopos,* sometimes a presbyter; today we call such priests pastors, not bishops. But one who not only had power to supervise or oversee, but also to ordain others was certainly an *episcopos.* Since he enjoyed the fullness of the priesthood, he was often called presbyter. In today's terminology, he was a real bishop. During the first hundred years of Church history, only the context can give us a clue as to whether the "*presbyter-episcopos"* had the commission to "make" other *shelihim,* i.e., to ordain others, or not. Whether Corinth had a bishop or bishops in our sense of the term is impossible to tell from Clement's epistle. In the early days, any church not having a real bishop would naturally be ruled by a body of presbyters. Corinth appears to have been one of these during Clement's time.

As soon as a Church reached a certain degree of organization, maturity and increase, it was probably given a bishop who then could ordain enough priests and deacons to provide for its future needs. Antioch, for example, already had such a clear threefold ministry during Ignatius' time:" Be careful therefore to observe one Eucharist; for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup unto union in His blood; there is one altar, as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and the deacons, my fellow-servants." [9]

[9] Ignatius, *Ad Philad.,* 4, PG 5, 321 C-824 A.

Ignatius seems to have no idea of any other form of Church ruler-ship, for in urging obedience to ecclesiatical authority, he nearly always includes the whole ministry, bishop, presbyters, and deacons [10] He himself very clearly occupies the office of monarchic bishop at the turn of the first century, and is not the first one to have done so." Evodius, supposedly appointed by St. Peter, was his undistinguished predecessor. Except for his name, nothing is known about him. Yet, because this "nobody"—and not the famous martyr—is given as the first of the Antiochene "succession," in the second-century list of bishops, it is probably accurate.[12]

Antioch was not the only Church to have a monarchic episcopacy. The "neighboring Church" in Syria had one too.[13] On his way to Rome, Ignatius found the same organization in all the places he passed in Asia Minor, since he mentions "the bishops who are established in the farthest parts of the earth." [14] This organization may have been established in the closing years of the first century. In the New Testament, St. John (3 Jn) writes to Gaius about the autocratic conduct of Diotrephes, "who seems to enjoy being in charge of it [the church]," arbitrarily deciding not to accept John's missionaries—not only refusing to welcome them, but preventing others from doing so, refusing to have the note read which John had written to the congregation, etc. Such action clearly marks him as the monarchic *episcopos* of the local church.

If, at the beginning of the second century, most of the *ecclesiae* in the Christian world were ruled by a corporate body of *presbyter-episcopoi* with no power of giving *katastasis* or ordination (a right

[10] E.g., *Ad Ephes.y* 2, PG 5> 733 B; 20, PG 5, 75<S A; *Ad Trail., 7,* PG 5, 785 B; 13, PG 5, 800 B; *Ad Philad., Praef.,* PG 5, 817 *C;* 7, PG 5, 832 C-833 A; *Ad Magn.,* 2, PG 5, 757 B; *Ad Smyrn.,* 8, PG 5, 852 A. etc.

[11] Ignatius, *Ad Rom.,* 2, PG 5, 805 A.

[12] Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* III, 22, PG 20, 256 C.

[13] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Philad.,* 10, PG 5, 836 B-837 A.

[14] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Ephes.,* 3, PG 5, 648 A. Some have argued that since Ignatius does not mention the Roman bishop in his epistle *Ad Romanes,* there was no monarchic bishop there, only the presbytery. Such reasoning is invalid, for Ignatius does not mention the Roman presbyters either, or, for that matter, any other form of Church organization there. Following the same line of reasoning, we would have to conclude that there was no ministry at Rome. We know Smyrna had a bishop, for the latter part of Ignatius' letter to the Smyrnaeans is directed to him, yet Ignatius does not mention him in addressing them.

reserved to a regional "apostle" from outside the local congregations) the end of that century witnessed almost everywhere the establishment of a monarchic type of episcopacy: the "apostolic" prerogative of conferring *katastasis* was shifted from a regional to a local basis. This change was not marked by any formal decree—and it would be futile to look for one—but by gradual development. As soon as a Christian community had grown and prospered, it seems the regional "apostle" ordained a monarchic *episcopos,* conferring upon him the "apostolic" commission to ordain others. In this way, the "successors of the apostles " became identified with the bishops of the local Churches. At the same time complete continuity of sacramental succession and a real transmission of office occurred.

At Smyrna, we see this transition occurring during the long lifetime of Polycarp. Appointed by the "apostles," he had received the "apostolic" office of ordaining others, which most of the local *episcopoi* did not possess at the time it had been granted to him. That is probably why Irenaeus, his disciple, wrote that Polycarp was "appointed by the apostles over Asia as bishop of the Church of Smyrna,[15] and why he was regarded by the pagans as "the teacher of Asia and the father of the Christians."[16] That is also why Ignatius could regard himself, not only as bishop of Antioch, but also as "bishop of Syria," [17] although the Syrian Churches had their own *episcopoi.*[18] By the time Polycarp died, he must have ordained many monarchic bishops with the power of ordaining, for after his death many neighboring churches numbered an "apostle" among their local clergy.

In the days of Tertullian, the African Church too had the threefold rank of monarchic bishop, whom he calls the "*summus sacer-dos*$_3$*"* and of "*presbyten et diaconi"* who were subject to him.[19]

[15] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.,* Ill, 3, PG 7, 851 C-852 A.

[16] *Martyr. Polycarpi,* 12, PG 5, 1037 C.

[17] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Rom.,* 2, PG 5, 688 B.

[18] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Philad.,* 10, PG 5, 836 B-837 A. Traces of the older system may be found in the *cor episcopoi* mentioned in Canon 13 of Ancyra Council (A.D. 314).

[19] Tertullian, *De bapt.,* 17, PL 1, 1326 B; so does Cyprian when he speaks of " the priests united by sacerdotal dignity with the bishop." *(Ep. 58, ad Lucium Papam,* 3, PL 3, 1005); cf. also Jerome, *Ep. 146, ad Evangelum,* 1, PL 22, 1194; Origen, *Homil. 23, in Librum Iesu Nave,* 2, PG 12, 935 CD, etc.

The threefold rank of monarchic bishop, presbyter and deacon is clearly shown and the ordination of each is set forth in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus (c. A.D. 215). Since he was opposing innovations in discipline and practice, he was probably comparing them with the Roman practices at the time of his youth (c. A.D. 180-200). The *Apostolic Tradition* represents the local usage of Rome, but since Hippolytus describes his work as "the Tradition which befits the Churches everywhere" (1, 2), and since it was widely accepted in the East, it contained no radical departure from what was being done in many other Churches.[20] Other evidence confirms this. Hippolytus' account is full and informative, giving us a valuable insight into the specific functions of bishop, presbyter and deacon.

First, he tells how a bishop is elected or chosen: "Let the bishop be ordained [being in all things without fault], chosen by all the people. And when he has been proposed and found acceptable to all, the people being assembled on the Lord's day together with the presbytery and such bishops as may attend, let <the choice > be generally approved."[21]

The consecration ceremony and prayer follow: "The bishops shall lay hands on him and the presbytery stand by in silence. And all shall keep silence praying in their heart for the descent of the Spirit. After this, one of the bishops present, at the request of all, laying his hand on him who is ordained bishop, shall pray thus, saying:

> " O God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who dwellest on high yet hast respect unto the lowly, who knowest all things before they come to pass; who didst give ordinances unto Thy Church by the Word of Thy grace; Who didst foreordain from the beginning the race of the righteous from Abraham, instituting princes and priests and leaving not Thy sanctuary

[20] Cf. A. v. Harnack THEOLOGISCHE LITERATURZEITUNG (1920), col. 225.

[21] *Ap. Trad.,* II, 1-2 (edit. G. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome* [London, I937L 2-3). Words in [ ] are or may be interpolations ; words in < > inserted by Dix for clearer meaning. Approval of the people is also mentioned by Origen, *Homil. 6 in Lev.,* 3, PG 12, 469 C.

without ministers (άλειτούργητον); Who from the foundation of the world hast been pleased to be glorified in them whom Thou hast chosen;
"[And] now pour forth that Power which is from Thee, of the princely Spirit which Thou didst deliver to Thy Beloved Child Jesus Christ, which He bestowed on Thy holy Apostles who established the Church which hallows Thee in every place to the endless glory and praise of Thy Name." [Father], who knowest the hearts [of all], grant it [i.e., the Βρίτίΐ,Πνευμα] upon this Thy servant whom Thou hast chosen for the episcopate to feed Thy holy flock and serve Thine high priest, that he may minister blamelessly by night and day, that he may unceasingly [behold and] propitiate Thy countenance and offer to Thee the gifts of Thy holy Church. And that by the high priestly Spirit he may have authority to forgive sins according to Thy command, to assign lots [i.e. to ordain] according to Thy bidding, to loose every bond according to the authority Thou gavest to the Apostles, and that he may please Thee in meekness and purity of heart, offering to Thee a sweet-smelling savour, through Thy Child Jesus Christ our Lord, through Whom to Thee be glory, might and praise, to the Father and to the Son with <the> Holy Spirit now and world without end. Amen."

The Eucharistic Liturgy follows: "And when he has been made bishop (επίσκοπος), let everyone offer him the kiss of peace, saluting him, for he has been made worthy < of this>.[22] To him let the deacons bring the oblation (προσφορά)...."

Essentially, the consecration of a bishop consisted of the laying on of the hand, together with the consecratory prayer. Its prefatory paragraph outlines the master-plan of God's economy in which the Church is positioned and effectual: God himself instituted, organized, and continually provided for true worship in all ages by choosing men as his ministers. The ordinances he gave the Church now continue to provide the same in this divinely ordered worship. This continuity is entrusted to the bishops.

Before outlining the bishop's functions, founded on divine power, the prayer explains the source of that power and how it was transmitted: the "power which is from Thee" is "of the princely

*» *Ap. Trad.,* II, 3-5 J HI» i"[6]> I[y]> [χ]-[2] <«*'*. [cli]-> 3-6).

Spirit.[n] This power was first given to Jesus Christ, and he in turn bestowed it upon the "apostles who established the Church which hallows Thee in every place.'[5] Beseeching that the same Spirit ("grant it") be given to the present candidate (" upon this Thy servant whom Thou hast chosen for the episcopate[>5]), the prayer explains why this divine power and authority are needed: to shepherd God's holy flock, to serve as God's high-priest, to offer him the gitfs of the Church (i.e., to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice), to forgive sins, to ordain others (" to assign lots"), to exorcise and heal (" to loose every bond") according to the same authority which God gave the apostles themselves.[23]

All these functions indicate a twofold relation of the bishop's office: the bishop is God's representative or *shaliach* to the *ecclesia* (as God's [α] servant," he exercises the Lord's place as Good Shepherd); and he is the *ecclesia's* representative before God (as high-priest offering sacrifice to God, ceaselessly propitiating him, etc.). This twofold representation demands a twofold authorization: from the people, and from God.

1. Authorization from the people. To be the true *shaliach* or representative of the people to God, the bishop must be their genuine choice; only then can he be said to truly represent them. Any number of references can be adduced to show the importance attached to the bishop's proper and free election in pre-Nicene times. It is the basic reason why Hippolytus carefully prefaces the consecration ceremony with comments about the bishop's election: he [α] was chosen by all the people," and "when his name has been put forward and found generally acceptable, the choice shall be ratified (συνευδοκείτο) when the laity and presbytery are met...together with such bishops as shall attend." Furthermore, his acceptance by all the faithful as their bishop is symbolized by the kiss of peace given to him by all before he offers the first Eucharist as bishop for his Church. Indeed, henceforth, he will be offering the corporate sacrifice, the Eucharist, in their name; by his prayers, he will be their propitiator before God; he will be their administrator of charity, the officer of discipline; he will be the "maker" of their future pres-

[23] Cf. also Tertullian, *De bapt.,* 17, PL I, 1326 B-1327 A.

byters and other lesser ministers. He will represent his Church in everything because he actually forms an important, essential part of it.

In a word, the bishop was consecrated for his Church (for his see). And as long as he lived in God's grace, he was not to be separated from his Church; there was no such thing in the pre-Nicene Church as retirement, or being transferred from Church to Church (from see to see). [24] A bishop without the see to which he was consecrated was as incomprehensible to pre-Nicene theology as head without a body— one simply did not sever a head and transfer it to another body! That is why transfers from see to see were vehemently condemned by the early councils, sometimes actually put on par with adultery. [25] Cyprian beautifully summarized the pre-Nicene concept of the Church when he wrote: "These form a Church: the people united to their high-priest and the flock following its shepherd. Wherefore you must know that a bishop is constituted by his Church and a Church by its bishop."[26]

2. Authorization from God. Still, the bishop is also the *shaliach*-representative of God to his people. For this, God chooses his envoy (" whom Thou hast chosen for the episcopate"), and infuses into him the Holy Spirit, bestowing divine power itself (" Now pour forth that Power which is from Thee, of the princely Spirit"). God did this with his Son, with his original apostles, and now he does it with the bishop as their successor (as paragraph two makes clear). Because the functions for which the bishop is being empowered are the same as those exercised by Christ and the apostles, the bishop may be called in a very real sense "*alter Christus,*" another Christ, or "*alter apostolus,"* another apostle.

Unless a man were himself a *shaliach-cnvoy* of God, empowered to act in his name, he could no more " make " a new *shaliach-emoy* to act for the Lord than a private citizen could, on his own initiative, make an envoy to act in a king's name. This is why apostolic succession is of such paramount importance, even to this day. Who can

[24] The transfer of Alexander of Cappadocia to Jerusalem is the first known; this was exceptional and a supposed miraculous vision justified it. Cf. Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* VI, 11, PG 20, 541 C.

[25] E.g., the Egyptian Council of A.D. 339, *Encycl. Ep.,* Section 10.

[26] Cyprian, *Ep. 69* (Oxford edit. 66), 8, PL 4, 419 A

empower a mere man to act for God if he himself were not empowered to do this? Cyprian put it well when he remarked:" How can anyone be reckoned a pastor—while the true pastor remains and presides over the Church of God by successive ordinations—when he himself stands in succession to no one, and thus, making a new beginning with himself, is in fact an interloper and a profane person?"[27]

The "making" of a new bishop is a joint human and divine act: the consecrating *bishop-shaliach* has the power to call down the Holy Spirit, the divine principal, who "makes " the new *shaliach* = bishop, giving him divine authority and power. Each consecration, therefore, is a fresh descent of the Holy Spirit, who makes the elect a bishop, a true *shaliach* of God, by a separate creative act. Thus, each new bishop is another apostle, an actual *addition* to the original apostolic college, just as was Matthias. A definite allusion to the appointment of Matthias, in fact, is made in the Hippolytus prayer through the words, " Father who knowest the hearts of all" (cf. Acts 1:24). Just as the episcopal ministry and the apostolate were one in the case of Matthias (Acts 1:25), so the apostolate and the episcopate were one and the same office in the consecration prayer of Hippolytus. The same equation is made by other pre-Nicene authors.[28]

"Apostolic succession" was important to the consecrating bishops because of the power to call down the Holy Spirit on the new bishop-elect through the imposition of the hand—yet, they did not thus ** transmit" the Holy Spirit from one generation of bishops to the next "like a contagion." Such a mechanistic idea had no place in the theology of the primitive Church before the last quarter of the second century. Even later, when the threat of Gnosticism forced the Church into emphasizing "apostolic succession," the transmission concerned the authority, powers or charismata and not the "transference" of the Holy Spirit himself (see below, pp. 281 if.): the Holy Spirit was "bestowed," not "transferred " from one bishop to the next.

[27] Cyprian, *Ep. 76* (Oxford edit. 69), 5, PL 3, 1188 BC.

[28] E.g., *Mart. Polycarpi,* 16, PG 5, 1041 A; Cyprian, *Ep. 27,* 1, PL 4, 305 B-306 A; *Anonymus de aleatoribus,* 1, PL 4, 903 AB, etc.

CHAPTER XXV

THE "APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION" OF BISHOPS

Practices and beliefs have a way of being taken for granted until someone challenges them, or until a change in circumstances makes some radical adaptation imperative: then issues have to be examined and clarified. Continuity of sacramental succession from one bishop-apostle to another went along smoothly and matter-of-factly, with everyone taking the process for granted—until after Polycarp. By then, the apostles and their immediate successors had been dying one by one—aged men like Polycarp or the bishop of Lyons, Pothinus, martyred in his nineties, c. A.D. 179.[1]

Until this time, whenever a question arose, the memory of living men could be relied on to provide an answer. Irenaeus, for example, relied on his own and Florinus' memories of youth regarding Poly-carp's accounts of his contacts with survivors from the apostolic age, and what *he* had heard from them in *his* youth.[2] Another generation, and even such second-hand contacts with the origin were gone forever. Hence, in the latter part of the second century, the sudden interest in what was "apostolic," in Scriptures, writings, beliefs, or ministry. Apostolicity was the precious norm against which current usages and beliefs were measured. This, of course, was more than mere nostaligia: interest in things apostolic was fanned by the Gnostic claims of a secret "apostolic" tradition and private "apostolic succession." [3]

Gnosticism, the intellectual amalgam of paganism and Christian truths, presented a more insidious threat to Christianity than the persecutions or any other later challenge. How close Christianity came to floundering by disintegration can be seen by the fact that the

[1] Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, i, PG 20, 420 AB.

[2] Cf. Irenaeus' letter to Florinus in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, 20, PG 20, 484 C-485 C.

[3] Cf. Epistle of Ptolemy to Flora (c. A.D. 165) in Epiphanius, *Haer.,* 33, 8, PG 41, 567-568; also Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.,* Ill, 2, PG 7, 848.

Gnostic heresiarch, Valentinus, came dangerously close to being elected Pope.[4] The aftermath of Vatican II, when many "new" teachings (including the new morality) are being offered as legitimate Catholic doctrine, may be somewhat analogous though slight in comparison. Today, Catholic intellectuals have a whole Christian tradition behind them, and the weight of the Scriptures to aid them in their defense of orthodox doctrine. In the days of Valentinus, they had neither: Scriptures were not yet clearly distinguished as canonical or apocryphal, and Christian tradition had not had time to develop.

Christians accused the Gnostics of "novelty" of doctrine. The Gnostics countered with a "secret tradition" allegedly handed down by a "succession of teachers" linked with the apostles: they claimed that their doctrines were not new, but were being made public for the first time. Their attempts to combine authentic Christianity with Hellenistic science and speculation were appealing: this, they claimed, was Christianity adapting itself to "modern thought" with the aid of a secret" apostolic tradition." In some cases, their claims could have been supported chronologically: Glaukias, the teacher of Basilides, may have had some contact with St. Peter; and Theodas, the teacher of Valentinus, in his youth could conceivably have heard Paul preach.

The Christians counter-claimed by insisting on the *public* tradition through the "succession" of official teachers, the bishops, in each Church. The public nature of any doctrine guaranteed its authenticity: any deviation would immediately have been spotted. Oneness, authenticity, and continuity of doctrine, therefore, were preserved by this succession of official *cat1wdrae₃* of "teachers' chairs," in any one Church. Furthermore, its correctness could be checked against what was being taught by all the official teachers, the bishops, in the other Churches.

Hegesippus (2nd century), in making use of the "apostolic succession" of bishops, was concerned, not with their sacramental succession, but with the foundations of their authority as official teachers. His succession lists are all the more valuable, since the temptation

[4] Tertullian, *Adv. Valent.,* 4, PL 2, 581 A-582 B.

to fill early gaps in the list with invented names was less. Besides, acute interest in apostolic succession itself had not yet arisen. In gathering his information from the Churches of Syria, Greece, and the West, Hegesippus undoubtedly believed what he wrote was true: otherwise, the Gnostics would only have had to disprove his "facts" in order to destroy his reasoning.

By personal comparison, Hegesippus also found that the teaching of contemporary bishops did approximate " oneness," that their doctrine did agree with Old and New Testament Scriptures, [5] while that of the Gnostics differed not only from the Scriptures and the official bishops of the Church, but also among themselves.

Irenaeus, who had lived and lectured in Rome in his earliest years, utilized Hegesippus' work: "It is within the power of all seekers of the truth in every Church to inspect clearly the tradition of the apostles made manifest throughout the world, for we are in a position to enumerate those *episcopi* appointed by the apostles and their successors down to our own time... Since it would be very tedious, however, in a volume such as this to enumerate the successions of all the Churches...we only indicate that tradition, derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul, and also point out the faith preached to men which comes down to our time through the successions of the bishops." [6] His succession-list of Rome's bishops follows, but he gave it new force by emphasizing the sacramental charisma received in ordination: to him, this was the guarantee of authentic apostolic teaching. "We ought to listen," Irenaeus writes, "to those presbyters who are in the *ecclesia,* who have the succession from the apostles—those who, as I have shown, possess the succession from the apostles; those who, together with the succession of the episcopate, have received the infallible charisma of truth, according to the good pleasure of the Father. But the others who are outside the original succession and hold their meetings in holes and corners we

[5] In every [episcopal] succession and in every city [the tradition] consents with what the Law proclaims and the Prophets of the Lord." (in Eusebius, *Hist. EccL,* IV, 22, PG 20, 377 D-380 A). Cf. also, *Adv. Haer.,* IV, 33> PG 7, 1077 B.

[6] Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.,* Ill, 3, 1-2, PG 7, 848 A if.

must treat with suspicion, either as heretics of perverse minds, or as schismatics puffed up and self-seeking, or as hypocrites acting thus for the sake of lucre and vainglory."[7] In other words, every bishop has the truth because he has apostolic succession and was ordained for his office; but the self-appointed Gnostic teacher, since he has neither of these qualifications, must be suspect. Irenaeus never specifically mentioned how a bishop enters into this "succession," but he did not have to: everybody knew that a bishop was chosen and ordained with the laying on of hands by other bishops, an observable fact.

While Irenaeus' argument tends to prove too much by nearly attributing infallibility to every bishop, he made his point: any of the faithful could trust as authentic the doctrines preached by the ordained teacher-bishop because he had a special charisma for it, whereas the doctrines of the ordinary *didaskalos* or private teacher possessing no such charisma, could easily be mixed with error. The ordinary lay person, therefore, need not investigate the succession of his own bishop to know that it was apostolic: it was, if he was the lawfully ordained bishop of the see, and, therefore, his teaching was apostolic.

Tertullian, too, stresses the importance of apostolic succession for the teaching office when he writes that Christ chose the twelve and "destined them to be the teachers of the nations." Quoting Christ's command (Mk 4:34) from which they derive their name as "the sent," he points out that they chose Matthias in place of Judas, and "they obtained the promised power of the Holy Spirit for the gift of miracles and of preaching; and after first bearing witness to the faith in Jesus Christ throughout Judea, and founding churches (there), they next went forth into the world and preached the same doctrine of the same faith to the nations. In like manner, they then founded churches in every city, from which all the other churches, one after another, derived the tradition of faith and the kernels of doctrine, and are every day deriving them, that they may become churches. Indeed, it is for this reason only that they will be able to

[7] *Ibid.,* IV, 26, 2, PG 7, 1053 C-1054 A; cf. also *Adv. Haer.,* Ill, *2, 2,* PG 7, 847 A.

deem themselves apostolic, as being the offspring of apostolic churches... Therefore the churches, although they are so many and so great, comprise but the one primitive church (founded) by the apostles, from which they all (spring). In this way all are primitive, all are apostolic, while they are all proved to be one, in (unbroken) unity..."[8]

He challenges the Gnostic heretics who claimed that their doctrines had been handed down from the apostles: "Let them produce the original records of their churches; let them unfold the roll of their bishops, running down in due succession from the beginning in such a way that (that first bishop of their) bishops shall be able to show as ordainer and predecessor anyone of the apostles or of the apostolic men—a man moreover who continued steadfast with the apostles. For this is the way in which the apostolic churches transmit their registers: as the church of Smyrna, which records that Polycarp was placed therein by John; as also the church of Rome, which makes Clement to have been ordained in like manner by Peter. In exactly the same way, the other churches also show their own (bishops) as having been appointed to their episcopal sees by the apostles and those they regard as transmitters of the apostolic seed. Let the heretics contrive something of the same kind... But should they try, they will not advance a step." [9] Tertullian, too, lays down another test by challenging them to compare their diverse and contradictory doctrines with those of the apostles and see whether they are the same. This is what he charged Marcion to do.[10]

In writing his lengthy *Stromata*—also to refute the heresies of Gnosticism—Clement of Alexandria names his teachers who "preserved the tradition of the blessed doctrine derived directly from the holy apostles, Peter, James, John, and Paul, the sons receiving it from the father...and came by God's will to us also to deposit those ancestral and apostolic seeds. [11]

[8] Tertullian, *De praescrp.,* 20, PL 2, 36 C-37 B. • [9]

Ibid., 32, PL 2, 52 B-53 A.

[10] Tertullian, *Adv. Marc,* IV, 5, PL 2, 395 C-397 Aj also *Depraescrp.,* 32, PL 2, 53 AB.

[11] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata,* I, 1, PG 8, 700 A; actually, this is a variant of the " apostolic succession " concept, but much closer to " apostolic tradition."

Origen, too, utilizes apostolic succession to prove authenticity of doctrine, when he says that "there are many who think they hold the opinions of Christ, yet some of them think differently from their predecessors. Since the teaching of the Church is still preserved because it had been transmitted in orderly succession from the apostles and is found in the Churches to the present day, only that is to be accepted as truth which differs in no way from ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition." [12]

Hippolytus himself was influenced by his contemporaries, not in his *Apostolic Tradition*^ but in a later work in which he claimed to be the lawful bishop of Rome. Heresies, he insists, are refuted by "none other than the Holy Spirit transmitted (παραδοθεν) in the Church, which the apostles had first of all received themselves and then imparted to those who had believed correctly. And we, by having become their successors and partakers with them of the same grace of high-priesthood and teachership, and being accounted guardians of the Church (ών ημείς διάδοχοι τυγχάνοντες της τε αύτης χάριτος μετέχοντες αρχιερατείας τε και διδασκαλίας και φρουροί της Εκκλησίας) will not conceal the right doctrine in silence."[13]

With the danger of Gnosticism past (c. A.D. 200), the emphasis from the bishop's office as teacher shifted back to the other aspect of his office—as pastor and liturgical minister—as had been the case originally. Hippolytus' consecration prayer, which represents the pre-Gnostic tradition, features the bishop's pastoral-liturgical duties. In the third century, another crisis, a disciplinary one, returned these same duties to the fore as well as all their implications. Now those acts were re-examined which gave a man the powers proper to a bishop, their source and commission—in a word, the sacramental acquisition of his office. Again, apostolic succession of his episcopal consecrators necessarily played a key role. After all, a man could be chosen for the episcopate and "be ordained" by the imposition of hands, but if the ordaining bishop himself were not the successor of the apostles, he could not give powers which he himself did not

[12] Origen, *De Princip.,* I, praef., 2, PG 11,116 AB. Discussion of Origen's other pertinent passages may be found in A. Ehrhardt, *The Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries of the Church* (London, 1953), pp. 137 ff.

[13] Hippolytus, *Philosophumena,* I, 6, PG 16, 3020 G.

have. That is why Firmilian of Cappadocia (A.D. 256) insists that heretics have no "share" in the power of baptising, blessing, and ordaining, nor in the authority to absolve: only the bishops of the Church have these powers.[14] The *shaliach-prmciple* makes the reason obvious.

Accordingly, the consecration prayer (" Laying on of hands at the making of a Bishop") in Serapion differs from that in Hippolytus by specifically mentioning "apostolic succession" and its role in episcopal ordination:

> " Thou who didst send the Lord Jesus for the gain of all the world, thou who didst through him choose the apostles, thou who generation by generation dost ordain holy Bishops, O God of truth, make this Bishop also a living Bishop, holy of the succession of the holy apostles, and give to him grace and divine Spirit, that thou didst freely give to all thy own servants and prophets and patriarchs: make him to be worthy of shepherding thy flock, and let him still continue un-blameably and inoffensively in the Bishopric through thy only-begotten Jesus Christ, through whom to thee (is) the glory and the strength in holy Spirit, both now and to all the ages of the ages. Amen."[15]

To repeat: the events of the century and a half between Hippolytus and Serapion make themselves felt in that the latter specifies" apostolic succession," while the former does not. Whether or not the phrase" of the succession of the holy apostles" has been interpolated by a fourth-century reviser makes little difference for our point: it is there to underscore the making of a bishop. The rest is interesting only for the points of similarity. Both prayers regard Christ as the "apostle" of God, and his appointing the original apostolic college. By equating the episcopate with apostleship, inference may be drawn from the Serapion prayer that the bishop is "another apostle," and indeed" another Christ," as in Hippolytus. God does this by an act of divine power (" give unto him grace and divine Spirit"), as in Hippolytus. Aside from "shepherding"

[14] *Ep. Firmiliani ad Cyprianum,* 7 and 16, PL 3,1208 B-1209 A and PL 3,1216 C-1217 A.

[15] Serapion, *Euchologion,* No. 14 (edit. J. Wordswort, *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer-Book,* [Hamden, Conn., 1964], p. 74).

God's flock, Serapion does not enumerate the functions of a bishop. By this time, much could be taken for granted. Other evidence from Egypt clearly shows that the functions of a bishop were the same priestly duties there as in any other Church.[16] In both Hippolytus and Serapion, references to Old Testament antecedents seem to point to the role of the Spirit in the purely Jewish institutions where the transmission elements were so prominent.

The similarity of concepts in these two prayers with the ideas found in the East Syrian Church—which had kept so many Judaic characteristics—shows that they had common roots in the apostolic Church. St. Ephraem of Syria, for example, embodies them in his question regarding claimants to the office of bishop: "Let them be asked from whom they received the hand..that the order should not be lost, which our Lord also transmitted to his disciples and our Church retains to this day transmitted to her from them. [17] Ephraem, too, insists on Old Testament succession—that God laid his hand on Moses, and from him the succession continued down to John the Baptist and from him to Christ. Narsai of Edessa,in the fifth century, does no less when he writes that Christ "chose his first twelve priests...they began to make priests spiritually, even as they had received from the High Pontiff who consecrated them. After his pattern they made priests.. .and they delivered the order to their disciples, that they might do according to their [sc. the apostles'] acts," and that "by the laying on of hands the priest receives the power of the Spirit, that he may be able to perform the divine mysteries."[18]

The Byzantine Church, today as always, uses the imposition of the hand together with a consecratory prayer for the ordaining of bishops, priests and deacons. The Byzantine, formula, like that in the *Apostolic Tradition,* is the same for all three orders, with the proper designation for each: "Divine grace, which ever gives strength to weakness and supplies what is lacking, ordains N..., a bishop [priest, deacon]. Let us then pray for him, that the grace of the Holy Spirit may come upon him."

[16] E.g., cf. A. J. Maclean, *The Ancient Church Orders* (Cambridge, 1910), p. 68.

[17] Ephraem, *Opp. Syriaca, adv. Haer., Serm. XXIII* (edit. 1740, II, p. 487).

[18] Narsai, *Homil. XVII and XXXII* (edit. R. H. Connolly, *The Liturgical Homilies of Narsai* [Cambridge, 1909], pp. 8, 63 f.).

This formula is used, with small variations, in all Eastern Churches for ordinations to the three major orders, and it can be traced back to the fourth century, and to the region of Antioch.[19] Simeon of Thessalonika (f 1429) seems to attribute sacramental efficacy to it (with the imposition of hands) when he writes of the deacon's ordination: "When the bishop says ' as deacon,' he who is ordaining confers the gift of grace and he who is being ordained receives the diaconate through the hierarch's word, at once. For the word is made effective by the holy and divine Spirit, because the bishop does not speak as a man but as a hierarch, with grace; the grace is produced and is operative, since God's word is effective, and the one and the same Spirit does all."[20]

In the Antiochene and Coptic Churches today, the formula is a mere declaration by the archdeacon; in some other Churches, it is said by the ordaining bishop *before* the laying on of the hand. As a result, doubts have arisen about its sacramental efficacy. Such doubts are unwarranted, however. Sacramental formulas in the primitive Church were semi-extemporaneous: the celebrant could compose his own wording, provided he incorporated the main ideas into the prayer-formula correcting the sacrament (this held true for the Eucharistic Prayer, for the "formula" of confirmation-chrismation, for the wording of sacramental absolution, etc.). The main ideas to be expressed in the prayer accompanying the imposition of hand in ordination are the bestowal of the Holy Spirit making the candidate a bishop (priest, deacon) either explicitly or equivalently by an enumeration of the powers being imparted. If, during the laying on of hands, the accompanying prayer does express these main ideas in some way, valid ordination is imparted. The prayer, "Divine grace..." sufficiently expresses such ideas and, therefore, constitutes the ordination formula for those Eastern Churches which use it during the imposition of the hands. The same prayer does not constitute the ordination formula in the Antiochene and Coptic Churches, since they have relegated it to a subordinate position, but these Churches have substituted another, equally

[19] Cf. B. Botte's study in *L'Orient Syrien,* II (Paris, *1957),* pp. 285-297

[80] Simeon of Thessalonika, *De sacris ordinibus,* 149, PG 155, 377.

valid for ordination, during the imposition of the hands.

Eastern Churches have always been loath to determine the exact moments of efficacy, e.g., moments of consecration in the Eucharistic Liturgy, in ordination, etc. They prefer to regard the whole ensemble of prayer and action as constituting the sacramental mystery. Byzantines, for example, may regard the prayer, "Divine grace...," accompanying the laying on of hands as an essential part of the outward sign, but they will count the various other prayers and actions in the rite as also being part of the total, external sign of the mystery. For them, even the smallest element of the rite is important because it is a vehicle of the Holy Spirit through which he touches the souls of men.

There are many such details in the present Byzantine rite of consecrating a bishop. One of these is the image of an eagle, with wings outstretched, under whose feet are depicted a city and a river. The river represents the grace of doctrine which the bishop as true pastor must have; the city symbolizes the see to which he is being consecrated and over which he will have authority; the eagle itself, a traditional symbol of John the Evangelist, the "Theologian," indicates orthodoxy, purity and depth of theological knowledge.[21] This image, lying in the middle of the church, near the tribune, features in the bishop elect's three professions of faith before his actual consecration: the bishop elect stands on the eagle's tail to make his first profession of faith, the Constantinopolitan Creed; he stands on eagle's body to make his second, somewhat fuller profession" concerning the properties of the three Persons of the ineffable Godhead and the Incarnation;" he stands on the eagle's head for his third, longest, and most explicit profession" regarding the Canons of the holy apostles and fathers, the traditions and regulations of the Church." His relative positions on the eagle are obvious: a progression of theological knowledge, from the lowest to the highest.

A similar progression is seen in the initial blessings imparted: the first is simple, "The grace of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit be with thee;" the second is more elaborate, "The grace of the Holy Spirit be with thee, enlightening,

[21] *Ibid.,* 200, PG 155, 4°7 D·

strengthening, and endowing thee with wisdom all the days of thy life;" the third is proper to the consecration itself, "The grace of the Holy Spirit, through my humility, exalteth thee, beloved priest of God, N..., to be the bishop-elect of N... "The singing of the hymn *Unto Many Years* completes the preliminary ceremonial.

The Eucharistic Liturgy is then begun. The bishop's consecration takes place after the Little Entrance when the Trisagion Hymn has been sung.[22] Again, symbolism plays its part. The Little Entrance typifies Christ's coming to earth where he died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven—thereafter, to carry on his work, his chosen ones received the Holy Spirit, being consecrated the Saviour's first successors. The bestowal of the same Pentecostal Spirit, making the elect a bishop at this point in the Divine Liturgy, therefore, seems quite appropriate.

Led by the archpriest and proto-deacon, the bishop-elect goes into the sanctuary and kneels down on both knees in the midst of the consecrating bishops. They take the Gospel Book, open it, and lay it (with the writing downward) upon his head and, while holding it there (laying on of the hands), the presiding consecrator says the prayer, " Divine grace...", (See above, p. 287 f.);[23] still holding the book in place, the presiding bishop imparts a threefold blessing, " In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever."[24]

Then, the consecrating bishops lay their right hands upon the ordinand's head, while the presiding bishop says a prayer which in many ways expresses the ideas of the *Apostolic Tradition* consecration: first, that God "established for us an ordinance of degrees and ranks unto the service and divine celebration of the august, all-spotless mysteries of the holy altar, apostles, prophets and teachers;[33] then, petitioning that "the same Lord of all who enabled this chosen person to come under the yoke of the Gospel and the dignity of a bishop through the laying-on of our hand, his fellow bishops here present, strengthen him by the inspiration and power and grace of the Holy Spirit... make his bishopric be blameless and, adorning him with purity, make him holy, that he may be worthy to ask for the salvation of the people and be heard by Thee."[25]

A short *eketene* (litany) follows and, again, while the bishops hold their right hands upon the newly consecrated bishop's head, the presiding bishop says another prayer. This prayer, also reminiscent of the *Apostolic Tradition* prayer, addresses God "who...in Thy providence hast instituted for us teachers of like nature with ourselves who maintain Thine altar that they may offer unto Thee sacrifice and oblation for all Thy people, make this man also...to be an imitator of Thee, the true Shepherd...[33] etc.[26]

Finally, the presiding bishop vests the new bishop in the dalmatic and other episcopal garments and sings, *Axios* (" He is worthy[33]). The choir repeats the same. The bishops receive their new colleague into their ranks with a kiss of peace and the Divine Liturgy is resumed. After the Divine Liturgy, the new bishop receives the episcopal cassock, pectoral image, mande, and cowl, as a sign that another successor to the apostles has been made—a true *shaliach* of the Lord![27]

[22] Thus, already the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini,* III, 55 (77), now 336 Goar, *Euchologion* [Graz reprint, i960], p. 251).

[23] In the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini,* this prayer was said during the impos-tion of hand without the Gospel Book (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 251).

[24] In the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini,* the Gospel Book was placed upon the candidate's head at this point, i.e., at this threefold blessing (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 251); the practice of resting the Gospel Book on the head of the bishop elect during his consecration is ancient, being first attested by the *Apostolic Constitutions,* VIII, 4 (cf. edit. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* Vol. VII, [Wm B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids (Mich. p. 482]).

[2S] This prayer is contained in the 8th-9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 252).

[26] Both the *ektene* and the prayer are contained in *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 252).

[27] For the complete rite of consecration, cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 243 ff., in the Greek; for English translation, see I. F. Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church* (Boston and New York, 1906), pp. 326-332, or J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, in Russia* (London, 1772), pp. 289-303.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE PRE-NICENE PRESBYTERS AND DEACONS

The powers of a presbyter or priest regarding the bestowal of sacraments are essentially the same as the bishop's, except ordination (" He has no authority to give ' holy orders '").[1] Hip-polytus is quite clear about this when he says:" And when a presbyter is ordained (χεφοτονεῖν), the bishop shall lay his hand upon his head, the presbyters also touching him. And he shall pray over him according to the form which we gave before over the bishop.... But upon a presbyter, the <other> presbyters also lay their hands because of the similar Spirit < which is> common to all the clergy. For the presbyter has authority (εξουσία) only for this one thing, to receive. But he has no authority to give holy orders (κλήρος). Wherefore he does not ordain (καθιστάναι) a man to orders (κληρικός), but by laying on hands at the ordination of a presbyter, he only blesses *(lit. "* seals," σφραγίζει) while the bishop ordains (χεφο-τονεῖν)." [2]

In some localities, the Jewish presbyteries had corporately performed the laying on of hands *(semikah)* on receiving a new colleague into their ranks.[3] Traces of this custom are evident in Hippolytus' account of the Christian ordination of a presbyter. The Christian ordination, however, diifers radically, in that a bishop alone has

[1] *Apostolic Tradition,* IX, *f* (edit. G. Dix, *The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome* [London, 1937], p. 17). What is not entirely clear is how the Christian presbyter was chosen at this early date. For the Jewish presbyteries, the local sanhedrin chose new members. Paul tells Titus to appoint new presbyters for the new Churches (Tt 1:5-6). But was this choice subject to the vote of the *ecclesia?* It seem reasonable to assume that it was, as was the case with a bishop-elect. Indications of such a procedure appear in Rome and Africa in the third century (cf. Cornelius, *Ep. 48,* in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* VI, 43, PG 20, 620-621); but some early Eastern sources point to the bishop nominating them (e.g., *Didascalia,* edit. Connolly, *Didascalia Apostolorum* [Oxford, 1929], p. 96). The bishop probably sought ratification of his choice by the faithful, for in fourth-century Antioch, Chrysostom speaks of presbyters being elected *(De Sacerd.,* Ill, passim, PG 48, 639-660 passim).

[2] *Apost. Trad.,* VIII, 1 and IX, *6* f. (edit. Dix, pp. 13, 16 f.).

[3] *Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Tosefta,* i, I.

power to ordain others. For this function, the ordaining bishop's apostolic succession was as indispensable as for the consecration of a new bishop—and the reasons were the same.

In Hippolytus' ordination prayer, the prefatory paragraph and doxology are the same as those in the consecration of a bishop. The body of the text, however, reads differently:

> " Look upon this Thy servant and impart to him the spirit of grace and counsel, that he may share in the presbyterate and govern Thy people in a pure heart [a clause dealing with the presbyter's office of " teaching " seems to have stood here in the original text, but its exact wording is difficult to restore]. As Thou didst look upon the people of Thy choice and didst command Moses to choose presbyters whom Thou didst fill with the spirit which Thou hadst granted to Thy minister, so now, O Lord, grant that there may be preserved among us unceasingly the Spirit of Thy grace, and make us worthy that in faith we may minister to Thee, praising Thee in singleness of heart, through Thy Child Jesus through Whom to Thee be glory, might..." etc., as in the consecration prayer. [4]

Another passage in Hippolytus sheds further light on the presbyter's role: "And let the deacons and presbyters assemble daily at the place which the bishop shall appoint for them. And let not the deacons especially neglect (άμελεῖν) to assemble every day unless (εί μήτε) sickness prevents (κωλύειν) them. And when all have assembled, they shall instruct those who are in the assembly (εκκλησία). And having also prayed, let each one go about his own business."[5]

[4] *Apost. Trad.,* VIII, 2-5 (edit. Dix, pp. 13-14).

[5] *Ibid.,* XXXIII, 1-2 (edit. Dix, p. 60). The presbyter's ordination prayer in Serapion is surprisingly similar: "We stretch forth the hand, O Lord God of the heavens, Father of thy only-begotten, upon this man, and beseech thee that the Spirit of truth may dwell (or settle) upon him. Give him the grace of prudence and knowledge and a good heart. Let a divine Spirit come to be in him that he may be able to be a steward of thy people and an ambassador of thy divine oracles, and to reconcile thy people to the uncreated God, who didst give of the spirit of Moses upon the chosen ones, even holy Spirit. Give a portion of holy Spirit also to this man, from the Spirit of thy only-begotten, for the grace of wisdom and knowledge and right faith, that he may be able to serve thee in a clean conscience, through thy only-begotten Jesus Christ, through whom to thee (is) the glory and the strength in holy Spirit both now and for all the ages of ages. Amen. " (edit. J. Wordsworth, *Bishop Sarapion's Prayer-Book* [Hamden, Conn., 1964], p. 73).

The amalgam of Jewish and Christian elements in the ordination prayer points to its having been compiled before the time of Hippolytus, possibly as early as the apostolic era. The Jewish presbyter's role in their community was solely administrative and didactic. Precisely, these are the functions noted in the ordination prayer, " governing " ("share in the presbyterate and govern"), and " teaching " (though the exact wording of the presbyter's teaching office is difficult to restore, his " instruction " role in chapter 33 is clear). In any case, the prominence given to the presbyter's teaching office in primitive times is known from other sources (e.g., 1 Tm 5:17; 2 Clem. 17, 3, etc.). Ordination to the presbyterate always preceded consecration to the episcopate. No need, therefore, to mention expressly the bishop's role as ruler and teacher in his consecration prayer—and Hippolytus does not. The bishop's prerogative as ex officio chairman of his " compresbyters " is obvious from a passage in the *Apostolic Tradition* indicating that it is the bishop who designates or " appoints " the place where presbyters and deacons daily assembled.

The presbyter's ordination prayer recalls God's providence regarding the Jews as his chosen people (" People of Thy choice "), his bestowal of the Spirit on Moses and on the elders selected by him, and the Spirit's later transmission to the Christian presbyterate (" preserving uninterrupted among us the Spirit of Thy grace"). This, too, suggests an early Jewish influence.

The Jewish presbyter had no liturgical function which a layman could not fulfil. Likewise, Hippolytus' ordination prayer defines no special liturgical functions for the Christian presbyter. Yet, he is more than a lay church counselor. According to the *Apostolic Tradition,* he is a *kleros,* entitled to join in the imposition of hands during the ordination of new presbyters, to be a "concelebrant" with the bishop in the Eucharistic sacrifice, to participate in conferring baptisms, etc.

Presbyters could probably act as the bishop's liturgical deputies in his absence, but when he was present, they had no independent liturgical functions. This seems to be the meaning of Ignatius of Antioch's remarks: "See that all of you follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the presbytery as you would the

apostles... Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a proper Eucharist which is [celebrated] either by the bishop, or *by one to whom he has entrusted it."* [6] Also, Irenaeus writes of the *fermentum* (the particle of the Eucharist) being sent from the Stational Eucharistic Liturgy celebrated by the Bishop of Rome to the "subsidiary" Eucharistic Liturgies;[7] since the seven deacons of Rome attended the Pope's main Liturgy, only presbyters could have celebrated these lesser ones. Later, according to Cyprian, the presbyter either alone or with other presbyters celebrated the Eucharist when the bishop was absent.[8] Since he does not comment on the custom, it must have been a long-established one, perhaps even reaching back to apostolic or post-apostolic days.

The presbyter shared with or was replaced by a deacon in some lesser functions, such as blessing the *eulogion* (blessed bread) at the agape,[9] administering the chalices at baptismal Eucharists,[10] reading the lections, teaching, conducting prayers at the daily assemblies,[u] etc. There was, however, a clear distinction between the office of presbyter and that of deacon. Hippolytus makes this plain when he writes of the deacon's ordination ceremony:

> "And a deacon when he is appointed (καθιστάναι) shall be chosen according to what has been said before, the bishop [alone] laying hands on him [in the same manner]. Nevertheless, we order that the bishop alone shall lay on hands at the ordination of a deacon for this reason: that he is not ordained (χεφοτονεῖν) for a priesthood, but for the service (ύπερ-ησία) of the bishop that he may do only the things commanded by him. For he is not [appointed to be] the fellow-counselor (σύμβουλος) of the [whole] clergy (κλήρος) but to take charge and to report to the bishop whatever is necessary. He does not receive the Spirit which is common to the presbyterate, in which the presbyters share, but that which is entrusted to

[6] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Smyr.,* 8, PG 5, 852 A.
[7] Cf. Irenaeus.) *Ep. to Victor,* in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.,* V, 24, PG 20, 505 A.
[8] Cyprian, *Ep. 4, ad Presbyteros et diaconos,* 2, PL 4, 236 AB.
[9] *Apost. Trad.,* XXVI, 11 (edit. Dix, p. 48).
[10] *Ibid.,* XXIII, 7 (edit. Dix, p. 41).
[11] *Ibid.,* XXXIII, 1-2 (edit. Dix, p. 60).

> him under the bishop's authority. Wherefore, the bishop alone shall make (χειροτονεῖν) the deacon."[12]

Unlike the presbyter who was a " fellow-counselor" of the bishop, with real voice in policy-making, the deacon was ordained" for the service of the bishop," to carry out decisions made without his assent. One of his duties was reporting. Another passage is more explicit: "And let each of the deacons with the subdeacons attend upon (προσ-καρτερεῖν) the bishop; and let it be reported to him who are sick, that if it seem good to the bishop he may visit them; for the sick man is much comforted that the high priest remembered him."[13] The status of deacon was much more personally dependent upon the bishop than the presbyter: the "Spirit which is common to the presbyterate" is received by the presbyters, while" that which is entrusted to" the deacon is a direct endowment from the bishop (to assist him in liturgical and pastoral functions). The deacon's relative rank and duties of assistance are reiterated in the prayer of his ordination:

> "O God who hast created all things and hast ordered them by the Word, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ whom Thou didst send to minister (διακονεῖν) Thy will and reveal unto us Thy desire: grant the Spirit of grace and earnestness and diligence to this Thy servant whom Thou hast chosen to minister (διακονεῖν) to Thy church and to bring up (ἀναφέρειν) in holiness to Thy holiness that which is offered (προσφέρειν) to Thee by Thine ordained high priests to the glory of Thy Name; so that ministering (λειτουργών) blamelessly and in purity, he may by Thy goodwill be found worthy of this exalted office, praising Thee, through Thy Child Jesus Christ through whom to Thee..." etc. [14]

Of all the temporal duties of deacons, their ordination prayer mentions only their liturgical ministration. It is, as Ignatius of Antioch remarked," the deacons who are (ministers) of the mysteries of Christ Jesus; for they are not ministers of meat and drink, but servants of the Church of God."[15] Justin mentions that the deacons

[12] *Ibid.,* IX, 1-5 (edit. Dix, pp. 15-16).
[13] *Ibid.,* XXX (edit. Dix, p. 57).
[14] *Ibid.,* IX, 10-12 (edit. Dix, pp. 17-18).
[15] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Tral.,* 2, PG 5, 780 A.

distributed the Eucharistic bread and the mixed wine and water to all those present at the Eucharistic sacrifice, and that they carried them also to those who were absent.[16] This may be what Ignatius had in mind when he called them "the ministers of the mysteries of Christ Jesus." In Hippolytus' day, "the bishop, if it be possible, shall with his own hand deliver [the Eucharistic bread] to all the people, while the deacons break the bread "during the Sunday Eucharist. [17] At the paschal Liturgy, the bishop also distributed the Eucharistic bread, while "the presbyters—but if there are not enough of them, the deacons also" administered the chalices.[18] Later evidence corroborates this arrangement.[19] The only liturgical duty mentioned in the prayer itself is the deacon's part in the corporate Eucharist, i.e., "to bring (ἀναφέρειν) in holiness...that which is offered (προσφέρειν)" to God. When the prayer was composed, probably this and not the administration of the chalice, was regarded as his main liturgical right.

All three ordination services have the laying on of hands, but a careful gradation is observed. At the consecration of a bishop, several bishops normally attend, and all participate in the laying on of hand. At the ordination of a presbyter, several presbyters are present, and they, too, participate in the imposition of hands on the candidate. But at the deacon's ordination, the bishop alone does it, because, as explained above, the deacon is ordained, not for the priesthood, but for the service of the bishop.

The earliest testimony is always the most important despite its occasional obscurity. Later sources elucidate many matters connected with the episcopate, priesthood and diaconate, but they are too abundant for treatment here.

In present Byzantine ordinations to the priesthood and diaconate, some common features and peculiarities stand out. The ordinations take place during the Eucharistic Liturgy: the priest's, after the

[16] Justin, / *Apoh,* 65 and 67, PG 6, 428 B and 429 C.
[17] *Apost. Trad.,* XXIV, 1 (the Ethiopic version, edit. Dix, p. 43).
[18] *Ibid.,* XXIII, 7 (edit. Dix, p. 41).
[19] E.g., Cyprian, *De lapsis,* 25, PL 4, 500 A; Augustine, *Serm.* 304, 1, PL 38, 1395; John Moschus, *Pratum spirit.,* 219, PG 87, 2109 C; *Testamentum Domini,* II, 10 (Quasten, *Monumenta eucharistica et liturgia vestustissima* [Bonn, 1935-1937], 273), etc. Not so, however, Can. 18 of Nicene Council (Mansi, II, 675).

Great Entrance; the deacon's, after the *anaphora* (the Eucharistic Prayer).[20] The ordinand is led (by an archdeacon in a priest's ordination, by two subdeacons in the deacon's ordination) from the middle of the church into the sanctuary, pausing three times on the way and making three profound bows. At each bow, the assisting deacon exclaims, "Command:" the first, being addressed to the people, the second, to the clergy, and the third, to the bishop—supposedly, a carry-over from earlier days when the people and clergy of the local church had a voice in approving or disapproving a candidate. [21]

Bowing before the bishop, the ordinand receives a blessing from him. Then, the ordinand and assistants walk around the altar, singing, "O holy martyrs, who fought the good fight... "The choir repeats the hymn, as the ordinand kisses the four corners of the altar, the bishop's hand and *epigonation* — signifying his gratitude and respect for the bishop's person through whom God's grace will be invoked. The whole process is repeated another two times, except that the accompanying hymns are different.

For the ordination itself, the ordinand goes to the altar, kneels down,[22] places his hands upon the altar cross-wise and his forehead on them. The bishop lays the end of his *omophorion* (stole) upon the ordinand's head, blesses him three times, and, laying his hand upon the candidate's head,[23] recites the prayer, " Divine grace...," the same as that used in the consecrations of bishops (see

[20] The different positions within the Eucharistic Liturgy during which the Byzantine ordinations take place were already allocated in the 8th or 9th century; cf. *Cod. Barberini,* III, 55 (77), now 336 (Goar, *Euchologion* [Graz reprint, i960], pp. 211, 244).

[21] Identical expressions were used at imperial audiences, when a person was entering or leaving the royal presence. The practice seems to have been adopted from Byzantine court life into church ceremonial; cf. D. F. Bieliaev, *Byzantina,* Vol. II (St. Petersburgh, 1893), pp. 25, 31, 65; also, A. Neselovsky, *Chyny khyrotesii i khyrotonii* (Kamenetz-Podolsk, 1906), pp. 155 if.). In Simeon of Thessalonika's day, it seems, the expressions were used only in consecrations of bishops (PG 155, 409 BC).

[22] In the ordination of a deacon, the ordinand kneels only on the right knee, as a sign that the fullness of the sacred ministry is not being conferred upon him; in the ordination of a priest, the ordinand kneels on both knees.

[23] The 8th or 9th century *Cod. Barberini* says nothing about the bishop laying the end of his *omophorion* on the candidate's head, only that he imparts a triple blessing and lays his hand upon the ordinand's head (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 245).

above, pp. 287 f.) except for the designations of the office being imparted.[24]

After blessing the newly-ordained three times, the bishop, with his hand imposed upon him, recites another prayer: for the deacon's ordination, calling upon God to grant him the grace which St. Stephen had received; for the priest's ordination, the great grace of the Holy Spirit for worthily exercising the great honors of the priesthood. [25]

An Ektene of Peace follows, into which are inserted petitions for the newly ordained. In the meantime, the bishop, still keeping his hand upon the head of the newly-ordained, recites a silent prayer detailing the duties of the office received.[26]

Finally, the proper vesture and liturgical implements are given to each newly-ordained, while the *Aksios, (he is worthy)* is being sung. For the deacon, this means merely laying his stole on his left shoulder (as a subdeacon, the stole was bound cross-wise), the bestowal of liturgical cuffs, and the liturgical fan (with which to fan the Holy Gifts on the altar). The priest is given the sacerdotal stole in exchange for his diaconal one, the zone to gird himself, *xhephelon(ion)* or chasuble, and a service-book to guide him in the holy ministry. In some churches, he is also handed a chalice and *diskos* (paten).

[24] Such an arrangement is ancient: the *Canons of Hippolytus* (IV, 30-32) state that the presbyter is to be ordained with the same prayer as the bishop, except that the words, "bishop," "episcopate," are to be altered to "presbyter," "presbyterate," and the enthronement is to be omitted (A. J. Maclean, *Ancient Church Orders* [Cambridge, 1910], p. 69). The same work, however, stipulated that, " The bishop in all things is to be put on an equal basis with the presbyter, except in the name of the chair *{cathedrae)* and in ordination, for the power of ordaining is not given to him (i.e. to the presbyter)." Since these same *Canons* recognize explicitly in another passage that communities too small to have a bishop at their head will be put in charge of a presbyter, both for government and for administer ing the sacraments, the need for clarifying the presbyter's powers and the extent of his participation in the bishop's priesthood was imperative. This is probably why other prayers were later inserted into the ordination ceremonies of a priest, detailing the powers and duties being imparted to him—as in the Byzantine ordin ation ritual of priests and deacons, which has been handed down till the present day.

[25] Identical prayers were already being said in the 8th or 9th century (cf. *Cod. Barberini* [Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 211, 245]), probably for the reasons outlined in note 24 above.

[26] Again, identical prayers in 8th or 9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 211, 245), probably for the reasons given in note 24 above.

The newly-ordained goes to the bishop to exchange the kiss of peace and then, immediately takes up his duties at the Eucha-ristic sacrifice: the deacon, fanning the Holy Gifts at the altar; the priest, concelebrating the Eucharistic Liturgy.[27]

The Scriptures mention only bishops, presbyters, and deacons; so do the authentic writings of the Apostolic Fathers. It seems, therefore, a fair inference that the lesser "ranks," now known as minor orders, were added later by the Church to fulfill lesser functions. The Church's rapid growth made a subdivision of the lesser tasks imperative. Subdeacons were established to help the deacons in their duties. Historically, the earliest reference to sub-deacons comes from the mid-third century. Pope Cornelius, in his letter to Fabius of Antioch (A.D. 255), refers to seven subdeacons among the clergy of Rome.[28] Cyprian also mentions subdeacons in the African Church at about the same time.[29] Later evidence abounds.

The Christians continued the Jewish practice of reading the sacred books publicly. For this, the Jews of the Diaspora trained special readers to read Hebrew. In the primitive Christian communities, probably only a few of the congregation were sufficiently educated to qualify for the post of reader (the earliest converts seem to have belonged to the poorest strata of Greco-Roman society). It was only natural that these same few would have found themselves fulfilling this task more or less regularly in the Christian assemblies. Justin seems to be the first to mention liturgical readers.[30] The ancients believed that everyone fulfilling an office for the Church should be

[27] The proper liturgical vesture and implements indicate distinct powers and duties. This part of the ceremonial is also nearly identical with that of the 8th or 9th century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 211, 245). For present complete ordination rites in Greek, cf. Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 208 f,, 242 f.; in English, cf. I. F. Hapgood, *Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic (Greco-Russian) Church* (Boston and New York, 1906), pp. 312-315, 317-319, or J. G. King, *The Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church, in Russia* (London, 1772), pp. 281-284, 285-287.

[28] In Eusebius, *Hist. EccL,* VI, 43, PG 20, 621 A.

[29] Cyprian, *Ep. 8,* 29, PL 4, 310 A*;* cf. *Ep. 28,* 3, PL 4, 309 A.

[30] Justin, / *ApoL,* 67, PG 6, 429 B; cf. also, // *Clem, ad Cor.,* 19, 1 (edit. *The Apostolic Fathers,* Vol. I [London and Cambridge, Mass., 1952], p. 159).

given a special blessing and dedication;[31] hence, not only readers or lectors were instituted for the post by prayers and ceremony, but also grave-diggers *(Jossores),* registrars *(notarii),* widows, acolytes, exorcists, and doorkeepers.

Both Western and Eastern Churches have a considerable variety of tradition regarding the number of minor orders. Thus, for a time, other functionaries were added to the list: psalmists or cantors, interpreters *(hermeneutae),* the guardians of martyrs *(custodes marty-rum),* etc. Fascinating as the histories of these minor posts may be, they are outside the scope of this brief survey.

[31] But this was not an " ordination," as is evident from *Apost. Trad.,* XII-XIV (edit. Dix, pp. 21-22): "The reader (αναγνώστης) is appointed by the bishop's handing to him the book. For he does not have hands laid upon him. A Virgin (παρθένος) does not have an imposition of hands, for personal choice (προαίρεσης) alone is that which makes a virgin. Hands shall not be laid on a subdeacon *φπο*-διάκονος), but he shall be named that he may serve the deacon. " Thus, also the regulation concerning the appointment of a widow for Church service: "When a widow (χήρα) is appointed, she is not ordained (χειροτονείν), but shall be chosen by name... But she shall not be ordained, because she does not offer the oblation (προσφορά) nor has she a' ministry ' (λειτουγία;. Ordination (χειροτονία) is for the clergy (κλήρος) on account of their * ministry' (λειτουργία). But the widow is appointed for prayer, and this is [a function] of all [Christians] ", *Apost. Trad.* XI, 1-5 (edit. Dix, pp. 20-21).

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MEANING OF MARRIAGE IN SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

Marriage as a permanent bond between man and woman was instituted by God himself. The author of Genesis (2:18) puts the divine decision in these words: “It is not good that a man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.” Monogamy, the union of one man and one woman, is implied by the singular form “helpmate[JJ] (not “helpmates”)· Elaborating further, Judaic thought regarded marriage not only as the normal state for a man, but as a divine ordinance. Rabbinic comments on Genesis 2:18, collected in the *Midrash* even after the advent of Christianity, indicate what the Jews had believed for hundreds of years previously.

Rabbi Jacob, for example, taught that “one who has no wife remains without good, without a helper, without joy, without blessing, and without atonement,” and he adduces Scriptural proofs for all these deficiencies. Likewise, Rabbi Hiyya ben Gamda said of the unmarried man: “He is not a whole man, for it is said, *And he blessed them, and he called their name ' man.* '“ Others, again, held that “the unmarried man diminishes the likeness (of God), *In the image of God he made the man, and thereafter, do ye increase and multiply.*”[1]

Indeed, the basic aim of marriage among the Jews was not romance, love, or companionship, but multiplication of the species, in accordance with Genesis (1:27 ff.): “God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them. God blessed them, saying to them, ' Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it.' * Barrenness was a curse, prolific fertility a blessing. Because he obeyed him, God promised Abraham vast hosts of descendants: “I will shower blessings on you,

[1] Cf. G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era,* Vol. II (New York, 1971 edit.), p. 119; also *Yebamot* 62b and 63a; *Tos. Yebamot* 8, end; *Yebamot* 63b, end; W. Bacher, *Die Agada der Tannaiten,* Vol. I, *Von Hillel bis Akiba. Von 30 vor bis 135 nach der gew. Zeitrechnung* (1884, Strassburg, 2nd edit., 1903), 408.

I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of their enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience” (Gn 22:17 ff·)·

Procreation and offspring, therefore, were choice blessings and marriage—monogamous or polygamous—was the normal means by which to achieve this end. Even concubinage was sometimes tolerated to secure the continuation of the race (Gn 16:1-3). Basic to the same purpose was the ideal that a man should marry young, at about eighteen; a girl might be betrothed while still a minor, that is, under twelve years and a day.[2] One of the duties of a father was to provide a wife for his son and a husband for his daughter,[3] and this early enough for them to produce huge families. With nearly everything in marriage subordinated to the producing of offspring, conjugal love appeared as an ideal, never as a religious norm or requirement.

In the New Dispensation, the meaning of marriage was purified, elevated, and filled out. Christ restored marriage to its original unity and indissolubility. Pointing to its divine institution, he answered the Pharisees' query about divorce: “Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female, and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So, then, what God has united, man must not divide” (Mt 19:3 ff.). His disciples were so impressed by the unhappy position in which a man might find himself that they felt it would be safer not to marry at all. But Jesus did not change his stand. On the contrary, he insisted: “The man who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another, she is guilty of adultery too” (Mk 10:11-12).[4]

[2] Betrothal was a formal act by which the woman became legally the man's wife. A proverb had it: “When a daughter is adult, free your slave and give him to her “ (rather than let her remain unmarried) *Pesachim* 113a.

[3] *M. Kiddushin 2, 1.*

[4] The exception adduced in Ait 5:32 seems to refer not to the marriage bond, but only to a separation from bed and board; for in the same passage Jesus declares, “ anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery “—which could not be if the bond of marriage were entirely loosed in cases of adultery.

Jesus' uncompromising assertion of the indissolubility of marriage, running counter to the Jewish legality of divorce (Dt 24:1), goes beyond utilitarian interpretations.[5] It presupposes the union between husband and wife as an end in itself, a union which cannot be broken by such concerns as "posterity," which on the one hand used to justify concubinage and, on the other, divorce on account of barrenness (one of the main causes for divorce among the Jews) or because of any other impropriety, utilitarian or other.

Pagan sentiment and law, while condoning fornication, were exceedingly lax in permitting divorce.[6] Paul applies the same unexceptional indissolubility of Christian marriage to pagan society when he writes to the Corinthians: "For the married I have something to say, and this is not from me but from the Lord: a wife must not leave her husband—of if she does leave him, she must either remain unmarried or else make it up with her husband—nor must a husband send his wife away" (1 Cor 7:10f.).[7] He refers the indissolubility of Christian marriage specifically to Christ's teaching, not to his own (" this is not from me but from the Lord").

Christian marriage, like any other, naturally includes the primary goal of producing offspring, but it is more than that, much more. There is not a single New Testament passage regarding marriage which indicates offspring as the main objective or justification of marriage. It is true, Paul says the wife "will be saved by child-bearing, "but he immediately adds, "provided she live a modest life and is constant in faith and love and holiness" (1 Tm 2:15).

Paul differs radically from Rabbinic thought in his encouragement of celibacy: "There is something I want to add for the sake of

[5] The first-century schools of Shammai and of Hillel differed about the legitimate grounds for divorce permitted under the law. The former admitted only the discovery of unchastity; the later admitted less serious faults down to burning a husband's food. On this whole question, see H. Strack - P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrash,* Vol. I *Das Evangelium nach Matthaus* (Munich, 1922), on Mt. 5:32.

[6] Cf. K. F. Hermann - K. B. Stark, *Lehrbuch der griechischen privatalterthumer* (Freiburg i. B. and Tubingen, 1882), 30, 15, 17.

[7] In a pagan marriage, after the conversion of one of the partners, the case is different: "However, if the unbelieving partner does not consent, they may separatej in these circumstances the [Christian] brother or sister is not tied... " (1 Co 7:15). Later, this became known as " the Pauline privilege. "

widows and those who are not married: it is a good thing for them to stay as they are, like me, but if they cannot control the sexual urges, they should get married, since it is better to be married than to be tortured [i.e., to burn with passion and the torturing struggle to resist it]" (1 Cor 7:8 f.). And, again, " A wife is tied as long as her husband is alive. But if the husband dies, she is free to marry anybody she likes, only it must be in the Lord [i.e., she must marry a Christian]. She would be happier, in my opinion, if she stayed as she is... " (1 Cor 7:25).[8] Later, perhaps made wise by experience, Paul thinks young widows should remarry: "I think it is best for young widows to marry again and have children and a home to look after, and not to give the enemy any chance to raise scandal about them; there are already some who have left us to follow Satan" (1 Tm 5:14). His encouragement of celibacy, of course, stemmed from his belief that the unmarried could devote themselves entirely to the affairs of the Lord (cf. 1 Cor 7:32 ff.).

Paul is closer to Rabbinic teaching when he gives a special reason why most should marry: as a virtuous antidote for concupiscence. At the same time, he counters any false doctrine which would brand marriage and marital sex as sinful (the Essenes and evidently some Corinthians held this view): "Yes, it is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman, but since sex is always a danger, let each man have his own wife and each woman her own husband. The husband must give his wife what she has the right to expect, and so too the wife to the husband. The wife has no rights over her own body; it is the husband who has them. In the same way, the husband has no rights over his body; the wife has them. Do not refuse each other-except by mutual consent, and then only for an agreed time, to leave yourselves free for prayer; then come together again in case Satan should take advantage of your weakness to tempt you. This is a suggestion, not a rule " (1 Cor 7:2 ff.).

Again, monogamy is the only kind of marriage allowed in the New Dispensation (" let each man have his own wife and each woman her own husband"). Throughout the passage, there is a careful balancing of the terms relating to man and wife, bringing out the

[8] Cf. also Rm 7:2 ff.

equality of Christian law. In Christian marriage, the wife is as much the mistress of his person as the husband is the master of hers; thus, the dictum corrects the one-sidedness of common sentiment and of the public law then prevailing both among the Greeks and among the Jews. Within the bonds of wedlock, marital "due" should be yielded by each for the satisfaction and according to the rights of the other—and they are equal rights—a superb defense of marital sex against the rigorists.

Christian marriage, however, is more than a mere restoration of unity and indissolubility of marital bonds to their original state. Its fullness is revealed for the first time in the beautiful Scriptural text, a classic by any standards, by Paul when he writes to the Ephesians:

" Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body—and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church. To sum up: you too, each one of you, must love his wife as he loves himself; and let every wife respect her husband" (Ep 5:22 if.).

For both pagans and Jews, marriage had a religious meaning since they connected it with religious rites, calling it a mystery, a sacred ceremony with deep, hidden significance. To the Jews, it represented the relationship between Yahweh and his people; among the Greeks, it was honored as a liturgical drama commemorating the marriage of the gods of earth and heaven, of Zeus and Hera. But

the mystery of Christian marriage revealed in Paul is much greater than anyone had thought.

First of all, Paul draws a parallel between the human marriage union and the union of Christ-God with the Church. These two mysteries shed light on each other. Christ's union with the Church, as intimate as the relation between head and body, is supernatural and life-giving. The Church, as a body, takes concrete form by being composed of individual members. Through baptism, a person not only becomes a member of the body, the Church, but also receives the life of God himself (sanctifying grace). As long as he is part of the body, the Church, the life of God pulses and grows within him, making him progressively holier, more "like God." All this is done through Christ, the head, who "saves" the whole body. In his total love for that body, Christ sacrificed himself to make it holy, glorious, and faultless. He still feeds it and looks after it because it is his body—and we are its living parts.

By marriage, two individual Christians become joined to each other to form one flesh, one body, with the husband as the head. The wife should regard her husband as the Lord, submitting herself to him as the Church does to Christ. But in his position as head of the wife, the husband should treat her as his own body—not with neglect, despotism, or hatred, but with self-sacrificing love, feeding her, providing for her, and looking after her, just as Christ does with his Church, his body. Since Christian marriage solemnly, mysteriously, signifies the union of Christ with the Church and all its implications, the implications of one apply to the other. The union of Christ and the Church is a supernatural one, imparting grace, holiness and salvation. The reality behind the Christian marriage union must also be supernatural, imparting grace and salvation to its members, the couple. Both unions derive from God and are productive of grace. In both, the loving, feeding, and salvation of the members are accomplished through the respective bonds, providing no obstacles are interposed by the individual member. The grace is there, but it has to be applied by the members if the effects and, indeed, salvation are to follow. Paul, it is true, does not speak of Christian marriage as a "sacrament" in an explicit or immediately apparent fashion, but he does so in its implications.

This was understood by the Fathers and early writers of the Church. Like Paul, they, too, wrote about Christian marriage as a sacrament, not in the technical, theological terminology of later times, but in substance as something conveying divine grace and presupposing it.

Tertullian, for example, wrote about the influence of divine grace on a Christian marriage in these words: "If, then, a marriage of this kind [contracted *before* conversion] stands ratified before God, why should not the marriage [contracted *after* conversion] also go prosperously forward, so as not to be thus harassed by pressures, needs, obstacles, and contaminations, since it enjoys the protection of divine grace?" * If grace is given in Christian marriage, such a marriage must be a * sacrament[M] in the later, technical sense. Only by understanding it this way can we rightly interpret what Tertullian says later: "How can we describe the happiness of those marriages which the Church cements, the oblation [the Eucharistic sacrifice] confirms, the benediction signs and seals, the angels publish [in heaven] and the Father holds as ratified? "[10]

Grace is also attributed to Christian marriage by Origen when he says, " Since God is the author of the [matrimonial] union, it is for this reason that grace belongs to those who have been joined together by God." [11] Likewise, Ambrose of Milan writes to Pope Sir-icius, "We also do not deny that marriage was sanctified by Christ."[12] He explains:" We know that God is the head and protector who does not permit that another's marriage-bed be defiled; and further, that a person guilty of such a crime sins against God, whose command he contravenes and whose bond of grace he loosens. Therefore, since he has sinned against God, he now loses his participation in the heavenly sacrament."[13] Some argue that the words "participation in the heavenly sacrament" referred to Holy Communion from which the adulterer was barred by his sin. It seems that Ambrose was referring to marriage itself. Siricius also writes

[9] Tertullian, *Ad uxor.,* II, 7, PL 1, 1413 A.
[10] *Ibid.,* 9, PL 1, 1415 A-1416 A.
[11] Origen, *Comment, in Matth.,* 14, n. 16, PG 13, 1230 A.
[12] Ambrose, *Ep. 42,* 3, PL 16, 1172 C; cf. *Ep. 19, ad Vigil,* 7, PL 16, 1026 AB.
[13] Ambrose, *De Abraham,* I, 7> PL 14, 465 A.

of the violation of the marriage benediction as a sacrilege, as we would of the desecration of any sacrament: "That benediction, which the priest adds to the nuptial veiling, if it is violated by any transgression, brings about as great a sacrilege as any among the faithful." [14]

Of all the ancients, perhaps Augustine (A.D. 354-430) is the clearest and most explicit in asserting that Christian marriage is a sacrament: "Among all people and all men, the good that is secured by marriage consists in the offspring and in the chastity of married fidelity; but, in the case of God's people [the Christians], it consists moreover in the holiness of a sacrament, by reason of which it is forbidden, even after a separation has taken place, to marry another as long as the first partner lives...just as priests are ordained to draw together a Christian community, and even though no such community be formed, the sacrament of Orders still abides in those ordained; or just as the sacrament of the Lord, once it is conferred, abides even in one who is dismissed from his office on account of guilt, though in such a one it abides unto judgment."[15] Here, Augustine places Christian marriage (which he says consists in the holiness of a sacrament) in the same category as Holy Orders, that is, in the class of sacraments in the strict sense. In another work, he places Christian marriage in the same category as baptism: "Undoubtedly, it belongs to the essence of this sacrament that, when man and wife are once united by marriage, this bond remains indissoluble throughout their lives. As long as both live, there remains a something attached to the marriage, which neither can remove; in such cases, indeed, it remains for the aggravation of guilt in their crime, not for the strengthening of the union. Just as the soul of an apostate, which was once similarly wedded unto Christ and now separates itself from him, does not, in spite of its loss of faith, lose the sacrament of faith, which it has received in the waters of regeneration." [16]

It would be anticlimactic to cite the less explicit testimony of Innocent 1,[17] Cyril of Alexandria,[18] and others.

[14] Siricius, *Ep. 1, ad Himer.,* 4, PL 13, 1136 B-1137 A-
[15] Augustine, *De bono conjugii,* 24, PL 40, 394.
[16] Augustine, *De nuptiis et concupiscentia,* I, 10, PL 44, 420.
[17] Innocent I, *Ep. 36,* PL 20, 602 B.
[18] Cyril of Alexandria, *In Io.,* II, 1, 2, PG 73, 224-225.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE ANCIENT MARRIAGE RITES

Baptism is an absolute requirement for both the union of Christ with his Church and the Christian marriage-union. Baptism is what makes the difference between a marriage in the order of nature, which is no sacrament—only a solemn contract—and the marriage between two Christians which is raised to sacramental efficacy, like the union of Christ with the Church. A marriage between Christians is necessarily a sacrament, while a marriage between non-Christians is not a sacrament, though both may be celebrated with identical rites.

Jewish converts probably used the Judaic rites, while the gentiles adopted the ceremonial of their world, modified to remove any trace of pagan worship. The proportion of gentile converts increased in the Christian communities of the Greco-Roman world, to the point that many Christian communities had no Jewish converts at all. The Jewish ceremonial disappeared. This explains the absence of any Jewish features in later Christian marriage rituals.

As a rule, the Christians did not set aside public law: the apologists were clear about this. Thus, in defending Christians against the vague accusations leveled by the pagans, Athenagoras for one states that a Christian recognized as wife only such a one as he had married in accordance with enacted laws.[1] The *Epistle to Diognetus* makes it clear that Christians living in Greek and barbarian communities adhered to the legal institutions of their neighbors in most if not all matters of daily life, including marriage.[2] The Christians readily accepted the Roman concept of marriage as a contract, but they knew, on the basis of Scripture (Ep 5:22 if.), that for them, as members of the body of Christ, a new reality was attached to *their* marriages which was productive of grace, and made such marriages different from those of the Jews and Romans. This new reality did not have to be manifested in any new or different ritual. If the

[1] Athenagoras, *Leg. pro Christianis,* 33, PG 6, 965 A.

[2] *Ep. ad Diog.,* 5, PG 2, 1173 BC.

parties were Christian, theirs was a Christian marriage, a contract blessed by God with grace, holiness and salvation.

Hence, the marriage ritual adopted by the Church was purely Greco-Roman. The immense extension of Roman citizenship in the third century resulted in an almost uniform Christian marriage ceremonial. Early evidence is scanty, but it does fit in with what is known of ancient Greco-Roman nuptials, and with the full Christian ceremonial as indicated in later sources.

When Pope Nicholas I describes the Christian marriage ceremonies in the ninth century, he says that the " Roman Church had iadopted them from ancient times."[3] He was right: while the prayers were Christian, the order of the ceremonies was exactly that of the solemn Roman nuptials, the *confarreatio.* [4] There was a twofold ceremony: the betrothal *(sponsalid)* and the actual wedding. This duality survives in Eastern Churches, except in the Chaldean.

The Christian betrothal consisted of a solemn promise of future marriage, in which the *arrhae,* or earnest-money (or property) was settled. Its symbol was a ring placed by the bridegroom on the bride's "faith finger." The provisions of the dowry were put in writing. This is exactly what the betrothal entailed among the ancient Romans and Greeks.

For the first seven or eight centuries, the Christian betrothal took place at home, and probably without the assistance of a priest. The only requirement seems to have been that the betrothed were to notify the pastor-bishop. As early as A.D. 96, Ignatius of Antioch insists: "Those who get married must unite with the knowledge of the bishop, so that the marriage be according to the Lord and not merely according to human desire." [5] This was necessary probably

[3] Nicholas I, *Responsa ad Bulgaros* (I. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio,* Vol. XV, 403).

[4] Two other kinds of marriage were recognized by Roman law: *usus,* when the woman lived for a year in her husband's house without absenting herself from him for three nights, and *coemptio* or symbolic sale, when, in presence of five witnesses and a *libripens* (holder of the balance), the bridegroom struck the balance with a bronze coin, which he handed to the father or guardian of the bride, asking her whether she would be his wife and she, in turn, asking him whether he would be her husband.

[5] Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Polycarp.,* 5, 2, PG 5, 868 A.

to forestall invalid marriages, e.g., of the divorced. If the bishop-pastor detected no irregularity, the marriage could proceed "according to the Lord."

It is difficult to determine the time when the betrothal became part of the Church's ritual. It probably first began in Syria, where emphasis on betrothal is found earlier than anywhere else. The importance attached to matrimonial legislation by the Isaurian emperors (A.D. 717-820) helped spread the blessing of betrothal throughout the Byzantine empire, until it became an established custom during the ninth or tenth century. Events seemed to have kept pace in the Western Church, too, since a ring was blessed in the marriage of Judith of France to the English King Ethelwulf, the father of Alfred the Great, in A.D. 856.[6]

The present betrothal ceremony in the Byzantine Church begins at the narthex of the church, where the priest receives and blesses the bridal couple,[7] gives them lighted candles,[8] and leads them into the church itself. In some localities the *Great Ektene* (litany) is said with special petitions for the engaged.[9] A prayer, already found in the eighth or ninth century but undoubtedly much older, follows: "Everlasting God, you gather together what is scattered and have made the bond of love unbreakable; you blessed Isaac and Rebecca and appointed them heirs of your promise. Bless likewise these your servants and lead them in the way of holy living, for you are a merciful God and the lover of mankind..." [10] After blessing the couple and bidding them to bow their heads, the priest recites another prayer: "Lord, our God, you have chosen that unstained virgin, the Church, to be your bride. Bless this betrothal: unite and keep your servants in peace and in concord..." [11]

The presentation of the rings follows. First, the priest blesses

[6] For the whole ritual, see *Monumenta Germanicae historica* (Berlin, 1826), 1,450.

[7] 'Thus, already in nth century *Cod. Bessarionis (Grotta-ferrata,* Γ.β.I.)» cf. Goar, *Euchologion* (Graz reprint, i960), p. 312.

[8] The lighted tapers symbolize purity of their lives, which shines with the light of virtue (Jn 3:20 f.).

[9] This *ektene* is found in the 1 ith century *Cod. Bessarionis* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 312).

[10] Cf. *Cod. Barberini,* III, 55 (77), now *Vat. gr.* 336 (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 313).

[11] This prayer is also found in the 8th-Qth century *Cod. Barberini* (Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 313).

the engaged pair with the rings, making the sign of the cross with the bride's ring over the groom, and with that of the groom over the bride. As he does this over the groom, he says: "The servant of God, N..., is betrothed to the handmaid of God N..., in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." The same prayer is repeated over the bride (with "servant" and "handmaid" interchanged). After repeating these words three times to each of them, the priest places the rings in their right hands. The couple, then, exchange the rings. This ritual dates back at least to the tenth century, but, again, is probably much older."

In Pope Nicholas I's description, the wedding ceremony is performed in church in the presence of a priest. Three main features stand out: the oblation, or Eucharistic sacrifice, in which the espoused take part; the solemn blessing pronounced while the nuptial veil is held over the couple; and the crowning of the married pair with a wedding garland. The eighth or ninth century *Codex Barberini* also points to the nuptials in the Greek Church taking place during the Eucharistic Liturgy: these consisted of short petitions for the couple inserted into *the ektene* (or litany), the crowning accompanied by a prayer, the joining of the couple's right hands by the priest as he says another prayer, and the drinking of a common cup.[13]

In the ancient Roman *confarreatio,* the espoused assisted at a sacrifice and partook of the *pants farreus,* prepared and consecrated for the purpose. In the Roman ceremony, a cake of spelt was made in honor of Jupiter in the presence of the *pontifex andflamen Dialis,* and of ten witnesses. The bride's hair was arranged in six locks *(crines).* She wore a garland of flowers and her head was covered with a flame-colored veil. The groom also wore a garland. A victim was sacrificed, the auspices taken, and the marriage contract was completed. A married woman then led the bride and groom together; they took each other's hands, clasped them, and said a prayer

[12] *Cod. Bessarionis* prescribes an iron ring for the husband; so does Simeon of Thessalonika (PG 155, 507 A), who says it indicates the husband's courage. Present rubrics prescribe a gold ring for the groom (to typify his authority) and a silver one for the bride (to signify her Scriptural subjection to her husband); however, in modern practice both use gold rings.

[13] In Goar, *op. cit.,* p. 321.

to the god of marriage; then, the newly-weds offered a sacrifice—generally, on one of the public altars. The Greeks held similar nuptials, except that the prayers and sacrifices were especially offered to Hera and to other deities of marriage. Some minor details differed from the Roman nuptials.

The Christians substituted prayers of their own and the Euchar-istic sacrifice. Thus, by Tertullian's time (c. A.D. 150-230), Christian marriage was "confirmed by the oblation," the Eucharistic sacrifice, and "signed and sealed by a blessing."[14] Tertullian also mentions the nuptial veil and the joining of hands.[15] At Milan, Ambrose speaks of the "sacerdotal veil and benediction."[16] The *Statuta Antigua Ecclesiae* has the pair presented by the parents or *paranymphi* to be blessed by the priest.[17] This is similar to the ancient Roman custom of having a married woman lead the bride and groom, and to the Greek practice in Athens whereby the bride was led to the Acropolis by her parents into the temple of Athene, whose blessing they beseeched with an offering of sacrifice.

In the last half of the fourth century, bishops were being invited to carry out some of the nuptial observances traditionally reserved to the father. Gregory of Nazianzus and John Chrysostom, for example, write that in Cappadocia, Antioch, and Constantinople, bishops and priests were often asked to impose the στέφανος νυμφικός, the wedding garland of natural flowers. Since the use of garlands had been closely associated with pagan beliefs and practices, bishops hesitated at first to make use of them, Tertullian stigmatizing the practice as totally pagan and writing a whole book about it.[18] Clement of Alexandria also discourages it, saying: "We must consider that the woman's crown is her husband, and the husband's crown is marriage itself, while the flowers of marriage are the children of both, which the divine husbandman plucks from meadows of flesh. "Children's children are the crown of old men."[19] At pagan

[14] Tertullian, *Ad uxor,* II, 9, PL 1, 1415 A-1416 A.
[15] Tertullian, *De veland. virgin.,* 11, PL 2, 955 AB.
[16] Ambrose, *Ep. 19, ad Vigil.,* 7, PL 16, 1026 B.
[17] Cf. PL 56, 556 C-557 A.
[18] Tertullian, *De Corona,* especially chaps. VII, XII, and XIII, PL 2, 104 A-107 A, 114 A-115 A, 115 B-117 B.
[19] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedag.,* II, 8, PG 8, 480 B.

marriages, the garlanding of the spouses was meant to ward off harmful spirits. The practice persisted in spite of its superstitious background: it added a touch of beauty to the festal garb of the couple. Finally, Chrysostom did the only thing which could be done without hurting sensibilities: he gave it Christian meaning, an ascetical significance: "The garland that is put on the heads of the bride and groom is a token of their victory: in that they have not succumbed to the lure of pleasure, they come undefeated to the haven of marriage. Why should a slave to self-indulgence who has given himself to harlots wear a crown? He has been defeated."[20]

The garlanding as part of the marriage liturgy in Armenia was know when Narses I the Great was catholicos (c. A.D. 364-373). Since the Armenian Church received so many of its liturgical observances from the Cappadocian Church, the liturgical garlanding of the couple was probably practiced in Cappadocia before the days of Chrysostom. Chrysostom, however, by his reinterpretation, lent it ritual respectibility. According to Gregory of Nazianzus, the couple was blessed by a bishop or presbyter while they joined hands.[21] Chrysostom was also familiar with the prayers the priest said at the bride's home on the eve of the wedding—a pious custom he often recommended, but never imposed.[22] Every Christian couple went through the formalities of civil registration which gave the marriage validity in secular society.

One of the first complete texts of the prayer accompanying the garlanding comes from Theodore the Studite (f 826). It was read "before the whole people" at the Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy, either by the bishop or by the priest: "O Master, stretch down thy hand from thy holy dwelling place and unite these, thy servant and thy handmaid. And give to those whom thou unitest harmony of minds; crown them into one flesh; make their marriage honorable; keep their bed undefiled; deign to make their common life blameless."[23]

The earliest *Codices* (the eighth or ninth century *Barberini* III, 55, now *Vat. gr.* 336, and the eleventh century *Barberini* 88, now 329)

[20] Chrysostom, *Homil. 9 in I Tim.,* 2, PG 62, 546.
[21] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ep. 193,* PG 37, 316 C.
[22] Chrysostom, *Homil. 48 in Genes.,* 6 ad fin., PG 54, 443.
[83] Theodore the Studite, *Ep. 1,* 22, PG 99, 973 CD.

provide two forms of Byzantine nuptials which apparently could be woven into the Eucharistic Liturgy, or be used as independent services.

Cod. 336

The deacon says: †[Ektene]. In peace, let us pray to the Lord. For peace from on high, etc. That this marriage be blessed as was that in Cana of Galilee, [let us pray to the Lord]. For the marriage-union and harmony of our brethren N..., and N..., and for their well-being, [let us pray to the Lord]. * That their crowns be blessed by the virtue, advent and operation of the Holy Spirit, [let us pray to the Lord].

Cod. 329 *The priest begins by incensing and saying:*

†[24] Blessed is the kingdom of the Father, etc. [Ektene]. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For peace from on high, etc. *[Here the Ektene of Peace follows through without any insertions of petitions for the bride and groom].*

† *The Prokeimenon, third tone:* * The Lord is my illumination.

† *Versicle :* * The Lord is my protector.

† *The Epistle to the Ephesians:* Brethren: As Christ is the head... *To the end.*

† Alleluia. * *Versicle :* Your wife shall be as a vine.

† *The Gospel from John.* At that time, there was a marriage... *To the end.* [John 2:1-11].

[24] Crosses (f) indicate those prayers found in present-day Byzantine nuptials, though not necessarily in the same order; asterisks (*) indicate those parts which differ.

Cod. 336

Cod. 329

* Wisdom, f Let us all say with our whole soul... Lord almighty... For this holy house... For those now being joined together in the covenant of marriage...

For their matrimonial union, harmony, and well-being... That they be made happy with the sight of sons and daughters...

That they be granted all the petitions that are for their welfare...

That we be delivered... Have mercy on us, O God...

Prayer

Prayer

† Holy God who hast formed man out of the dust and from his rib didst fashion a woman and didst join her to him as a helpmate, since it seemed good to thy majesty that man be not alone upon the earth: do thou thyself, O Lord, stretch down thy hand from thy holy dwelling place and join together thy servant N... and thy handmaid N..., for it is by thee that a husband is united to his wife. Unite them in a harmony of minds, crown them into one flesh; grant them the fruit of the womb, the procreation of children. For thine is the majesty, and thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

† *Then the priest imposes the garlands on each of them,*

† *The priest takes the garlands and crowns them, while he says:* The servant of God N... is being crowned with the garland of incorruption, in the name of the Father, etc.

Cod. 336 † *and after taking their right hands, he joins them one to another•, while saying:* †Peace be to all. † *And the deacon says :* [Bow down] your heads.

The priest prays: † O Lord our God, who in thy saving providence by thy presence in Cana of Galilee, didst deign to show that marriage is honorable, do thou thyself now also preserve in peace and harmony thy servants N... and N..., whom it hath pleased thee to unite to each other. Make their marriage honorable; keep their bed blameless; grant that they live together without stain, while keeping thy commandments with a pure heart, enable them to reach a ripe old age. For thou art our God, the God of salvation and mercy, and we give glory to thee, together with thy eternal Father, and with thy all-holy, good, and life-giving Spirit, now and always and for ever and ever.

Cod. 329 f *And the bride is crowned in the same way.*
† *And then the priest joins the right hand of the groom with the right hand of the bride.*
* *Deacon:* Wisdom.
† *The cantor in a solemn tone:* Thou hast crowned them with glory and honor.
†*Versicle :* Thou hast placed upon the head...
† *Deacon :* Let us pray to the Lord.
The priest says this prayer:
* Crown them with thy grace, unite them in temperance and honesty; bless them with a good old age and an unshaken faith; grant them length of days; bes tow on them all favors, fear and consideration of thee; give them the fruit of the womb; make them joyful with the sight of sons and daughters. Grant that, glorying in thee, they may reiterate the language of the apostles. Hear us, O Lord our God, who thyself hast gone to Cana of Galilee and hast celebra ted the marriage there and, after performing miracles with thy presence and after changing the water into wine, thou hast bles sed [the marriage there], as Lord of all, bless the marriage of thy servant N..., and thy hand-

Cod. 336

Cod. 329

maid N..., as thou hast blessed Abraham and Sarah; bless them as thou hast blessed Isaac and Rebecca; bless them as thou hast blessed Jacob and Rachel. Crown them as thou hast Joseph and Aseneth, Moses and Se-phora. May thy eyes be attentive upon them and thy ears hear the voice of their supplication. Fulfil in them what has been said through the Prophets: thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine in the interior of your house; your children as olive plants around your table; behold, thus is a man blessed who fears the Lord, for thine is the power, etc.

Prayer of the Common Cup *Prayer of the Cup*

† O God who hast created all things by thy might, who hast established the universe and hast beautified the crown of all thy creatures, bless with thy spiritual blessing these thy servants who have just been united by matrimonial bonds. For blessed is thy name and glorified is thy kingdom, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and always, and for ever and ever.

† *And he divides it between them ; first to the man₃ then to the woman. Psalm Solemn tone.*
† Glory be to thee, our God, glory be to thee.
† *Versicle:* Blessed are all who fear the Lord.

Cod. 336	*Cod.* 329
	The priest makes this prayer: 0 Lord our God, who in thy saving providence, etc. [the same prayer as in Ms. St. Mark, a prayer of inclination]."

Thus, by the ninth century, a complete Church ritual for marriage had evolved in the East[26]—and in the West, as Pope Nicholas I testifies in his canonical letter. [27] With minor variations and embellishments, this ritual is still in use in the Eastern Churches. Yet, in both Eastern and Western Churches, these liturgical solemnities were not regarded as necessary for a valid marriage. In his "capitularies," Charlemagne († 814) exerted his imperial authority by enjoining that marriages should not be celebrated without being blessed by a priest.[28] He even declared that without such a blessing a marriage should not be regarded as valid, yet the Holy See did not subscribe to this view, as is evident from later pronouncements. By the end of the ninth century, the Greek Church held that omitting the blessing and crowning was sinful. But Pope Nicholas I, in his canonical letter to the Bulgars (A.D. 866), protests against such an opinion, excusing those for whom this was too costly, and definitely affirming the validity of marriage by mutual consent.[29] No ceremony, he adds, can make a marriage good when that consent is lacking. He was merely confirming ancient Roman law: *nuptias non concubitus, sed consensus fuit.* The *Epanagoge,* a well-known legal collection, the author of which is probably Patriarch Photius of

[25] Text of both *Codices* found in Goar, *op. cit.,* pp. 321-322.

[26] Only minor variations and embellishments have been added since in the Byzantine Church. The most notable additions are: the singing of Psalm 127 (also in the Catholic Byzantine ritual, the explicit expression of mutual consent just before the *Great Ektene);* the insertion of one or two lengthy prayers immediately after that *ektene* (in the Catholic ritual, explicit marriage vows are said by the couple while laying their joined hands on the Gospel Book); the insertion of an *ektene* and the Lord's Prayer; finally, the addition of a prayer to be said with bowed head just before the final, formal dismissal. These insertions also resulted in a slight rearrangement of order.

[27] Nicholas I, *Responsa ad Bulgaros* (I. D. Mansi, *op. cit.,* Vol. XV, 403).

[28] Cf. Beauchet, Nouvelle revue de droit francais, " VI, 381-383.

[29] Nicholas I, *Responsa ad Bulgaros* (Mansi, *op. cit.,* Vol. XV, 403).

Constantinople (A.D. 857-867, 877-886), requires no solemnity for a valid marriage. It defines marriage as an alliance between husband and wife, and their union for their entire fife," and it gives a choice of three methods of performance: a blessing, a crowning, or an agreement.[30]

It was imperial authority, and not the Church, which required a church ceremony as a legal condition of validity for a marriage between free citizens. The eighty-ninth *novella* (new law") of Byzantine Emperor Leo VI, proclaimed A.D. 893, makes it clear: We now also order that marriages be confirmed with a sacred blessing, and if the couple will neglect that procedure, their cohabitation will not be considered as marriage at any time, and will not produce the legal effects of marriage.[55] Slaves, perhaps over half the Empire's population, were not affected. The discrepancy was resolved by Emperor Alexis I Comnenus (1081-1118) who made the liturgical rites a legal obligation also for slaves.[31]

The crowning and liturgical blessing came to be regarded as *′ constituting" the sacrament of marriage. Mutual consent seemed to have been sufficiently expressed by the betrothal rites, which now immediately preceded the nuptials. Theologians went along with the new law," so that a marriage with full consent but no solemn rites was considered null and void, and there was no sacrament. It is within the competence of the Church to determine the conditions of validity or licitness, and also to decide what makes the contract absolute or rescindable (e.g., no consummation). The development of Church law on marriage, however, is too vast a subject to be treated here. One conclusion remains: juridical requirements and conditions of validity imposed by the Church must be observed. Only when a valid marriage is concluded between baptised Christians does the sacrament of marriage come into being.

[30] *Epanagoge,* XVI, 1.

[31] Cf. A. Dain, *Les Nouvelles de Leon VI, le Sage* (Paris, 1944), pp. 294-297.

PART III

BYZANTINE SACRAMENTAL SYNTHESIS

CHAPTER XXIX

SYNTHESIS OF THE SEVEN SACRAMENTAL MYSTERIES

The seven sacramen«s were in use from the beginning of Christianity. Both the Western and Eastern Church hold the New Testament Scriptures as documentary evidence of their existence, supported by descriptive references to all of them in the writings of the Fathers. The Fathers, however, seem never to have stated expressly that there were exactly seven. Why was the work of synthesis left until later?

First, the early Christians did not speculate about the sacraments; they lived by them and through their marvelous powers. Their primary concern, like that of the Eastern Church today, was to prepare and to instructt the faithful as to how to receive them with as much spiritual benefit as possible.[1] The early Fathers wrote from a strictly practical pointl of view: trying to satisfy the actual needs of their neophytes and faiithful, they concentrated on the main sacraments, Baptism, Chriismation (Confirmation), the Eucharist and Ordination.[2] The others are treated only incidentally.[3]

There was no concern about the precise number of the sacraments because no one at the time ever denied any of them.[4] The zealous defenders of orthodoxy in the anti-Trinitarian and Christological controversies who did mot hesitate to shed their blood would surely

[1] Moreover, early writers! hiad their hands full trying to win over the pagans and, laterj opposing the pagan mifsteries.

[2] And their treatment is mostly devotional and ascetical rather than speculative and technical.

[3] Cf. J. Scheeben, *Die AUysterien des Christentums,* 3rd edit., (Freiburg, 1912), pp. 507 ff. for details.

[4] Cf. T. Gorsky, *Orthoibxae orientalis ecclesiae dogmata,* I (Moscow, 1851), p. 240 j perhaps a better wasp to put it would be that no heresy at this early date denied any of the sacraments, though there were heresies which denied certain aspects of some sacraments,i e.g.4 the Encratitae denied the matter of the Eucharist; the Montanists and Novatimais, the power to forgive certain sins; the Arians, the distinction of orders; the Manicheans, the goodness of matrimony. These also had doubts regarding the ninanister of Extreme Unction.

have sounded the alarm had anyone tried to deny any of the sacraments. Even the Nestorians and Monophysites, who broke with the Church in the fifth century, never questioned their number; to this day their liturgical books have kept the administration of the seven sacraments, and this they still practice.[5]

The greatest reason for a lack of synthesis, however, was probably secrecy, the *disciplina arcani.* All sacraments were included under the ban. Stricdy enforced during the patristic period, the ban forestalled free interchange of doctrinal speculation and development between the churches.[6] Letters were sent secretly—but they always dealt with practical" matters. Why risk disclosure on speculative ideas when there was no pressing need? Even in practical matters, the discipline was strict.[7] All copies of Cyril's *Catecheses,* for example, had a notice requesting the reader not to show it to catechumens or to other non-Christians, nor to allow copies to be made without a similar warning. Whether this caution proceeded from Cyril himself or some later editor is immaterial: the warning itself is clear:" You may lend these Catechetical Lectures for the Illumined, for reading to candidates for Baptism and to believers who are already baptized, but do not give them to all indiscriminately, neither to catechumens, nor to any other non-Christians, for you will answer

[5] Cf. I. A. Assemani, *Bibliotheca Orientalis Clementino-Vaticanae,* II, p. 5, and III, pp. 240 if.; also *Perpetuite de la Foi sur les sacrements,* III, 1. 8, c. 18 f., and V, 1. 1, c. 9. The Monophysite Armenians no longer seem to administer the Unction of the Sick (Extreme Unction) at all, or only very rarely, perhaps because of the difficulty of having seven priests to administer it as required by liturgical books. That they did administer it in the past is a proven, historical fact (cf. L. Petit, *Dictionnaire de Thiologie catholique* [Paris, 1909 ff.], I, 1954-58). Var-tanus, a 13th century Armenian, held that the burial service " was one of the seven sacraments (after fusing Penance with the Unction of the Sick). The Nestorian Ebed Jesu (d. 1318) seems to have denied the sacraments of Matrimony and the Unction of the Sick and replaced them with the Sign of the Cross and the Holy Ferment. The official position still held to the number seven, otherwise why the speculation?

[6] Because pagan philosophy was usually pure speculation without moralizing intent, there may also have been on the part of the early Christian writers a conscious effort to avoid giving the same impression about the Christian faith. The main thrust was not speculative, but moral.

[7] Theodoret lays down the general principle in these words: We speak about the Divine Mysteries in obscure terms because of the uninitiated, but when these have withdrawn, we teach the initiated plainly." *(Quaest. 15 in Num.,* PG 80, 368 C).

to the Lord. And if you make a copy, write this at the beginning, as in the sight of the Lord." [8]

If the discipline applied to instruction, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed,[9] how much more vigorously was it enforced regarding the sacraments! In the same way,Basil insists, the Apostles and Fathers who laid down laws for the Church from the beginning thus guarded the awesome dignity of the mysteries in secrecy and silence, for what is bruited abroad at random among the common folk is no mystery at all." [10]

Such insistence on "mystery" in the writings of early theologians also expresses the relationship between the "hidden" and the holy." The mystery of the Godhead is somehow manifested by maintaining the secrecy of the foremost cultic formulas and dogmatic creeds.

The restrictions of the Eucharistic mysteries are so well known that documentation is superfluous. Examples of other sacraments coming under the ban are also frequent. In regard to Baptism, for instance, we have the testimony of Cyril of Alexandria, Gregory of Nazianzus, and a number of others."[11] For Holy Orders, the Laodicean Council stipulates that Ordinations are not to be held in the presence of an audience";[12] and Chrysostom, in asking the faithful to pray for those to be ordained, explains: It is not lawful to reveal everything to those not yet initiated."[13] Basil lists the oil of Chrism "among the practices which come "from that unpublished and secret teaching which our fathers guarded in silence out of the reach of curious meddling and inquisitive questioning";[14] while Pope Innocent I (A.D. 402-417), in responding to the Bishop of

[8] The notice appears at the end of the *Procatechesis,* cf. PG 33, 366 CD.

[9] The very name for the Creed in the ancient Church was σύμβολον (something put together, a sign of recognition), and being kept secret from the pagans, it was indeed used as a password or countersign with which a traveling Christian proved his identity to some other Christian community. Christians were forbidden to write it down.

[10] Basil, *De Spir. s.,* 27, PG 32, 189 B.

[11] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat. 40, de bapt.,* 45, PG 36, 424 D-425 A; Basil, *De Spir. s.,* 27, PG 32, 188 BC.

[12] Council of Laodicea (A.D. 343-3 81), Can. 5, though there is controversy as to whether elections or ordinations were meant.

[13] Chrysostom, *Homil.* 17, in II Cor., 3, PG 61, 527 A.

[14] Basil, *De Spir. S.,* 27, PG 32, 188 B.

Gubbio, refuses to divulge the confirmation formula even to him, for "I cannot say the words lest I seem to make public more than is necessary for the case proposed for consideration." [15]

Such secrecy was hardly conducive to speculation on sacramental theology. The language had to be veiled even in dealing with practical matters. For example, Chrysostom writes to Pope Innocent I about the riot in Constantinople in A.D. 403, during which "the blood of Christ had been spilt upon the ground." Because he was reporting to the pope, he was freer in expressing himself, but Palladius, his biographer, in writing for a more general audience, describes the same incident by saying, "They overturned the symbols."[16]

If speculative theology of the sacraments was impossible, their nature and number would remain unclear. Defining a sacrament precisely was no easy matter since it entailed a double task: working out a generic definition and applying it to each of the seven symbols officially in use—each sacrament being a complete, independent unit with no connecting link, for instance, between the Eucharist and Penance, Ordination and Matrimony, etc.

Part of the difficulty stemmed from the various meanings of μυστήριον and "sacrament." Thus, Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite (c. A.D. 500) uses μυστήρια and other equivalent terms in both the restricted and broad senses. He designates as μυστήρια (εικόνες, σύμβολα , etc.) the sacred rites performed by a bishop, for example, including Baptism, Chrismation (Confirmation), the Eucharist and Sacred Orders,[17] and he uses the same word for the consecration of an altar and of holy chrism, for the rite of[et] consec-

[15] Pope Innocent I, *Epist.* 25, 3, PL 20, 555 A.

[16] Cf. Chrysostom, *Ad Inn.,* 1, 3, PG 52, 534; Palladius, *Dialog, de S. Joan. Chrysos., 9,* PG 47, 33.

[17] E.g., "The mysteries belonging to the hierarchy, "τα ιεραρχικά μυστήρια *{Eccles. hier.,* I, 1, PG 3, 372); "the perceptible images of heavenly things," τάς αίσθητάς εικόνας των ύπουρανίων *{Eccles. hier.,* I, 5, PG 3, 376 D); "the divine and sacred symbols, "τα θεία και ίερά σύμβολα *{Eccles. hier.,* II, ι, PG 3> 39[2] B)> "the mystic rites belonging to the hierarchy," τάς Ιεραρχικάς τελετάς *{Eccles. hier.,* Ill, 1, PG 3, 425 A); "the perceptibly holy images of intelligible things, "τά αισθητώς ίερά των νοητών άπεικονίσματα *{Eccles. hier.,* II, 3 S PG 3, 397 C); and a special designation for the Eucharist, "the ritual mysteries, ""the perfecting mysteries of God, " "the mystic rites of mystic rites, τα τελεστικά μυστήρια — τά Θεαρχικά καΐ τελειωτικά μυστήρια—τελετών τελετή *{Eccles. hier.,* Ill, I, PG 3, 424-425).

rating monks," as well as the burial rites, in which the dead are anointed with holy oil.[18]

At the beginning of the ninth century, Theodore, the well known *hegumenos* of the Studios monastery, still repeats the classification of Dionysius.[19] Although he does not mention the Unction of the Sick, Penance and Matrimony, their existence and use in the Byzantine Church of his day are well documented. He himself received the Unction of the Sick (Extreme Unction) before his death.[20] His own writings assert that the faithful of his time often made use of secret confession.[21] Marriage was regarded as no less a sacred mystery, since it had its own liturgical rites and prayers.[22]

In the West, the imprecision of sacramental theology was just as great. Yet, the Greek and Latin Churches agreed so perfectly in their belief on the sacraments that in the controversies initiated in A.D. 869, the fiery Photius never once accused the Latins of having abolished any of the traditional sacraments or of having introduced new ones. Nor did the Latins find any fault with the Greeks on this particular point. Nothing changed regarding the sacraments, even after the tragic separation of the two Churches in 1054. The Synod of Cyprus, for instance, held under Germanus Pessimandro at Paphos about the year 1260, affirmed that there were only seven sacraments and it enumerated them.[23] The same seven sacraments were

[18] Some readers of Dionysius the Ps.-Areopagite believe he was treating the "mysteries " or sacred rites in a different and personal way. He seems to consider them as means by which man can be elevated from an imperfect to a more perfect state. That may be the reason why he omitted those rites by which the faithful are returned to a state they had lost through either personal fault (Penance, Unction of the Sick) or original sin (Matrimony). For the same reason, he may have included the monastic habit and the funeral services. At one point, Dionysius assimilates the consecration of an altar and the consecration of holy chrism with the sacraments of the Eucharist and of Chrismation (Confirmation), showing that the two rites merely are necessary for the administration of the sacraments in question. A. Katansky *{Dogmatycheskoe uchenie 0 senty tserkovnykh tainstvakh v tvoreniakh drevnijshikh ottsev i pysatelei tserkvy do Origena vkljuchytelno* [St. Petersburg, 1877], PP· 405-415) illustrates beautifully how Dionysius treated the subject of the sacraments under a trinitarian aspect.

[19] *Epist. 1,* II, 165, PG 99, 1524.

[20] *Theodori Studitae Vita,* I, 67, PG 99, 325; also cf. *ibid.,* PG 99, 1845.

[21] *Epist. 1,* II, 162, PG 99, 1504-1516.

[22] Cf. J. Pargoire, *VEglise byzantine de 527 á 847* (Paris, 1905), p. 338.

[23] It enumerated them in this order: Matrimony, Holy Orders, Baptism, Chrismation, Communion (also called synaxis), Penance or Confession, and the Unction

contained in the *Confession of Faith* of Emperor Michael Paleologus, proposed first to Pope Clement IV in 1267, and then included in the pact made at the Council of Lyons (1274-1279) between the Greeks and the Latins.[24] The Patriarch of Constantinople, John Vecco, made the same profession to Pope John XXI in April of 1277, while noting traditional differences in the administration of some sacraments. For instance, the Unction of the Sick was administered by seven priests in the Byzantine Church (whence its name, τδ έπτα-παπαδον): Chrismation (το μυστήριον της βεβαιώσεως, or Confirmation) was administered either by bishops or priests, etc. [25]

The Greek Church still did not give much attention to denning the distinction between the sacraments and the sacramentals. Neither did the Latin Church until the twelfth century. In the West, St. Otto, bishop of Bambery (c. 1127) is credited by his biographer Herbord (f 1168) with drawing up a list of "the seven sacraments of the Church," and enumerating them.[26] A little later, Bishop Gregory of Bergamo (1133-1146) gives the same number.[27] About the year 1150, Roland, later Pope Alexander, does the same.[28] From then on in the Latin Church, it was rare that a writer would not clearly delineate the seven sacraments.[29]

In the Byzantine Church, the synthesis began somewhat later, probably independently from the West, since the East and West were

of the Sick (with oil), γάμος, τάξις Ιερά, βάπτισμα, χρίσμα δια μύρου, κοινωνία, δ και σύναξις λέγεται, μετάνοια ήτοι έξομολόγησις και χρίσις ελαίου. Cf. *Cod. Barb, graec. 300,* fol. 250.

[24] Cf. Denzinger-Bannwart, *Enchiridion,* n. 465; also A. Theiner and F. Miklo-sich, *Monumenta spectantia ad unionem Ecclesiarum graecae et latine* (Vienna, 1872), pp. 10, 17 f. Here Chrismation is called μυστήριον βεβαιώσεως and the Unction of the Sick, τ& έΟχατον χρίσμα..

[25] Theiner and Miklosich, *ibid.,* pp. 27 f. The Patriarch used the same names as had Michael Paleologus, except for Holy Orders which he called τό μυστήριον της ιερατικής χειροτονίας while Paleologus' reads ή ιερά τάξις.

[26] *Sermo ad Pomeranos,* PL 173, 1358.

[27] Cf. *Zeitschrift filr katholische Theologie,* III (1878), p. 800.

[28] H. M. Gietl, *Die Sentenzen Rolands, nachmals Papstes Alexander III., zum ersternal herausgegeben* (Freiburg, 1891), pp. 154 ff.

[29] E.g., the statutes of Bishop Richard Poore, A.D. 1217, and in *Statuta Edita 1222* of Archbishop Stephen Langton of Canterbury (cf. Mansi, *Concih,* XXII, 1173), in the decrees of the provincial councils of Oxford (1222), Clairvaux (1268), London (1272), and Cologne (1280), etc. One of the rare exceptions was Bernard of Clairvaux (t 1153) who seems to include the washing of the feet on Holy Thurs day among the sacraments *(Serm. in Coena Domini,* n. 4, PL 183, 271).

on less than cordial relations at the time.[30] The monk Job, circa 1270, still includes the reception of the monk's habit among the seven sacraments.[31] Others do not: Manuel Calecas,[32] Joseph Bryennios,[33] and especially Simeon of Thessalonika (t 1429) who writes an entire liturgico-dogmatic tract about it.[34] Simeon certainly had studied Job's work, for he follows his order in his own listing, but in place of the reception of the monastic habit, he has Penance.[35]

Nor did any discrepancy arise between the Byzantine and the Latin Churches regarding the sacraments at the Council of Florence (A.D. 1439).

There may have been individual exceptions among the theologians, [36] but the official position of the Byzantine Church always remained unchanged. Jeremias II, Patriarch of Constantinople,

[30] Orthodox writers reject any inference that the Byzantines borrowed the doctrine of seven sacraments from the Latins. Cf. A. Katansky, *op. cit.,* pp. 417, 421; N. Malinovsky, *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* IV (Serg. Posad, !9°9)> P· [2]3> note 1 j C. Dyobouniotes, Τα μυστήρια της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας έξ απόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1913)5 P· [22]> note ι.

[31] Cf. *Cod. 64 Supplementi graeci Paris.,* fol. 239; or M. Jugie, *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium, ab Ecclesia Catholica Dissidentium,* III (Paris, 1930), pp. 17 ff. Unlike Theodore of the Studios monastery, he divides this "mystery " into three grades. He joins Penance with the Unction of the Sick.

[32] Manuel Calecas, *De principiis fidei catholicae,* c. vi, PG 152, 597-610.

[33] Joseph Bryennios, *Sermo I De mundi consummation, Opera,* edit. E. Bulgaris, Vol. II, p. 198.

[34] Simeon of Thessalonika, *De Sacramentis,* PG 155, 175-696.

[35] De *Sacramentis,* PG 155, 197 A-503. Though Simeon shows how Christ himself inaugurated religious profession, he carefully distinguishes between the restricted and broad meanings given to the term "mysteries," i.e., between sacra ments and sacramentals such as the consecration of chrism, consecration of an altar, the dedication of a church, the anointing of a monarch, the burial service, etc. Such writers as Gabriel of Philadelphia, Meletius Syrigus, Coresius and Georgios Protosynkellos followed Simeon's lead.

[36] E.g., Joasaph of Ephesus (died probably in 1437) who lists a total of ten mysteries (sacraments): the seven traditional ones, and the consecration of a church, the burial rites, and the reception of the monastic habit (religious profes sion), cf. Joasaph, "Αποκρίσεις," qu. 47; in A. I. Almazov, *Kanonycheskie otvity Ioasapha Ephesskago. Zapiski imper. novorossijskago Universiteta* (Odessa, 1903), p. 190. In the 16th century: Damascene the Studite (t 1577) who obviously followed the monk Job's classification in listing the reception of the monastic habit (religious profession) with its three grades, marriage for the first time but not second or third marriages, cf. Θησαυρός, λόγος γ' εις τα άγια θεοφάνεια (Venice, [1]55°)> P· 435 Almazov's edition, *op. cit.,* p. 33 does not distinguish the three grades in the reception of the monastic habit*;* Metrophanes Kritopoulos who held that second and third marriages are tolerated by the Church; otherwise, he follows a peculiar, two-class listing all his own: the *necessary* mysteries (sacraments) of Baptism, the Eucharist and Penance and certain, other "homonym" rites of

made this very clear in 1573 when he firmly rejected the overtures of Martin Crusius and Jacob Andrea of the Tubingen theological faculty. Opposing the Lutheran innovations point by point, he affirmed the Orthodox belief in "neither more nor less "than seven sacraments."We solemnly affirm that the holy Fathers have handed down to us...seven divine sacraments, viz.: Baptism, Unction with Sacred Chrism, Holy Communion, Order, Matrimony, Penance, and the Oil of Final Unction ...neither more nor less.... And all these means of our salvation have been handed down to us by Christ himself, our Lord God, and his Apostles." [37]

When Cyril Lucar (Cyrillos Lucaris), who became Patriarch of Constantinople through personal intrigue, espoused a Calvinistic confession of faith, asserting but two sacraments, the Greek Church at once took alarm and exiled him (1634). He managed, through bribery, to have himself reinstated, but shortly afterwards was killed by the Janissaries of Sultan Murad. His teaching was condemned by the synod of Constantinople in 1638,[38] then by the synod of Jassy

Chrismation, Order of priests, first Marriage, and the Unction of the Sick, cf. *Confession of Metrophanes Kritopoulos,* chap. 5: "6 πρώτος γάμος "in I. Mihalcescu, Θησαυρός της ορθοδοξίας, *Die Bekenntnisse und die wichtigsten Glaubenszeugnisse der griechisch-orientalischen Kirche* (Leipsig, 1904), p. 214; in edit. Kimmel *Monu-mentafidei ecclesiae orientalis,* Vol. I (Jena, 1850), pp. 93, 150. Finally, the most recent example was that of the Hierom. Tarasij who seems to reject the septenary number of sacraments as arbitrary (cf. *Perelom v drevnerusskom bogoslovii,* Warsaw, 1927, pp. 181 ff.); he also excludes marriage from the list, (p. 184). Tarasij has hardly any supporters among Orthodox theologians, cf. N. Malinosky, *op. cit.,* p. 24, note 1.

On the other hand, there is no dearth of Orthodox theologians who hold that the septenary number of sacraments is a doctrine of faith: e.g. C. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου καθολικής Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907), p. 293; T. Gorsky, *Orthodoxae orientalis ecclesiae dogmata,* I (Moscow, 1851), p. 240; see also Makarij (Bulgakov), *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* II (St. Petersburg, [18]95)> P· 314; N. Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 21; P. Smirnov, *Izlozhenie khrystianskoi viry* (St. Petersburg, 1917), p. 231*;* M. jastrebov, *O tainstvakh* (TRUDY XLVIII, Kiev, 1907, II), p. 490; K. Neokosmos, Έγχειρίδιον τοϋ ορθοδόξου χριστιανού (Constantinople, 1888), p. 216; Archimandrite Firmilijan, *Dogmatychko bogoslovie,* II (Karlovci, 1900), p. 96; S. Calinescu, *Lectiuni de Teologiea dogmaticd* (Bucharest, 1896), p. 197, etc.

[37] A. Arnaud, *Perpetuiti de la Foi,* Vol. V (Paris, 1713), 1. i, c. 3.

When the Tubingen divines again appealed to Patriarch Jeremias in 1581, he bluntly told them to cease their fruitless efforts, cf. Schelstrate, *Acta Orient. Ecclesiae contra Luteri Haeresim,* (Rome, 1739), I, 151 ff., 202 ff., 246 ff.

[38] Cf. E. I. Kimmel, *Monumenta fidei ecclesiae orientalis,* Vol. I (Jena, 1850), p. 404; also Alzog-Babisch-Byrne, *Manual of Universal Church History,* Vol. Ill, 5th edit. (Cincinnati, 1899), pp. 465 if.

(Constantinople) in 1642, under Parthenius 1.[39] The latter synod adopted the "Orthodox Confession" drawn up by Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kiev,[40] which expressly reiterated Orthodox belief in the seven sacraments.[41] This important symbol of faith was officially accepted the following year and signed by the Patriarchs of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, as well as by numerous bishops. In 1672, the same doctrine was again approved by the synod of Jerusalem. [42]

In short, the constant practice of the Church, Eastern and Western, in every age and in every part of the earth, clearly demonstrates what the Church has believed and what it now believes.[43]

The authentic Byzantine tradition, never a legalistic one, holds that God chose seven chief ways, seven visible signs by which he pours grace into the soul of man, if man places no moral obstacle to that grace. These seven signs contain the grace which they signify, and they confer it through the performance of the rite. This can be seen from the formulas used in their administration: they are consec-ratory, not merely exhortatory. There is no magic in the notion of the "seven.*"* They do not exhaust the possibilities of the Holy Spirit's gifts.

Even today, Byzantine theologians are not concerned about numbers. What is important is the grace conveyed by the sacra-

[39] Cf. E. I. Kimmel, *op. cit.,* p. 414.

[40] Peter Mogila, Metropolitan of Kiev, is principally known for his *Orthodox Confession,* drawn up at his instance by Abbot Kosslowski, of Kiev. It was first approved at a provincial synod in 1640. Besides the numerous editions of the *Confession* in Russian, it has been edited in Latin and Greek by Panagiotes (Amster dam, 1662), by Hofmann (Leipzig, 1695) and by E. I. Kimmel, the edition we cite.

[41] I p. q. XCVIII, E. I. Kimmel, *op. cit.,* p. 170.

[42] Cf. E. I. Kimmel, *op. cit.,* p. 448, *Confessio Dosithei,* c. XV. "We believe that there are gospel sacraments in the Church and these are seven... no more and no less. *"*

[43] Modern Orthodox theologians appeal to this practical truth in the settling of any theoretical uncertainties: e.g., G. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου καθολικής Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907)3 P· 3*6; Archbishop Ignatij, *O Tainstvakh jedynoi, sviatoi, sobornoi, i apostolskoi tsertkvy* (St. Petersburg, 1849), p. 24; N. Malinovsky, *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* IV (Serg. Posad, 1909), p. 25; M. Jastrebov, *O Tainstvakh* (TRUDY XLVIII, Kiev, 1907), II, p. 49°; S. C51i-nescu, *Lectiuni de Teologiea dogmaticd* (Bucharest, 1896), p. 199; Bishop Silvester (Malevansky), *Opyt pravoslavnago dogmatycheskago bogoslovia,* IV (Kiev, 1889), p. 321.

ments;[44] *it* is indispensible,[45] "guaranteeing and sealing our salvation." [46] Not everyone must make use of all the sacraments, but every man must use those necessary for him. "All the sacraments are of obligation according to the circumstances of this or that need of the believer." [47] Failure to receive them, due to contempt or unpardonable negligence, is regarded as loss of salvation: "But God is certainly able to save...otherwise than through the sacraments.... Nevertheless he who despises or is indifferent to the divinely instituted means of grace is surely not to be excused." [48]

All the sacraments confer grace, but not all grace is given through the sacraments.[49] The Spirit moves where it will, in as many ways as there are persons, even human acts. The Eastern tradition has never been overly anxious about formulas necessary for validity (this is presupposed), but rightly has preferred to stress the fruitfulness through careful attention to ceremonial and prayers. Even the smallest item is important as a means by which the Spirit would convey the plenitude of grace. The same may be said of the lesser mysteries, the sacramentals. They too are important vehicles of the gracious Spirit.

[44] C. Dyobouniotes, Τα μυστήρια τής ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας εξ απόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1913)» P· 23·

[45] Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 299.

[46] 1. E. Mesolora, Συμβολική τής ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας, IV (Athens 1904), ρ. I4ΐ.

[47] Cf. Dyoubouniotes, *op. cit.,* pp. 23-24. Dyobouniotes categorically denies the usual Orthodox distinction of the sacraments into those of (1) "general obligation" (υποχρεωτικά), and those of (2) a "voluntary and individual character" (προαιρετικά), when he says: "The customary distinction of the sacraments into those of general obligation ' and ' those which have a voluntary character,' into ' necessary ' and those which are not so, is not correct... "Germogen also concurs in this opinion *(O sviatykh tajnstvakh pravoslavonoj Tserkvy,* St. Petersburg, 1904, p. 3). On the other hand, most Orthodox theologians follow this "usual" classification of the sacraments into "necessary" and "not necessary," or their equivalents.

[48] Androutsos, *op. cit.,* pp. 299 f. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* pp. 23 f. reaches almost the same conclusion.

[49] All grace, of course, is sacramental in reference to the great mystery, Christ-Church.

CHAPTER XXX

VISIBLE-INVISIBLE REALITY

The purpose of the mysteries, the sacraments, is to sanctify men, to build up the body of Christ, and, finally, to give worship to God.[1] Or, in the words of a well-known Greek theologian, the sacraments are actually "the various manifestations of our Lord's saving power, and the means by which Christ is present and works in his Church... As the Church is the perpetual extension of Christ..., so the sacraments are the power by which the Church sanctifies men, and the seven pillars that uphold the religious and moral life of the faithful."[2] More simply stated, a sacrament is something which makes man holy. The "something" is visible to the senses, but the "making holy" is invisible, hidden.

This double, inward-outward character is a distinctive feature of every sacrament: like the Church, the reality of the sacraments is both visible and invisible, a combination of an outward, visible sign which is perceived by the senses and an inward, invisible grace which is not.[3]

[1] Vatican II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, chap. 3, 59.

[2] Androutsos, Δογματική τής ορθοδόξου καθολικής 'Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907)» P· 293·

[3] Though expressed in slightly different terms, this double inward-outward character of the sacraments shines through Byzantine and Slav sacramental theology with such clarity that it cannot be mistaken. Among the Greek theologians, it is expressed thus: Dositheus (Η ομολογία τοϋ Δοσιθέου, πατριάρχου 'Ιεροσολύμων Deer. 15): "that which is physical or material" (τδ φυσικόν) and "that which is immaterial" (τδ ύπερφυές); C. Androutsos *(op. cit.,* p. 292): "what is visible" (ύλη) and "matter" or "material" (τδ αίσθητόν), and "spirit" (πνεϋμα), or "grace " (χάρις, ρ. 295).

Among the Slavs: Ignatij *(O tainstvakh jedynoi, sviatoi, sobornoi, i apostolskoi tserkvy* [St. Petersburg, 1849], p. 40): that which is " visible "*(vydymoe)* and that which is "invisible "*(vmisti s nevydymyn);* N. Malinovsky *(Pravoslavnoe dogmaty-cheskoe bogoslovie,* IV [Serg. Posad, 1909], p. 5): "visible sign " *(znak vydymyj)* and "invisible grace "*(nevydymaja blagodai);* Archimandrite Firmilijan *(Dogmaty-chesko bogoslovie,* II [Karlovci, 1900], p. 96): "visible sign "*(vydivy nachyri)* and "invisible grace " *(nevydymaja blagodat);* M. Jastrebov *(O tasinstvakh,* in TRUDY XLVIII [Kiev, 1907], II, pp. 488 and 483): "visible part" *(vydymaja storona)* and "salutary power " *(blagodatnaja syla),* or "divine grace" *(blagodat Bozhia,* p. 482): P. Smirnov *(Izlozhenie khrystianskoi pravoslavnoi viry* [St. Petersburg, 1917], pp. 23, 231): "visible sign" *(znak vydymyj)* and "salutary power "

Another way of putting it would be: an exterior representation of a reality not attainable by the senses. In Baptism, for example, the outward washing in water symbolizes or represents the interior, invisible cleansing or purification of the soul from sin. In the Eucharist, the Christian consumes and is nourished by what appears visibly as bread and wine, while in invisible reality he consumes and is nourished by the body and blood of Christ. What is stressed by the Byzantine Church is the invisible aspect; that is why it has adopted the name "mystery."

"It is called a mystery," to quote Chrysostom, "because what we believe is not the same as what we see, but we see one thing and believe another... On hearing of a laver, he (the pagan) reckons it merely as water, but I behold, not simply the thing which is seen, but the purification of the soul which is by the Spirit. He considers only that my body has been washed; but I am convinced that the soul has become pure and holy; and I regard it as the sepulchre, the resurrection, the sanctification, the kingdom of heaven, the full effusion (χορηγίαν) of the Spirit. For not by the sight do I judge the things that appear, but by the eyes of the mind. When I hear the body of Christ mentioned, I understand what is said in one sense, the unbeliever in another." [4] Indeed, what to the unbeliever appears to be mere eating of bread and wine is to the believer the reception of Christ himself into the soul. Both outward and inward aspects are inseparable and of necessity make up the sacrament.[5] Add the fact of divine institution, and we have a good definition of what a sacrament is: "the divinely instituted rites manifesting and communicating invisible grace," [6] or "the divine rites instituted by Christ and his apostles, which through visible signs, convey hid-denly God's grace."[7]

(blagodatnaja syla); T. Gorsky *(Orthodoxae orientalis ecclesiae dogmatica,* I [Moscow, 1851], p. 241): "external and visible sign " *{externum et visibile signum)* and "dj,vine grace" *(divina gratia)*.

[4] Chrysostom, *Homil.* 7 *in Cor.,* 2, PG 61, 55.

[5] Cf. C. Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 295; I. E. Mesolora, Συμβολική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας, Vol. Ill (Athens, I90i),p. 163; P. Smirnov, *op. cit.,p.* 230; N. Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 5; M. Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* p. 490; Firmilijan, *op. cit.,* p. 96.

[6] Androutsos, *op. cit.,* pp. 294 f.

[7] Dyobouniotes, Τά μυστήρια της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας εξ απόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1913)5 PP· 8 f.

These definitions contain the distinctive and constituent notes of a sacrament learned in children's catechisms, both Eastern and Western: (1) outward sign or rite, (2) inward grace imparted, and (3) divine institution. The Eastern and Western concepts of the sacraments are different aspects of the same reality.

The Western approach, however, with its penchant for precision (and a certain amount of legalism), with its concomitant tendency to dissect, to break up all phenomena into their component parts and to place them in order, evolved an emphasis different from that of the East: it was interested more in the "formal," the "technical" aspects, in the "validity"of the sacraments. With the advent of the hylomorphic theory and its near canonization, Western theologians got involved with essential, non-essential, integral, etc. elements of the sacraments to the extent that they ceased to relate the sacraments to the total Christian life, compartmentalizing them as independent units, isolated from the man who receives them. Perhaps precision was developed, but the spirit, the "soul," was very nearly lost.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the meaning of the Eucharist. The abstract, though precise speculation, transformed the most central act of Christianity into the "Eucharistic species" or "elements,"as if the Christ who was there did not matter. Whole sets of abstract questions formulated by Western theologians were designed, it seems, to squeeze the tremendous reality of the Eucharist into their own little molds or intellectual framework. The one, organic, living, all-embracing, and all-transforming act of Christ and of the whole *ecclesia* was gradually forgotten or relegated into the shadows, as interest concentrated on essential or non-essential parts, elements, moments, formulae, and conditions of validity, etc., to the point that for some theologians the very notion of "Eucharist" seems to have become irrelevant.

With this, the real meaning of the liturgy receded, obscured in the mists of rubrical prescriptions, measured movements, drops of water (as in the chalice), of countless rubrical commentaries that were mere liturgical cook-books, treatises on the chemistry of liturgical food. This resulted in a worship that was technically correct but internally dead.

Perhaps the judgment is too severe, but when we scan the Western Eucharistic literature since the Middle Ages, both theological and liturgical, the real meaning of the Eucharist and its liturgy tends to be second to rubrical technology. Fortunately, the trend has been reversed since Vatican II.

Byzantine theologians, with some exceptions and qualifications, have generally not fallen into the same error. Most of them have kept a sense of proportion and perspective, though perhaps at the expense of some precision and clarity. Their great reverence for the writings of the early Fathers saved them from any major excess; so did the Eastern tendency to preserve the old, the ancient (though this is not without fault either).

Eastern theology looks to the sacraments in their totality, and stresses what the whole does for the soul, insisting on the hidden, invisible aspects of the "mysteries." This authentic Byzantine tradition may be seen in almost every form of liturgical and spiritual life. The inconostasis "hides "the sanctuary, the "holy of holies," the veil of the Royal Doors further hides the most holy, the Eucharist, from the gaze of profane eyes. Even devotion to the Eucharistic Christ tends not to be separated from its central act, the Divine Liturgy. "Eucharistic" devotions are almost non-existent in the Eastern Churches. There is no Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament outside the Divine Liturgy,[8] no special "visit" to the Blessed Sacrament. God's presence is perceived in the act of going into a church, which is heaven on earth, in the mysterious quality of the divine as seen in icons, etc. Religious art itself is permeated with the spirit of "hiding "the sacred: where Western art exposes the Sacred Heart or the immaculate Heart of Mary (sometimes even in isolation from the person), Eastern icons never do, even in the case of Christ the *Chelovikoljubets*$_3$ the Lover of mankind.

[8] Except in Ukrainian and Ruthenian churches. The opinion of some Westerners that this lack of Eucharistic cultus outside the Mass is responsible for the infrequent reception of Holy Communion in the Eastern Church (e.g., M. J. Le Guillou, *The Spirit of Eastern Orthodoxy* [Glen Rock, N. J., 1964], p. 69) cannot be maintained, cf. C. Kucharek, *The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom* (Allendale, N. J., I97i)$_3$ PP· 707 ff. This is not to say that a special cultus could not be helpful in re-establishing more frequent reception of Communion provided a true perspective be maintained.

Eastern theology dislikes "dissecting" the sacraments even abstractly into essential parts, non-essential parts, moments of consecration, etc.[9] It is uncomfortable when forced to do it in controversies with the West. The whole Eucharistic Liturgy is looked upon as sanctifying. That is why Eastern theologians never divided it into parts so as to define which part could be missed on Sundays without serious sin. Even their notion of mortal and venial sin is different: if something is sinful, no matter how slightly, it ought not be done. If one could not for some reason participate in the Eucharistic Liturgy on Sunday, one could with clear conscience participate in the Vesper Service and thus fulfill the precept of keeping the Lord's day holy.

Like the early Christians, the Eastern Church sees Christian life as one, in a sense a single mystery (or one great sacrament) to be made holy through many different acts, some performed only once in a lifetime, others rarely, others again frequently, even daily. These acts or rites merely express different aspects of a total mystery, the Christian life. Hence the Eastern Church objects to a rigid distinction between the wider and the narrower sense of the term "mysteries," as occurred in the Western Church with the definition of sacraments and sacramentals.[10] There is a hierarchy of value in the sacraments, yet every sanctifying rite is precious and life-giving. The rite of Entrance into Religion or the Great Blessing of Waters at Epiphany may do more spiritual good to a soul than the sacrament of penance carelessly received.

Byzantine theology clearly recognizes the existence, the constitution of the visible rite and the efficacy of each sacrament as indeed dependent on their institution by Christ. Only the God-man could attach to material elements such as water, oil, bread, wine, the inner real power of producing spiritual and supernatural effects, that is,

[9] E.g., Mesolora, *op. cit.,* Vol. IV (Athens, 1904), p. 164; also Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* pp. 11-15; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* pp. 297 f.

[10] The Byzantine Church's lack of concern for a rigid division between the sacraments and sacramentals and its appreciation of the unity of the whole Christian life as a single unified mystery is clear from its indefinite and unfixed lists of the sacraments. Only in the seventh century, perhaps later, did the list become fixed at seven. Even today, the number seven does not seem to have absolute dogmatic significance for Orthodox theology; it is rather used primarily as a convenience in teaching.

could make them vehicles of the Holy Spirit. The sacraments resemble the Incarnation, in that the second Person of the Holy Trinity took material flesh and made it a vehicle of the Spirit. They also anticipate the αποκατάστασης, the final restoration and redemption of matter on the Last Day. But the Byzantine Church never isolates the sacraments from the many other actions and rites, the sacramentals, which are also productive of grace (though in a different way) and possess sacramental characteristics. [11]

Among these sacramentals are such rites as the Burial Service of the Dead, the Great Blessing of the Waters at Epiphany, the Anointing of a Monarch, etc. All these rites combine an outward, visible sign with the inward, invisible grace, but they were instituted by the Church, not by Christ;[12] they are productive of grace in a much more subjective sense, usually dependent upon the piety of the recipient, the intercession of the Church, etc.[13] Besides these major sacramentals, [14] there are many other lesser or minor blessings. Though minor, they possess some sacramental characteristics too, the inward-outward combination of visible sign and invisible grace, etc. These include: the blessings of wheat, wine, bread, oil, fruits, fields, homes, flowers, and the like. [15] Some of them are quite ritualistic and other-wordly. Others are very practical and prosaic, as, for example, ridding a place of vermin or a well, of dead rats; blessing a car or a railway engine.[16] In fact, there is a blessing to

[11] The sacramentals, of course, are not termed as such in the Eastern Church. The Byzantines call them merely by such terms as "sacred rites, " or the "rest of the sacred rites, or simply speak about "rites" with the context making it clear that reference is not being made to the sacraments; e.g., Germogen, *O sviatykh tainstvakh pravoslavnoi tserkvy* (St. Petersburg, 1904), p. 8; Ignatij, *op. cit.,* p. 38; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 317; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 53. Many will qualify these by adding " instituted by the Church, "e.g., Mesolora, *op. cit.,* p. 139; Dyobounio-tes, *op. cit.,* p. 35, n. 1; Smirnov, *op. cit.,* p. 232, etc.

[12] Germogen *{op. cit.,* p. 8) and Smirnov *(pp. cit.,* p. 233) seem to ascribe divine institution to some of the sacramentals; Malinovsky *{pp. cit.,* p. 54) is of the opinion that some sacramentals were instituted by the apostles.

[13] E.g., Smirnov, *ibid.*; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 318. Dyobouniotes *(op. cit.,* p. 35, n. 1) even use the expressions so familiar to the Latins: that the sacraments cause grace *ex opere operate,* while the sacramentals, *ex opere operantis.* Cf. also the unique difference cited by Jastrebov *(op. cit.,* p. 490) and Malinovsky *(op. cit.,* pp. 54 rT.).

[14] Though not all agree on the same classifications.

[15] Smirnov *(op. cit.,* pp. 232 ff.) even includes Church fasts.

[16] Cf. G. Every, *The Byzantine Patriarchate* (1st edit., London, 1947)» P· 198.

embrace anything and everything in a Christian life. Allied to this is the exorcism of demons.[17]

Sacraments and sacramentals with their host of rites and blessings are regarded as vehicles of Christ's presence and action.[18] In that sense, too, the Church is seen as a sacrament, a "mystery," that makes Christ present and acting on the souls of God's people. The Church's mission to the world is the conferring of this sacrament through its liturgical, living word.

[17] Cf. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 35, n. 1.

[18] The dogmatic foundation of the Church's power to institute and establish sacramentals is based on Scripture and the practices of the early Church: cf. Rm 8: 21 f.; Mt 7:22; 10:8; Mk 3:22; 9:37; 16:17; 1 Tm 4:4; Justin, / *Apol.,* chaps. 61 and 65, PG 6, 421 A, 428 AB; Tertullian, *De bapt.,* 7, PL 1, 1315 AB; *De cor. mutt.,* 3, 4, PL 2, 98 B-roi B; Basil, *De Spir. S.,* 27, PG 32, 192 D-193 C, etc

CHAPTER XXXI

THE VISIBLE REALITY

The Byzantine Church's dislike for any systematic division of the holy things of God appears in its treatment of the sacraments' outward signs. The Church is both visible and invisible, and man, to whom Christ ministers through the Church, is composed of body and soul: so also every sacrament must have an outward, visible sign in addition to the invisible reality. Yet, in Eastern theology, there is hardly any reference to matter and form, substance and accidents, etc. in the Scholastic sense. In considering the outward-visible character of a sacrament, Byzantine theologians view the total external sign (the external acts *and* words, the physical and tangible part, as a whole) as it is perceived by the senses, and their terminology is descriptive rather than technical. It is easily understood by the layman.

Eastern theologians realize, of course, that the external sign of a sacrament consists necessarily in the matter that is used and the words that are spoken. The latter are called "divine word(s),"[1] "accomplishing words,"[2] or simply "words," [3] "prayers," 4 or "words of the accomplishing prayer," [5] or even more descriptively as the "invocation of the Holy Spirit," and-or the "form of words." [6] Though a few Byzantine and Slav theologians do use the

[1] C. J. Dyobouniotes. Τά μυστήρια της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας έξ απόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1913)» P· [16]: θείος λόγος.

[2] Evsebij, *Besidy o sedmy spacytelnykh tainstvakh* (St. Petersburg, 1850), p. 3: *sovershetelnia slova.*

[3] C. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου καθολικής 'Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907), p. 297 '· λόγοι; C. J. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 12: λόγοι; I. E. Mesolora, Συμβολική τής ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας, Vol. Ill (Athens, iooi),p. 164: ρήσεις.

[4] Bishop Germogen, *O sviatykh tainstvakh pravoslavnoi tserkvy* (St. Petersburg, 1904), p. 5: *molytvy;* I. E. Mesolora, *ibid.:* εΰχαί.

[5] P. Smirnov, *Izlozhenie khystianskoi pravoslavnoi viry* (St. Petersburg, 1917)5 p. 232: *slova sovershytelnoi molytvy.*

[6] E.g. *The Confessio orthodoxa* of Peter Mogila, P. I, qu. 100 (Malvy-Viller, *La Confession orthodoxe de Pierre Moghila.* Texte latin inedit ORIENTALIA CHRIS TIANA, vol. X, [Rome, 1927] and I. E. Mesolora, *op. cit.,* I [Athens, 1883], p. 423); Markarij Bulgakov, *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* II (St. Peters-

word "form " or its equivalent in regard to the sacraments,[7] most do not, for unlike the Scholastics, they do not subscribe to the hylo-morphic theory as applied to the sacraments. Thus, we may search in vain for the term in the works of major Byzantine theologians: the monk Job, Nicolas Cabasilas, Manuel Calecas, and Simeon of Thes-salonika.

The word "matter" (in the sense of material) is used in reference to the sacraments but not in the technical Scholastic sense. In considering the "matter" of the sacraments, the Scholastics further distinguish "remote matter"(the thing itself used in the external sign, such as water, bread, etc.) and "proximate matter" (the actual application of the matter). Here again the Byzantines usually keep a more total view: by "matter " they usually understand the matter as used in the sacrament, and not as existing independently of the priest's action. For instance, water, besides its sacramental use, may be a sign of many things (recent rain, a nearby stream or lake, physical cleansing, etc.). It becomes a sign of internal, spiritual regeneration only when conjoined with the priest's action in Baptism.

Some refer to this as "matter," "sensible matter," or "suitable matter ";[8] others call it "actions," "signs," or "rites," or, again, "matter and priestly actions";[9] still others will use the terms "mat-burg, 1895), p. 314 has, "the invocation of the Holy Spirit and a certain form of words;" similarly, N. Malinovsky *(Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* IV [Serg. Posad, 1909], p. 45) and Archbishop Ignatij *(O tainstvakh jedynoi, sviatoi, sobornoi i apostolskoi tserkvy* [St. Petersburg, 1849] p. 44) have "the word of God and the prayer."

[7] Probably the first to adopt the term was the Synod of Cypria under Germanus Pessimandro Paphi, about 1260. Also cf. *Cod. Barb, graec.* 390, fol. 250. The next time we find the term used is in the 16th century by Patriarch Jeremiah II in his *Response to the Lutherans,* I Resp., c. VII (cf. I. E. Mesolora, *op cit.,* I, p. 140). From the 16th century on the term is used more often, e.g., in the *Trebnyk* of Peter Mogila (Kiev, 1646) where he renders *form* by *obraz Hi sovershenie, i.e., form* or complement.

[8] E.g., *Confessio orthodoxa* of Peter Mogila, P. I, qu. 100 (Malvy-Viller, *op. cit.,* p. 56); also *Response to the Lutherans* of Patriarch Jeremiah II (Mesolora, *op. cit.,* I, p. 140); Archimandrite Firmilijan, *Dogmatychesko bogoslovie,* II (Karlovci, 1900), p. 96; Makarij (Bulgakov), *op. cit.,* p. 314.

[9] E.g., C. J. Dyobouniotes *{pp. cit.,* p. 12) and Androutsos *(op. cit.,* pp. 297, 300; call it πράξεις, though Dyobouniotes *(op. cit.,* p. 13) also refers to it as τελεταί) Germogen *(op. cit.,* p. 5) has *obriady* (rites); Bishop Evsebij *(op. cit.,* p. 3) has *vnieshnie Hi jestestvennoe dijstvie* (external or essential action). P. Smirnov *(op. cit.,* p. 230) has *samoe veschestvo i sviaschennia dijstvia* (matter and priestly actions).

ter joined with certain external symbols" or "types." [10] Unfortunately, Byzantine Catholic priests trained in Latin seminaries often follow the Scholastic terminology and concepts.

The two notions differ as to their ascetical applications but not in terms of doctrine; when taken in context, the dogmatic content of Eastern theology is the same as that of the Universal Church, though it does differ from Scholasticism. Before the thirteenth century, matter and form in the Scholastic sense were unknown in the Latin Church also. [11] The sacraments do consist in things and words (formulae), but nowhere did the Catholic Church define or pronounce *de fide* that they consist in "matter" and "form" in the Scholastic sense.[12] Hylomorphism is a theory at best and even the Scholastics with all their "squeezing"could not fit the tremendous reality of the sacraments into their molds of thought. They still had to hedge and qualify matter as "quasi-matter" by applying the term only analogously to Penance and Matrimony. What, indeed, is quasi-matter? When one has to apply some terms analogously and others truly, the system is not perfect. Even within Latin Catholic ranks, the controversy whether all the sacraments are intrisically constituted by matter and form has never been settled satisfactorily.[13]

The Scholastic concepts and terminology are foreign to the Byzantine Church and to the authentic tradition of the East. There would be no objection to adopting such concepts and terms if they really helped to understand the reality of the sacraments, but many

[10] E.g., Mesolora, *op. cit.,* II, p. 164. Similarly Malinovsky *(op. cit.,* p. 45) has "matter and visible sign. " Androutsos *(pp. cit.,* p. 300) includes the whole sensible and external sign of the sacrament under the name πράξεις (actions), including the formula of administration.

[11] The first to apply these terms seems to have been Gulielmus Antissidorensis at the beginning of the 13th century.

[12] The closest the Catholic Church came to any definition was in the Council of Trent (Sess. XIV, chap. 2) when it used the Scholastic terminology: "the matter and form with which the essence of the sacrament is accomplished," but it did not define the exact meaning of the terms "matter" and "form. "The *Decree for the Armenians* also uses the same terms but there was nothing *de fide* regarding them.

[13] The Scotists claim that while the sacraments are accomplished with things as matter and by the words as form *not all* are intrinsically constituted by matter and form. The Thomists deny this and claim that all are intrinsically constituted by matter and form.

feel they are superfluous or even harmful.[14] The nature of the sacraments and their efficacy may be interpreted more realistically without resorting to the mental acrobatics of the Scholastics. Many feel that the Scholastic terminology is founded on the Aristotelian concept of substantial change. It overlooks the fact that God's grace can accomplish what it wills in whatever way it wills. [15] In view of the damaging effects of hylomorphism on Western sacramental theology and liturgy in the past several centuries, perhaps they are right.

Eastern theologians recognize that not all the rites and ceremonies, matter, words, and acts prescribed by the Church are rigidly necessary for the accomplishment of the sacraments. Some of these are indeed absolutely necessary, "without which a sacrament cannot be consummated," [16] because they make up its indispensable outward sign, instituted by Christ. But other ceremonials and rites added by the Church, desirable as they may be as a development and extension of the original simple service, are not essential. "Yet, it does not mean that the rites of the sacraments which are prescribed by the Church are voluntary, as if the priest had the right to omit or change anything in them at his own discretion. As history shows, only the Church can change, curtail, or add rites that do not constitute the * outward signs,' in the performance of the sacraments." [17] These are the logical presentation and expression of the Church's faith through which it gives and professes to give the special grace of the sacraments.[18] Rites and ceremonial belong to the very structure of the sacrament and share in its divine dignity and meaning. Even if they merely procure a better understanding of the sacrament, they are precious supplements which ought not be changed, adapted, abolished, or omitted without urgent necessity or cause.

Reducing even the study of the sacraments to liminal cases, to the

[14] E.g., Filaret (Gumilevsky), *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* II (St. Petersburg, 1882), p. 128, n. 3; Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 15, n. 1.

[15] E.g., Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 297.

[16] Dyobouniotes, Τά μυστήρια, p. 14, note 1.

[17] Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* pp. 13 f.

[18] Cf. Mesolora, *op. cit.,* I, pp. 319 f. The form of the rites is also important in the application of "economy " regarding the "sacraments "in religious communions other than the one true Church of Christ; if their sacramental rites, teaching and practice are utterly divergent, such "economy " cannot be applied.

bare "valid" administration (i.e., to the necessary outward sign, "stripped" of all additions) is not a sound approach precisely because it results in too limited, narrow, and rationalistic notions. When studying man, we do not chop off every part of the human body not absolutely required for life. If we did that, we would have a distorted view of "man." The same is true of the sacraments without the rites, ceremonies, and prayers added by the Church.

Besides the fundamental "outward sign," a sacred minister or officiant is necessary for the accomplishment of a sacrament (see above, chaps, XXIII-XXVI). Generally, this means a canonically ordained[19] priest or bishop,[20] who has jurisdiction and authority from the Church.[21] Though the proper sacred minister consummates the sacrament by using the necessary outward sign in form of the prescribed rites, Byzantine theologians stress the ultimate divine power through which grace is imparted.

Sacramental grace, like the Church itself, is rooted in Christology, and even more in pneumatology; grace, like the Church, is the work of Christ and of the Holy Spirit. Some theologians insist on the power of Christ, the institutor of the sacraments and the invisible head of the Church:[22] "He who accomplishes the sacraments is not the priest, but the Founder of the sacraments, Jesus Christ, who continually abides in his mystical body, the Church, administering his saving power exactly. The priest is the indispensable organ by which the unseen divine power accomplishes the sacraments."[23] Others stress the action of the Holy Spirit.[24]

[19] Mesolora, *op. cit.,* p. 138 and passim; Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 30; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* pp. 5, 32; Smirnov, *op. cit.,* p. 232; Germogen, *op. cit.,* p. 11; M. Jastrebov, *O tajnstvakh* (TRUDY XLVIII, Kiev, 1907II, p. 503); Makarij Bul gakov, *op. cit.,* 314; etc.

[20] The *Confessio orthodoxa* of Mogila, P. I., qu. 100 (Malvy-Viller, *op. cit.,* p. 56); Evsebij, *op. cit.,* p. 10; Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* p. 503; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 32; Firmilijan, *op. cit.,* p. 965 Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 32; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 301, etc.

[21] Cf. Mesolora, *op. cit.,* IV, p. 165; Ignatij, *op. cit.,* p. 48; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 46j A. Katansky, *Dogmatycheskoe uchenie 0 semy tserkovnykh tajnstvakh v tvoreniyakh drevnijshykh ottsev i pysatelej tserkvy do Origena vkljuchytelno* (St. Petersburg, 1877), p. 10.

[22] E.g., Evsebij, *op. cit.,* p. 4; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,*p. 41; Mesolora, *op. cit.,* p. 138; I. Kontonis, Θεολογία συνοπτική έκ των θείων Γραφών και ίερών Συνόδων (Zacynthi, 1861), p. 84.

[23] Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 301; cf. also *op. cit.,* p. 293.

[24] Ignatij, *op. cit.,* p. 70; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 41.

Actually, these views are complementary. The sacramental power proceeds from Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.[25] Though their roles differ, the Son and the Holy Spirit accomplish the same work upon earth in creating the Church within which θέωσος, deification or union with God, will be brought about. "The Holy Spirit who rests like a royal unction upon the humanity of the Son, Head of the Church, communicating himself to each member of this body, creates so to speak many Christs, many of the Lord's anointed: persons in the way of deification... "[26] Equating grace with divine energies helps us to understand this.[27]

That the ultimate power operative in the sacraments is divine rests firmly on Scripture (Jn 1:33; 1 Cor 3:7; I Cor 4:1; Eph 4:11 if.; Heb 5:1 if.; Heb 13:12 if.) and the Fathers. Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, in writing about Baptism, clearly stated: ".for this grace is not of men, but the gift is from God through men. Approach the minister of Baptism, but in approaching, think not of the face of him you see, but remember it is the Holy Spirit to whom we are referring. For he is present in readiness to seal your soul..."[28] Similarly, Chrysostom: "Even as when he (the priest) baptizes, it is not he who baptizes you, but it is God that possesses your head with invisible power... For when God begets, the gift is his alone;" [29] or regarding the Eucharist, "Believe, therefore, that even now it is that supper at which he himself sat down. For this is in no way different from that other one; but both this and that are his own work. When therefore you see the priest delivering it unto you, reckon not that it is the priest that does this, but that it is Christ's hand that is stretched out." [3o] Cyril of Alexandria is no less clear: "As water poured into a kettle, if exposed to intense heat, absorbs the power thereof, so the material water, through the operation of the (Holy) Spirit, is changed into a divine, unspeakable virtue and

[25] Cf. Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 296.

[26] V. Lossky, *The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church* (Cambridge and London, edit. 1968), p. 174.

[27] See, pp. 359 ff. below.

[28] Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XVII,* 35, PG 33, 1009 AB.

[89] Chrysostom, *Homil. 50 in Matt.,* 3, PG 58, 507.

[30] Chrysostom, *op. cit.,* 3, PG 58, 507; cf. also *Homil. de prodit. Iudae,* 1, 6, PG 49, 380; *Homil. in Ioann.* 86, 4, PG 59, 472; *Homil. in I Cor.* 8, 1, PG 61, 69; *Homil. in Act Apost.,* 14, 3, PG 60, 116.

sanctifies all on whom it is poured.*"* [31] Many of the Fathers repeat substantially the same teaching.[32]

Stress on the divine presence and power in the sacraments eliminates the risk of regarding the outward signs in any mechanical or magical sense. Furthermore, if the officiating minister is merely the organ and means by which God imparts his grace, the effecting of the sacraments is independent from the minister's faith or his moral perfection.[33] Grace may operate and be imparted through unworthy ministers, since the sacraments do not depend on the worthiness of men but on that of the Savior. Centuries ago, Chrysostom taught: "It may happen that the rulers of a nation are bad and corrupt, and their subjects good and pious; that the laity live moral lives while the priests are guilty of iniquity. But if grace always required worthy [priests], there would be no Baptism, no body of Christ, and no [Eucharistic] sacrifice. Now, God usually operates through unworthy men, and the grace of Baptism is in no way stained by the [sinful] life of a priest."[34] Augustine puts it more forcefully when he calls attention to the rays of the sun shining upon filth without being contaminated by it.[35] Gregory of Nazianzus compares a sacrament to a signet ring, insisting that an iron ring has the same power as a ring of gold.[36] If the effecting of the sacraments did depend on the faith and moral perfection of the officiant, the existence of the Church as a visible communion would be brought into question or denied.[37]

Logically, by the principle *lex orandi, lex credendi,* the mind of the Church is always reflected and manifested in its rites and ceremonies. The officiant acts, not only in his own name, but as the representative

[31] Cyril of Alexandria, *In Ioann.* I. II, PG 73, 243.

[32] E.g., Gregory of Nazianzus, *Or at. 40 in s. baptisma,* 26, PG 36, 396 AC ; Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. in Bapt. Christi,* PG 46, 581 AC; Augustine, *Contra litt. Petil.* 2, 37, 88, PL 43, 291; *De Bapt.* 6, I, I, PL 43, 197; *Contra Crescon.* 3, 8, 8, PL 43, 500; Ambrose, *De sacred, dignitate* 5, PL 17, 577 C-578 A; Ps.-Ambrose, *De sacram.* 2, 5, 14, PL 16, 427 CD; etc.

[33] Cf. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* pp. 3, 34; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 301; Mesolora, *op. cit.,* IV, p. 169; Antonij, *op. cit.,* p. 217; Germogen, *op. cit.,* p. 10; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 33.

[34] Chrysostom, *Homil. in Epis. I ad Cor.* 8, n. 1, PG 61, 69.

[35] Augustine, *De Bapt. c. Donat.,* 3, 10, 15, PL 43, 144-145-

[36] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat. 40 in s. bapt.,* 26, PG 36, 396 C.

[37] Cf. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* pp. *311;* Androutsos, *op. cit.,* pp. 301 f.j also pp. 309 f.

of the Church. The Church functions through him. Even though personally unworthy and sinful, he must have the intention of doing what the Church does in order to consummate the sacraments. According to the Byzantines, such an intention or disposition "is shown externally, and involves the will to administer the sacrament not in play nor for teaching purposes, but soberly in accord with the prescibed forms of the Church... It is enough that the priest act freely and with full consciousness of what he is doing, and that he conform externally to the order enjoined by the Church." [38]

The minister of the sacrament is not considered in isolation, as if he alone were concerned. He is considered in context. The deeper salvific will of Christ is verified in the act of ritual acquiescence. So long as the minister agrees to act as the performer of the Church's sacramental rites in the service of the liturgical community, his actions convey the salvific will of Christ attached to the given sacramental sign. This agrees almost perfectly with the Latin "externalist " position.[39] Surely, a person deliberately bathing an infant jntends obviously to bathe him; since he does it, it is impossible for him not to have this intention of bathing him. The same applies to the conferral of sacraments: if the officiant observes the rites prescribed by the Church regarding a given sacrament—a fact which can be verified by the onlookers—there can be no doubt regarding the officiant's intention and the conferral of the sacrament.

The Byzantine position is a simple, common-sense approach, without the subtle distinctions of the Scholastics. There is no need for any type of casuistry, so foreign to the Gospel's spirit of simplicity. The sacramental event is the focal point of this spirit. The most recent developments on intention in Latin sacramental theology lean toward the Externalist school of thought, and therefore coincide with what had been the Byzantine position for centuries.

[38] Androutsos, *op. cit.,* pp. 309 f.; cf. also Mesolora, *op. cit.,* IV, pp. 168 f.

[39] According to the "externalist"school, the sacramental rite has its own objective and intrinsic meaning; it embodies the finalized intention or will of Christ and of the Church—imposed upon the minister when he freely agrees to perform the prescribed rites for the faithful in their normal ecclesial context. This is not enough, according to the "internalist" school: to this must be added an interior, personal commitment, by virtue of which the minister explicitly and formally must will to confect a sacrament out of the whole action. This subjective intention penetrates the objective sign or is somehow imposed upon it.

CHAPTER XXXII

SACRAMENTAL CAUSALITY-EFFICACY

The Latin theologians' one-sided emphasis on causality is another instance of the damage done by the loss of sacramental perspective. Excessive stress on causality, combined with seven centuries of concern with the essential conditions of validity, have produced a highly mechanistic view of the sacraments. The legitimate concern of the canonist and moral theologians was taken over by the dogmatists locked in legalism and casuistry.[1] The total effect of each sacrament was overlooked.

This led to a mechanistic view of the sacraments: Christ instituted the sacraments but gave them to the Church; the Church, guaranteed the result if the matter and form were there, for the sacraments thus "confected" produce grace *ex opere operato*—infallibly by their very conferring. It sounded very much like magic. Small wonder, then, that before the Reformation superstitious uses of sacraments abounded in the Western Church. They were used as patent medicines. Surprisingly, the Reformation brought about hardly any change in this regard. The tide has turned today in the theological world, but many of the faithful still hold to the mechanistic view.

Byzantine theologians never wavered: for them, the sacraments are not mere symbols; they not merely figure, indicate, or promise but actually cause grace in the recipient.[2] Most assuredly, when properly performed, they effect grace,[3] or to use other expressions

[1] Vagaggini has demonstrated this fact by quoting every major dogmatic theology manual since Trent: not one of them bases its treatment on the full sign of the sacrament and what it teaches. The wealth of sacramental ritual and prayers, constituting the full sign is hardly considered at all.

[2] Always presupposing that the recipient places no moral obstacle.

[3] Many Orthodox theologians try to demonstrate the doctrine of causality from Scripture: e.g., A. Katansky *(Dogmatycheskoe uchenie o semy tserkovnykh tainstvakh v tvoreniayakh drevnijshykh ottsev i pysatelej tserkvy do Origena vkljuchytelno* [St. Petersburg, 1877], pp. 26; 26, note 1; 76) cites Jn 3:5 (Baptism); Mt 16:19; Mt 18:18; Jn 20:22 (Penance); 1 Cor 10:27 ff. (Eucharist); 2 Tm 1:6; 1 Tm 4=4 (Holy Orders), but he says Holy Scriptures do not sufficiently indicate the strict

they give,[4] communicate,[5] confer,[6] grace in the recipient. Only a legalistic mind would object that the use of such terms by Orthodox theologians does not express precisely the "true and proper efficient causes "of grace or the idea of "*ex opere operato*. "But this is a matter of semantics rather than of doctrine. The context makes the meaning obvious: true, efficient causality.

Many Eastern theologians use a terminology that is even more explicit, expressing what the Latins mean when they say that the sacraments effect grace *ex opere operato*. When the Byzantines say, for example, that grace is conferred "through the sacramental sign," "through the sacrament," "by means of the sacramental sign,[7] or when they call the sacraments the "instruments," "organs," or

nexus between the sacramental sign and grace in the case of Matrimony and the Unction of the Sick. M. Jastrebov (O *Tainstvakh,* TRUDY XLVIII [Kiev, 1907], II, p. 407) uses the same texts except 1 Co 10:27. N. Malinovsky *(Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* IV [Serg. Posad, 1909], pp. 6 ff.) adds I Cor 6:11; Eph 5:25 (for Baptism); Ac 8:17 (Chrismation); Jn 6:5 ff. (for the Eucharist); 1 Cor 11:9; 1 Cor 7:3 (for Matrimony) and Jm 5:14, 15 (for the Unction of the Sick). Cf. also C. J. Dyobouniotes Τά μυστήρια της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής 'Εκκλησίας έξ απόψεως δογματικής Athens, I9I3)> P· ï6> note ι, and C. Androut-sos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής 'Εκκλησίας (Athens, 1907), ρ. 3[10]> note 3.

Many theologians conclude that the early Fathers and writers of the Church had generally recognized and affirmed the same causality; cf. A. Katansky, *op. cit.,* pp. 77 ff., 92 ff., 138 ff., 188 ff., 272 ff., 334 ff.; Jastrebov, *op. at.,* p. 497 ff.; Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 16, note 1, etc.

[4] E.g., N. Malinovsky *(pp. cit.,* p. 5), Jastrebov *(op. cit.,* p. 486), Silvester Male-vansky *(Opyt pravoslavnago dogmatycheskago bogoslovia,* IV [Kiev, 1889], p. 320) use *prepodavaetsia.* C. J. Dyobouniotes *(op. cit.,* p. 12), I. E. Mesolora (Συμβολική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας, [Athens, 1901], p. 140), N. M. Damalas ("Ορθόδοξος κατήχησις [Athens, ι877]> P· 95) and K. Neokos-mos (Εγχειρίδιον του ορθοδόξου χριστιανού [Constantinople, 1888], ρ. 296) use μεταδίδοται, μετάδοσις της χάριτος, μεταδοτικά τής χάριτος. C. Androutsos *(op.cit.,* p. 292) employs χορηγείται.

[5] E.g., N. Malinovsky *(op. cit.,* p. 5, etc. passim), Antonij Amfiteatrov *(Dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie* [St. Petersburg, 1862], p. 216, and A. Katansky *(op. cit.,* p. 27) use *soobschaet blagodat, soobschenie.* S. C21inescu *(Lectiuni de Teologiea dogmaticd* [Bucharest, 1896], p. 198) employs *comunica.*

[6] T. Gorsky, *Orthodoxae orientalis ecclesiae dogmatica,* I (Moscow, 1851), p. 241, says *confert.*

[7] E.g., Malinovsky *(op. cit.,* p. 5); Jastrebov *(op. cit.,* pp. 483,490); Antonij Amfiteatrov *(op. cit.,* p. 216); Katansky *(op. cit.,* p. 10); Dyobouniotes *(op. cit.,* p. 12, etc., passim); Mesolora *(op. cit.,* Ill, p. 139); Metropolitan Plato ("Ορθόδοξος διδασκαλία [Athens, 1851], p. 75); and K. Oikonomos (Κατήχησις ή 'Ορθόδοξος διδασκαλία [Athens, 1868], p. 61).

"means " of grace,[8] what other possible meaning can they intend? All this is confirmed in the treatment of the differences between the sacraments and the rites of the Old Law,[9] or in the distinction between the sacraments and other internal or external means of grace.[10] When Tarasij appeared to reject the sacraments' true causality of grace,[11] Orthodox theologians themselves opposed him, asserting that his teaching was not only against the common opinion of Byzantine theology, but against the "faith" of the Orthodox Church. To prove their point, many Byzantine theologians offered arguments from Scriptures and the early Fathers.[12]

Because Byzantine theologians believe that the sacraments operate in a totally hidden and mysterious way,[13] they generally regard speculation about the mode of causality as unimportant and superfluous. [14] In their opinion, the nexus between the sacramental sign and the grace imparted is wholly incomprehensible.[15] Since there is nothing really certain in this regard either in the Scriptures or in patristic literature, theirs may be the most sensible attitude.[16] The

[8] E.g., Jastrebov *(op. cit.,* pp. 482, 486)*;* Gorsky *(op. cit.,* p. 241); Ignatij, *(O tainstvakh jedynqj, sviatoj, sobornoj, i apostolskoj tserkvy* [St. Petersburg, 1849], pp. 47, 67); Malinovsky *(op. cit.,* p. 16)*;* Germogen *(O sviatykh tainstvakh pravos-lavnoj tserkvy* [St. Petersburg, 1904], p. 6); Androutsos *(op. cit.,* p. 292); etc.

[9] Cf. C J. Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 15; Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* p. 484; and I. Konto-nis, Θεολογία συνοπτική [Zacynthi, 1861], p. 84.

[10] E.g., Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 294; Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* p. 483.

[11] Cf. Hierm. Tarasij, *Perelom v drevnerusskom bogoslovii* [Warsaw, 1927], p. 181.

[12] E.g., see Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 16, note *x;* Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* pp. 496 ff.; Katansky, *op. cit.,* pp. 28 f., 76 f.; also see pp. 92 ff., 138 ff., 188 ff., 272 ff., 334 ff.j Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* pp. 6 if.; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 310.

[13] E.g., Mesolora, *op. cit.,* pp. 139, 143, 151*;* Neokosmos, *op. cit.,* p. 296; And routsos, *op. cit.,* p. 311; Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 8; Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* p. 483.

[14] E.g., Androutsos, *op. cit.,* pp 298 f ; Katansky, *op. cit.,* p. 28. See also Jas trebov, *op. cit.,* pp. 493 ff.

[15] Cf. Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 5; Dyobouniotes, *op. cit.,* p. 18.

[16]Among those Byzantine theologians who have touched upon the subject at all, three schools of thought regarding the mode of causality are discernible: (1) those who seem to admit a twofold operation in the sacraments, i.e. the natural one produced by the sacramental sign and the other, a supernatural one, proceeding from the Holy Spirit (e.g., Evsebij, *Besidy o sedmi spasytelnykh tainstvakh* [St. Petersburg, 1850], p. 4; Neokosmos, *op. cit.,* Plato, *op. cit.,* p. 75); (2) others who speak of the elevation of the sacramental signs, and about the power of the Holy Spirit being enshrined in or poured into the sacraments (e.g., Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 292; Mesolora, *op. cit.,* p. 138); (3) still others who hold that the external, sacramental signs of themselves have no higher power, and that they produce grace only because God has freely chosen to impart such effects to them (e.g., Ignatij, *op. cit.,* 47; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 18; however, see Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 41).

controversies between the Thomists and Scotists on this point seem useless when compared to so many unresearched areas of the sacraments' total sign, i.e., of their rites and prayers and their meaning.

The reason why Byzantine theologians have never fallen prey to the mechanistic view of the sacraments is their deep appreciation of the total sign: their careful regard for the whole complex of sacramental ritual and prayers combined to focus their attention on the fruitfulness of reception. Where "valid " and "worthy " reception have become almost synonymous in the minds of Western Catholics, the Eastern Christians are ever urged to arouse and quicken their faith and devotion through the sacramental rites and prayers, through the total sign of the sacraments. More interested in teaching and urging the optimum rather than the minimum, Byzantine theologians insist this is how θέωσις, divinization, is accomplished: in Western parlance, this is how saints are made—and the sacraments are intended to make saints.

Perhaps the attitude of the Byzantine Church regarding the administration of the sacraments may be summed up as follows: holy concern and reverent care in performing the total rite in all its detailed ceremonial, actions and prayers. All are important in the sense that even the minutest action or word is a vehicle of the Holy Spirit, part of the "mystery,*"* making Christ present and acting on the souls of men. This alone inspires awe for the smallest word. Whatever has been determined and added or changed by the Church in the administration of the sacraments ought to be carefully and reverendy performed.[17] Also, the various rites, ceremonial and prayers do much for the worthy preparation of the recipient as regards faith penitence, gratitude and charity.

Ritual beauty preaches to men and captures their hearts; this is the mission of the liturgy. According to the *Russian Primary Chronicle,* this was what won the heart of Vladimir for God, with the result that the whole Kievan nation embraced the faith of Christ.

[17] That is why some Byzantine and Slav theologians give the impression that all the ceremonial is necessary, e.g., Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 310; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* pp. 32, 36, etc. Even regarding the Eucharistic Liturgy, sometimes the impression is given that the whole Liturgy is necessary to effect the consecration, cf. Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 149; Makarij Bulgakov, *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* II, (St. Petersburg, 1895), p. 378.

Desiring to find the true religion, Vladimir sent his emissaries to the various countries of Europe—to the Mohammedans of Bulgaria, to the Christians of Germany and Rome, and, finally to those of Constantinople. When the envoys returned, they reported of the first three: "There is no joy, no beauty in their worship." But after attending the Divine Liturgy at Hagia Sophia, they exclaimed: "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth, for surely there is no such splendor or beauty anywhere on earth. We cannot describe it to you: only this we know, that God dwells there among men, and that their service surpasses the worship of all other places. For we cannot forget that beauty." [18]

Only this we know, that God dwells there among men... For we cannot forget that beauty, has echoed in the hearts of the Eastern Slavs ever since. They still are moved by their liturgy. To them, like the Greeks before them, the liturgy expresses their faith,[19] it preaches the faith.[20] Like diamonds and pearls, its every part is precious, because even the smallest iota is a vehicle of the Holy Spirit. This attitude of attributing great importance to minute points of ritual often astonishes the Western Christian. Nurtured on a sacramental theology whose first concern is the search for precise definitions— and which has unwittingly relegated ritual and the "accidental" to the category of the secondary, the unimportant, and the decorative— the Latin Catholic finds it difficult to appreciate the total sacramental reality, the *leiturgia* of the Church.

Always insistent that artificially isolating the sacraments from their liturgy is wrong, that liturgical accretions have a bearing on the meaning of the sacraments and on their fruitful reception, Byzantine theologians have been less concerned with validity than with fruitfulness. Only with extreme reluctance will an Eastern theologian consider what is absolutely necessary for sacramental validity

[18] Significantly, the sight of people at worship and the vigor of their " Amens "— which struck Augustine like the sound of an awesome thunder—were major factors in Augustine's conversion to the faith.

[19] For them, worship is faith in action, and that is why liturgical changes can never be regarded lightly.

[20] And they in turn have poured their whole religious experience into it and have given it their best in poetry, art, and music, especially in the Divine Liturgy.

and what is accessory—what Western theologians call essential and accidental elements. All Easterners recognize that whatever was instituted or determined by Christ for each sacrament is absolutely necessary for validity. And most concede that in cases of necessity (or grave cause) those ceremonials actions and prayers evolved and added by the Church, while expressing more clearly the whole external sign and its true meaning, do not affect validity.[21]

When all is said and done, the Eastern and Western Churches believe the same about the sacraments: it is in their approach that they differ. The truth of the values defended by the East and the West respectively are complementary, not contradictory. Neither system is perfect: there are some undesirable aspects to both. Perhaps the ideal would be that they wed the best in each—and help each other in getting rid of the harmful.

The Eastern Church may find it beneficial to acquire some of the theological precision of the West. On the other hand, the Western Church would gain much by recapturing the mentality of the East, especially its perspective and mysticism.

There are dangers in both systems. The Eastern Church's emphasis on the externals, without corresponding instruction of the faithful, may lead to mere observance without truly spiritual significance. [22] Too many people, both clerical and lay, both Orthodox and Catholic, have delved superficially into their liturgical inheritance. As a result, many Eastern Christians come dangerously close to the idea that salvation will be theirs simply by belonging to the Church without too much effort on their part to "work out their

[21] E.g., cf. Dyobouniotes, 'Οφειλομένη άπάντησις (Athens, 1908), p. 126; also Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 300; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 44. See, however, N. M. Damalas, *op. cit.,* p. 95.

[22] The underlying root of two schisms within the Orthodox Church was precisely this: stopping short at external forms, at observances, without perceiving their value and meaning. The Old Believers *(Starovery)* broke with the official Church because they felt tradition itself was at stake, that not the tiniest item of their worship could be changed, as if God himself has set them down in precise detail. They splintered further into the *Popovtsy* (those who have retained the priesthood) and *Bezpopovtsy* (those who have no priests). In 1923, nearly a million people separated themselves from the Orthodox Church in Greece because the Archbishop of Athens (with agreement of the patriarchs of Constantinople and Alexandria) adopted the Gregorian calendar—a problem which Catholic Easterners find just as difficult to solve.

salvation," to lead a good, moral life.[23] The center of the Gospel revelation, the center of liturgical life is the spiritual change of heart. Without this change of life, both revelation and liturgical worship are reduced to mere habit and do little good. The Eastern Church's perspective and ideal could be reinforced by a more intellectual and spiritual training.[24]

The Western Church, on the other hand, especially in this day of liturgical renewal, can profit immensely from the East by shedding some of its legalism, by regaining a proper perspective on the sacraments, capturing the total approach to them, appreciating and giving back to the people of God their rightful part of the liturgy. Excessive concern and fears for validity should be allayed by one historical fact: the Byzantine system, even among our separated brothers, despite any supposed imprecision, has preserved the true sacraments and their valid administration through the centuries, without the mental gymnastics of Latin theologians and the excessive theological technology of the Scholastics. In matters of faith, reason is unable to pierce the mysteries of the divine. How much bitterness, controversy and heartache could have been averted in God's Church if Western theologians of yesteryear had not insisted that every last iota of religious teaching should conform with their fixed conceptions; if they had not called anathema any divergence from their system! In their intemperate use of "reason," they lost wisdom. Dialectics may seem a virtue, but it can become a scandal in matters of faith, as it often has in the relations between East and West. Simeon of Thessalonika put it well when he wrote to the Latins:

"You use evasive arguments, you flourish syllogisms; and I will show that you alter the meaning of the holy Scripture and the Fathers

[23] The danger is often increased by the frequent identification of the Eastern Churches, both Catholic and Orthodox, with national life, which results in many of the faithful retaining the observances of religion with little if any religious significance in their spiritual life. Adherence to the Church is merely part of being a good Ukrainian, Russian, Greek, etc.—a sentiment which nationalists and politicians hasten to exploit.

[24] Exactly what the modern religious movement " *Zoe* "is attempting to do in Greece. S. Bulgakov probably had this in mind when he wrote: "Orthodoxy educates the heart; this is its characteristic trait, the source of its superiority but also its weakness—its lack of education of the will." *(Orthodox Church* [London, 1935]» P- 179)·

by false interpretation, that you follow the heathens, not the Fathers. If I wanted to, I could bring forward better syllogisms than yours . against your scholastical reasonings—but I do not want to. I ask for proofs from the Fathers and what they wrote; you reply with Aristotle and Plato, or even your new doctors. Against them, I set up the (Galilean) fishermen, with their straight forward sayings, their true wisdom, and their apparent foolishness. I will disclose that mystery of godliness that St. Paul looked on as such strong evidence. I will make foolishness of your wisdom with the words, * Leave these vain matters alone. If anyone proclaims a gospel to you other than the gospel you have received, let him be accursed.' Thus will you be brought to confusion, and I shall glory in the glory of my fathers, for the Cross has not lost its power, even though the preaching of it seems foolishness to some."[25]

Most doctrinal divergences between us and our separated brothers of the East may be reduced to incomprehension and misunderstanding of the context of each Church's developments. The more polemics abounded on both sides, the less effort was made to understand each other. The more accusations flew, the less interest there was for each other. However self-sufficient they may have felt in their own narrowing worlds, both East and West have now come to realize, for the most part, the tragedy of their limited spiritual vision. Both worlds are now reaching out towards one another. Already the fingers touch, the Spirit's whispering of love is being heard in sincerity, good will and charity, ever-tending to draw both parties into full embrace.

[25] Simeon of Thessalonika, *Dialogus adv. Omnes Haereses, c* 29, PG155,140 BD.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE INVISIBLE REALITY: GRACE-ENERGIES-THEOSIS

The invisible reality effected by the sacraments is called "grace," "divine grace," the "grace of the Holy Spirit," by both Western and some Eastern theologians,[1] and the "gift of the Holy Spirit," or the "gift of God," by others.[2] This, however, does not tell us just what this reality is. More helpful, perhaps, are such descriptive names as the "power of the Holy Spirit," "spiritual and supernatural power," "invisible power," or "saving power," [3] because they are more conducive to understanding the end-result in the recipient: θέωσις, deification. Western theology seems to have ignored this beautiful concept and has preferred to call it merely "justification," "sanctification," and even "purification." [4]

[1] It would be superfluous to cite the countless Western theologians. Χάρις is used by Eastern theologians in: Dositheus, Ή ομολογία, Deer. 15; C. J. Dyobouniotes, Τα μυστήρια της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής 'Εκκλησίας έξ απόψεως δογματικής (Athens, 1913)3 Ρ· 8; C. Androutsos, Δογματική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής Εκκλησίας (Athens, ιαο7)> Ρ· 292; K. Neokosmos, Έγχειρίδιον τοϋ ορθοδόξου χριστιανού (Constantinople, 1888), ρ. 296; its Russian equivalent, *blagodat,* is used in N. Malinovsky, *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* IV (Serg. Posad, 1909), p. 32. The same with a qualifier, "ή θεία χάρις " "ή χάρις τοϋ αγίου Πνεύματος, " "ή αόρατος χάρις "or the Russian equivalent, *blagodat Bozhia, nevydymaya blagodat,* in: I. E. Mesolora, Συμβολική της ορθοδόξου ανατολικής 'Εκκλησίας III (Athens, 1901), pp. 138, 140 and 139; Athanasius of Paros, 'Επιτομή των θείων τής πίστεως δογμάτων (Leipzig, 1806), ρ. 344; Silvester Malevansky, *Opyt pravoslavnago dogmatycheskago begoslovia,* IV (Kiev, 1889), p. 321; M. Jastrebov, *O tainstvakh* (TRUDY XLVIII, Kiev, 1907, II), p. 482; Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 5; P. Smirnov, *Izlozhenie khrystianskoj pravoslavnoj viry* (St. Petersburg, 1917), p. 230; I. Perov, *Rukovodstvo k oblychytelnomu bogosloviyu* (Tula, 1910), p. 73; Makarij Bulgakov, *Pravoslavnoe dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie,* II (St. Petersburg, 1895), p. 313.

[2] E.g., Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 292; Antonij Amfiteatrov, *Dogmatycheskoe bogoslovie* (St. Petersburg, 1862), p. 216; cf. also Malinovsky, *op. cit.,* p. 21; Jastrebov, *op. cit.,* p. 490.

[3] E.g., Mesolora, *op. cit.,* p. 139; Androutsos, *op. cit.,* p. 292; Smirnov, *op. cit.,* p. 231; Antonij Amfiteatrov, *op. cit.,* p. 216; Evsevij, *Besidy o sedmy spasy-telnykn tainstvakh* (St. Petersburg, 1850) p. 3; Germogen, *O sviatykh tainstvakh pravoslavnoj tserkvy* (St. Petersburg, 1904)^ Ρ· 5·

[4] These terms, of course, tell us of the end-result under different aspects. They are known to Byzantine theologians, and their equivalents have been used by some,

Since deification is effected by grace, the study of both are intertwined in Eastern theology. Only by considering grace as divine power or energies can we hope to understand even vaguely the real meaning of St. Peter's words (2 ρ 1:4), "partakers of the divine nature" (θείας κοινωνοί φύσεως). To dismiss Peter's words as rhetorical or metaphoric would be folly, for there are too many revealed truths which we would have to ignore, too many teachings of the Fathers which we would have to discard.

Deification is the constant theme of St. John's Gospel and of St. Paul's Epistles; in fact, the whole doctrine of the Mystical Body is based on it. For the Eastern Fathers and church writers, deification, θέωσις or θεοποίησις was never merely a metaphor. In Egypt, Clement of Alexandria speaks of man's "assimilation to God," [5] and Origen, writing about the incarnation of Christ, states that" from him began the union of the divine with the human nature, so that the human, by communion with the divine, might rise to be divine, not in Jesus alone, but in all who believe and enter upon the life which Jesus taught." [6] Athanasius, too, asserts that God became man that we humans might become God.[7] In the Cappadocian Church, Basil speaks of the heavenly citizen's "abiding in God, (his) being made like to God, and, highest of all, (his) being made God." [8] Gregory of Nazianzus writes about Christ still pleading as Man, "for my salvation...until he make me God by the power of his incarnation." [9] Other writers took the concept from there and developed

e.g., Mesolora, *op. cit.,* pp. 139 and 140. Athanasius of Paros, *op. cit.,* p. 344; Gabriel Severus, Συνταγμάτιον περί των άγιων μυστηρίων (in Chrysanthos, Συνταγμάτων [Venice, 1778]), p. 98; I. Kontonis, Θεολογία συνοπτική (Zacynthus, 1861), p. 84; Ignatij, *O tainstvakh jedynoj, sviatoj, sobornoj i apostolskoj tserkvy* (St. Petersburg, 1849), p. 58.

[5] Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata,* IV, 23, PG 8, 1361 A; also Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.,* V, preface, PG 7, 1120 AB.

[6] Origen, *Contra Celsum,* III, 28, PG 11, 956 D. Also Synesius (c. 374- c. 414), the bishop of Ptolemais in the Libyan Pentapolis, writes in one of his Hymns: "Soon commingled with the Father Thou shalt dance a ' god' with God."

[7] Athanasius, *De incarn. Verbi,* 54, PG 25, 192 B; the expression he uses is Θεοποιηθώμεν. Also cf. *De decretis,* 14, PG 25, 440 C.

[8] Θεδν γενέσθαι: Basil, *De Spiritu sant.,* IX, 23, PG 32, 109 C; also cf. *adv. Eunom.* 2, 4, PG 29, 580 B: "They who are perfect in virtue are deemed worthy of the title of God. "

[9] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat.* 30, 14, PG 36, 121 C. Cf. also *Poem, dogma.,* X, 5-9, PG 37, 4655 Gregory of Nyssa, *Orat. Cat.,* 25, PG 45, 65 D-68 A.

it, especially Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite and Maximus.[10]

Understanding even the basics of deification, this "changing of the soul into divine nature," [11] is not easy. While Scriptures and tradition are clear regarding man's participation in the divine nature, they are no less explicit about the absolute incommunicability of the divine Being.

The ancients wrestled with the problem. After Nicaea, the Fathers wisely made the distinction between studying the Divine Being Itself, the Holy Trinity (to them, theology proper) and the various, exterior manifestations of God, the Trinity known in its relation to created being (which they labeled divine economy).[12] They recognized a distinction between the essence of God, or his nature properly so-called, which is unknowable, inaccessible, and incommunicable, and his divine energies or operation, powers proper to and inseparable from God's essence through which he manifests, communicates, and gives himself.

Basil, for example, clearly teaches that "there is a distinction between (God's) essence and his listed attributes. The energies (attributes) are various, the essence is simple. It is through his energies that we say we know our God; we do not claim that we can come near his essence, for his energies come down to us, while his essence remains unapproachable." [13] Likewise, Chrysostom explains

[10] Cf. Dionysius, the Ps. Areopagite, *De divin. nomin.,* II, 4, PG 3, 661 D-668 B; XI, 6, PG 3, 953 D-956 A; *Ep. II,* PG 3,1068 A-1069 A; cf. *Ep.* V, PG 3,1073 A. Maximus, *Cent, gnost.,* II, 88, PG 90, 1168 A: "We remain creatures while becoming God by grace." In another work, he states: "God has created us in order that we may become partakers of the divine nature, in order that we may enter into eternity, and that we may appear like unto him, being deified by that grace out of which all things that exist have come, and which brings into existence everything that had no existence before " *(Ep. 43, Ad Joannem cubicularium,* PG 91, 640 BC); also "Love, the divine gift, perfects human nature until it makes it appear in unity and identity by grace with the divine nature" *(De ambiguis,* PG 91, 1308); cf. also *Quaestiones ad Thalassium,* 60, PG 90, 621 AB. *Theosis* is also reflected in the Byzantine liturgy: among other passages, one of the most beautiful is in the *Kanon* for Matins of Holy Thursday, Ode 4, *Tropar(ion)* 3: "In my kingdom, said Christ, I shall be God with you as Gods.

[11] Ps. Macarius of Egypt, *Hotnil. 44,* 8, PG 34, 784 C.

[12] Pre-Nicene writers did not seem to make this distinction dearly. Athena-goras, for example, mixes these two planes when he calls the Person of the Logos, the divine "idea and energy," manifesting itself in creation *(Legatio,* 10, PG 6, 908 B).

[13] Basil, *Ep. 234, ad Amphilochium,* PG 32, 869 AB.

the beginning of St. John's Gospel as follows:" This is why he (John) never posits a name to the essence, for it is impossible to say what God is in his essence; but he shows him to us everywhere through the energies (πανταχού δε ήμῖν αύτον από των ενεργειών δήλοι).[3>] [14] The two Gregories make similar distinctions. [15]

Interpreted in the light of such tradition, the work and ideas of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite are much easier to understand.[16] For him the "unions " (ενώσεις) in God, "the secret mansions only seldom thrown open,*"* are equated with the transcendence of God or his superessential nature, in itself unknowable and inaccessible; on the other hand, God's " distinctions "(διακρίσεις) are his "processions (πρόοδοι) beyond himself"; God's "manifestations" (εκφάνσεις) he equates with the energies or powers (δυνάμεις) of God through which God reveals himself in his creatures (but not according to his substance). [17] Carrying on this Eastern tradition, John Damascene writes: "Anything we assert positively of God manifests not his nature but the things about his nature,"[18] and he graphically labels the divine energies the "rush" (έ'ξαλμα) or the "movement" (κίνησις) of God.[19]

The synthesis of the Eastern writers and Fathers concerning θέωσις, deification, the doctrines of the divine energies and of the absolute incommunicability of God's nature, was formulated by Gregory Palamas, bishop of Thessalonika from 1347-13 50. The fact that his system of ascetic and dogmatic theology cannot be reconciled with the philosophical tenets of scholasticism does not derogate

[14] Chrysostom, *Hotnil. in Joan.* II, 4, PG 59, 34. In another passage, he explains the Scriptural names applied to God: "These names signify his energies " *(In Ps. 44,* 5, PG 55, 190).

[15] E.g., Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio,* 11, PG 44, 153-156; *Quod non sunt tres Dei,* PG 45, 116 A-136 A; *Orat. Cat.,* chaps 1 and 2, PG 45, 13 A-17 C; *De anima et resurrectione,* PG 46, 52 AB; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orat 38, In Theophaniam,* 7, PG 36, 317; *Orat. 30, (Theologica, IV),* 20, PG 36, 128 D-129 C; also *op. cit.,* 18, PG 36, 128 A, etc.

[16] Paradoxically, the ideas of the Areopagite were interpreted essentially in an Eastern light by a Westerner, the Irishman John Scotus Erigena, while the East erners Akindynos and Nicephoros Gregoras interpreted them in a clearly Western way!

[17] Cf. Dionysius the Ps.-Areopagite, *De divin. nomin.,* II, 4, PG 3, 661 D-668 B.

[18] John Damascene, *De fide orth.,* I, 4, PG 94, 800 BC.

[19] *Ibid.,* 14, PG 94, 860 B.

from its greatness;[20] in fact, it seems more Christian, since it is based on the God of Scripture and on the Fathers.

Palamas expanded the Dionysian concept of the inaccessibility of God's essence. From Basil and Gregory of Nyssa, he borrowed the idea of God's knowability through his energies (while his essence remains unknowable and unnamable), and the distinction between divine energies and essence. From Gregory the Theologian, he took over the theory of the "uncreated light." In a sense, he could have found all of this in Chrysostom. In fact, Palamas seems to have taken something from every earlier Eastern writer. He did more than borrow, however: he developed, synthesized, and systematized their teachings, including the great concept of θέωσις.[21]

[20] So neither can Molinism. The Catholic Church has never officiary pro nounced itself on the teachings of Palamas. In fact, his difficulties regarding Christian orthodoxy stemmed not from the Catholic Church but from his own, which subjected him and some of his teachings to the most severe polemics and passionate criticism, e.g., Akindynos, Nicephoros Gregoras, Isaac Argyros, Manuel Calecas, John Ayparissiotes and others of the 14th and 15th centuries. Though the Greek Orthodox Church now regards Gregory Palamas a saint and doctor, it called six different synods to discuss his theories. One of these, the Synod of I345J under political rivals, condemned him for heresy and excommunicated him. The last settled the question in his favor and declared his teachings a "fault less canon of the true faith of Christians."

There would be very little for Catholic theologians to add to the criticism he received from his own Church. His synthesis weathered every storm and added riches to Byzantine theological knowledge. Latin theologians studying Palamas may be handicapped, instead of helped, by their scholastic training. To understand the antinomic character of his teaching on the Divinity, for example, many scholastic pre-suppositions have to be disgarded. His antinomies, however, are logically defensible when properly understood—in context and in his terminology.

[21] Much research still remains to be done on the life, thought, and works of Palamas. Not all of his works have been published and there are no critical editions of most. The most comprehensive list of his works, both published and unpub lished, is that of M. Jugie (cf. article, "Palamas," in *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique).* Of his published works, the most readily available are those in Migne, *Patrologia graeca,* Vols. 150 and 151. His major work against Barlaam was edited by J. Meyendorff *(Gragoire Palamas — Les Triades pour la defense des saints hesy-chastes* in SPICILEGIUM SACRUM LOVANIENSE [Louvain], 29-30, 1959). The *Homilies* of Palamas were edited by S. Oikonomos (Athens, 1861) but this edition is very difficult to obtain.

Perhaps the most substantial work on Palamas was done by G. Papamichail (Ὁ Ἅγιος Γρηγόριος Παλαμάς [Alexandria, 1911]). M. Jugie gives much useful information in his *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum Orientalium,* Vol. II (Paris, 1933), pp. 47-183, and in his articles "Palamas" and " Palamite (Contro-verse) " in the *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique.* Another helpful work is S. Guichardon's, *Le probleme de la simplicite divine en Orient et en Occident aux*

After noting what appear to be paradoxes, opposites in God,[22] he proposes that purely philosphical concepts and terminology cannot be applied to God as they are to finite beings—even such concepts as essence: "He is not essence because he transcends all essence...no created thing can have anything in common with the supreme Being or even any proximity with the supreme Being."[23] In referring to God as he is in himself, Palamas prefers the expression "supra-substance" (ὑπερουσιότης) instead of substance (ουσία) and "supra-essential (ὑπερούσιος), instead of essential; he even uses the expression "more-than-God" (ὑπέρθεος) in this sense.[24] In his "supra-essence," or "supra-substance," God is utterly unaccessible, uncommunicable, and unknowable;[25] in fact, he is absolutely unique and inexpressible: "There is for him no name in this or in the future world, no word formed in the soul or uttered by the tongue; there can be no contact (επαφή) with him either sensible or intellectual; nor can there even be any image whatever if we discount that of total inapprehensibility obtained by way of denial—by denying (transcending) everything which exists or can be named. It is not even permissible to call him a substance or a nature if these terms are used in their proper sense."[26]

Yet, being a biblical realist, Palamas is convinced that the opposite is also true of God: that he is personal and active, communicating himself, manifesting his goodness to all, using his creative and

XIV^e et XV^e sticks, Gregoire Palamas, Duns Scott, Georges Scholarios (Lyons, 1933)· An excellent study of Palamas and his teachings is that of J. Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas* (London, 1964) and that of B. Krivochein, *Ascetical and Theological Teaching of St. Gregory Palamas* in THE EASTERN CHURCHES QUARTERLY, Vol. Ill (1938).

[22] E.g., "He is being and not being; he is everywhere and nowhere; he has many names and cannot be named; he is both in perpetual movement and immova ble; he is absolutely everything and nothing of that which is. " *(Apology, Coisl. 99, fol. 2).* Also, "All essences are in the highest degree foreign and far-removed from the essence of God. For if God is an essence, then no other thing is an essence; on the other hand, if all others are essences, then God is not an essence; and even he is not if other existing things are; but if he is then other things are not existing. " *(Captita physica, theologica, moralia et practica,* 78, PG 150, 1176).

[23] Palamas, *Capita, physica,* etc., 78, PG 150, 1176.

[24] Palamas, *Theophanes,* PG 150, 937 A.

[25] Palamas, *Theophanes,* PG 150, 937 CD: "ή έν κρυφοϊς ύπερουσιότης... " "άνεκφοίτητος και άνέκφαντος ".

[26] Palamas, *Theophanes,* PG 150, 937 A.

providential energies. In Aristotelian terms, of the ten categories of existence, Palamas chooses only two which could be applied to God as the "supra-essential essence," for he says: "one can only see the categories of relation and of action" (τό προς τί τε και τό ποιεΐν, i.e., in Aristotelian terminology, the manifestation *ad extra* of the being) and this only in a way different from other beings, without introducing any "confusion "into him.[27] God's exteriorizations or that which goes out of himself (πρόοδος, his "coming forward") he calls "energies,[u] which refer to the mode of divine existence outside his inaccessible supra-essence.[28] "We must," he writes, "look for a God who not only possesses within himself his own end, his own energy, and his own deification, but (one) who is a good God—since it will not be enough for him to exist merely in self-contemplation—not only perfect, but surpassing all fullness, so that when he wishes to do good, he can. He will not only be immobile, but will set himself in motion; thus, he will be present for all in his manifestations and in his creative and providential energies." [29]

These energies manifest God in as many ways as God deals with creatures, from creation to providential care and the conferring of grace in or outside the sacraments.[30] Whereas God in his (supra) substance is incommunicable, inapprehensible, unnameable, and indivisible, divine energy is communicable, apprehensible, and

[27] Palamas, *Cap. phys.* etc., 134, PG 150, 1213 D-1216 A.

[28] Palamas, *Theophanes,* PG 150, 937 D.

[29] Palamas, *Triads for the defense of the hesychasts,* III 2, 24 (numbers refer to edit. Meyendorff, in SPICILEGIUM SACRUM LOUVANIENSE, 29-30,1959). In fact, for him, denying God's energies was denying the existence of God: "Indeed, it is only through his energies that one knows that God exists; hence, he who rejects the divine energies...must necessarily be ignorant of the existence of God. " *Dialogue, Coisl. 99, fol.* 48V; cf. also *Cap. phys.,* 141, PG 150, 1220 A.

[30] On the other hand, *it* is wrong to think of the divine energies as a divine function existing on account of creatures: God's energies, uncreated and eternal, exist independently of them. Solar rays would emanate from the sun even if there were no other beings to receive their light. God would manifest himself beyond his essence even if creatures did not exist. This is why even the Aristotelian categories of relation and of action, despite their usefulness, are inadequate: Palamas sought to clarify this by maintaining the absolute, non-relative character of the externally expansive energy proper to God alone. Even the expression "manifesting himself" or similar terms are defective, implying only post-creative energies, whereas these energies are eternal, without any real reference or relation to creation.

nameable. The difference is based on the distinction (but not divisibility) between substance and energy as between cause and that which is conditioned by cause. Formulating the authentic Byzantine teaching regarding this point, the "Acts" of the Constantinopolitan Council of 1351 state: "We conceive this (energy) not as being outside the substance of God, but as a substantial and essential movement of God; we say that it proceeds and flows from the Divine Being as from its consubstantial source; it is never found without it, but coexists with it; it cannot be separated from the Divine substance either by time or by any temporal and spatial distance, but proceeds from it and eternally coexists with it outside time in eternity." [31]

Distinguishing Divine Being in his supra-essence and in his energies does not derogate from his simplicity. Simplicity does not exclude distinction, only separation and division. As Gregory of Nyssa observes regarding human intelligence, it remains simple, despite the multiplicity and diversity of its faculties.[32] Indeed, this analogy is quite good, for in the process of knowing something outside itself, human intelligence does not become divided, only diversified—and its essence does not pass into the substance of the thing known, nor is its power of concentration in any way diminished. Wisdom and power are operations or energies of the Divine Being—but he remains simple, nor is his essence diminished in any way by his operations. The energies, says Palamas, "do not compose "the being of God, for that is not a composite entity, and "it is he who gives them their existence, without taking his existence from them; indeed, it is not the realities which surround God (τά περί θεόν) which are the essence of God, but he is their essence." [33] In other words, these energies are not something in themselves, existing without and separated from God, but they are God himself (not according to his substance, however) in his action and self-revelation to the world.

The basis for the absence of complexity in God in spite of the distinctness of substance from energy is the non-hypostatic and non-autonomous nature of that energy. The divine energy neither

[31] PG 151, 736 D.

[32] Cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *De hominis opificio,* XI, PG 44, 153-156.

[33] Palamas, *Triads,* etc. Ill, 2, 25 (numbers edit. Meyendorff).

increases nor decreases: it is not changeable. Whether present or not, it is the changeless, eternal, continuous action of God, differing only in the degree of its manifestation and participation by the creature. It remains unchangeable regardless of whether creatures participate in it or not; it is the same whether creatures exist or not. In terms of Aristotelian categories of being, we must not think of divine energy, however, as accident: "Accident is something which begins and ceases to be; therefore, (it is true) something inseparable can also be considered as accident. A natural (attribute) is, in a sense, accident, because it increases and decreases, such as, for example, knowledge in the rational soul. But there is no such thing in God, since he remains entirely changeless. Wherefore, there is nothing in him which can be called accident." [34]

The 1351 Council reiterates the distinction between divine substance and energy, but stresses their inseparability: "As we confess the Divine substantial unity, not only according to indivisibility, but in other ways, such as common uncreatedness and indescribability, so we have learned to praise as God-fitting that distinction and difference (between substance and energy) without breaking up (the unity) into real separateness or conceiving any unnatural difference or essential estrangement or interval between the two. God forbid! But we admit such a distinction as can exist between that which causes and that which is caused essentially... distinguishing by one concept in a God-fitting manner that which is, by its essence, united and inseparable." [35]

We can and do distinguish the Three Divine Persons, the three hypostases in the Holy Trinity; yet God is one, not composite but simple, in the one divine nature. Thus also the distinction of substance from energy does not introduce composition nor plurality: "God does not lose his simplicity as a result of either separation and distinction of the hypostases or separation and plurality of energies." [36] God's divine energies emanate from the one divine

[34] Palamas, *Cap. phys.,* 127, PG 150, 1209 C.

[35] PG 151, 737 BC.

[36] Palamas in his *Homily on the Orthodox Faith* (PG 151, 766 B) approved by the Council of 1351 (PG 151, 766 B); also, "For neither can complexity ever result from the perfect hypostases nor can that which is powerful through the possession

nature and are, therefore, the manifestation of eternal splendor common to the three divine Persons, be that manifestation Wisdom, Power, Justice, Love, Goodness, or an infinity of other "attributes "unknown to man.[37] Like the energies, the divine names are innumerable, e.g., God is Love, God is Wisdom, etc.

It is supremely important to keep in mind the absolute incommunicability of the Divine substance (or "supra-substance," as termed by Palamas). If a creature were able, even in the smallest degree, to partake of the Divine substance itself, he would be substantially identified with God (because of the indivisibility of that substance) and become a new divine hypostasis inseparable from the substance; hence, the creature would be God by essence, and God would then no longer be Trinity but a Divinity with countless hypostases (μυριυπόστατος)—as many as there would be persons participating in his essence.[38] Pantheism would result.

Palamas does not often use the specific term "grace," but it is with divine energy as grace that he is mainly concerned and, through it, that he answers the puzzling question of how man can participate in the divine nature in a very real sense without being God. How can this be accomplished when the two natures involved in the union are absolutely different, when "the one is God, the other is not God; the one is Lord, the other is servant; the one is Creator, the other is creature.. .and their natures have nothing in common"? [39] Through the divine energies. Since grace as divine energy flows eternally from the one essence of God, "the divine nature is communicable not in itself but through its energy." [40] The essence of God or his nature properly so-called is indeed incommunicable and

of power be called composite on account of that possession " *(ibid.,* PG 151, 766 C). His conclusion is logical: "we believe in one Tri-hypostatic and omnipotent Godhead whose unity and simplicity are in no way lost either on account of the powers or of the hypostases " *(ibid.,* PG 151, 768 C).

[37] Cf. Palamas, *Cap. phys.,* 127-128, PG 150, 1209 C-1212 A; also *Dialogue, Coisl.* 99, *fol.* 55.

[38] Cf. Palamas, *Cap. phys.,* 109, PG 150,1195 A, and *Theophanes* PG 150,940 B; also *Against Gregoras,* IV, *Coisl.* 100, *fol.* 285.

[39] Ps.-Macarius of Egypt, *Horn.* 49, PG 34, 816 B.

[40] Palamas, *Theophanes,* PG 150, 937D. In another work *(Cap. phys.,* 69, PG 150, 1169 C) he also says: "The divine and deifying illumination and grace is not the essence but the energy of God. "

inaccessible,[41] but it is through his energies or divine operations, the forces proper to and inseparable from essence, by which he goes forth from himself, communicates and gives himself. Grace, therefore, is not something created, *ex nihilo,* like creatures: it is the living God in the act of coming to the faithful.

The concept of uncreated and created grace is precisely one of the major issues separating Eastern and Western theologians. The term "created grace "is so frequently used in late scholastic theology that it may surprise many Latin Christians to learn it is not a *defide* doctrine. The Council of Trent, which had so much to say about grace and justification, never used the expression. Neither did that giant of the Western Church, Thomas Aquinas.

The concept of "created grace" is complex. Even according to the Latin point of view grace is not absolutely "created." Using Aristotelian terms and concepts, Aquinas teaches: "Because grace is above human nature, it could be neither a substance nor a substantial form, but is an accidental form of the soul itself. For what is substantially in God, has being accidentally in the soul participating of the divine goodness, as it is clear about science." [42] Then, he further explains, accident: "properly speaking, neither exists nor falls into corruption, but it is said to exist or to fall into corruption, in as much as the subject begins or ceases to be in energy according to that accident." [43] According to this concept, then, grace being an accidental form neither existing nor falling into corruption, cannot really be called "created " in the strict sense.

The Byzantine view of deifying grace as God's own energy is much more theocentric. Always keeping in mind that God's essence and energies are inseparable but distinct, divine energy-grace is not separable from God, but is divine life granted to man. Like Maxi-

[41]"If we could partake of the Divine substance itself," wrote Palamas, "then everyone who partook of it, either of the whole of it or of its smallest part, would become omnipotent... " *(Theophanes,* PG 150, 940 B). This is true, "because of its indivisibility, the Divine substance would be communicated together with all its powers." *(ibid).* There is, of course, a hypostatic union, proper to God the Son alone wherein the Second Person of the Trinity, without ceasing to be God, became man.

[42]Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theohgica, Quaestio,* 110th, *Pars* la, Ilae, Art. 2.

[43] Thomas Aquinas, *ibid.*

mus, Palamas explains that "grace accomplishes the mysterious union...God in all fullness comes to dwell in the complete being of those who are worthy of it, and the saints fully dwell in their complete being in the whole God by drawing to themselves the whole God, and not receiving any reward besides God himself for the ascent accomplished towards him. He attaches himself to them as the soul is attached to the body, as to his own members." [44]

The Byzantines' θέωσις, deification, was never a mere abstract, intellectual concept. It is real in the strictest sense of the word. Deified man, within his limits, possesses by grace that which the Holy Trinity has by nature. Possessing this divine energy-grace means having God, not in his essence but in his energies, which are inseparable (though not distinct) from his essence. God really comes to man, wholly and entirely,[45] through his grace-energy: [α] God...unites himself to them to the extent of coming to dwell in his entirety in their entireties, while they dwell completely in him; and through the Son, the Spirit spreads in abundance over them (Tt 3:6)...do not, however, consider that God lets himself be seen in his supra-essential essence, but according to the deifying gift and according to his energy, according to the grace of adoption, uncreated deification, and the direct hypostasized glory." [46]

There is really nothing new about this teaching. It was taught centuries before by Basil who, in a beautiful passage, said that the Holy Spirit, the source of all holiness, is "in essence simple, in powers various; wholly present in each one and wholly present everywhere; impassively divided, yet shared without losing any of Ms entirely, like a sunbeam whose kindly light falls on him who enjoys it as though it shone for him alone but in fact it shines upon earth, sea, and air. In the same way, the Spirit is present in each of those who receives him as if each recipient were the only one, and yet he pours out total and sufficient grace on all men. He is enjoyed

[44] Palamas, *Tr.* Ill, i, 27. Cf. Maximus, *Amb.,* PG 91, 1088 BC and 1320 B.

[45] It may be less shocking for non-Byzantine Catholics to remember that almost the same happens in the Eucharistic Bread: the Eucharistic Christ is present wholly and entirely in each particle after the Eucharistic Bread is broken into fragments, etc.

[46] Palamas, *Tr.* Ill, i, 29.

by all who share him according to the measure of their respective capacities...

"Shining upon those that are cleansed of every stain, he makes them spiritual by communion with himself. As bright, transparent bodies, when a sunbeam falls on them, become brilliant too and shine with a fresh brightness of their own, so souls in whom the Spirit dwells, through his illumination, become spiritual and send forth their grace to others. From this Source comes foreknowledge of the future, understanding of mysteries, perception of what is hidden, the distribution of good gifts, a heavenly citizenship, a place in the chorus of angels, joy without end, abiding in God, the being made ike unto God, and, highest of all, the being made God, Θεον γενέσθαι!"*[7]

[47] Basil, *De Spir.* $., I, 22 and 23, PG 32, 109 AC.

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