

41. FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI

GOSPEL: John 6: 56-59. *At that time:* Jesus said to the multitude of the Jews: My Flesh is meat indeed, and My Blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My Flesh and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me. This is the Bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.

HOMILY BY ST. AUGUSTINE *Tract 26 on St. John*

I. BY THE USE OF MEAT AND DRINK MEN SEEK TO attain to this, that they should neither hunger nor thirst any more. Yet, there is but one Meat and one Drink which renders those who feed thereon incorruptible and immortal—that is, the very communion with that general assembly and Church of God's holy children, where there shall be peace and unity full and perfect. Therefore it is, as men of God before our times understood, that our Lord Jesus Christ set before us His Body and His Blood in the likeness of things, which from being many, are reduced into one. In one loaf there are many grains, and in one cup of wine, the juice of many grapes. And now He explains how that which He spoke of comes to pass, and what it is to eat His Body and drink His Blood. *He that eateth My Flesh, and drinketh My Blood, abideth in Me, and I in him.* To abide in Christ, therefore, and to have Him dwelling in us, is for a man to eat that meat and to drink that cup. And he that dwells not in Christ, and in whom Christ abides not, undoubtedly does not spiritually eat His Flesh nor drink His Blood, though he carnally and visibly press the Sacrament

with his teeth. But rather *he eateth and drinketh judgment to himself*, because, being unclean, he dares to come to that secret and holy thing of Christ, whereunto no one draws nigh worthily, unless he be pure; for of such it is said: *Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God* (Matt. 5: 8).

II. *As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.* Notice that our Lord does not say, *As I eat the Father, and live by the Father*; so he that eats Me, the same shall live by Me. For the Son, Who was begotten equal to the Father, does not become better by the participation of the Father, just as we are made better by the participation of the Son through the unity of His Body and Blood, signified by the eating and drinking. We live by Him, eating Him — that is, by receiving Him as the eternal life, which we had not from ourselves. He lives by the Father, being sent by Him, because *He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross* (Phil. 2: 8). *I live by the Father as One that is greater than I* (John 14: 28). Just as we also live by Him, Who is greater than we are; and this results from His being sent. The sending is, in fact, the humbling Himself, *taking the form of a servant*; and this is rightly understood, while also the Son's equality with the Father is entirely preserved. For the Father is greater than the Son, considered as man only; but He has the Son equal to Himself as God; whilst the same is both God and man — Son of God and Son of man, the one Christ Jesus. If these words are rightly understood, then we know why He said: *As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.* Just as if He had said: *My humbling Myself* — in that He sent Me — effected that I should live by the Father that is, that I should refer My earthly life to Him as the greater. But that anyone should live by Me is effected by that communion in which he eats Me. Therefore, being humbled, *I live by the Father*, and man, being raised up, lives by Me. But if it was said, *I live by the Father*, so as to mean that He is of the Father, not the Father of Him, it was said without any detriment of equality. And yet, when saying, *He that eateth Me, the same shall live by Me*, He did not mean to say that His own

equality was the same as our equality, but He thereby showed the grace of the Mediator.

III. *This is the Bread that came down from heaven, that by eating it we may live for ever, since we cannot have eternal life from ourselves. Not, He says, as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this Bread shall live for ever.* That those fathers are dead, He wished us to understand as meaning that they do not live for ever. For even those who eat Christ shall without doubt die temporarily; but they live for ever, because Christ is life everlasting.

THE PROCATCHEISIS

OR

PROLOGUE TO THE CATECHETICAL LECTURES

ALREADY, MY DEAR CANDIDATES for Enlightenment,¹ scents of paradise are wafted towards you; already you are culling mystic blossoms for the weaving of heavenly garlands;² already the fragrance of the Holy Spirit

¹ I.e., Baptism; also intellectual "enlightenment," for pre-baptismal instructions impart the revealed system of (supernatural and esoteric) knowledge; cf. 6.29. Light is a prominent theme in the Bible from the second verse of Genesis to the last chapter of the Apocalypse. Particularly important in the Johannine writings, the symbol was used also by the Qumran community (cf. the war between "the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness") as well as in Zoroastrianism and the Greek mystery religions. Cf. T. Halton, "Baptism as Illumination," *Irish Theol. Quart.* 32 (1965) 28-41.

For literary and rhetorical reasons (note the anaphora, the thrice repeated *edé*, "now," "already"), the "paradisaical scents" and "mystic blossoms" seem to refer to the candidates' recent enrollment and subsequent ceremonies rather than to the graces of the lower grade of the catechuminate. Cyril means that the candidates' registration has brought them so close to the Paradise of which the sacramental initiation will seize them that already its exciting scents are sometimes borne to them along the breezes. Compare the "yet brighter and more fragrant meadow of this Paradise" of *Myst.* 1.1. The imagery, inspired by the Song of Songs, favorite reading of Cyril, would be more appropriate and natural if spring had already appeared in the land—implying a later Easter. But in 14.10, four or five weeks later, Cyril says the date is about March 25th and this implies an early Easter. In 18.7, he says the season is "wintry" and adds: "The trees now stand as if they were dead: where are the leaves of the fig-tree? . . ."

There is no contradiction if the language in *Procat.* 1 is purely metaphorical. For other evidence about the season, cf. 4.30; 13.18.

² The garlands are probably those worn at banquets, especially marriage feasts. Cyril refers to the nuptials between the soul and Christ (the Bridegroom) at Baptism, a spiritual wedding consummated in the Eucharist, itself the pledge and foretaste of the marriage-feast of

has blown about you. Already you have arrived at the outer court of the palace:³ may the King lead you in! Now the blossom has appeared on the trees; God grant the fruit be duly harvested! Now you have enlisted; you have been called to the Colors.⁴ You have walked in procession with the tapers⁵ of brides in your hands and the desire of heavenly citizenship in your hearts; with a holy resolve also, and the confident hope which that brings in its train. For He is no liar who said: "For those who love Him, God makes all things conspire to good." Yes, God is generous and kind; nevertheless He requires in every man a resolve that is true. That is why the Apostle adds: "For those who are called in accordance with a resolve." It is the sincerity of your resolution that makes you "called."⁶ It is of no use your body being here if your thoughts and heart are elsewhere.

³ The Lamb: cf. *Procat.* 3 and 4, *Cat.* 3.1.

⁴ "Mystic": *noëta*, intelligible. Thus early Cyril introduces the Platonic category of the sensible-intelligible, adapted to Christian spirituality and sacramental theory.

⁵ I.e., at the threshold of Baptism, which is the portal of the Paradise of the Church conceived eschatologically. Cf. *Procat.* 15-17, *Cat.* 18, 34.

⁶ In *Myst* 1, 2, 9, the candidates, immediately before Baptism, renounce Satan and take Christ for their Lord and Master. Roman army recruits took an oath (*sacramentum*) pledging their personal fidelity to the emperor. For the adaptation of this idea to the Christian mysteries (called *sacramenta*, "sacraments," in the West) cf. Tert., *Adv. Marc.* 8. The Latin New Testament translated *mysterion* by *sacramentum*. Cf. Col. 1.13, Eph. 2.1-2, 1 Pet. 2.9; and St. Augustine's doctrine (*City of God*) of the two kingdoms or realms, each with its own king, laws, goods, destiny, principle, and life.

⁷ Apparently, therefore (for this passage seems to be the chief or only evidence), at some ceremony following their registration, perhaps, in a formal entrance procession into the church for the opening lecture, the candidates carried lighted tapers or torches, "a significant symbol both of the marriage of the soul with Christ, and of its enlightenment by faith" (Gifford, xvii)—and also of the heavenly teaching which, as *illuminandi*, they were about to receive.

⁸ Cyril stresses the importance of human effort to the point of misinterpreting Rom. 8.28. His successor, John, refused to condemn Pelagius at a diocesan synod at Jerusalem, July 28, 415, as a Palestinian synod at Diospolis (Lydda) also did in December 415; cf. John Ferguson, *Pelagius* (Cambridge 1956) 82-89. This is not to say that John was a Pelagian, still less Cyril, who is not asking whether sincerity too is not God's gift, but only rhetorically insisting upon the necessity of cooperation with grace. Cf. also Ch. 8. and *Sermon*, Ch. 4 and 5 *fn.*

(2) Why, there was a Simon the Sorcerer⁷ once who approached the baptismal waters: he was dipped in the font, but he was not enlightened. While he plunged his body in the water, his heart was not enlightened by the Spirit;⁸ physically he went down and came up, but his soul was not buried with Christ, nor did it share in His Resurrection. If I mention these examples of falls, it is to prevent *your* downfall. "Now all these things happened to them as a type, and they were written for the correction"⁹ of those who approach the font to this day. Let none of you be found tempting grace, "lest some bitter root spring up to poison"¹⁰ your heart. Let no one enter saying: "I say, let us see what the believers¹¹ are doing; I'm going in to have a look and find out what's going on." Do you expect to see without being seen? Do you imagine that while you are investigating "what's going on," God is not investigating your heart?

(3) We read in the Gospels of a busybody who one day decided to "investigate" a wedding-feast.¹² Without dressing

⁷ Although, according to Acts 8.13, Simon Magus "believed," Cyril invariably assumes that he had been insincere from the first, at least in the sense that he had not "believed from the heart" (which implies more than an intellectual response); cf. 1 John 2.19.

⁸ Cf. Origen, *Hom. in Num.* 3.1: "... neque omnes qui loti sunt aqua, continuo etiam Spiritu Sancto loti sunt." Origen illustrates from the hypocrisy of Simon.

⁹ 1 Cor. 10.11.

¹⁰ Cf. Heb. 12.15.

¹¹ I.e., apparently the upper class of catechumens, i.e., the candidates (*phoizomenoi-illuminandi*) who, contrary to the custom of other churches, at Jerusalem were assimilated to the faithful and no longer called catechumens.

¹² Cf. Matt. 22.1-14, esp. verses 11-13. Perhaps what was originally a separate parable begins at verse 11. If the two parables are read as one, it is not clear—since the guests have been hastily collected from the highways and by-ways—how one could be blamed for not being in his "party clothes." Cyril, without mentioning the difficulty, offers an answer: "Should not your eyes have informed you?" Or perhaps (Telfer) Cyril realized that the two parables were independent and felt free to invent the circumstances of the unmannerly guest's entry. K. Stendahl thinks that there is no problem in oriental parable, where the details can be forgotten once they have served their purpose or be supposed to change appropriately as required by the unfolding story (Peake's *Commentary on the Bible* [London-New York 1962] *ad loc.*). The detective dispositions which mark Cyril's "intruder" seem

correctly for the occasion, he entered the dining room and, unchallenged by the bridegroom, took his place at table. Etiquette, of course, demanded that, seeing everybody's white garments, he should conform; but in fact, though fully the match of his fellow-guests as a trencherman, he did not match them in his dress (I mean, his resolve). The bridegroom, for all his large-heartedness, was not undiscerning and, while going the rounds of the company and observing his guests individually (it was not what they ate, but the correctness of their behavior and dress that interested him),¹⁸ he saw a stranger without a wedding garment, and said to him: "Pray, sir, how did you get in? What a color! What effrontery!"¹⁴ The doorkeeper did not stop you in view of the liberality of the host? Quite so. You didn't know the correct dress for a festive occasion? Quite. Nevertheless, you came in; you saw the glittering clothes of those at table. Should not your eyes have been your teachers? Should not a timely exit then have been the prelude to a timely return? As it is, your untimely entrance can lead only to your untimely ejection." Turning to his attendants, he ordered: "Bind those feet" which presumptuously intruded; "bind the hands" which had not the wit to put a bright garment on him; and "cast him into the outer darkness"; for he is not worthy of the bridal torches.

to be not so much imperfect faith as moral: the lack of the determination to make a decisive break with the old life in favor of the new life with the ethical quality demanded by the Gospel. See Ch. 3. In the era introduced by Constantine's conversion, when Christianity became first a tolerated and then a privileged religion in the Empire, the merely curious or the dilettante might be found among the candidates. In first-century Palestine, "the wedding garment was not, apparently, a special garment, but ordinary clean, clothes" (J. C. Fenton, *Saint Matthew Pelican Gospel Commentaries*, 1963) *ad loc.* While on the night of their Baptism the candidates would be literally all in white (the Easter color, as Lancelot Andrewes observed), in the Greek Koine "white garments" meant simply "dressed in one's best" (Telfer). In Ch. 4, Cyril explains and applies the metaphor; cf. 3.2.

¹⁸ Reichel encloses this parenthesis in square brackets, presumably as an interpolation, but his justifying note is obscure.

¹⁴ Or, keeping the apparently universal meaning of *synesis*, "What a conscience!" Then the phrase is probably either Cyril's interpretation of, or a scribal gloss upon, "What a color!"

Ponder, I bid you, the fate of that intruder, and look to your own safety.

(4) For our part, as Christ's ministers we have given a welcome to every man and, in the role of porter, have left the door ajar. You, maybe, have come in with your soul befouled with the mire of sin and with your purpose¹⁵ sullied. You came in; you were accepted; your name was entered in the register. Do you see the majesty of the Church? Do you behold, I ask, its order and discipline, the reading of the Scriptures, the presence of the ecclesiastical orders, the regular sequence of instruction? You are on holy ground; be taught by what you see. Withdraw in a good hour now, and come back in a right good hour tomorrow. If the fashion of your soul was avarice, put on another fashion, and then come in. Put off, I say, lewdness and impurity; put on the bright robe of chastity. I give you timely warning before Jesus, the Bridegroom of souls, comes in and sees the fashions. You cannot plead short notice; forty days are yours for repentance; you have opportunity in plenty for undressing, for laundry-work, for dressing again and returning. If you persist in an evil

¹⁵ *Proairesis* (resolve, intention, motive, project) is important in the *Catecheses* as also in first-century Jewish proselyte baptism, where conversion had to be intended or chosen for its own sake and not as a means, or as incidental, to something else; cf. D. Daube, *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (Oxford 1956).

¹⁶ (*Katexiōtikēs*) Apparently, therefore, in Cyril's time acceptance for registration was not automatic. In Aethiopia's time (ca. 390?; *Peregrinatio* 45) intending candidates, having previously given in their names to a priest who jotted them down, on the eve of Lent attended a formal scrutiny by the bishop who inquired of their neighbors whether they could give them a good character. If so, he formally entered their names in the register; else "he told them to go out and reform themselves . . . and then approach the Laver." Cyril probably means that, like his imaginary door-keeper in the parable, he had given the candidates the benefit of any doubt, reflecting no doubt that only God can read the heart. He regularly (cf. Telfer) puts the responsibility on the candidates; cf. 1.3. Nevertheless, the first sentence of Ch. 15 reminds us that in most churches there were periodical scrutinies during the final stages of preparation for Baptism. Candidates for admission to the Qumran community were examined to test their "spirit and learning"; while they practiced periodical ritual bathing, it is disputed whether admission to the order was by a bath after a period of instruction and probation.

purpose, the preacher is guiltless, but you must not expect to receive the grace. Though the water will not refuse to receive you, you will get no welcome from the Spirit.¹⁷ If anyone is conscious of a wound in himself, let him have it dressed; if any has fallen, let him rise. Let there be no Simon among you, no hypocrite—and no Paul Pry.

(5) Perhaps you have come with a different motive: perhaps you are courting, and a girl is your reason—or, conversely, a boy. Many a time, too, a slave has wished to please his master, or a friend his friend. I allow the bait, and I welcome you in the trust that, however unsatisfactory the motive that has brought you, your good hope will soon save you. Maybe you did not know where you were going, or what sort of net it was in which you were to be caught. You are a fish caught in the net of the Church. Let yourself be taken alive: don't try to escape. It is Jesus who is playing you on His line, not to kill you, but, by killing you, to make you

¹⁷ Here as in Ch. 2, Cyril seems to attribute the reception of the Spirit to water (rather than to chrism). In 3.3 also, the "spiritual grace" is given "with the water," and it is natural to read 3.3 as saying that it is in the baptismal bath that the Holy Spirit seals souls, as is said explicitly in 3.4. In 3.5, "the gift" of "grace" (*charis*) is "given through water," the fairest of the four elements, and Cyril quotes Gen. 1.1. In 1.2 also, "the grace" is given, along with the new birth, in the "Holy Bath," and 1.5 shows that "the grace" includes "the communication of" (or "participation in") the Holy Spirit as well as the forgiveness of sins (3.2, 12, 15, 16). It is natural to read 1.2 and 3.3 as meaning that the Seal, like regeneration and adoption, is given in "the Holy Bath," as is stated explicitly in 3.4. Thus, while the *Catecheses* think of the Holy Spirit as working in the Baptismal water, in the *Mystagogica*, by contrast, the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Christ at Jordan is (3.1) distinguished from His actual baptism, and (3.1-2) in the sacramental initiation the unction is correspondingly distinguished from water-baptism and it is in the post-baptismal unction that the Holy Spirit descends. In the *Mystagogica*, therefore, the Chrismation rivals Baptism in importance and it is (3.5) only after Chrismation (Confirmation) that one becomes really entitled to the name of "Christian." Many scholars, however, have argued that the *Catecheses* and *Mystagogica* can be harmonized by supposing that in the *Catecheses* "Baptism" often refers to the whole initiatory rite and thus includes Chrismation. To settle this question, one must notice what effects the *Catecheses* ascribe not simply to "Baptism," but to the water. It is, I think, impossible to harmonize the two works on this point.

alive. For you must die and rise again. Did you not hear the Apostle say: "dead to sin, but living to justice?"¹⁸ Die, then, to sin, and live to righteousness; from today be alive.

(6) What honor Jesus bestows! You used to be called a catechumen, when the truth was being dimmed into you from without:¹⁹ hearing about the Christian hope without understanding it; hearing about the Mysteries without having a spiritual perception of them; hearing the Scriptures but not sounding their depths. No longer in your ears now but in your heart is that ringing; for the indwelling Spirit henceforth makes your soul the house of God. When you hear the texts from Scripture concerning the Mysteries,²⁰ then you will have a spiritual perception of things once beyond your ken.

Do not suppose that it is a small thing that you are being given. You, a pitiable creature, are receiving the family name of God. Listen to Paul saying: "God is faithful."²¹ Listen to another Scripture saying God is "faithful and just."²² It was because he foresaw this—because men were to bear a name which belongs to God—that the Psalmist, speaking in the person of God, said: "I have said: you are gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High."²³ But take care that you do not, while rejoicing in the name of "faithful," have the resolve of the faithless. You have entered for a race: run the course; you will not get the like chance again. If it were your wedding day that was fixed, would you not, ignoring everything else, be wholly engaged in preparations for the marriage

¹⁸ Cf. Rom. 6.11; 1 Pet. 2.24.

¹⁹ The word-play of the Greek depends on the derivation of "catechumen," etc., from *êchê*, "a ringing sound" (cf. "echo"); *katechê* then means "sound a thing in a person's ears," hence "teach by word of mouth," and finally, "instruct in the elements (of Christianity)."

²⁰ "Mystery" in the Greek Church corresponds to the word "sacrament" in the Latin Church, especially the initiatory rites. In Cyril, "mysteries" also covers (eg., 6.29) the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, which Cyril equates with the Creed. In this broad sense, "the Mysteries" cover the subjects of both series of *Catecheses*.

²¹ 1 Cor. 1.9.

²² 1 John 1.9.

²³ Ps. 80.6.

feast? Then, on the eve of consecrating your soul to your heavenly Spouse, will you not put by the things of the body to win those of the spirit?

(7) A man cannot be baptized a second and a third time. Otherwise, he could say: "I failed once; the second time I shall succeed." Fail once, and there is no putting it right. For, "one Lord, one faith, one Baptism." It is only heretics who are rebaptized, and then because the first was no Baptism.²⁴

²⁴ Here we abandon RR, who adopted M 1's "splendid text" ("praecleara lectio"), "some heretics," and follow the great majority of MSS and Toulte. Toulte judged that Reg's omission of this sentence was due to haplography and not to the scribe's being shocked by Cyril's contradicting the teaching of the (medieval Western) Church. There seems, however, little doubt that Reg's omission and M 1's variant ("too good to be true") are due to some such scruple. If M 1's text were the original, the variants would be inexplicable. But, whereas since Augustine and probably since the Council of Arles (314; can. 9 [8]) heretical Baptism, if administered in the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, has usually (but see Nic. Can. 19) been deemed valid in the Western Church, Eastern practice has been much less uniform. Even the decision of Nicea (Can. 19, and cf. 8) that convert Paganists, though not Novatians, must be rebaptized (*anabaptizesthai*), explained by Athanasius (*Orat. c. Ariam. 242-43*) in relation to their defective Trinitarian faith, is much closer to Cyril's principle, than to Arles' since most fourth-century heresies were Trinitarian.

Telfer takes Cyril to mean that certain heretical sects do "repeat baptism," i.e., practice frequent ritual ablutions. This, though ingenious, seems less probable. The PGL seems to show no parallel for this meaning of *baptizomai*; rather, the *ana* implies the repetition (cf. *anabaptizo, anaphes*) of an act or state conceived of as normally unrepeatable or unrecoverable. Cyril seems to interpret "One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism" as excluding both the repeatability of a Baptism associated with the one Faith and the possibility of a true Baptism apart from it. Lest, however, we rashly judge Cyril a bigoted rigorist, we must remember that for him (*Gal. 4.3-18; 5.12*) "the Faith" was almost synonymous with the Creed. The "heretics" to whom he refers were no doubt the far-out Gnostic sectaries and particularly, perhaps, the Manichees, who were scarcely Christians at all (6.12). For in 6.14, he says: "The inventor of all heresy was Simon Magus" (the reputed founder of Gnosticism) and in 6.20 he speaks of hating "all heretics" but especially Mani, though the Manichees (6.21) were "not of Christian origin." To the groups whom he thought of as "heretics," Cyril's attitude was uncompromising: 4.37; 6.35; 15.9 (probably referring to both Arians and Sabellians; cf. 4.8; 11.13; 16.17); 4.2. For an English translation of the principal documents in the third-century re-baptism controversy, cf. J. Stevenson, *A New Eusebius* (London 1957) 251-267, 323, 360-364.

(8) God requires of us only one thing, sincerity. Do not go on saying, "But how are my sins blotted out?" I answer: "By assenting, by believing." Could any answer be more succinct? If, however, not your heart but only your lips proclaim your assent, well, it is the "Reader of hearts"²⁵ who is your Judge. From today cease from every evil deed; let not your tongue speak unholy words, nor your eye commit evil or rove after vanities.

(9) Let your feet take you swiftly to the catarchical instructions. Submit to the exorcisms devoutly.²⁶ Whether you are breathed upon or exorcised, the act spells salvation. Imagine virgin gold alloyed with various foreign substances: copper, tin, iron, lead. What we are after is the gold alone; and gold cannot be purified of its dross without fire. Similarly, the soul cannot be purified without exorcisms, exorcisms which, since they are called from the divine Scriptures, possess divine power. The veiling of your face is to foster recollection, lest a roving eye make your heart also stray. But the veiling of the eyes does not hinder the ears from receiving salvation.²⁷ Just as goldsmiths with their delicate instruments direct a blast upon the fire and, by agitating the surrounding flame, cause the gold hidden in the crucible to bubble up and so gain their object, in the same way when the exorcists inspire fear by means of the divine Spirit²⁸ and regenerate the soul by fire in the crucible of the body, our enemy the Devil flees, and we are left with salvation and the sure prospect of eternal life; and henceforth, the soul, purified of its offenses, has

²⁵ Cf. Acts 1:24; 15:8.

²⁶ In Aetheria's time (*Peregr. 46*), the candidates were exorcized daily by "the clerics" after the dawn service in the Church of the Resurrection. The exorcizing and teaching (in the Great Church, i.e., "Golgotha" or "The Martyr") occupied three hours, from six to nine.

²⁷ Whereas for Greek philosophy, knowledge tends to be the analogue of visual perception of form and so objective, impersonal and universal, in the biblical tradition saving knowledge is a matter of a personal response of faith, and obedience to an audible word of invitation and command.

²⁸ In Hebrew (cf. Gen. 1:1 and 2:7), Greek, and Latin, the same word means "spirit" and "breath."

Cyril promises further instruction on the reception of Baptism on Easter day itself, and on the days following Easter other discourses on the various mysteries of which the baptized are to become partakers.

To the modern reader Cyril's accommodation of Scripture texts will often seem strained or farfetched. Assuming that the record of the Old Testament is prophetic, he is constantly discovering what he believes to be prophetic anticipation of the events in the life of our Lord. This is particularly true in connection with His passion, death, resurrection and second coming. As for Cyril's position on the Trinity, I would here state that I do not accept some of the findings set out in pp. 34-60 above.

In the rendering of Cyril's biblical quotations into English, use has been made of the version published under the patronage of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. When the Confraternity rendering is based on texts that do not correspond with Cyril's Greek, the necessary adaptations have been made.

LEO P. McCauley, S.J.

CATECHESIS I

An Introductory Discourse to the Candidates for Baptism

*"Wash yourselves clean! Put away the misdeeds of your souls from before my eyes . . ."*¹

(1) Disciples of the New Testament, sharers in the mysteries of Christ—as yet by calling only, but presently by grace as well—"make for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit,"² that you may become a subject of joy for the citizens of heaven. For if there is joy "over one sinner who repents,"³ according to the gospel, how much more will the salvation of so many souls gladden the blessed saints? You have entered upon a good and glorious course: run the holy race in good earnest. Eager for your redemption, the Only-begotten Son of God is present among us; He says: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest."⁴ Clothed as you are in the rough garments of your offenses and "held fast in the meshes of your own sins,"⁵ listen to the prophet's voice saying: "Wash yourselves clean! Put away the misdeeds of your souls from before my eyes,"⁶ that the angelic choir may chant over you: "Happy they whose faults are taken away, whose sins are covered."⁷ Guard unquenched in your hands the torches of faith you have just lighted, that He who of old here on all-holy Golgotha opened

1 Cf. Isa. 1.16.
2 Ezech. 18.31.
3 Luke 15.7.
4 Matt. 11.28.
5 Cf. Prov. 5.22.
6 Cf. Isa. 1.16.
7 Ps. 51.1.

up Paradise to the robber because of his faith, may grant you grace to sing the bridal song.

(2) If any man here is a slave of sin, let faith fit him for the new birth of adoption that will set him free. Exchanging the ignoble bondage of his sins for the blessed bondage of the Lord, let him be counted worthy to inherit the kingdom of heaven. By confession,⁸ "put off the old man which is being corrupted through his deceptive lusts,"⁹ to put on the new man which is being renewed unto perfect knowledge of his Creator.¹⁰ Attain by faith the pledge of the Holy Spirit that you may win admittance into the everlasting tabernacles.¹¹ Come forward for the mystical seal, that you may be recognizable by the Lord. Be numbered in the holy, spiritual flock of Christ, that you may be set apart on His right hand and inherit the life prepared for you. For the lot of those still clothed in the rough garments of their sins is on His left hand, because they did not attain the grace of God, which is given through Christ, in the regeneration of Baptism. I do not mean corporal regeneration, but the spiritual regeneration of the soul. For bodies are born of visible parents, but souls are reborn through faith. For, "the Spirit breathes where he will."¹² Then you may hear, if you are worthy: "Well done, good and faithful servant,"¹³ when you have been found free in conscience from hypocrisy.

(3) If there is any man here who thinks of tempting God's grace, he deceives himself and knows not its power. Let every man keep his soul free from deceit, because of Him who searches hearts and reins.¹⁴ For just as those who set about levying an army examine the ages and constitutions

⁸ "confession": The confession referred to here and elsewhere in the *Catechesis* is obviously not secret auricular confession, but a public acknowledgment of sins and faults committed in the past.

⁹ Eph. 4.22.

¹⁰ Cf. Eph. 4.24; Col. 3.10.

¹¹ Cf. Luke 16.9.

¹² Cf. John 3.8 (Douay).

¹³ Matt. 25.21.

¹⁴ Cf. Ps. 7.10.

of those who enlist, so the Lord, when He raises His levy of souls, examines their motives; and where He finds a secret hypocrisy, He rejects the man as unfit for the true service. But if He finds a man worthy, He readily bestows His grace upon him. He does not give what is holy to the dogs, but where He discerns a worthy motive, there He confers the wonderful seal of salvation. Before this demons tremble whereas angels acknowledge it, so that the former are put to flight while the latter honor it as something kindred. The recipients of this spiritual and saving seal must have the proper disposition. For as the pen or the dart requires the hand of the user, so grace also demands believers.

(4) The armor you receive is not corruptible but spiritual. The paradise into which you are to be planted is not seen by the eye. You are being given a new name you did not possess. Instead of catechumen, you will now be called a Believer. From now on, you are grafted upon the stock of the spiritual olive, like a slip transplanted from the wild olive into the good olive tree, from sin to righteousness, from corruption to purity. You are to be made partaker of the holy vine.¹⁵ If you abide in the vine, you will grow as a fruitful branch; if you will not abide, you will be consumed by fire. Let us then bear fruit worthily. May we be spared the fate of the barren fig tree; may Jesus not come even now and curse us for our barrenness. Grant that all may be able to say: "I, like a green olive tree in the house of God,"¹⁶ an olive tree not visible to the eye, but spiritual and luminous. While it rests with Him to plant and water, it is your part to bring forth fruit. It rests with God to bestow grace, but with you to accept and cherish it. Do not despise the grace because it is freely given, but rather cherish it with reverence once you have received it.

(5) Now is the time for confession. Confess your transgressions, whether in word or deed, by night or day. Con-

¹⁵ Cf. John 15.1, 4, 5, 6.

¹⁶ Ps. 51.10.

ness at the accepted time, and on the day of salvation receive the treasure of heaven. Be earnest about the exorcisms. Be constant in attending the catecheses and be mindful of their teachings. For they are delivered not merely that you may listen to them, but that you may seal by faith what you have heard. Banish from your mind all human concerns, for the race you are running is for your soul. You are forsaking completely the things of the world: little are the things you leave behind, great are those bestowed by the Lord. Lay aside things of the present and put your trust in things to come. You have passed through so many cycles of years in the vain service of the world: will you not spare forty days for the sake of your soul? "Desist and confess that I am God,"¹⁷ says Scripture. Renounce idle gossip; do not slander nor listen readily to the slanderer, but be prompt to prayer. Show in ascetic practice the firmness of your heart. Make clean your vessel that you may receive more grace. For though the remission of sins is granted to all alike, the communication of the Holy Spirit¹⁸ is granted in proportion to the faith of each. If you labor little, you will receive little; if you work hard, your reward will be great. You are running for yourself, so look to your own advantage.

(6) If you have aught against any man, forgive it him. You are coming forward to receive the remission of your own sins; you must, in turn, pardon him who has offended you. Else with what face will you say to the Lord: "forgive me my many sins," if you yourself have not forgiven the few sins of your fellow-servant? Be zealous in your attendance at Church, not only now when the clergy demand diligence,

¹⁷ Ps. 45.11.

¹⁸ Chapter 5: "Communication of the Holy Spirit": Cyril distinguishes two effects of baptism, first the remission of sins, which all who sincerely approach the sacrament receive; secondly, positive graces, or as he puts it, "the communication of the Holy Spirit." The second effect will vary, he feels, according to the fervor of faith and intensity of love of God on the part of the recipient. Note that the baptism of John (Gal. 3.7) grants remission of sin but not the communication of the Holy Spirit.

but after receiving the grace. For if before its reception it was a good practice, is it not good thereafter? If before your engraving it is a safe course to be watered and tended, is it not far better after the planting? Sustain the struggle for your soul, especially in these days. Nurture your soul with holy readings; for the Lord has prepared for you a spiritual table. Repeat in the words of the Psalmist: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. In verdant pastures he gives me repose; beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul";¹⁹ that the angels, too, may share your joy, and Christ Himself, the great High Priest, ratifying your purpose, may offer all of you to the Father, saying: "Behold, I and my children whom God has given me."²⁰ May He keep all of you well-pleasing to Himself, to whom be glory for the endless ages of eternity. Amen.

¹⁹ Ps. 23.1-3.

²⁰ Heb. 2.13.

CATECHESIS III

On Baptism

*"Do you not know that all we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into his death? For we were buried with him by means of Baptism into death, [in order that, just as Christ has arisen from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life]."*¹

(1) "Rejoice, O ye heavens, and let the earth be glad,"² in honor of those who are to be sprinkled with hyssop, and cleansed by the spiritual hyssop and by the power of Him who, in His Passion, was offered drink on a stalk of hyssop. Let the heavenly powers rejoice, and let the souls who are to be united with their spiritual Spouse prepare themselves. For there is "the voice of one crying in the desert: Make ready the way of the Lord."³ For this is no slight matter, no ordinary or common fleshly union, but the election according to faith by the Spirit who "searches all things."⁴ For worldly marriages and contracts are not always made with judgment, and the bridegroom is quickly swayed wherever there is wealth or beauty. But here there is concern not for beauty of body, but for the blameless conscience of soul; not for the accursed Mammon, but for the wealth of the soul in piety.

(2) Yield then, O children of justice, to the urging of John,

¹ Rom. 6:3, 4.
² Cf. Ps. 95:11; Isa. 49:13.
³ Cf. Isa. 40:3.
⁴ 1 Cor. 2:10.

when he says: "Make ready the way of the Lord."⁵ Remove all hindrances and stumbling blocks, that you may hold a straight course unto eternal life. Make ready the vessels of the soul, purifying them by sincere faith, for the receiving of the Holy Spirit. Begin to wash your garments through repentance that, when you are called to the bridal chamber, you may be found clean. For the Bridegroom invites all without distinction, for His grace is bountifully bestowed, and the cry of His loud-voiced heralds draws all together; but He Himself thereafter separates those who have come in.⁶ God forbid that any of those enrolled should now hear those words: "Friend, how didst thou come in here without a wedding garment?"⁷ Rather, may you all hear: "Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many: enter into the joy of thy master."⁸ Up to now you have stood outside the gate, but may all of you be able to say: "The king hath brought me into his storerooms";⁹ "Let my soul be joyful in the Lord: for he has clothed me with a garment of salvation and a robe of gladness; like a bridegroom he has adorned me with a diadem; like a bride, bedecked me with jewels."¹⁰ Thus may the souls of all of you be found "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."¹¹ I do not mean before you have received the grace (for how could that be true of you who are called for the remission of sins?) but that, the grace given, your conscience, being found blameless, may be suitable for grace.

(3) This is a truly serious matter, my brethren, and you must approach it with great care. Each of you is to stand before God, in the presence of myriads of the angelic host. The Holy Spirit is about to imprint a seal upon your souls.

⁵ John 1:23.
⁶ Cf. Matt. 22:9, 10.
⁷ Matt. 22:12.
⁸ Matt. 25:23.
⁹ Cf. Cant. 1:3.
¹⁰ Isa. 61:10 (Sept.).
¹¹ Eph. 5:27.

You are to be enlisted in the service of the Great King. Therefore prepare and equip yourselves, not by putting on shining white garments, but piety of soul with a good conscience. Regard not the laver as fresh water, but look to the spiritual grace given with the water. For just as the offerings on the pagan altars, though morally neutral in themselves, become defiled by the invocation of the idols, so contrariwise the plain water, after the invocation of Holy Spirit, and Christ, and Father, acquires a power of sanctification.

(4) For since man's nature is twofold, compounded of soul and body, the purification is also twofold, incorporeal for the incorporeal part, bodily for the body. For as the water purifies the body, so the Spirit seals the soul, that having our hearts sprinkled, and our bodies washed with clean water, we may draw near to God.¹² Therefore when about to enter the water, regard it not as mere water, but look for its saving power by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, for without both you cannot be made perfect. It is not I who say this, but the Lord Jesus, who has the power in this matter, says: "Unless a man be born again, of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."¹³ Neither does he who is baptized, but has not been deemed worthy of the Spirit, possess perfect grace; nor will a man who acts virtuously, but does not receive the seal by water, enter into the kingdom of heaven. This may appear a bold saying, but it is not mine, for it was Jesus who pronounced it. And here is the proof of the statement from inspired Scripture. Cornelius was a just man, deemed worthy of a vision of angels, a man who had set up his prayers and alms as a fair column in the heavens in the sight of God. Peter came, and the Spirit was poured out upon those that believed, and they spoke with divers tongues and they prophesied.¹⁴ And yet after the grace of the Spirit, Scripture says that Peter "ordered them to be

¹² Cf. Heb. 10.22.

¹³ John 3.5.

¹⁴ Cf. Acts 10.46.

baptized in the name of Jesus Christ,"¹⁵ that after the soul had been regenerated by faith, the body also, by means of the water, might share the grace.

(5) But if any man wishes to know why the grace is given through water instead of some other element, he will find the answer if he takes up the divine Scriptures. For water is a noble thing and the fairest of the four visible elements of the world. Heaven is the dwelling place of angels, but the heavens are from the waters. Earth is the home of men, and the earth is from the waters. And before the whole six days' formation of created things, "The spirit of God was stirring above the waters."¹⁶ With water the world began; the Jordan saw the beginning of the Gospels. The sea was the means of Israel's liberation from Pharaoh, and freedom for the world from sin comes through the laver of water in the Word of God.¹⁷ Wherever there is a covenant there also is water. After the deluge, a covenant was made with Noe; it was given from Mount Sinai, but "with water and scarlet wool and hyssop."¹⁸ Elias was taken up, but not without water; for first he crosses the Jordan, and only then mounts to heaven in a chariot. The high priest washes himself, then offers incense; for Aaron was first washed, then became high priest. For how could one who had not yet been cleansed by water pray for others? Further, the laver had been set within the tabernacle, as a symbol of baptism.

(6) Baptism marks the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New. For its author was John, than whom there was no one greater among those born of women.¹⁹ He marked the end of the Prophets: "For all the prophets and the Law were until John."²⁰ He likewise marks the beginning

¹⁵ Acts 10.48.

¹⁶ Gen. 1.2. The opening verses of Genesis seem to refer to water as prime matter. Water is mentioned in Scripture more often than the other three elements.

¹⁷ Cf. Eph. 5.26.

¹⁸ Heb. 9.19.

¹⁹ Cf. Matt. 11.11.

²⁰ Cf. Matt. 11.13; Luke 16.16.

of the things of the Gospel: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ," and what follows: "There came John in the desert, baptizing."²¹ You may mention Elias, who was taken up to heaven, but he is not greater than John. Enoch was transported, but he is not greater than John. Mightiest was Moses the lawgiver, and all the Prophets, but they are not greater than John. It is not I who venture to compare Prophets with Prophets, but their Master and ours who has declared: "Among those born of women, there has not risen a greater than John."²² He does not say, "among those born of virgins," but, "of women." The comparison is between the great servant and his fellow-servants; but the pre-eminence and the grace of the Son over the household is beyond compare. Do you see how great a man God chose to be the first minister of this grace? He was a man who possessed nothing, a lover of solitude, but no hater of mankind; who ate locusts, and fitted wings to his soul, satisfying his hunger with honey, and speaking words sweeter and more wholesome than honey; clad in a garment of camel's hair, and showing in himself the model of the ascetic life; who was sanctified by the Holy Spirit when still borne in his mother's womb. Jeremia also was sanctified, but he did not prophesy in the womb. Only John leaped for joy when still being carried in the womb.²³ Without seeing Him with the eyes of the body, he recognized his Master by the Spirit. For since the grace of Baptism was a great one, it called for greatness in its author.

(7) John was baptizing in the Jordan and there went out to him all Jerusalem, to have the benefit of the first-fruits of baptism;²⁴ for the prerogative of all good things is in Jerusalem. But notice, O people of Jerusalem, how those who went out were baptized by him "confessing their sins."²⁵ First they displayed their wounds; then he applied the remedies,

²¹ Mark 1.1, 4.
²² Matt. 11.11.
²³ Cf. Luke 1.44.
²⁴ Cf. Matt. 3.5.
²⁵ *Ibid.* 6.

and to those who believed he granted redemption from eternal fire. And if you wish a proof on this point, that the baptism of John was a redemption from the threat of fire, listen to his own words: "Brood of vipers, who has shown you to flee from the wrath to come?"²⁶ Be not, then, henceforth a viper, but though you were once of viper's brood, put off, he says, your former sinful nature. For every snake, retreating into a nook, puts off its age, and sloughing off its skin by constriction, henceforth is rejuvenated; so you, too, enter in through the narrow and straitened gate; constrain yourself by fasting, do violence to what threatens your destruction. "Strip off the old man with his deeds,"²⁷ and say in the words of the Canticles: "I have taken off my robe, how am I then to put it on?"²⁸

But perhaps there is some hypocrite among you, who seeks the favor of men and makes a pretense of piety, but does not believe from the heart, who with the hypocrisy of Simon Magus approaches not to share in the grace, but out of meddlesome curiosity concerning what is given. Let him listen to John: "For even now the ax is laid at the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that is not bringing forth good fruit is to be cut down, and thrown into the fire."²⁹ The Judge is inexorable, so cast aside your hypocrisy.

(8) What must be done, then, and what are the fruits of repentance? "Let him who has two tunics share with him who has none."³⁰ Now the teacher was one worthy of credence, since he had first put his teaching into practice; he was not ashamed to speak, for his tongue was not checked by a bad conscience. "And let him who has food do likewise."³¹ While aspiring to the grace of the Holy Spirit for yourself, will you deny bodily food to the poor? Do you seek great things, but share not the small?

²⁶ *Ibid.* 7.
²⁷ Col. 3.9.
²⁸ Cant. 3.5.
²⁹ Matt. 3.10.
³⁰ Luke 3.11.
³¹ *Ibid.*

make your own soul safe, by fasting, prayers, alms, and the reading of the divine oracles, that living in temperance and in the observance of pious doctrines for the rest of your time in the flesh, you may enjoy the one salvation of the laver of baptism, and so, enrolled in the heavenly hosts by God the Father, you may be deemed worthy of the heavenly crowns, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

CATECHESIS V

On Faith

"Now faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that are not seen; for by it the men of old had testimony borne to them."¹

(1) How great a dignity the Lord confers upon you in transferring you from the rank of catechumens to that of the faithful Paul the Apostle indicates when he says: "God is faithful, by him you have been called into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ."² For, since God is called faithful, you also, in receiving this title, receive a great dignity. For as God is called Good, and Just, and Almighty, and Creator of the universe, so also is He called faithful. Consider then to what a dignity you are being exalted in that you are about to become a sharer of a title of God.

(2) Moreover, it is required that each of you be found faithful in conscience.³ For, "it is a task to find a faithful man."⁴ Not that you should show your conscience to me—for not by man's day are you to be judged⁵—but that you may show the sincerity of your faith to God, "the searcher of reins and hearts,"⁶ who "knows the thoughts of men."⁷ A great thing is a faithful man, no man is so rich as he. For,

¹ Heb. 11.1, 2.

² 1 Cor. 1.9.

³ Cf. 1 Cor. 4.2.

⁴ Prov. 20.6 (Sept.).

⁵ Cf. 1 Cor. 4.3.

⁶ Ps. 7.10.

⁷ Ps. 93.11.

"to the faithful man belongs the whole world of riches,"⁸ inasmuch as he disdains wealth and tramples it underfoot. For those who in appearance are rich, though they have many possessions, are yet poor in soul; for the more they amass, the more they pine with longing for what they lack. But the believer, paradoxically, is rich even when poor; for knowing that we have need only of raiment and food, and being content with these, he has trampled riches underfoot.⁹

(3) It is not only among us, who are marked with the name of Christ, that the dignity of faith is great; all the business of the world, even of those outside the Church, is accomplished by faith.¹⁰ By faith, marriage laws join in union persons who are strangers one to another; the spouses, though erstwhile strangers, bestow on each other their bodies and material possessions, because of faith in the marriage contracts. By faith agriculture is sustained; for a man does not endure the toil involved unless he believes that he will reap a harvest. By faith, seafaring men, entrusting themselves to a tiny wooden craft, exchange the solid element of the land for the unstable motion of the waves, surrendering themselves to uncertain hopes and carrying about with them a faith more sure than any anchor. Most of the affairs of men, then, depend on faith; and not only among us does this hold true, but also, as I have said, among those outside the fold. For though they do not accept the Scriptures but advance certain doctrines of their own, yet even these they receive on faith.

(4) The lesson read today likewise calls you to the true faith, as it points out the way by which you must please God; for it says that "without faith it is impossible to please [God]."¹¹ For when will a man propose to serve God, unless he believes that He is a rewarder?¹² When will a young

⁸ Prov. 17.6 (Sept.).

⁹ Cf. 1 Tim. 6.8.

¹⁰ This chapter constitutes an excellent approach to the meaning of faith.

¹¹ Heb. 11.6.

¹² Cf. *ibid.*

woman lead the life of a virgin or a young man a life of self-control, unless they believe that for chastity there is a never-fading crown? Faith is the eye that enlightens every conscience and produces understanding; for the Prophet says: "If you will not believe, you shall not understand."¹³ Faith stops up the mouths of lions;¹⁴ according to Daniel; for Scripture says of him: "Daniel was removed from the den, unhurt because he trusted in his God."¹⁵ Is there anything more terrible than the devil? Yet, even against him, we have no other armor than faith, a spiritual shield against an invisible enemy. For he discharges manifold arrows, and shoots in the dark those who are not vigilant;¹⁶ but, though the enemy is unseen, we have our faith as a strong protection, according to the saying of the Apostle: "In all things taking up the shield of faith, with which you may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the most wicked one."¹⁷ Oftentimes a fiery dart of desire of base indulgence is discharged by the devil; but faith, representing to us the Judgment, and cooling the mind, extinguishes the dart.

(5) Much is to be said about faith, and the whole day would not suffice for us to discourse fully upon it. For the present let us be content with Abraham as an example from the Old Testament, since of him also we have become sons by faith. He was justified, not by works alone, but by faith. For he had done many things well, yet he was never called friend of God but when he believed;¹⁸ and further, every deed of his was perfected by faith. By faith, he left his parents; by faith, he left country, district, and home. Just as he was justified, so you also will be justified. He was dead in body for the further begetting of children; for he was an old man, his wife Sara was old also, and there was no hope left

¹³ Isa. 7.9 (Sept.).

¹⁴ Cf. Dan. 6.23; Heb. 11.33.

¹⁵ Dan. 6.24.

¹⁶ Cf. Ps. 10.3.

¹⁷ Eph. 6.16.

¹⁸ Cf. Gen. 15.6; James 2.23.

of offspring. God promised offspring to the old man; and Abraham was not weak in faith,¹⁹ and considering his own body now dead, he looked not to the weakness of his body, but to the power of Him who promised, believing "that he who had given the promise was faithful,"²⁰ and so from bodies as good as dead, beyond all expectation, he obtained a son. Then, after begetting a son, when he was commanded to offer him, though he had already heard the words: "In Isaac thy seed shall be called,"²¹ he proceeded to offer his only-begotten son to God, "reasoning that God has power to raise up even from the dead."²² And when he had bound his son and placed him on the wood, in will, indeed, he sacrificed him, but by the goodness of God, who supplied him a lamb in place of his child, he received his son alive. Therefore, because he was faithful, he was sealed unto righteousness, and he received circumcision as the seal of the faith which he had while uncircumcised,²³ having received a promise that he would be "the father of a multitude of nations."²⁴

(6) Let us see in what respect Abraham is the father of many nations. Admittedly, he is the father of the Jews, by succession according to the flesh. But if we look only to succession according to the flesh, we shall be forced to say that the oracle is false; for he is no longer father of all of us according to the flesh. But the example of his faith makes us all sons of Abraham. How and in what manner? It is incredible among men that one should rise from the dead; as it is likewise incredible that offspring be born of aged persons as good as dead. But when Christ is preached as having been crucified on the tree, as having died and risen again, we believe it. By the likeness of our faith, therefore, we become the adopted sons of Abraham; and consequent upon our faith,

19 Rom. 4.19.
20 Heb. 11.11.
21 Heb. 11.18.
22 Heb. 11.19.
23 Cf. Rom. 4.11.
24 Gen. 17.5.

like him we receive the spiritual seal, being circumcised by the Holy Spirit through the laver of baptism, not in the forskin of the body, but in the heart, according to the words of Jeremia: "For the sake of the Lord, be circumcised, remove the forskins of your hearts,"²⁵ and according to the Apostle: In the "circumcision which is of Christ, buried together with him in baptism," and so forth.²⁶

(7) If we guard this faith, we shall be free from condemnation and be adorned with virtues of every kind. For the power of faith is so great that it even buoys up men walking upon the sea. Peter was a man like ourselves, composed of flesh and blood, and living on like foods. But when Jesus said: "Come,"²⁷ believing, he walked upon the waters, having in his faith a support firmer than any natural ground, and upholding the weight of his body by the buoyancy of his faith. Now as long as he believed, he had firm footing upon the water, but when he doubted, then he began to sink; for as his faith gradually gave way, his body also was drawn down along with it. Realizing his predicament, Jesus, who cures our souls' sicknesses, said: "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?"²⁸ Then, strengthened by Him who grasped his right hand, as soon as he had recovered his faith, led by the hand of the Master, he walked upon the waters as before. For the Gospel signifies this indirectly in the words: "And when they got into the boat."²⁹ For it does not say, swimming to the boat, Peter got into it, but it gives us to understand that, after retracing the distance he had traversed in going to Jesus, he re-entered the boat.

(8) Further, faith has such power that not only is the believer saved, but some have been saved through the faith of others. The man sick of the palsy in Capharnaum was not a believer; but those who brought him, and let him down

25 Jer. 4.4.
26 Cf. Col. 2.11, 12.
27 Matt. 14.29.
28 *Ibid.* 14.31.
29 *Ibid.* 14.32.

through the tiles, had faith; for the soul of the sick man shared the sickness of his body. And do not think that I accuse him rashly. The Gospel itself says: "Jesus seeing," not his faith but "their faith, he said to the paralytic, Arise."⁸⁰ They who brought him believed and the one sick with the palsy got the benefit of the cure.

(9) Do you wish to see with more certainty that some are saved by the faith of others? Lazarus died; one day had passed, and a second, and a third, and dissolution and putrefaction were already setting into his body. How could one four days dead believe and call upon the Redeemer on his own behalf? But what was lacking in the dead man was supplied by his sisters. For when the Lord came, one of them fell at His feet. To His question: "Where have you laid him?"⁸¹ she answered: "Lord, by this time he is already decayed, for he is dead four days."⁸² Then the Lord said: "If you believe, you shall behold the glory of God."⁸³ This was tantamount to saying: Wake up what is wanting in your dead brother's faith. And the sisters' faith, in fact, availed to recall the dead man from the gates of hell. Now if men, believing one for another, have been able to raise from the dead, will not you, if you believe sincerely on your own behalf, be profited all the more? Indeed, even though you be faithless or of little faith, the Lord is benevolent, and shows indulgence to you when you repent; only do you, too, say with all sincerity: "I do believe, Lord; help my unbelief."⁸⁴ But if you think that you are a believer, but have not yet attained the perfection of faith, you too have need of saying with the Apostles: Lord, "increase our faith."⁸⁵ For, while you have some part from yourself, the greater part you receive from Him.

(10) Though the term "faith" is one, as far as expression

⁸⁰ Matt. 9:2, 6.
⁸¹ John 11:34.
⁸² *Ibid.* 11:39.
⁸³ *Ibid.* 11:40.
⁸⁴ Mark 9:23.
⁸⁵ Luke 17:5.

goes, it may mean either of two things. Dogmatic faith involves an assent to some truth; and this truly profits the soul, as the Lord says: "He who hears my words, and believes him who sent me, has life everlasting; and does not come to judgment." And again: "He who believes in the Son is not judged, but has passed from death to life."⁸⁶ O the great loving-kindness of God! Now the just, indeed, in many years of service have pleased God; but what they succeeded in gaining by many years of well-pleasing service, this Jesus now bestows on you in a single hour. For, if you believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved and translated into paradise by Him who brought the robber into paradise. Doubt not that this is possible; for He who here on holy Golgotha saved the robber after a single hour of faith will save you also when you believe.

(11) There is a second kind of faith, which is bestowed by Christ as a special gift. "To one through the Spirit is given the utterance of wisdom; and to another the utterance of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit; to another the gift of healing."⁸⁷ Now this faith, given as a grace by the Spirit, is not only doctrinal, but also effects things beyond man's power. For whoever possesses this faith "will say to this mountain, 'Remove from here,' and it will remove."⁸⁸ For whenever anyone shall say this in faith, believing that it will come to pass, "and does not waver in his heart,"⁸⁹ then he receives that grace. It is of this grace that the saying stands: "If you have faith like a mustard seed."⁹⁰ For just as the mustard seed, tiny as it is, has a fiery power and, narrow though its seed-bed, has a mighty spread of branches, so that when full-grown it affords shelter to the birds of the air, so also faith, in a twinkling, produces mighty effects in the soul. For when it is enlightened by faith,

⁸⁶ John 3:18; 5:24.
⁸⁷ 1 Cor. 12:8, 9.
⁸⁸ Matt. 17:19.
⁸⁹ Mark 11:23.
⁹⁰ Matt. 17:19.

the soul has visions of God, and contemplates God, as far as it may; it ranges over the bounds of the universe, and before the consummation of this world, beholds the judgment and the payment of the promised rewards. Cherish therefore that faith which comes from yourself and is directed towards Him, that you may also receive from Him that faith which accomplishes things beyond man's power.

(12) In learning and professing the faith, embrace and guard that only which is now delivered to you by the Church, and confirmed by all the Scriptures. For since not everyone has both the education and the leisure required to read and know the Scriptures, to prevent the soul perishing from ignorance, we sum up the whole doctrine of the faith in a few lines. This summary I wish you to commit to memory, word for word, and to repeat among yourselves with all zeal, not writing it on paper, but engraving it by memory on the heart. Only take care, in rehearsing it, that no catechumen chance to overhear what has been delivered to you. Keep it as a provision for the way throughout the whole course of your life, and beyond this, never receive any other, even though we ourselves should change and contradict what we now teach; nay, even though an enemy angel, transformed into an angel of light, should try to lead you astray. For "even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel to you other than that which you have now received, let him be anathema."⁴¹ For the present, just listen and memorize the creed as I recite it, and you will receive in due course the proof from Scripture of each of its propositions. For not according to men's pleasure have the articles of faith been composed, but the most important points collected from the Scriptures make up one complete teaching of the faith. And just as the mustard seed in a small grain contains in embryo many future branches, so also the creed embraces in a few words all the religious knowledge in both the Old and the New Testament. Take heed, therefore, brethren, and hold fast to

⁴¹ Gal. 1.8, 9.

the teachings⁴² which are now delivered to you, and "write them on the tablet of your heart."⁴³

(13) Guard them with care else by chance the enemy may despoil those who have grown remiss, or some heretic may pervert the traditions entrusted to you. Faith is like opening a deposit account at the bank, as we have now done; but it is God who is the author. "I charge thee," as the Apostle says, "in the sight of God, who gives life to all things, and in the sight of Christ Jesus, who bore witness to that great claim before Pontius Pilate,"⁴⁴ that you keep this faith which is delivered unto you, without stain until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. A treasure of life has now been committed to you, and the Master will require the deposit at the time of His coming, which "he in his own time will make manifest, who is the blessed and the only sovereign, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; who alone has immortality and dwells in light inaccessible, whom no man has seen nor can see";⁴⁵ to whom be glory, honor, and power forever and ever. Amen.

⁴² 2 Thess. 2.14, 15.

⁴³ Prov. 7.3. The text of the Nicene creed follows this chapter in some manuscripts.

⁴⁴ 1 Tim. 6.13, 14.

⁴⁵ 1 Tim. 6.15, 16.