# CYRIL OF JERUSALEM

St Cyril was probably born about 313, that critical year in the history of the Church when the Emperor Constantine, feeling an attraction to Christianity that to begin with, at least, seems to have been largely superstition, granted Christians the right to practise their religion. This toleration soon developed into favour as the Emperor began to see in Christianity, rather than paganism, the influence he needed to cement together his widespread and diverse subjects. Soon, in 325, he was convening the first Oecumenical Council at Nicaea to restore the unity which the Arian heresy had shattered. St Cyril grew up in the aftermath of this Council, when the Nicene definition that the Son was consubstantial with the Father was opposed for a variety of reasons by many different parties. St Cyril tried to steer a middle way through this controversy; but was driven out of Jerusalem three times by the Arians.

Soon after the Council of Nicaea, Constantine, with the fervour of a convert and with a propagandist's instinct for what would appeal to the people, decided to build a sumptuous church in Jerusalem on what was traditionally held to be the site of the tomb where Jesus had been buried. While the foundations were being excavated, some find was made which was interpreted as miraculous proof that here indeed was the site of the Lord's Passion. By the end of the century there had grown up the legend of the discovery of the true cross by Constantine's mother Helen. A rock hill was also discovered, which was identified as the hill of Calvary; also a tomb cut out from the rock which was taken to be the tomb of Christ. The complex of Constantine's buildings on this site featured these three holy places: the crypt where the cross was discovered, Calvary and the tomb.

Over the place of the finding of the cross a Basilica was built; this came to be called the *Martyrion,* a term used to denote a chapel connected with a martyr's body or his relics. A structure within a circular church was built over the tomb; this was called the *Anastasis* or Resurrection. In the open court between the two churches stood the rock of Calvary, pared down and built round with masonry. On top of it a richly jewelled cross was set.

It was in these buildings that Cyril preached his catechetical sermons. They are usually dated to about the year 348, only thirteen years after the dedication of the Basilica, and a few years before he was consecrated bishop. Bishops sometimes delegated their catechetical duties to a priest. It was in this capacity apparently that Theodore of Mopsuestia and John Chrysostom as well as Cyril preached the sermons contained in this collection.[1] Sometimes even a layman, like Origen, fulfilled this function.[2]

Even before the dedication of the Basilica in 335 pilgrims began to make their way to the Holy Land. One pilgrim, a nun from Spain or the south of France, came to Jerusalem about the end of the fourth century. The detailed and lively account that this pilgrim, named Aetheria, wrote helps us to recapture the atmosphere of the Holy Week ceremonies celebrated on the scene of the original events and the enthusiasm of the new Christians as they applauded each point of the mystagogic catechetical sermons as they were preached in the *Anastasis*.

Perhaps the chief source of interest in these sermons lies in Cyril's theology of the Eucharist. The Eucharist is a sacrifice of propitiation (MC 5.8); it can be offered for the living and the dead (5.8, 9); the bread and wine are 'transformed' into the body and blood of Christ (4.6; 1.7; 5.7); the presence of Christ is brought about by the Epiclesis by which God the Father is asked to send down the Holy Spirit upon the offerings to transform

[1] There is, however, some reason for believing that these five sermons attributed to Cyril were in fact preached not by him but by John, his successor to the See of Jerusalem.

[2] Cf. Eusebius, *Church History,* vi. 3 and 19.



them into the body and blood of Christ (1.7; 5.7); prayer in the presence of the body and blood of Christ has a special efficacy (5.9); each particle of the Host is precious as it is the body of Christ (5.21); the spiritual effect of Holy Communion is obtained through our bodies, which absorb Christ's body and blood (4.3).

The best short introduction to Cyril's life and to various problems connected with the mystagogic catechesis is to be found in the introduction of the late Dr. F. L. Cross's edition of *St Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments* (S.P.C.K., 1966). His bibliography will prove of great use to any student who wishes to study the subject more deeply. A. A. Stephenson's introduction to Cyril's works in *The Fathers of the Church* series, vol. 61, also contains much valuable information. Volume 64, containing a translation of the Mystagogic Catecheses with introduction and notes, appeared only after the present book had gone to the press.

The following translation is based on a version made by Dr. P. G. Walsh; he has indulgently allowed me to tinker with it here and there. The text followed has been the one used by Dr. F. L. Cross. A more reliable text is established by Père A. Piédagnel in his edition of the Mystagogic Catecheses in the *Sources Chrétiennes* series. It does not, however, differ from Dr. Cross's text in points of substance. Père Piédagnel's edition includes informative introduction and notes, with a full treatment of the problem of authenticity.

## Sermon I.

# THE PREBAPTISMAL RITES

The reading is from Peter's First Letter to the whole Church, from 'Brethren, be sober, be watchful' to the end. [1]

1. For some time now, true and beloved children of the Church, I have desired to discourse to you on these spiritual and celestial mysteries. But I well knew that visual testimony is more trustworthy than mere hearsay, and therefore I awaited this chance of finding you more amenable to my words, so that out of your personal experience I could lead you into the brighter and more fragrant meadow of Paradise on earth. [2] The moment is especially auspicious, since you became receptive to the more heavenly mysteries when you were accounted worthy of divine and vitalising baptism. It remains therefore to lay before you a feast of more perfect instruction; so let me give you careful schooling in this so that you may know the true significance of what happened to you on the evening of your baptism.

### Renunciation of the Devil

2. You began by entering the forecourt of the baptistery. You faced westward, heard [3] a voice commanding you to stretch out

[1] 1 Pet 5.8ff.

[2] An allusion perhaps to 2 Cor 12.3: 'I know that this man was caught up into Paradise'. St Cyril gives two reasons for not teaching the neophytes the meaning of baptism until after they are baptized: (1) it is sounder pedagogy to let the person experience baptism before learning its meaning; (2) baptism gives one the power to understand. Cf. Ambrose, S 1.1 and note 2.

[3] The words suggest that a disembodied voice came out of the darkness. On the use of darkness in the mystery religions to play on the emotions, cf. Introduction, pp. 58, 60.



your hand, and renounced Satan as though to his face. You should realise that the symbolism harks back to the Old Testament. When Pharaoh, that most savage and cruel tyrant, afflicted the free and noble people of the Hebrews, God sent Moses to lead them out of their debasing slavery at the hands of the Egyptians. Their doorposts were smeared with the blood of a lamb so that the destroyer might avoid the houses bearing the bloodstain, and thus against all expectation the Hebrews gained their freedom. But when they had been liberated they were pursued by the enemy, who saw the sea miraculously part to afford the Hebrews a path. Yet even so the Egyptians pressed on in their footsteps, and at once they were submerged and drowned in the Red Sea. [4]

3. Now turn your mind from past to present, from symbol to reality. [5] Of old Moses was sent into Egypt by God, but in our era Christ is sent into the world by the Father. As Moses was appointed to lead his afflicted people from Egypt, so Christ came to deliver the people of the world who were overcome by sin. As the blood of the lamb served to avert the destroyer, so the blood of Jesus Christ, the blameless lamb, had the effect of routing demons. That tyrant of old pursued the ancient Jewish people as far as the sea, and here and now the devil, bold and shameless, the source of all evil, followed you up to the waters of salvation. Pharaoh was submerged in the sea, and the devil disappears in the waters of salvation.

4. None the less, you are told to stretch out your hand, and to address the devil as if he were before you: *I renounce you, Satan*. I will tell you now, for you need to know, why you face westward. The west is the quarter from which darkness appears to us; now the devil is darkness, and wields his power in darkness. So we look to the west as a symbolic gesture, and renounce the leader of shadow and darkness.

[4] Exod 12.7, 13, 23; 14.21-29.

[5] On Cyril's use of the words 'symbol' (*tupos*) and 'reality' (*antitupos*), cf. 5.20 with note 23.

So what each of you said as you stood there was: 'I renounce you, Satan, you wicked and most cruel tyrant',[6] and your meaning was 'I no longer fear your power'. For Christ has dissolved that power by sharing with me in blood and flesh, so that he might annihilate death by death and save me from subjection to eternal slavery.[7] I renounce you, you cunning and most vicious serpent. I renounce you, you plotter, who under the guise of friendship have worked all manner of wrong and caused our first parents to secede from God. I renounce you, Satan, author and associate in every evil.

5. The second phrase you are instructed to recite is: *and all your works*. The works of Satan are all wickedness; this you must also renounce, for when one escapes a tyrant, one surely escapes his weapons as well. So every form of sin is numbered amongst the devil's works. Now realise this: all that you say, especially at that most awesome moment, is written in God's books. So when you are found contravening your promise, you will be judged a transgressor.[8] When I say, then, that you renounce the works of Satan, I mean that you renounce all deeds and thoughts which are against your better judgment.

6. Next you say: *and all your pomp*. The devil's pomp is the mad world of the stage, horse-racing, hunting, and all such futility.[9] The holy man prays to be freed from this when he says to God: 'Turn my eyes from looking at vanities'.[10] Do not be keen to set eyes on the madness of the theatre, where you will witness actors indulging in obscenities and outrages and every kind of impropriety, and unsexed men dancing in abandoned fashion. Show no enthusiasm either for the stupid pursuits of huntsmen who expose themselves to wild beasts in

[6] The formula seems to be: 'I renounce you, Satan, and all your works, and all your pomp, and all your worship'. St Cyril here expands the formula in order to explain it.

[7] Cf. Heb 2.14-15.

[8] Cf. Gal 2.18.

[9] It became traditional for preachers to give such a list of the objects that comprise the devil's works and pomp. Chrysostom gives a similar list (ACW 11.25); so too does Theodore (BH 2.10ff.).

[10] Ps 119.37.



order to titillate their wretched bellies. In seeking to indulge their own gluttony with food, they actually become food themselves for the bellies of the wild beasts; it would be fair to say that for the sake of their belly, that is their god[11], they engage in hand-to-hand combat to throw their lives away.[12] Avoid horse-racing as well, for it is a foolish pursuit which unseats the soul. All such sport is the pomp of the devil.

7. Also included in the pomp of the devil are the meat, loaves and other offering suspended during the festivals in honour of idols, and polluted by the invocations of abominable demons. For as the bread and wine of the Eucharist is merely bread and wine before the invocation of the sacred and adorable Trinity, but after the invocation the bread becomes the body of Christ and the wine his blood, so the foods attached to the pomp of Satan are in themselves merely food but become impure after the invocation of the devils.[13]

[11] Cf. Phil 3.19.

[12] 'Making the best of a bad text' — P.G.W.

[13] The argument of this paragraph is derived from 1 Cor 10.14-21, where St Paul compared the Eucharist, which is a sharing with Christ, with the food of pagan sacrifices, which made those who eat it partners with demons. St Cyril is making two points about the Eucharist:

a) There is a change from bread and wine to the body and blood of Christ;

b) This change is brought about by the Invocation or *Epiclesis* (not by the words of consecration, 'This is my body... This is my blood'). Cf. 5.7, where it is seen that God (the Father) is called upon to send his Spirit on the bread and wine so as to make them into Christ's body and blood. Cf. also 3.3 and 5.19. St Ambrose, however, believes that it is the priest's repetition of Christ's words that brings about the change (S 4.14).

St Ambrose's Mass also contained a prayer of invocation (S 4.21); but there is only one very ambiguous indication that St Cyril's Mass contained the recitation of Christ's words 'This is my body... my blood'. C's statement that 'the bread and wine... are the body and blood of Christ *as the master himself has proclaimed*' (4.6) could refer to a recitation of Christ's words in the Mass.

Later the question began to be debated whether it was the invocation of the Spirit or the recitation of Christ's words of consecration that brought about the change in the eucharistic elements, and this became one of the many subjects of bitter disagreement between the east and the west. But in the fourth century the difference, though

8. Your next words are: *and all your worship.* The devil's worship is prayer in pagan temples, honour paid to lifeless idols, kindling lamps and burning incense by fountains or rivers (for some are fooled by dreams or demons, and go to these waters expecting a cure for their bodily ailments), and similar rites. So do not practise them. Augury, divination, watching for omens, wearing amulets, writing on leaves, sorcery and other such evil practices are the worship of the devil. These, then, you must avoid, because if after renouncing the devil and making your contract with Christ [14] you succumb to them, you will find Satan a harsher master in temptations, doubtless because he regarded you as his own before, treating you kindly and not subjecting you to cruel slavery, whereas now you have grievously embittered him. So you will both be deprived of Christ and become acquainted with the devil.

You will remember hearing in the Old Testament the account of Lot and his daughters. [15] He himself was saved together with his daughters, for he reached the mountain; but his wife was turned into a pillar of salt, pilloried [16] for ever to preserve a memorial of her wicked decision to turn back. So watch yourself, do not turn to what lies behind;[17] do not after putting your

there, seems not to have been felt. Moreover it did not have the later geographical basis, as in the east Chrysostom attributed the change to the recitation of Christ's words of consecration (e.g. *de prod. Judae* 1.6; PG 49.380).

St Cyril believes that the presence of God (generally the Holy Spirit) in the sacramental elements is required not only in the Eucharist, but also in baptism (3.1) and confirmation (3.3).

C's words modify those of Irenaeus in the second century: 'For just as when bread from the earth receives the invocation of God, it is no longer ordinary bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two elements...' (*Adv. Haer.* iv.18.5; Harvey ii.205-8; PG 7.1028-9).

[14] The neophyte makes his contract with Christ by the act of faith described in section 9. Cf. Introduction, p. 18.

[15] Gen 19.17ff.

[16] Pillar/pilloried (*stele/esteliteumene*): a typical play on words. So too *mneme* means both 'reminder' (grim irony) and 'memorial'; *halmura* ('bitter') means literally 'salty', and refers back to the pillar of salt.

[17] Cf. Phil 3.13.



hand to the plough [18] revert to the bitter activity of the world. Flee to the mountain to Jesus Christ, the stone hewn without hands which has filled the world. [19]

### The Contract with Christ

9. So when you renounce Satan, you trample underfoot your entire covenant with him, and abrogate your former treaty with Hell. The gates of God's Paradise are open to you, that garden which God planted in the east, and from which our first parent was expelled for his transgression. When you turned from west to east, the region of light, you symbolised this change of allegiance. Then you were told to say: *I believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and in one baptism of repentance.* I spoke to you at length about this in previous instructions, [20] as well as God's grace permitted.

10. Now that these words have made you secure, 'be sober'. 'For our adversary the devil', in the words we have just read, 'prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour'. [21] In earlier times 'death was strong and devoured' [22] men, but at the holy font of new birth, 'God wiped every tear from every face'. [23] For now that you have cast off the old man you will no longer mourn but keep holiday, clad in the saving garment which is Jesus Christ. [24]

### Entry into the Baptistery

11. These rites were carried out in the forecourt. God willing, when we enter the holy of holies at the next stage of our initiation into the mysteries, we shall then become aware of the symbolism of what was there performed. To God the Father be glory, power and majesty, in company with the Son and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

[18] Lk 9.62.

[19] Cf. Dan 2.34-35.

[20] In the catechetical sermon St Cyril preached to them earlier in Lent explaining the Creed. See Introduction, p. 12.

[21] 1 Pet 5.8, part of the reading for the day.

[22] Is 25.8 (LXX).

[23] Cf. Is 25.8; Tit 3.5; Apoc 7.17.

[24] Cf. Col 3.9-10.

## Sermon 2.

# THE BAPTISMAL RITE

The reading is from the Epistle to the Romans, beginning 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?' as far as 'Since you are not under law but under grace'. [1]

1. These daily instructions on the mysteries, and these new teachings which proclaim new tidings, are useful to us all, but especially to you who have been granted new life from old age to rebirth. [2] Therefore I must describe to you the stage which follows on yesterday's instruction, so that you may know what was underlying the symbolic actions you performed in the inner baptistery. [3]

### Stripping

2. Upon entering you took off your clothing, and this symbolised your stripping off of 'the old nature with its practices'. [4] Stripped naked, in this too you were imitating Christ naked on the cross, who in his darkness 'disarmed the principalities and powers' and on the wood of the cross publicly 'triumphed over them'. [5] Since hostile powers lurked in your limbs, you can no longer wear your former clothing; I do not of course refer to visible apparel but to 'your old nature which is corrupt through deceitful lusts'. [6] I pray that the soul which has once thrown off

[1] Rom. 6.3-14.
[2] Aetheria also tells us that Christians of longer standing liked to join the neophytes to hear the mystagogic sermons (47).
[3] The rites described in Sermon 1 had taken place in the forecourt (Sermon 1.2).
[4] Col 3.9.
[5] Col 2.15.
[6] Eph 4.22.



that old nature may never resume it, but rather speak the words of Christ's bride in the Song of Songs: 'I had put off my garment; how could I put it on?' [7] This was a remarkable occasion, for you stood naked in the sight of all and you were not ashamed. You truly mirrored our first-created parent Adam, who stood naked in Paradise and was not ashamed. [8]

### First Anointing [9]

3. Next, after removing your garments you were rubbed with exorcised oil from the hair of your head to your toes, and so you became sharers in Jesus Christ, who is the cultivated olive tree. For you have been separated from the wild olive tree and grafted on the cultivated tree, [10] and given a share in the richness of the true olive. The exorcised oil, then, symbolised your partaking of Christ's richness; it is the token which drives away every trace of the enemy's power. Just as the breath of the saints [11] and the invocation of God's name burn like a fierce flame and drive out devils, likewise the exorcised oil, through invocation of God and through prayer, is invested with such power as not merely to cleanse all traces of sin with its fire, [12] but also to pursue all the invisible powers of the wicked one out of our persons.

[7] Cant 5.3. St Ambrose also attributes words in the Song of Songs to Christ's bride, the Church (e.g. S 5.14).
[8] Cf. Gen 2.25. For C the stripping symbolises: (1) putting off the old nature; (2) the stripping of Christ; (3) the innocence of Paradise.
[9] See Introduction, p. 19f. C takes this anointing to be a symbol of the neophyte's share in Christ's life, and also an exorcism.
[10] Cf. Rom 11.24. The grafting of the wild shoot on to the cultivated tree is a bewildering horticultural process.
[11] Breathing on the neophyte's face was one of the rites of exorcism. See Introduction, p. 6f.
[12] The sacramental element of oil, like the bread and wine in the Eucharist, has no supernatural power unless God was first called down upon it. St Ambrose speaks in the same way of the baptismal water (S 1.15).

## Rites of Baptism

4. Then you were conducted by the hand to the holy pool of sacred baptism, just as Christ was conveyed from the cross to the sepulchre close at hand.[13] Each person was asked if he believed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.[14] You made the confession that brings salvation, and submerged yourselves three times in the water and emerged: by this symbolic gesture you were secretly re-enacting the burial of Christ three days in the tomb. For just as our Saviour spent three days and nights in the hollow bosom of the earth, so you upon first emerging were representing Christ's first day in the earth, and by your immersion his first night. For at night one can no longer see but during the day one has light; so you saw nothing when immersed as if it were night, but you emerged as if to the light of day. In one and the same action you died and were born; the water of salvation became both tomb and mother for you.[15] What Solomon said of others is apposite to you. On that occasion he said: 'There is a time to be born, and a time to die',[16] but the opposite is true in your case — there is a time to die and a time to be born. A single moment achieves both ends, and your begetting was simultaneous with your death.

### *Signs and Realities in Baptism*

5. What a strange and astonishing situation! We did not really die, we were not really buried, we did not really hang from a cross and rise again. Our imitation was symbolic, but our salvation a reality.[17] Christ truly hung from a cross, was truly buried,

[13] C, who is speaking in the Holy Places, readily recalls the details of the Passion (cf. 2.2, 5, 6). Theodore sees similar symbolism in the Mass (BH 4.26).

[14] This act of faith in the Trinity at the moment of baptism is distinct from the act of faith that constitutes the contract with Christ (1.9). Ambrose (S 2.20) and Theodore (BH 3.18ff.) make it clear that at each mention of the name of one of the three Persons the candidate submerged.

[15] Ambrose compares the font with a tomb (S 3.1); Theodore compares it with a womb (BH 3.10).

[16] Eccles 3.2.

[17] For the contrast between signs and reality, cf. 5.20 with note 23.



and truly rose again. All this he did gratuitously for us, so that we might share his sufferings by imitating them, and gain salvation in actuality. What transcendent kindness! Christ endured nails in his innocent hands and feet, and suffered pain; and by letting me participate in the pain without anguish or sweat, he freely bestows salvation on me.

6. No one should think, then, that his baptism is merely for the remission of sins and for adoption in the way that John's baptism brought only remission of sins. We know well that not merely does it cleanse sins and bestow on us the gift of the Holy Spirit — it is also the sign of Christ's suffering.[18] This is why, as we heard just now, Paul cried out: 'Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized in Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death'.[19] These words he said to those who had assented to the view that baptism confers remission of sins and adoption, but not that it further implies a share by imitation in the true suffering of Christ.

7. So in order that we may realise that Christ endured all his sufferings for us and our salvation actually and not in make-believe,[20] and that we share in his pains, Paul cried out the literal truth: 'If we have been planted together with him in a death like his death, we shall certainly be planted together with him in a resurrection like his'.[21] He does well to say 'planted together'. For since 'the true vine'[22] has been planted here in Jerusalem, we have been planted with him by partaking of the baptism of his death. Pay close attention to the words of the apostle. He did not say 'If we have been planted together with

[18] It says much for the importance C attached to symbolism that the symbolic effect of baptism, i.e. the share in Christ's suffering, seems to him more important than the forgiveness of sins or the adoption it confers.

[19] Rom 6.3f. just read.

[20] St Cyril stresses the reality of Christ's sufferings, presumably in order to refute the Docetic heresy that Jesus was simply God masquerading as a man, while remaining free from human weakness.

[21] Rom 6.5, just read (not the RSV version).

[22] Jn 15.1.

him in his death', but 'in a death like his death'. For Christ really died, his soul really was separated from his body; he really was buried, for his holy body was wrapped in pure linen. In his case all these events really occurred; but in your case there was a likeness of death and suffering, but the reality, not the likeness, of salvation.

8. Now that you have thus received instruction, I exhort you to keep it in your minds, so that I, your unworthy teacher, may say in your case: 'I love you, because at all times you are mindful of me and maintain the traditions which I have delivered to you'. [23] God, who has brought you from death to life, can grant you the power to walk in newness of life, [24] for his is the glory and the power, now and for ever. Amen.

[23] 1 Cor 11.2 (paraphrased).
[24] Cf. Rom 6.4, just read.



SERMON 3.

# THE ANOINTING AT BAPTISM

The reading is from John's First Epistle to the whole Church, beginning from 'You have been anointed by God, and know all things', as far as 'And not shrink from him in shame at his coming'. [1]

## CONFIRMATION

1. Now that you have been 'baptized into Christ' and have 'put on Christ', you have become conformed to the Son of God. [2] For God 'destined us to be his sons', [3] so he has made us like to the 'glorious body of Christ'. [4] Hence, since you 'share in Christ', [5] it is right to call you Christs or anointed ones. As God said, referring to you: 'Touch not my anointed ones'. [6] You have become anointed ones by receiving the sign [7] of the Holy Spirit. Since you are images of Christ, all the rites carried out over you have a symbolic meaning.

Christ bathed in the river Jordan, and having invested the waters with the divine presence of his body, [8] he emerged from

[1] 1 Jn 2.20-28 (paraphrased).
[2] Gal 3.27; Rom 8.29.
[3] Eph 1.5.
[4] Cf. Phil 3.21.
[5] Heb 3.14.
[6] Ps 105.15.
[7] i.e. *antitupon*. For C's use of the antithesis between type and antitype, cf. 5.20 with note 23.
[8] Ambrose also suggests that Christ's entry into the water of the Jordan gave all baptismal water its power to communicate his 'justice' (cf. S 1.15-19). One is reminded of the modern ceremony at the Paschal Vigil, in which the Paschal candle representing Christ is dipped into the baptismal water to give it power to communicate Christ's risen life.

them, and the Holy Spirit visited him in substantial [9] form, like coming to rest on like. In the same way, when you emerged from the pool of sacred waters you were anointed in a manner corresponding with [7] Christ's anointing. That anointing is the Holy Spirit, of whom the blessed Isaiah spoke when he prophesied in the person of the Lord: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good tidings to the poor'. [10]

2. For Christ was not anointed by human hand with any tangible oil. No, the Father chose him to be Saviour of the whole world, and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. As Peter says, 'Jesus of Nazareth whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit'. [11] Again, the prophet David cried out: 'Your Throne, O God, endures for ever and ever; your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity. You love Righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness above your fellows'. [12]

Just as Christ was truly crucified, buried, and raised again, and you are considered worthy to be crucified, buried and raised with him in likeness [13] by baptism, so too in the matter of anointing, Christ was anointed with the spiritual oil of gladness because he is the author of spiritual joy; and you have been anointed with chrism because you have become fellows and sharers of Christ.

3. But be sure not to regard the chrism merely as ointment. Just as the bread of the Eucharist after the invocation of the

[9] 'Substantial', in order to emphasize the equal status of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity against the Arians and the like.

[10] Is 61.1. Cf. Lk 4.18.

[11] Ac 10.38 (paraphrased).

[12] Ps 45.6-7.

[13] Again the language of typology. Cf. 5.20 with note 23.



Holy Spirit is no longer just bread, but the body of Christ, [14] so the holy chrism after the invocation is no longer ordinary ointment but Christ's grace, which through the presence of the Holy Spirit instils his divinity into us. It is applied to your forehead and organs of sense with a symbolic meaning; the body is anointed with visible ointment, and the soul is sanctified by the holy, hidden Spirit.

4. First you were anointed on the forehead so that you might lose the shame which Adam, the first transgressor, everywhere bore with him, [15] and so that you might 'with unveiled face behold the glory of the Lord'. [16] Next you were anointed on the ears, that you might acquire ears which will hear those divine mysteries of which Isaiah said: 'The Lord has given me an ear to hear with'. [17] Again, the Lord Jesus in the gospel said: 'He

[14] In 1.7 (cf. note 13 there) C explains that the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ through the invocation (Epiclesis) of the Trinity. Here and in 5.7 he states the theology more precisely: the Father is asked to send the Holy Spirit on the offerings so as to make them the body and blood of Christ. Cf. also 5.19.

Here C explains the consecration of the chrism in the same way: through the invocation of the Holy Spirit the chrism ceases to be ordinary chrism and becomes the 'grace of Christ', a share in his divinity. The Roman Mass for the blessing of chrism on Maundy Thursday has preserved such an Epiclesis: 'Send forth from heaven, we pray you, O Lord, your Holy Spirit the Paraclete on this rich produce of the olive...' Ambrose suggests that a similar process is at work at the consecration of the baptismal font: 'The priest comes, he says a prayer at the font, he invokes the name of the Father, the presence of the Son and the Holy Spirit' (S 2.14; cf. S 1.15).

This application of epiclesis-theology to baptism and confirmation has the advantage of emphasising the role of the Holy Spirit: the sacramental presence of Christ is the result of the action of the Holy Spirit. But this view obscures the different modes of Christ's presence in the Eucharist and the other two sacraments.

[15] C seems to regard the forehead as the part of the countenance that shows the signs of shame. He may be thinking also of the mark God placed on Cain (Gen 4.15). So too St Augustine, quoted on p. 5.

[16] 2 Cor 3.18. St Paul is alluding to the glory of God which dazzled the Israelites when reflected on Moses' face (Ex 34.29-35).

[17] Is 50.4 (LXX). St Ambrose attributes a similar effect to the Opening (S 1.2).

who has ears to hear, let him hear'.[18] Then you were anointed on the nostrils, so that after receiving the divine chrism you might say: 'We are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved'.[19] After that, you were anointed on the chest, so that 'having put on the breast-plate of righteousness, you might stand against the wiles of the devil'.[20] Just as Christ after his baptism and visitation by the Holy Spirit went out and successfully wrestled with the enemy, so you also, after your holy baptism and sacramental anointing, put on the armour of the Holy Spirit, confront the power of the enemy, and reduce it saying: 'I can do all things in Christ who strengthens me'.[21]

5. Now that you are reckoned worthy of this holy chrism, you are called Christians, and this title you substantiate by your new birth. For before being thought worthy of this grace you did not strictly merit such an address. You were still advancing along the path towards being Christians.

6. It is important for you to know that this anointing is foreshadowed in the Old Testament. When Moses entrusted to his brother the command of God and made him High Priest, after washing him with water he anointed him;[22] and his brother received the name 'anointed one', clearly because of this prefiguring anointing.[23] Likewise when the High Priest raised Solomon to the kingship, he anointed him after washing him in the waters of Gihon.[24] This happened to Aaron and Solomon by way of figure, but to you not in figure but in truth, for you were truly anointed by the Holy Spirit. Christ is the beginning of your salvation, for he is truly the firstfruit while you are the

[18] Mt 11.15.
[19] 2 Cor 2.15, quoted by St Ambrose in explaining the Opening (S 1.3).
[20] Eph 6.14, 11.
[21] Phil 4.13. C in this paragraph lists a number of effects of the gift of the Holy Spirit. The wide range of these effects indicates the difficulty that theologians have in distinguishing between the graces of baptism and confirmation.
[22] Ex 40.12-13.
[23] In the translation 'prefiguring' and 'figure' represent the Greek word *tupikos*. Cf. 5.20 with note 23.
[24] 1 Kg 1.38-39. C seems to be relying on an extra-biblical tradition.



whole lump. If the firstfruit is holy, clearly the holiness will pass to the whole lump.[25]

7. Keep this anointing unspotted. For if it abides in you it will teach you all things, as you have just heard the blessed John say in his long discourse about the anointing.[26] For this sacrament is the spiritual preserver of the body, and the salvation of the soul. So the blessed Isaiah prophesied long ago: 'The Lord shall make provision for all nations on this mountain' (by mountain he means the Church, as elsewhere when he says, 'And it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord will be made clear'[27]). 'They will drink of wine and gladness, and be anointed with chrism'.[28] To convince you utterly, hear what he says about the sacramental nature of this chrism: 'Give all these things to the nations, for the Lord's counsel is to all nations'.[29]

Now that you are anointed with this holy chrism, keep it in yourself spotless and unsullied. Advance in good works, and be pleasing to the 'pioneer of your salvation',[30] Jesus Christ. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[25] Cf. Rom 11.16; 1 Cor 15.23.
[26] 'But the anointing which you received from him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you; as his anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie, just as it has taught you, abide in him' (1 Jn 2.27, taken from the reading of the day).
[27] Is 2.2 (LXX).
[28] Is 25.6-7 (LXX paraphrased).
[29] Is 25.7 (LXX). St Cyril takes these words as a prophecy that the Church will give her sacraments (wine and chrism) to the gentiles.
[30] Cf. Heb 2.10; 12.2.