THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA

Theodore was ordained at Antioch about 383, and served there as a priest until in 392 he became Bishop of Mopsuestia, a town some 100 miles away, where he remained until his death in 428. It was probably during his time at Antioch that he preached the 16 catechetical sermons.[1] He was a perceptive and imaginative theological thinker, and was the source from which Nestorius derived much of his terminology and ideas.

By the last decades of the fourth century a marked cleavage had developed between the theology current at Alexandria and Antioch. The two schools followed different methods in explaining scripture, the Antiochenes favouring the more literal sense against the allegorical interpretations of the Alexandrians; but it was in the field of Christology that the divergence was most pronounced. The Alexandrian tendency (exemplified by both the Doctor of the Church Athanasius, as well as the heretic Apollinarius, whose thought was subject to Alexandrian influences though his home was in Asia Minor) was to assume that the eternal Word replaced or made irrelevant some of the faculties of Jesus' human soul; this viewpoint had the advantage of emphasising the unity of the divine and human natures, but at the cost of the completeness of the humanity. The Antiochenes, on the other hand, stressed the completeness of Jesus' human nature, with the result, however, that they had difficulty in explaining the union of the divine and human natures except in terms which could apply to any saint. Theodore, for example, preferred to

[1] For the indications, which are far from conclusive, that these sermons were preached at Antioch, not Mopsuestia, see R. Tonneau and R. Devreesse, *Homilies Catéchetiques, Testi et Studi* 145 (1949) p. xvi.

speak of the Word 'assuming a *man*' (cf. BH 3.21,24; 5.2,10) rather than 'becoming *flesh*', thus preparing the way for the Nestorian heresy that Christ consisted of two persons, a human and a divine, united in moral union and functional collaboration. The Christological orthodoxy of Theodore is much debated, and is hard to establish because of the systematic destruction to which his writings were submitted after his condemnation. R. A. Greer and J. N. D. Kelly both defend him.[2]

But whatever the verdict should be, there remain elements in his thought which the present age finds congenial and stimulating. His emphasis on the resurrection in connection with the Mass and the redemption, and his perception of the eschatological role of sacraments, which are only the first instalment of our heavenly destiny, have inspired some of the modern thinking in the liturgical and catechetical movements.

Among Theodore's works which perished after the condemnation in the sixth century was the Greek original of these catechetical sermons. They survive only in Syriac translation. The English version printed in this collection owes much to the French translation of R. Tonneau[3], and to the assistance of my friend Robert Murray, S.J., who checked my version against the Syriac.

Theodore has many merits, but conciseness is not one of them. His work occupies a disproportionate amount of space in this book, and the imbalance would have been even more pronounced if I had not allowed myself a certain liberty in removing some of his repetitions. Many otiose adjectives and similar insignificant flourishes have been dropped without indication. But I have used two signs to mark larger omissions. Dots indicate that some words have been omitted between sentences as they appear in the English. An asterisk means that I have compressed

[2] R. A. Greer, *Theodore of Mopsuestia, Exegete and Theologian,* London 1961. J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines,* London, 4th ed. 1968, pp. 303-309.

[3] See note 1. It was not until 1932-3 that the Syriac text was first published by A. Mingana.

the expression within a sentence. I trust this license does no violence to Theodore's thought. The saving in space and, more important, the avoidance of some turgidity should provide ample compensation.

The first eleven of the catechetical sermons are the Lenten instructions given to the candidates for baptism. The last five (called here *Baptismal Homilies*) teach the candidate the meaning of the sacraments of initiation. The first, which deals with preliminaries, is not included in this collection. The second and third explain the ceremonies connected with baptism; the fourth and fifth explain the Eucharist. Unlike Cyril and Ambrose, who required the candidate to be baptized before hearing an explanation of the sacrament, Theodore and John Chrysostom explain baptism in advance; but in all four sets of sermons the instruction on the Eucharist is held back until after the neophyte's baptism and first communion.

BAPTISMAL HOMILY — II.

Synopsis. — You stand again on sackcloth, bare-footed, with your outer garment removed and your hands stretched out to God in the attitude of prayer. First you fall on your knees, holding the rest of your body upright. Then you say, 'I renounce Satan, all his angels, all his works, all his service, all his vanity and all his worldly enticements. I pledge myself by vow, I believe and I am baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Kneeling on the ground, but with the rest of your body upright, you look up to heaven and stretch out your hands in the attitude of prayer. The bishop, wearing light, shining vestments of linen, signs your forehead with the oil of anointing, saying: 'N. is signed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Your sponsor, standing behind you, spreads a linen stole over your head and raises you to your feet.

Preliminary Rites

1. I have already instructed you sufficiently about the rites which according to ancient tradition the candidates for baptism must celebrate. When you present yourselves to give in your names [1], in the hope of finding a dwelling-place in heaven, the exorcisms are, so to say, a law-suit with the devil; you are freed from slavery to him by God's judgment. So you recite the words of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer; and there and then through the mediation of the bishops you make an undertaking to persevere in love towards God's being. This undertaking will be the source of wonderful blessings for you if you think about his being in the right way — that is to say if you believe that it is

[1] See Introduction, p. 7. The synopsis with which each homily begins seems to be an extract from a kind of Ritual.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit [2] — and if you live in this world as far as you are able in a way which befits people who have a dwelling-place in heaven. But now you need to learn what takes place in the mystery itself ...

Renunciation of the Devil

2. *You stand again on sackcloth, bare-footed, with your outer garment removed and your hands stretched out to God in the attitude of prayer.* In all of this you adopt the posture of the exorcism by which you symbolized your former captivity and slavery to the Tyrant, which was your severe punishment. For it is appropriate that you should abandon this posture and these memories before you approach the mystery which promises a share in the good things to come ...

3. *First you fall on your knees, but keep the rest of your body upright.* You stretch out your hands to God in the attitude of one at prayer. For we have fallen into sin and the sentence of death has thrown us to the ground; but, as St Paul said, 'at the name of Jesus Christ the knee should bow, and confess in praise of God his Father that Jesus Christ is Lord'. [3] By this confession we show what the divine nature bestows on us through the administration [4] of Christ our Lord, whom it raised up to heaven as Lord of the Universe and 'pioneer of our salvation'. [5] It remains then for all of us, who in St Paul's words have 'fallen to the ground', [6] to achieve this. So you are called by faith in Christ our Lord to share through the mystery in these

[2] Theodore has in mind the heresies which denied the divinity of the Son (Arianism) and of the Holy Spirit (Pneumatomachianism). The condemnation of the latter at the Council of Constantinople was as recent as 381.

[3] Phil 2.10-11 (adapted).

[4] The underlying Greek word (*oikonomia*) means 'management' (literally 'housekeeping'), and comes to refer to the Incarnation, by which God the Son 'arranges' his influence on human history.

[5] Heb 2.10.

[6] Acts 26.14.

indescribable benefits; you must kneel as a sign of your ancient fall and adore God, the source of good.

4. *The rest of your body should remain upright,* looking up to heaven. By this attitude you present, so to speak, a request to God, asking him like a petitioner for liberation from your ancient fall and a share in the joys of heaven. While you are kneeling like this the appointed ministers come and address to you in effect the very words which the angel who appeared to St Cornelius spoke to him:[7] 'Your prayers have been heard.' God has had regard for the tribulations that have gripped you from the beginning and pitied you for your long, cruel service as a slave to the Tyrant. He has deigned to deliver you from this slavery and to give you a share in the indescribable gifts of heaven, so that once you have received them you will be completely free from evil * ...[8] What is the undertaking that you make at this moment which releases you from your long-standing ills and gives you a share in the gifts you hope for?

5. '*I renounce Satan and all his angels, all his service, all his vanity and all his worldly enticements. I pledge myself by vow, I believe, I am baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*' Now the deacons come to you and tell you to recite these words. The time has come for me to explain to you their efficacy, so that you may know the force of the undertaking which opens the way to the enjoyment of such a gift. Once, beginning with the first members of your race, you obeyed the devil, and he inflicted on you many great tribulations.[9] So

[7] Cf. Acts 10.4.

[8] The preacher wishes to prepare the minds of his congregation so that baptism will cause a profound conversion in their lives, and so allows himself to leave the impression that evil will now have no influence or attraction for them.

[9] Because of the unity of the human race Theodore, like many other Fathers, says that 'you' or 'we' fell. The language is deliberately ambiguous: he means not only that all mankind was affected by Adam's sin, but also that each individual is personally associated in the guilt of his sin. It was rare for the Fathers to attempt to answer the question that seems to later theologians to expose the weakness of this theory of original sin: how can later generations incur the guilt of Adam's disobedience? The next section, however, suggests that Theodore also accepts another explanation of original sin: we do not simply inherit the effects of Adam's sin, but 'freely submit to the devil' subscribing to Adam's sin by our own personal sins. Cf. BH 3.11.

you must promise to turn away from him now that you have experienced suffering at his hands. That is why you say, 'I renounce Satan'. Up till now, even if you had wished, you would not have dared to speak these words, frightened and enslaved as you were. But now that the divine judgment has granted you your liberty through the exorcisms, you recover your voice and boldly proclaim that you renounce him ... At the same time you show that you have so far been associated with him, but that you are parting with him now; for no one claims to renounce a thing if he has never had anything to do with it ...

6. Hardly for a moment have you realized the harm you suffered from your familiarity with him, hardly have you received the power to recover from it, when you have to say, 'I renounce Satan'. By this you mean: Now we have nothing in common with him. I have hardly realized the evils in which he tried to involve us every day; hardly understood the extent of the harm suffered by Adam, the father of us all, when he listened to the devil, the extent of the ills he incurred, together with those who freely submitted themselves to the devil and down the years chose to become his slaves. But now that a great and marvellous grace has appeared[10] through Christ himself, a grace that has freed us from the Tyrant's oppression, liberated us from this slavery, won for us good things in wonderful abundance — now I know my benefactor, I recognise my Saviour. For truly my benefactor is my Saviour, who created me when I was not, who grants me favours every day, who does not turn away from me even when I rebel... Once for all I renounce Satan, I avoid his company and pledge myself by vow never to seek it again. I shall have nothing to do with him, I shall avoid him like a dangerous enemy, for he was the cause of evils without number... This is the meaning of 'I renounce'.

[10] Cf. 2 Tim 1.9-10.

7. If Satan made war on us single-handed, if he were the only one to harm us, this expression 'I renounce' would be sufficient, for it would prevent you from accepting his friendship. * But, invisible though he is, he can attack us with visible weapons, by means of men whom he has conquered and made instruments of his malice to harm others. That is why you add, 'And all his angels'.

8. 'His angels' are men who have contracted from him some ill-will which leads them to harm others. Originally, since no one had yet fallen so as to become a ready tool for injuring others, the serpent was the instrument he used to beguile and ruin men. But once he has men in his trap, he always uses those whom he finds suitable for his purpose of harming others. This is what St Paul meant when he said: 'I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds will be led astray from a sincere devotion to Christ' [11]... This is why, after saying, 'I renounce Satan', you add, 'and all his angels'. By Satan's angels you mean all those who carry out his purpose of ruining and deceiving the human race. We must take 'angels of Satan' to refer to all those who devote themselves to profane wisdom and spread the error of paganism. 'Angels of Satan' are poets whose stories promote idolatry and whose 'wisdom' supports the error of paganism... 'Angels of Satan' are leaders of heresies who, since the coming of Christ our Lord, have in Christ's name taught ungodly dreams and presented them to the world. Mani, Marcion, Valentinus [12] were 'angels of Satan', who

[11] 2 Cor 11.3 (adapted).

[12] Mani (c. 216 - c. 277) was the Persian prophet whose followers, the Manichees, St Augustine joined for a while in his youth. The central doctrine of the sect was its dualistic belief in two Creators, one good, one evil. Matter was the creation of the evil principle: man is a spiritual spark imprisoned in evil matter. Marcion separated (fl. 140) the vindictive Creator, who was the God of the Old Testament, from the God of Love who revealed himself in Christ. Valentinus, a contemporary of Marcion's, in order to insulate God from contact with matter, postulated a descending hierarchy of spirits emanating from God; only the inferior spirits have any contact with material creation. Mani, Marcion and Valentinus agree in teaching that matter is too sordid to be the concern of the Almighty; therefore other deities or spirits must be responsible for it.

dissociated visible things from the creative power of God; visible things, they said, owe their existence to another principle apart from God. Paul of Samosata [13] was an 'angel of Satan'; he taught that Christ our Lord was a mere man, and denied the individuality of the divinity of the Only-Begotten Son that existed before time began. Arius and Eunomius [14] were 'angels of Satan'. They dared to say that the nature of the divinity of the Only-Begotten Son is created and did not exist from the beginning, but according to the law of nature passed from nothingness to a state of becoming. They copy the pagan myths and assert that the Son's substance is created, and yet, like the pagans, say they believe him to be God by nature. They imitate the childishness of the Jews, who do not recognize that the Son came from the Father and exists without beginning by his Father's substance, true Son that he is; instead they say he is Son in the sense in which the Jews call men sons of God, who hold the rank of sons by grace and not by their substance.

9. Apollinarius [15] was another 'angel of Satan'. He gave a false interpretation to belief in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; in the guise of orthodoxy he declared our salvation to be

[13] Paul of Samosata's teaching is not available to us in any impartial source, but he seems to have held erroneous views about the Trinity and the Person of Christ. With regard to the Trinity he is said to have taught that only the Father had a substantial existence; the Word was simply the Father's will, and the Spirit his grace dwelling in men. Christ was a mere man inspired by the Word (cf. Kelly, *Doctrines,* pp. 117-118; 158). Paul was condemned at the Synod of Antioch in 268.

[14] Arius' (d. 336) heresy arose from an attempt to reconcile the unity of God with the distinction between the Father and the Son. Since God is one, he taught, the Son must be a creature, created in time, though he can be called divine 'by grace'. The Council of Nicaea (325) had declared in its Creed, against Arius, that the Son was 'one in substance' with the Father, but almost immediately a reaction set in against this unscriptural term. One heretical school of thought, led by Eunomius (d. c. 394), held that the Son was 'unlike' the Father, and inferior to him, though the Father was able to confer true divinity upon him.

[15] Apollinarius (d. c. 390) tried to explain the union of the human and divine elements in Christ by maintaining that the divinity took the place of the rational soul. This view was quickly rejected by the

imperfect, maintaining that Christ did not assume a human intelligence, so that, unlike our body, our intelligence does not receive a share of grace. 'Angels of Satan' are the leaders and teachers of error in any heresy, honoured though they may be with the name of bishop or priest; they all serve Satan's purposes, and in the name of their position in the Church fall headlong into error. * Other 'angels of Satan' again are those who give men any wicked, shameful advice against the divine laws, so as to lead them into the service of evil. All these you have promised to renounce; so you ought to have nothing to do with them in future. You have presented yourself to Christ; you have been enrolled in God's Church; being born in baptism you look forward to becoming the body and member of Christ our Lord; you will share with him and be attached to him, your Head, and keep apart from all those who dare to abandon the Church's creed.

10. When you have said, 'I renounce Satan and all his angels', you continue, 'and all his service'. It is not only men who are in the Evil One's service; you must also recoil in horror from the open blasphemies done in the name of religion. All pagan practices are works of Satan: not only sacrifices and idolatry and all the old cult, but everything that derives from it and corrupts the soul. The pursuit of astrology is clearly the service of Satan — the scrutiny of the movements of the sun, the moon and the stars before beginning a journey or undertaking any business, and the belief that their course can help or harm us; in short, the study of the movement of the stars in the hope of learning the future from them is clearly the service of Satan... Ritual washings and purifications, amulets, the practice of hanging up fermenting dough, the inspection of the bodies of animals or the movement and cries of birds [16] — all such things are the service

Church, among other reasons because it made the redemption impossible. The Son redeemed us by assuming our nature; but sin lies precisely in the rational soul that Apollinarius maintained the Son did not assume. Gregory of Nazianzus' slogan, 'What is not assumed is not restored', pin-points the weakness of Apollinarius' theory.

[16] In Roman society there were officials appointed to predict the future from their study of natural phenomena: the *auspex* derived omens from the behaviour of birds, the *haruspex* from the formation of a slaughtered animal's entrails. The use of fermenting dough as a charm or means of divination is not elsewhere attested, so far as I know.

of Satan. To put your trust in any Jewish observances is service of Satan. The worship found among heretics in the name of religion is service of Satan. It may bear a superficial resemblance to the worship of the Church, but it lacks the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit, and it is wicked to perform it. [17] It follows that it is service of the devil and illustrates our Lord's saying: 'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.' [18] For surely it is useless to invoke our Lord with an ungodly mind and in the company of the ungodly... Just as in the theatre the actors who play the part of kings are not taken for real kings despite their royal appearance — we know this is only play-acting; appearances do not blind our eyes to the reality — so too the rites that the heretics perform in the name of religion, whether they be baptism, the eucharist or anything else, are play-acting and the service of Satan. We should recoil from it, for its purpose is evil. *

11. Then you say: 'And all his vanity'. Satan's vanity is a plain description of everything pagans do in the name of religion; all those actions they flaunted in the eyes of the world they performed out of vanity to dazzle the spectators and lead them astray. Today the grace of God has abolished all this, but we must be no less chary of the rites of the heretics. When Satan saw that the name of Christ had put an end to the error of paganism, he at once took other steps to lead men astray. He devised heresies and raised up their leaders to imitate the Church's invocations and outward forms, and so deceive the simple and lead them to damnation.

[17] It is only comparatively recently that most Christians have become convinced that there can be heretics in good faith, whose worship is a channel of grace, and who are not without the grace of the Holy Spirit.

[18] Mt 7.21.

12. Next you say: 'And all his worldly enticements'. What do you mean by 'worldly enticements'? The theatre, the circus, the stadium, athletics, songs, organ-playing, dances — seeds which the devil sows in the world in the guise of amusement to lead men's souls to ruin. It is easy to see the dangers such pursuits hold for men's souls. You must avoid such things if you share in the Mystery of the New Covenant, if you have enrolled as a citizen of heaven, a fellow-heir of the blessings to come,[19] if you hope that, being born again in baptism, you will henceforth become a member of Christ our Lord, our common Head, in Heaven. We, his members, must live lives that are worthy of him. That is why at this moment, in the attitude I have described, you pronounce these vows...

The Contract with Christ

13. When you say, 'I renounce', you reject Satan without reserve and show that you will never turn back or take pleasure again in his company; so too, when you say, 'I pledge myself by vow', you show that you will stand firm and unshakable at God's side, that you will never on any account abandon him, and that for the rest of your life you will value more than anything else the privilege of living in company with him and in accordance with his laws. *

14. But you must also add, 'I believe', for, as St Paul said, 'whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists.'[20] Since God is invisible by nature, to face him and promise to persevere as members of his household you need faith. The blessings that God is preparing for us in heaven by the administration[21] of Christ our Lord, the blessings that we hope for when we present ourselves for baptism — these are invisible and indescribable too. For this reason too we must have faith in the invisible blessings in store for us... That is why the words,

[19] Cf. Phil 3.20; Rom 8.17.
[20] Heb 11.6.
[21] Cf. note 4.

'I believe', are followed by the words, 'I am baptized'. For it is with faith in what is to take place that you came forward to receive the holy gift of baptism; you mean to be reborn, to die with Christ and rise again with him, in order that this second birth may replace your first and obtain for you a share in heaven. As long as you are by nature mortal, you cannot reach your home in heaven; but when you discard this mortality in baptism and rise again with Christ and receive the sign of this new birth you hope for, you are revealed as a citizen of heaven and become a fellow-heir to the heavenly kingdom.

15. To the foregoing words you add: 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' For such is God's nature. It is the Substance[22] which exists from all eternity, the cause of all, which created us in the beginning and now is renewing us; it is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We approach this nature now and offer it our vows, as is just, because it has been and remains the cause of the countless great blessings we have received. We make to it our vows and promise in future to believe in it; we invoke it when we are baptized; we hope to receive from it the blessings which are given to us now in symbol and in anticipation, and to enjoy them for ever when we rise in reality[23] from the dead and share in the inheritance of our home in heaven.

16. You pronounce these vows and this covenant in the attitude I have described, *kneeling on the ground,* as a sign that you are paying God a debt of adoration and that you are recalling your

[22] The underlying Greek word is *ousia.*
[23] This contrast is central to T's sacramental theology. He contrasts the immediate effects of baptism, which we receive 'in symbol and in anticipation' ('symbolically' alone would not convey the full meaning of the underlying Greek word *tupoi,* as the effects begin in this life), with the 'reality', i.e. the full realisation of the effects which will take place only in heaven. To quote other terms T uses, the sacraments bestow the 'guarantee (advance payment) of our inheritance' (BH 3.6-7), 'first-fruits of the mystery' (3.7), the 'promise of the blessings of heaven' (2.16), the 'share in the heavenly blessings' (2.20), the 'potentialities' of man's 'immortal and incorruptible nature' (3.10). After baptism we are *already* risen (3.5; cf. 3.7, note 15). Baptism confers the 'seed' of the future risen life (3.28).

ancient fall to earth. But *the rest of your body is upright*, and you *look up to heaven and stretch out your hands in the attitude of prayer*.[24] In this way you express your adoration of God in heaven and your hope of receiving from there the power to rise from your ancient fall. The time has already come for you to receive the first instalment of the mystery, the promise of the indescribable blessings of heaven.

First Anointing

17. When you have pronounced these vows and this covenant, the bishop comes over to you. Instead of his usual clothes, he is wearing a delicate, shining linen vestment. He is wearing new garments which denote the new world you are entering; their dazzling appearance signifies that you will shine in the next life; its light texture symbolizes the delicacy and grace of that world. This is the symbolic meaning of his dress: he inspires you with fear but at the same time fills you with love; because it is new it communicates the dignity of the sacrament. *Then he signs your forehead with the oil of anointing saying: 'N. is signed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'* This is the first instalment of the sacrament he is administering to you. He does so 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', because he must begin the sacrament with the name from which you hope to receive all these favours. Already he is prompting you to invoke the Trinity; you must look to it and live your life according to its will in preference to everything else. The seal[25] that you receive at this point marks you out for ever as the sheep of Christ, the soldier of the King of Heaven. As soon as a sheep is bought, it is given a mark to

[24] There are many representations in early Christian art which show people standing at prayer with hands stretched out, a posture which is still adopted at Mass by the priest in the Roman rite.

[25] Syriac *rushma;* underlying Greek *sphragis*. For the seal, cf. Introduction, p. 33. Chrysostom also compares this anointing to the branding of a sheep (ACW 10.16). The seal which Theodore associates with the Holy Spirit is discusssed in the next Homily, sect. 27.

identify its owner; it feeds in the same pasture and lives in the same fold as the other sheep that bear the same owner's mark. And when a soldier is chosen for his height and build to serve the empire, he is at once given a tattoo on his hand to show the name of the emperor in whose service he has enlisted. You have been chosen for the kingdom of heaven; you too can be identified as a soldier of the King of heaven.

18. First you receive a sign on your forehead. This is the highest and noblest part of the body; when we are talking to somebody, it is to this part that we direct our eyes. * So you receive this mark on the forehead to show what a great privilege you are receiving. 'For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face.'[26] 'We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit', says St Paul.[27] This is why we have to receive the seal on the upper part of the face. In this way the demons can see it a long way off and are deterred from coming close to harm us in future; and we proclaim that God has granted us the privilege of beholding him henceforth with face unveiled, if only we display before him the sign that we are members of his household and soldiers of Christ our Lord.[28]

19. When the bishop has completed this ceremony of sealing your forehead, he pronounces the words I have mentioned to show that he has set you apart for the future and appointed you a soldier of the true king and a citizen of heaven. The seal shows that all this belongs to you. Immediately *your sponsor stands*

[26] 1 Cor 13.12.

[27] 2 Cor 3.18.

[28] In this paragraph T states the following reasons why the sign is received on the forehead, but the development of his thought is confused: (1) the forehead is a sign of dignity; (2) it reminds us that we will meet the Lord 'face to face' (i.e. in familiar intercourse as opposed to the obscurity of sacramental signs); (3) to proclaim our allegiance openly and so scare away the devil. The last reason is forced, because the sign was not permanently visible; but T is thinking partly of its visibility to spirits.

behind you, spreads a linen stole over your head and raises you to your feet. You get up off your knees to show that you have abandoned your ancient fall, and have nothing to do with the earth and earthly affairs. God has accepted your adoration and entreaty. You have received the seal to show that you have been chosen for heavenly service. You have been called to heaven. Henceforth this is the home and the life you must make for; you must keep aloof from all earthly things... To begin with, you stand naked, like prisoners and slaves; but when you receive the sign, you spread the linen cloth over your head to symbolize the freedom to which you are called, [29] for this is the decoration that free men wear both indoors and out.

20. Now that you carry the identification-mark of a soldier of Christ our Lord, you may receive the rest of the sacraments and so acquire the full armour of the Spirit [30] and your share in the heavenly blessings. How this happens I shall explain in detail later. What I have said is sufficient for today. So let us end our instruction in the usual way, offering praise to God the Father, to his Only-Begotten Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

[29] For the significance of the linen stole, see Introduction, p. 30; BH 4.23 with note 52.

[30] Cf. Eph 6.11, 13, 17.

BAPTISMAL HOMILY — III.

Synopsis. — Then you come forward to be baptized. First you strip completely; then you are anointed all over with the oil of anointing in the prescribed manner. The bishop begins the ceremony with the words: 'N. is anointed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Then you go down into the water that has been blessed by the bishop. The bishop stands and lays his hand on your head saying: 'N. is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' He wears the same vestments as before. He lays his hand on your head with the words, 'In the name of the Father', and while pronouncing them pushes you down into the water. If you were free to speak at this moment, you would say, 'Amen'. You bow down under the water, then lift up you head again. Meanwhile the bishop says, 'and of the Son', and guides you with his hand as you bend into the water as before. When you raise your head, the bishop says, 'and of the Holy Spirit', pressing you down into the water again with his hand. Then you come up out of the font and put on a dazzling garment of pure white. The bishop comes to you and puts a seal on your forehead saying: 'N. is sealed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.'

1. I concluded yesterday's instruction at the point where you had been sealed with the oil of baptism to mark you out for service in the heavenly army as one chosen and approved. Now the kingdom of heaven was revealed in the person of Christ our Lord in his incarnate life, [1] when after his Passion and Resurrection he ascended into heaven and established his kingdom there. And we, who have been called to this service, ought to have an affinity with heaven, for we are all now bound for the place where our king is, since he said himself: 'I desire that they

[1] *Oikonomia.*

also may be with me where I am.' * [2] We hope to 'reign with him', as St Paul said, if we show our love for him by endurance,[3] because when we are in heaven with him we shall share in his great glory... So as soon as you come up from the font and receive the mark, you spread a linen cloth over your head to signify your state of freedom. Since you have been chosen to serve in the heavenly army you have been set free from all contact with earthly things and assumed the liberty of heaven. If an earthly ruler will not countenance the presence of a slave in his army,[4] all the more should one who serves in the army of heaven be free from slavery. Our share in heavenly things has set us all free; in St Paul's words, 'the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother'.[5]

2. These then are the effects of the sealing, and you know all you need to know about the ceremony, for I described it yesterday. Today I must explain the next ceremonies, for at this stage you have to come forward for baptism itself. Baptism contains the signs of the new birth which will be manifested in reality when you rise from the dead and recover all that death has stolen from you... You will gain this new birth by rising from the dead to a second existence, just as when you were born of a woman you entered upon the existence that death takes away from you. You will gain this in reality when the time comes for you to rise again to your new birth; but now you have faith in Christ our Lord, and while you are waiting for the resurrection you must be content with receiving symbols and signs of it in this awesome sacrament which affords you certainty of sharing in the blessings to come.

3. You come forward then for baptism, the symbol of this birth you hope for. This is why Christ our Lord calls it a second birth in his words to Nicodemus: 'Unless one is born anew, he

[2] Jn 17.24.

[3] 2 Tim 2.12.

[4] On the almost inflexible principle that only free men could serve in the Roman army, see J. B. Bury, *History of the Late Roman Empire,* vol. 1, p. 39

[5] Gal 4.26.

cannot see the kingdom of God' [6] ... Nicodemus, taking Jesus to mean that this birth was like birth from a woman, asks: 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?'... So Christ our Lord says no more about the second birth that we shall receive in reality at the resurrection, for he knows that this is a truth too sublime for Nicodemus to grasp. Instead he tells him about the symbolical birth that takes place at baptism, and which believers must undergo in order to pass by means of the signs to the enjoyment of the reality. 'Unless', he says, 'one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.' He explains the means, water, and he reveals the cause, the Spirit. That is why he adds the words: 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.' He says no more about the water, because it merely serves as a sacramental sign; he speaks of the Spirit because this birth is due to the Spirit's operation. This is clearly his meaning: just as one who is born in the flesh and of the flesh is by nature subject to death, pain, corruption and all kinds of change, [7] so we are to expect that when we are born, so to speak, of the Spirit, we shall become by nature free from all these afflictions. *

4. But Nicodemus repeated the question: 'How can this be?' Jesus answered: 'The wind blows where it wills and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' [8] He does not say a word about water; he refers to the reliability and credibility of the Spirit to establish his teaching against all doubt. For the expression 'blows where it wills' indicates the Spirit's power to accomplish his will in anything... Therefore Christ's

[6] Jn 3.3ff.

[7] Liability to change is commonly regarded in Greek philosophy as an imperfection, because it indicates an incomplete realisation of the ideal as well as the possibility of corruption. T, however, probably is thinking of liability to moral change, i.e. sin.

[8] In fact Nicodemus' question, 'How can this be?' comes after these words of Jesus'. 'Wind' and 'spirit' are used to translate different meanings of the same word in the gospel text.

words are conclusive: 'so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit'...

5. For the same reason St Paul says: 'All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.' [9] Before Christ's coming, God's sentence enabled death to exercise sovereign power over us, and it was quite beyond our strength to break our bonds, so firm was death's hold on us. But by his death and resurrection Christ our Lord altered the sentence and undid death's hold on us, so that now the death of those who believe in Christ is like a prolonged sleep. This is implied in St Paul's words: 'Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of those who have fallen asleep.' [10] By 'those who have fallen asleep', he means those who have died since the resurrection of Christ, for they will rise again and cast off their death. * So it is because Christ our Lord has abolished the power of death by his own resurrection that St Paul says: 'All of us who have been baptized in Christ Jesus were baptized into his death'; we know, he means, that Christ our Lord has already abolished death. Believing this we come to him for baptism, because we wish now to share in his death so as to share like him in the resurrection from the dead. So when I am baptized and put my head under the water, I wish to receive the death and burial of Christ our Lord, and I solemnly profess my faith in his resurrection; when I come up out of the water, this is a sign that I believe I am already risen.

6. These things only happen to us in symbols, but St Paul wishes to make it clear that we are not concerned with empty symbols but with realities, in which we profess our faith with

[9] Rom 6.3-4.

[10] 1 Cor 15.20. Several of the Fathers held that between death and the resurrection of the body the separated soul did not yet enter heaven or hell (cf. Tertullian, *de Anima,* 58; PL 2.795-8). For the Syriac tradition that the souls of the dead sleep (though not without consciousness) until the general resurrection, see P. Kruger, 'Le sommeil des âmes dans l'oeuvre de Narsai', *L'Orient Syrien,* 4 (1959) 196-210.

longing and without hesitation. So he continues: 'If we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.' [11] He proves the present by the future, taking the splendour of what is to come as evidence of the value of these symbols, the symbols contained in baptism, the work of the Holy Spirit. You receive baptism only because you hope for the blessings to come: by dying and rising with Christ and being born to a new life, you come to share in the reality of the signs that attracted you * ... This second birth is the work of the Holy Spirit, whom you receive in the sacrament as a kind of guarantee. So you can see what a great sacrament this is, how awesome and deserving belief its symbolism... That is why St Paul says: 'In him we have believed and were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance to the praise of his glory.' [12] He calls this grace that the Holy Spirit gives us here on earth 'the Spirit of promise' because we receive it as a promise of future gifts. He calls it also 'the guarantee of our inheritance', because it enables us already to share in the gifts to come.

7. Similarly he says in another place: 'It is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has commissioned us; he has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.' [13] In yet another place he says: 'And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.' [14] We have the first-fruits of the Spirit, he says, on this earth, because we receive the fulness of grace only when we enjoy the reality. 'We wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies', he says, meaning that in this life we receive adoption in anticipation; [15] we shall receive the reality

[11] Rom 6.5.

[12] Eph 1.13-14 (adapted).

[13] 2 Cor 1.21-22.

[14] Rom 8.23.

[15] Literally 'in sign' (*tupoi*). T refers not so much to the sacramental *sign,* but the sacramental effect, which is an anticipation of the full reality found only in heaven.

when we are born again and rise from the dead, becoming at once immortal, incorruptible and free from all physical evil...

Second Anointing

8. *Then you come forward to be baptized. First you strip completely.* Originally Adam was 'naked and not ashamed" [16] but once he had disobeyed the commandment and become mortal, he needed a covering; you, on the other hand, are to present yourself for baptism in order to be born again and become immortal in anticipation, and so you must first take off your clothes. [17] For they are proof of mortality, convincing evidence of the humiliating sentence which made man need clothes. When you have done this, *you are anointed all over with the oil of anointing in the prescribed manner;* this is a sign of the garment of immortality you will receive through baptism... *You are anointed all over:* unlike clothes, which only come in contact with part of the body, and even if they touched the whole surface of the body would still not come in contact with the internal organs, our whole nature will 'put on the imperishable' [18] at the moment of the resurrection, by virtue of the working of the Holy Spirit within us. * When this anointing is conferred upon you, *the bishop begins the ceremony with the words: 'N. is anointed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit',* and the appointed ministers anoint your body all over.

Blessing of the Font

9. Next, at the time I have already explained to you, *you go down into the water that has been blessed by the bishop.* You are not baptized in ordinary water, but in the water of second birth. Now ordinary water cannot become this other thing except by the coming of the Holy Spirit. [19] Consequently the bishop

[16] Gen 2.25.

[17] Cf. Introduction, pp. 20-21.

[18] 1 Cor 15.53.

[19] Note the implication that the water is changed (transubstantiated?). Cf. Introduction, p. 23.

beforehand pronounces a prescribed form of words, asking God to let the grace of the Holy Spirit come upon the water and make it capable of begetting this awesome birth, making it a womb for sacramental birth. [20] For when Nicodemus asked: 'Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be reborn?', our Lord replied: 'Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.' He means that just as in natural birth the mother's womb receives a seed, but it is God's hand that forms it according to his original decree, so too in baptism the water becomes a womb to receive the person who is being born, but it is the grace of the Spirit which forms him there for a second birth and makes him a completely new man. A seed settling in the mother's womb has neither life nor soul nor sense; but God's hand forms it so that it emerges a living man, endowed with soul and senses and a nature capable of any human action. So too here: the one baptized settles in the water as in a kind of womb, like a seed showing no sign of an immortal nature; but once baptized and endowed with the divine grace of the Spirit, his nature is reshaped completely. Once mortal, it becomes immortal; once corruptible, it becomes incorruptible; [21] once changing, it becomes unchanging; by the almighty power of him who forms it.

10. A baby born of a woman has the potentiality of talking, hearing, walking and working with his hands, but is too utterly weak for any action of the kind; yet, in due time, by God's decree he becomes capable of these actions. So too one who is born by baptism possesses in himself all the potentialities of his immortal and incorruptible nature, but cannot use or exhibit them until the moment God has ordained for us to be born from the dead and attain full enjoyment of our freedom from corruption, death, pain and change. We are endowed with the potentiality for these things at baptism but gain the effective use of them only when we are no longer merely natural but

[20] Cf. Introduction, p. 24.

[21] Cf. 1 Cor 15.53-54.

spiritual, [22] and the working of the Spirit has made the body incorruptible and the soul immutable, holding them both in his own power and preserving them. As St Paul says, 'What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown a merely natural body, it is raised a spiritual body'. [23] He means that it is the power of the Holy Spirit that will make us imperishable, glorious and powerful, working upon our bodies and souls, making the former immortal and the latter immutable. The body that will rise from the dead and that man will assume will not be merely natural now but spiritual. Now it is not in the nature of water to work these effects; they are the result of the working of the Spirit at baptism by water. So first of all the bishop pronounces the prescribed words of consecration, praying that the grace of the Holy Spirit may come upon the water and by his holy and awesome coming endow the water with power to produce all these effects. In this way the water becomes an awesome womb of the second birth; in this way all who go down into the water are formed again by the grace of the Holy Spirit and born again in another, higher nature...

Baptism

11. So the water you enter is like a crucible in which you are reshaped to a higher nature: you lay aside your old mortality and assume a nature that is completely immortal and incorruptible. You are born in water because you were formed originally from earth and water, [24] and when you fell into sin the

[22] T is using the terms 'natural' and 'spiritual' in the sense in which St Paul uses them in the quotation which follows: 'natural' applies to our condition in this life, 'spiritual' to our condition in the next.

[23] 1 Cor 15.42-44 (adapted).

[24] T presumably has in mind Gen 2.6-7: 'A mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground — then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground'. Ambrose (S 2.19) makes a clearer connection between earth and water: since water comes from the earth, by ritual 'burial' beneath the baptismal water we fulfil the sentence: '...return to the earth, for out of it you were taken' (Gen 3.19).

sentence of death made you totally corruptible. This is what a potter [25] does when a vase he is shaping from clay becomes spoilt: he shapes it again in water and so it recovers its true form. This is why God told Jeremiah to go to the potter; and when he had seen the potter doing this God said to him: 'O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter has done?' * [26] For we too were formed from earth and clay — 'You too were formed from a piece of clay, like me.' [27] Pardon 'those who dwell in houses of clay, for we too are of the same clay'. [28] We too fell and were corrupted by sin. Then sentence of death involved us in complete decay, but our Creator and Master subsequently shaped us afresh by his immeasurable power: he abolished death by the resurrection and gave all of us hope of salvation from death and of a better world than this, in which we shall not only survive, but become immortal and incorruptible...

13. When the potter has made a vase, he can reshape it in water, as long as it retains the plastic quality of clay and has not yet come into contact with the fire; but once it has been baked there is no longer any way of reshaping it. So it is with us now: since we are by nature mortal, we need to undergo this renewal by baptism; but once we have been formed afresh by baptism and received the grace of the Holy Spirit, who will harden us more than any fire, we cannot undergo a second renewal or look

[25] This simile of the potter is used to explain original sin by many of the Greek Fathers: Adam's sin produced a hereditary flaw in our nature, which can only be cured when our bodies are broken up at death and reshaped at the resurrection. Cf. Theophilus of Antioch (flor. 188), *Ad Autolycum*, 2.26 (PG 6.1093); Methodius of Olympus (d. 311), *Symposium*, iii.5 (PG 18.68), *de Resurrect.*, 6-7 (PG 18. 269-73); Gregory of Nyssa (d. 394), *Or Cat.* 8 (PG 45.36); Chrysostom, ACW 9.21-26. Thus death is a blessing as well as a punishment.

For this ambiguous use of the pronoun '*you*' (*you* fell), to refer to the first man, the whole human race and the individual members of the congregation, cf. BH 2.5, note 9.

[26] Jer 18.6.

[27] Job 33.6 (LXX).

[28] Job 4.19 (LXX).

to a second baptism, [29] just as we can only hope for a single resurrection, since Christ our Lord also, as St Paul said, 'being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him'. * [30]

14. This then is the effect of the gift of baptism. But to teach you once for all who it is who is the cause of all these blessings, who is now recasting you, who is raising you to a higher nature, who is making you immortal instead of mortal, imperishable instead of perishable, *the bishop stands and lays his hand on your head saying: 'N. is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' He wears the same vestments as before,* when he sealed your forehead while you knelt, and when he blessed the water. He wears it now while performing the ceremony of baptism, because it is appropriate that he should perform all the rites of the sacrament in the same vestments which symbolize this new world to which the sacrament transports you. He says, *'N. is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit',* to teach you by these words who it is who is the cause of this grace... This formula corresponds to our Lord's commission: 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. [31] These words show that the effects are produced entirely by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, who exist from all eternity, and are the cause of all things. To them we owe our original existence, and by them we now hope to be renewed... It is evident that the

[29] T gives this common simile of the potter an original twist to illustrate the fact that baptism cannot be repeated. The Church only gradually gained a clear grasp of the possibility of the forgiveness of sins committed after baptism. Although some local churches were slower in coming to this conclusion than others, by T's time it seems to have won general acceptance (cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Doctrines,* pp. 436ff.). The reason why T says nothing here of the forgiveness of sins after baptism is perhaps that he wishes to stress the conversion of life that baptism should bring about; he takes it for granted that there will not be any deliberate sins after baptism. But he does allow later for this possibility (BH 5.34).

[30] Rom 6.9.

[31] Mt 28.19.

one who originally saw fit to make us mortal and corruptible is none other than the one who is now making us immortal and incorruptible... He made us originally according to his good pleasure and in the end brought us to a state of excellence, to teach us that the first state too was his doing; the thought that we owe our attainment of excellence to him should make us realise that we would never have existed in the first place if he had not brought us into existence. [32]

15. This is why, when the bishop places his hand on your head, he does not say, 'I baptize', but 'N. is baptized'; for no man, only divine grace, is capable of making such a gift. * He goes on at once to say who it is who signs and baptizes: the words 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' show who is responsible for the effect, and proclaim that he himself is simply the obedient minister... For just as Peter's words, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk', [33] show that Christ is the cause of the man's recovery of his powers, so too the bishop's words show that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the cause of the gifts we receive at baptism. * This is the cause of our renewal, of our second birth, of our reshaping as new men, free from death, decay, suffering and change, of our exchange of our former slavery for a state of liberty, in which we are free from all our ills and enjoy for ever these indescribable blessings.

16. *In the name of the Father, etc.* means 'at the invocation of the Father, etc.'. Similarly Isaiah said: 'Lord, apart from you we know no other; we call on you by name'. [34] He meant this: We acknowledge no other Lord apart from you, the Creator of all things; you have put an end to all our ills; from

[32] The baptismal formula shows that our new life comes from God; therefore our natural creation must also have been due to him. The contrast between the 'first state' and the 'state of excellence' does not quite coincide with the distinction between the natural and the supernatural, for in T's thought the state of excellence does not begin until the next life.

[33] Acts 3.6 (alternative reading).

[34] Is 26.13 (LXX).

you we expect to receive the enjoyment of all our blessings; it is you, the Creator of all things, whom we have learnt to invoke in all our needs; you alone can produce and give every gift at will. So at this stage the bishop says, 'In the name, etc.', meaning that we are baptized invoking the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the cause of all things, that can accomplish whatever it wills. But he does not say: 'In the name of the Father and in the name of the Son and in the name of the Holy Spirit.' Each of them has his own name which he does not share with the others... But the name that the bishop pronounces is not that by which the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are invoked individually: the name which he invokes and by which we call upon the cause of these blessings, is the divine nature existing from all eternity, the nature shared by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; we call upon them in a single invocation. * We do not call upon the Father as one cause and the Son as another and the Holy Spirit as a third. The invocation is addressed to One, and towards this One we look for the enjoyment of the graces of baptism...[35]

17. Consider then that these names act as a prayer.[36] When the bishop says, 'In the name of the Father', take him to mean, 'Grant, Father, these everlasting, inestimable blessings for which this man is now baptized.' So too with the Son and the Holy Spirit. * When Peter said, 'In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk,'[37] he meant, 'Grant, O Jesus Christ, to this man that he may stand up and walk.' So too when the

[35] T is arguing from the baptismal formula that, although all three Persons of the Trinity cause the sacramental effect, they do so, not as three co-operating individuals, but by virtue of the single divine essence. Indeed in whatever way God exerts influence on his creation, he does so by virtue of this essence that all three persons share; otherwise there would be three individual Gods, instead of one God in three Persons. The argument is developed in sections 20 and 21. Ambrose hints at a similar argument in his treatment of Mt 28.19 (S 2.22; cf. 6.5-8).

[36] Sacraments are not only signs that cause the grace God gives the Christian. They are also prayers in which the Church asks God to grant the grace.

[37] Acts 3.6.

bishop says 'In the name, etc.', all he means is: 'O Father, Son and Holy Spirit, grant to this man who is baptized the grace to be born again.' Peter's words, 'In the name of Jesus Christ, stand up and walk,' have the same meaning as his later words, 'Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you';[38] in both cases he showed who was really responsible for the cure... *

18. Then the bishop lays his hand on your head with the words, *'In the name of the Father', and while pronouncing them pushes you down into the water.* You obediently follow the signal he gives by word and gesture, and bow down under the water. You incline your head to show your consent and to acknowledge the truth of the bishop's words that you receive the blessings of baptism from the Father. *If you were free to speak at this moment you would say 'Amen'* — a word which we use as a sign of our agreement with what the bishop says. This is implied in St Paul's question: 'How can anyone in the position of an outsider say the "Amen" to your thanksgiving?'[39] St Paul's words show that 'Amen' is the people's response to the bishop's thanksgiving, by which they express agreement. But since at the moment of baptism you cannot speak, but have to receive the sacrament of renewal in silence and awe,[40] you bow your head when you immerse yourself to show your sincere agreement with the bishop's words.

19. *You bow down under the water, then lift your head again. Meanwhile the bishop says, 'And of the Son', and guides you with his hand as you bend down into the water as before.* You make the sign of consent as before, signifying that you accept the bishop's declaration that it is from the Son that you hope to receive the blessings of baptism. *You raise your head, and again the bishop says, 'And of the Holy Spirit', pressing you down into the water again with his hand.* You bend beneath the

[38] Acts 9.34.

[39] 1 Cor 14.16.

[40] This passage shows that the phrase 'the awesome rite of initiation' was no *cliché*, but an expression of the religious awe that the baptismal ceremonies were intended to inculcate.

water again, humbly acknowledging by the same sign that you hope for the blessings of baptism from the Holy Spirit... Then you come up out of the font to receive the completion of the mystery. [41]

20. Three times you immerse yourself, each time performing the same action, once in the name of the Father, once in the name of the Son and once in the name of the Holy Spirit. Since each Person is named, you understand that each enjoys equal perfection, and each is able to dispense the graces of baptism. You go down into the font once, but you bend beneath the water three times in accordance with the bishop's words, and you come up out of the font once. This teaches you that there is only one baptism, and that the grace dispensed by the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is one and the same. They are inseparable one from the other, for they have one nature. So although each Person can confer the grace, as is shown by your immersion at each of the names, we do not consider baptism to be complete until the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit have all been invoked. Since their substance is one and their divinity is one, it follows that it is by a single will and a single operation that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit regularly act upon their creatures. [42] So we too can hope for new birth, second creation and in short all the graces of baptism only upon the invocation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — an invocation which we believe to be the cause of all our blessings.

21. It is in this sense that St Paul says: 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one body and one Spirit, one God and Father of us all, who is through all and in all.' [43] He does not mean that the Lord is not God or Spirit, and God is not Lord or Spirit, and the Spirit is not Lord or God. For necessarily the Lord is also God and Spirit, and God is also Lord and Spirit, and the true Spirit — the Holy Spirit — is also God and Lord. No, what

[41] An allusion to Confirmation (cf. Introduction, p. 31).

[42] See note 35.

[43] Eph 4.4-6 (adapted). In the following lines the word 'Substance' stands for the Greek *ousia*.

he is teaching us is this: the one Lordship is the one Godhead. For the Substance of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is one, without body or limit. It is the Substance which at baptism grants us adoption, this Substance in which we believe, are baptized and become a single body by the power of the Holy Spirit at baptism. This power makes us sons of God and the one body of Christ our Lord, whom we call our Head, since he shares our nature and he was the first to rise from the dead so that we might share in these blessings through him. By naming the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we received the cause of all blessings. St Paul indeed would not have said that there was one faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit if he had believed that their nature was distinct; he would not have said that there was one baptism in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit if he had believed that their will, their power and their activity were distinct. [44] It is clear that there is one faith, because there is one Being in which we believe. There is one baptism, because those whom we invoke have one will, one operation and one power, which enables us all to be born again and to become the one body of Christ whom we call our Head. In his human existence he was assumed [45] from among us

[44] T misunderstands the text from Ephesians. St Paul does not in fact say in this passage that we have faith in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; nor that we are baptized in their name. Paul instances the one faith and one baptism, not as evidence of the unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but to show the unity that should exist among Christians.

[45] T's Christology bears the peculiar features of the Antiochene school of thought. Instead of St John's formula, 'The Word became flesh' (Jn 1.14), he speaks of the Word 'assuming' a 'man'. This terminology was capable of an unorthodox interpretation, for it could be taken to imply that the Incarnation was simply a union of wills between the Second Person of the Trinity and an independently existing human being. This indeed was the interpretation that the disciples of Nestorius read into the words, and later generations posthumously condemned T as a result. Most probably, however, T used the terms in an orthodox sense to express two truths: first, that Jesus' humanity was complete; secondly, that we are saved, not by direct union with his *divine* life, but by a share in his ***human*** life and his resurrection from the dead. To make this second point more clearly T emphasises the share that our *bodies* will receive in the glory of Christ's risen body.

and became the first to rise from the dead, in this way assuring for us a share in his resurrection, which allows us to hope that our bodies too will be like his: 'But our commonwealth is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body.' [46]

22. This prediction will be fulfilled in reality at the resurrection; at baptism we merely perform the signs and symbols. [47] For the same reason [48] we are called, according to St Paul's saying, the body of Christ our Lord, who is our head: Christ is the head 'from whom the whole body, nourished and knit together, grows with a growth that is from God.' [49]

Our Baptism and Christ's Baptism

Our Lord himself, before his resurrection from the dead, was seen to receive baptism at the hands of John the Baptist in the River Jordan in order to present in anticipation a sign of the baptism that we were to receive by his grace. For us he was the first-born from the dead', in St Paul's words, 'that in everything he might be pre-eminent'; [50] therefore he chose for your sake to be the first not only in the reality of the resurrection but also in sign... St John the Baptist said to him: 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?', showing in this way the difference there was between himself and Jesus. But

[46] Phil 3.20-21. The Syriac translation read 'service' instead of 'commonwealth'.

[47] In this and the following two sections the word corresponding with the Greek *tupos* occurs several times, and is translated here four times 'sign' and twice 'anticipation'. Cf. BH 3.7, note 15. Our baptism is the '*tupos*' of heaven; Christ's baptism is the '*tupos*' of ours. Although this sentence may suggest that for T baptism is only a symbol of the after-life, it is clear from other passages that he believes the sacrament has an immediate effect, which is, however, only a first instalment of the glory of our risen lives in heaven. Cf. BH 2.15, note 23.

[48] I.e., because we share even bodily in Christ's resurrection.

[49] Col 2.19.

[50] Col 1.18.

Jesus replied: 'Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.' [51] Righteousness, he meant, is established by the grace of baptism, [52] and it is fitting that your hands should introduce it among those who are subject to the Law. So the Law too is publicly honoured, since through it righteousness entered the world.

23. Our Lord, then, was baptized by John, but not with John's baptism. For John's baptism was a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and our Lord had no need of it as he was free from all sin. He was baptized with our baptism, and presented an anticipation of it. Consequently he also received the Holy Spirit, who appeared descending in the form of a dove and 'remained on him', [53] as the evangelist says. For John did not have the power to confer the Spirit; he said himself: 'I baptize you with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire'... [54] The power to confer the Spirit belonged to our Lord. He gives us 'the first-fruits of the Spirit' [55] now, and promises to give us the full measure at the resurrection, when our nature will be fully capable of being transformed in reality to a state of excellence. *

24. You were baptized, then, with the same baptism that Christ our Lord received in his humanity. This is one reason why you are baptized 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', because the very events at Christ's baptism foreshadowed your baptism in sign. When the Father said aloud from far off, 'This is my beloved son, with whom I am well pleased', he was referring in fact to the grace of our adoption, which is the purpose of baptism... [56] This adoption is far superior

[51] Mt 3.14-15.

[52] There is a similar argument in Ambrose, S 1.15.

[53] Jn 1.32.

[54] Jn 1.26; Mt 3.11.

[55] Rom 8.23.

[56] Mt 3.17. T should not be regarded as a supporter of the Adoptionist heresy that before the baptism Jesus was no more than a man. He says elsewhere (*Catechetical Homily,* 6.2,9) that the 'economy' (i.e.

to Jewish adoption, which was subject to change. God is saying in effect: 'I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; nevertheless, you shall die like men" '.[57] This adoption remains firm and unshakeable, because anyone who is adopted in this way will remain immortal. For these signs enable him to pass to the adoption which will take place at the resurrection, transforming him into an immortal and incorruptible nature. The Son also was present in the one who was baptized, and united with the one who was assumed,[58] confirming our adoption as sons. So the Holy Spirit too was there: he descended in the form of a dove and 'remained on him'. And so Christ too was baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

25. When the bishop says, 'In the name of the Father', he recalls the Father's words: 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.' When he says, 'Of the Son', take these words to refer to him who was present in the man who was baptized, and acknowledge that he has obtained adoption for you. When he says, 'Of the Holy Spirit', remember the one who descended in the form of a dove and remained on him, and in short expect that your adoption too will be confirmed by the same Spirit. For, as St Paul said, 'those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God'.[59] The only genuine adoption is that granted by the Holy Spirit; but it is not genuine if the Spirit is not present to produce the effect and encourage us to receive the gift in which we have faith. And so, by the invocation of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, you have received the grace of adoption.

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life of the Second Person on earth) began at his birth (he does not consider the prenatal period). The Nicene Creed, in fact, contains an implicit denial of Adoptionism: '...incarnate by the Holy Spirit out of the Virgin Mary.'

[57] Ps 82.6-7.

[58] T is not attempting to distinguish between 'the one who was baptized' and 'the one who was assumed'. The two phrases refer to the same human being, who was united to God the Son.

[59] Rom 8.14.

Then you come up out of the font. You have received baptism, second birth. By your immersion you fulfilled the sentence of burial; by coming up you received a sign of the resurrection. You have been born again and have become a completely different man.[60] You no longer belong to Adam, who was subject to change, because he was afflicted and overwhelmed by sin; you belong to Christ, who was entirely free from sin through his resurrection, and in fact had committed no sin from the beginning of his life. For it was fitting that he should have from the beginning a claim to the immutable nature that he received in full at the resurrection.[61] So it is that he confirms for us the resurrection from the dead and a share in his freedom from corruption.

The White Garment

26. As soon as *you come up out of the font, you put on a dazzling garment of pure white*. This is a sign of the world of shining splendour[62] and the way of life to which you have already passed in symbol. When you experience the resurrection in reality and put on immortality and incorruptibility, you will not need such garments any longer; but you need them now, because you have not yet received these gifts in reality, but only in symbols and signs...

Confirmation

27. When you have received grace by means of baptism, then, and put on this shining white garment, *the bishop comes to you and puts a seal on your forehead, saying: 'N. is sealed in the*

[60] T refers very obliquely to Rom 6.3ff. This obviously relevant text, with its juxtaposition of baptism with death and resurrection, is quoted much more explicitly by Ambrose at this point in his exposition (S 2.20; 3.2).

[61] T implies that the resurrection changed Jesus' spiritual state, as well as his physical condition.

[62] Cf. Mt 13.43: 'The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father.'

name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' When Jesus came up out of the water, he received the grace of the Holy Spirit, which came and remained on him in the form of a dove. This is why he too is said to have been anointed by the Holy Spirit: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,' he said, 'and therefore the Lord has anointed me.' [63] 'Jesus of Nazareth, whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power.' [64] This shows that the Holy Spirit never leaves him, just as the anointing attaches to those who are anointed by men with oil [65]

[63] Lk 4.18 (adapted) quoting Is 61.1.

[64] Acts 10.38 (adapted).

[65] The mention of oil seems to imply that an anointing forms part of this 'sealing', which confers the Holy Spirit. The inclusion of such a ceremony in an Antiochene rite would be surprising, as most Syrian liturgies contain no ceremony after baptism to confer the Holy Spirit. Chrysostom (sect. 25) takes the imposition of the bishop's hand at the moment of baptism to be the rite that imparts the share in the Holy Spirit. Most other Syrian liturgies give an anointing to confer the Spirit *before* baptism. Cf. Introduction, p. 33 with note 179. *The Apostolic Constitutions,* which is generally held to have been compiled in Syria, or even Antioch, at the end of the fourth century, gives three versions of baptismal ceremonies, all of which include a post-baptismal anointing, which is not however associated with the gift of the Spirit: iii.16 (post-baptismal anointing with *muron* as a seal); vii.22 (ditto); vii.44 (post-baptismal anointing with *muron,* for steadfastness in the good odour of Christ). In all three of these versions the gift of the Spirit is connected with the anointing *before* baptism.

Why then is T at variance with the Syrian tradition in giving after baptism a rite conferring the Spirit? Why in particular does his version differ from that of his fellow-townsman and contemporary, Chrysostom?

One way of attempting to solve these difficulties is to take the simple, radical solution of declaring T's section 27 to be a later addition. (Thus L. L. Mitchell, *Baptismal Anointing,* p. 41.) This seems, however, too arbitrary a solution; and it would leave T without any teaching on the gift of the Spirit apart from his words on the grace imparted by all three Persons in baptism.

Yet it must be admitted that, even if section 27 is authentic, T does not say that the ceremony gives the Spirit in a different way from baptism; it is merely a sign to show that the Holy Spirit came on the neophyte at the moment of baptism.

In fact, if this section is a later addition, it is a surprisingly fumbling one. If it was made, as Mitchell suggests, to bring this homily into line with current liturgical practice, why is it alone in describing a rite to show that the Holy Spirit *has already been received?* And why is the reference to anointing so unclear?

This obscurity in the reference to anointing has led some scholars (e.g. G.W.H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit,* p. 202, n. 4) to maintain that in this section there is no evidence for an anointing after baptism. For T does not say explicitly that the 'seal' is given in the form of an anointing. The words 'anoint' may, with the exception of one clause, be used throughout this section (as in Lk 4.18, just quoted) simply as a metaphor to describe the gift of the Holy Spirit. The exception is the reference to anointing 'by men with oil' (as opposed to anointing 'by the Holy Spirit'). It could at first sight be taken to be a simile illustrating the permanence of the presence of the Spirit in Christ, not a description of a ceremony performed at this stage in the service. However, if this is so, the simile is peculiarly inept, as the possibility of recourse to a bath makes nonsense of the statement that anointing 'never leaves them'. It seems better, therefore, to take this mention of anointing with oil as a description of the sealing that is given after baptism.

The resultant discrepancy between the ceremonies described by Chrysostom and T does seem surprising, as both have been assigned to the end of the fourth century, and to the same place, Antioch (cf. Introduction, p. 173). However, with our present experience of rapid liturgical change, we should not reject the possibility that in a space of a few years there should be two or more versions of the same ceremonies at Antioch. It seems likely that T's form, which includes the post-baptismal ceremony, represents a later stage in evolution than Chrysostom's.

and never leaves them. You too, then, must be sealed on the forehead. *While the bishop is putting the seal on you, he says: 'N. is sealed in the name of the Father, etc.'* This sign shows you that, when the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were named, the Holy Spirit came upon you. You were anointed by him and received him by God's grace. He is yours and remains within you. You enjoy the first-fruits of him in this life, for you receive now in symbol the possession of the blessings to come. Then you will receive the grace in its fulness, and it will free you from death, corruption, pain and change; your body too will last for ever and will be free from decay, and your soul will not be liable to any further movement towards evil.

28. Such, then, is the second birth which we receive at baptism, and which you are now about to approach. We hope that this baptism will enable us to pass in reality to this dread birth

of the resurrection. Baptism assures us of the resurrection, a resurrection which in signs and symbols we already enjoy sacramentally by faith. * The fact that we receive a double birth, and pass from the first to the second, need not surprise us, because even in our physical existence we receive a double birth, first from a man and then from a woman. First we are born from a man in the form of sperm.[66] Everyone knows that the seed bears no resemblance to a human being until it has been conceived, shaped and brought to birth by a woman according to the laws of nature decreed by God. * So too at baptism we are born in seed, but not yet in the immortal nature which we hope to attain at the resurrection: we do not yet bear the least resemblance to it. But if in faith and hope of the future blessings we shape ourselves by a Christian life, when the time of the resurrection comes, according to God's decree we shall receive a second birth from the dust and assume this immortal and incorruptible nature. 'Christ our Saviour', says St Paul, 'will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body.'[67]

29. When you have undergone the sacramental birth of baptism in this way, you will come forward to receive the food of immortality, the food that will be in keeping with your birth. On a later occasion you will be able to learn about this food and the way in which it is offered to you. But now at the end of this instruction you are going to receive the birth of baptism;[68] you have come forward now to share in the indescribable light by means of this second birth. So for the moment our words have, so to speak, wound you tightly in swaddling bands to keep you in mind of this birth which is about to take place. Here, then, we shall let you rest in silence; at a suitable time we shall bring you to this divine food and explain it to you. But now let us end our address in the usual way, praising God the Father, his only-begotten Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

[66] The ancients did not know that the mother provided the *ova* to be fertilized by the sperm.
[67] Phil 3.21 (adapted).
[68] T (like Chrysostom) does not explain the Eucharist until the next homily, delivered after the neophyte has received his first communion.

BAPTISMAL HOMILY — IV.

Synopsis. — The most important point to grasp is that the food we take is a kind of sacrifice we perform. The duty of the High Priest of the New Covenant is to offer this sacrifice which revealed the nature of the New Covenant. We ought to believe that the bishop who is now at the altar is playing the part of this High Priest, and that the deacons are so to speak presenting an image of the liturgy of the invisible powers. They wear vestments which are in keeping with their true role, for their outer garments have a greater splendour than their personal appearance. On their left shoulders they drape a stole which hangs down equally on either side. We must see Christ now as he is led away to his passion, and again later when he is stretched out on the altar to be immolated for us. This is why some of the deacons spread cloths on the altar which remind us of winding sheets, while others stand on either side and fan the air above the sacred body. All this takes place amid general silence. Then comes the time for prayer aloud. The deacon announces it, and everyone stands in silence while the bishop begins the Prayer over the Offerings. At the conclusion of the prayer he gives thanks on his own behalf, and all present reply 'Amen'. Then the bishop prays: 'Peace be with you', to which the congregation replies, 'And with your spirit'. The bishop then begins to give the Kiss of Peace, and the church herald in a loud voice orders all the people to exchange the Kiss of Peace among themselves. Next the bishop washes his hands, and after him all the priests present, however many there may be, do the same. The names of the living and the dead are read from the church records. Then the bishop comes forward to perform the liturgy, while the church herald proclaims: 'Turn your eyes to the offering'.

Eucharistic Food

1. It is usual to wrap babies in swaddling-bands when they are born; for their bodies are newly-shaped and still soft, and we wish to keep them from suffering any injury, and so hold them still so that they retain their new shape. First you make them lie motionless in their swaddling-bands and only later offer them their natural food. In the same way you have just been born by baptism. We have, so to speak, wrapped you up tightly in the swaddling-bands of instruction to let the memory of the grace you have received harden within you. We broke off the instruction to let you rest, for we had said enough. But today by the grace of God I shall try to give you the food you need, for you need to know what it is and precisely where its greatness lies.

2. When you have undergone the real birth of the resurrection, you will eat another kind of food which is wonderful beyond description; you will feed upon the grace of the Spirit, which will make your bodies immortal and your souls unchanging... It enables those who have been born by the resurrection to remain firm, so that their bodies do not decay, and their souls experience no change inclining them to evil.

3. But for the present we are born in anticipation [1] at baptism in the hope of this expected birth. For at this moment we receive the first-fruits of the grace of the Holy Spirit, which we shall possess then; today we are given an advance payment of what we shall receive in full through the resurrection in the world to come, and which will make us immortal and unchanging. So we need a food which is suitable for our life in this world to feed us symbolically with the grace of the Holy Spirit. In St Paul's words, 'As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.' [2] These words show that, when our Lord comes from heaven, he will reveal the future life and bring the resurrection for all of us...

[1] Here and in sections 5 and 6, the Greek word behind this phrase is probably *tupoi*; it also underlies the words 'symbol' and 'symbolical' throughout this homily. Cf. BH 2.15, note 23; 3.7, note 15.

[2] 1 Cor 11.26.

4. In this world we owe our existence to two things, birth and nourishment; we derive our existence from our birth, but in order to continue in existence we need nourishment, and without it birth is inevitably followed by decay. In the world to come we likewise derive our existence from our birth and resurrection; but since we are immortal our existence will be permanent. St Paul says: 'We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens.' [3] St Paul describes the future life in such terms for this reason: in this world we win by the labour of our hands the nourishment that enables us to remain alive, but at the resurrection, when we become immortal and take up our abode in heaven, we shall no longer need food produced by the labour of our hands; the gift of immortality, which we shall enjoy then, will take the place of food and keep us alive by the power of grace. * [4]

5. This, then, is the future that awaits us through the resurrection. But since we are born now at baptism symbolically and by signs, we need also to receive under the same symbols nourishment which is in keeping with the new life we receive at baptism, and which will enable us to preserve this life. Every animal that is born by nature from another receives the kind of nourishment it needs from the body of the mother that gave it birth. * And we too have received divine grace in anticipation, and so need nourishment from the other world which is the origin of our birth. The abolition of our Lord's death by his resurrection reveals to us the birth that will be ours in the world to come through our resurrection. St Paul was thinking of the food for our symbolical birth in this world at baptism when he said: 'All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized

[3] 2 Cor 5.1.

[4] According to T, St Paul is emphasising the permanence of life in heaven. It is permanent by virtue of the gift of immortality, and so will not need the transient support of the eucharistic food. The argument, continued in section 6, is that, since the Eucharist proclaims the death of Christ, and the death of Christ is the source of our new birth and resurrection, the Eucharist is the food for Christians in their new birth.

into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.' [5]

6. St Paul teaches us that Christ's death pointed to the resurrection. We were buried with him in anticipation by baptism, in order to share his death in this world by faith and so share also in his resurrection. The death of Christ our Lord procures for us not only the birth of baptism but also symbolic food. We have St Paul's word for this: 'As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup,' he says, 'you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.' [6] He means that when we receive the offering and take part in the mysteries, we proclaim our Lord's death, which obtains for us the resurrection and the enjoyment of immortality. Since we have received sacramental birth through the death of Christ our Lord, it is fitting that we should also receive from his death the food of immortality. We have to obtain food from the source from which we derived our birth, in conformity with the law of nature that all living creatures are nourished by the parents that gave them life.

7. Our Lord also bears witness to this fact. When he gave us this sacrament he said: 'Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sins'; and: 'Take, drink; this is my blood which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins.' [7] He means that by his death he will give us the world to come where our sins will be forgiven. It is our duty to take part in the sacrament and symbolically proclaim his passion, which will procure for us the possession of the future blessings together with forgiveness of our sins...

8. The nature of signs and symbols should be appropriate to our present condition. * Just as we received new birth in water,

[5] Rom 6.3-5. Since there is no obvious connection between this passage and the Eucharist, Tonneau thinks something has dropped out of the text; but see note 4.

[6] 1 Cor 11.26.

[7] Mt 26.26-28; 1 Cor 11.24-25 (adapted).

which is so useful, or rather, indispensable for life in the world that one cannot even make bread without it; so too we receive as nourishment bread and wine mixed with water, because these things are especially conducive to life and help us to maintain it. In this world we do enough to maintain our life if we use the appropriate symbols, pondering on this spiritual food which we confidently expect will make us immortal and secure for us the everlasting enjoyment of the blessings we hope for when we receive this holy sacramental food. *

9. This, then, is the reason why he gave us the bread and the chalice: these are the food and the drink which keep us alive in this world. But he called the bread his body and the chalice his blood because the passion affected his body and wounded it and made his blood flow. He used food and drink as symbols of the two means of his passion, his body and blood, in order to make known to us our enduring, immortal life, [8] in expectation of which we receive this sacrament which gives us, so we believe, a firm hope of the blessings to come.

10. When he gave his apostles the bread he did not say, 'This is the symbol of my body', but, 'This is my body.' So too with the chalice, he did not say, 'This is the symbol of my blood', but, 'This is my blood' — and with good reason. For he wanted us to turn our attention from the nature of the bread and the chalice once they received the grace and the presence of the Holy Spirit, [9] and to receive them as the body and blood of our Lord. For even our Lord's body did not enjoy immortality and the power to confer immortality by its own nature, but by the gift of the Holy Spirit. [10] It was by resurrection from the dead

[8] I.e. Christ gave us his body and blood in the form of food to show that they are the source of life.

[9] The bread and wine are not only symbols, but are transformed into Christ's body and blood by the action of the Holy Spirit who is called down upon them (BH 4.11). See Introduction, p. 42, *Epiclesis*. T says more about the Real Presence later (e.g. BH 5.12, 24, 28, 36).

[10] The Father raised Jesus from the dead by the power of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 8.11).

that his body was united with the divine nature, [11] and so became immortal and the source of immortality for others.

11. This is why, when our Lord said, 'He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life', [12] and when he saw the Jews murmuring and doubting his words, thinking that mortal flesh cannot confer immortality, he sought to remove their doubts at once by adding: 'What if you were to see the Son of man ascending where he was before?' [13] He said in effect: 'These words do not carry conviction with you now, because they refer to my body. But when you see me risen from the dead and ascending into heaven, you should certainly not find them harsh and shocking, because the facts themselves will convince you that I have passed to an immortal nature. How else could I ascend into heaven? And in order to show the source of this change, he at once added: 'It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh is of no avail.' [14] He would undergo this change, he meant, by the nature of the life-giving Spirit, which would transfer him to this state in which he would become immortal himself and confer immortality on others. This could not come from his own nature, because it is beyond the powers of the nature of flesh. * But if the life-giving Spirit gave our Lord's body a nature it did not possess before, we too, who have received the grace of the Holy Spirit by sacramental symbols should not regard the offering as bread and chalice any longer, but as the body and blood of Christ. [15] It is the descent of the grace of the

[11] These words seem to imply that Jesus was not united to the Second Person of the Trinity until the resurrection. In BH 3.24, however, he seems to hold that the union begins at Jesus' baptism. In fact, though he speaks imprecisely, he seems to date the union, as is orthodox teaching, to the beginning of the Incarnation, though here he seems to be saying that the body, as opposed to the human soul, is not fully united until the resurrection. Cf. note 56 to Homily III

[12] Jn 6.54.

[13] Jn 6.62. Christ's resurrection proves that he received the Spirit, which transforms his human nature, enabling him to give his flesh and blood as a source of life.

[14] Jn 6.63.

[15] If the parallel were exact, it would imply that Jesus is no longer human after the resurrection. But, although T says the 'nature' of

Holy Spirit that transforms them, obtaining for those who receive them the gift which we believe the faithful obtain by means of our Lord's body and blood. This is what our Lord meant when he said: 'I am the bread which came down from heaven'; and: 'I am the bread of life.' [16] He showed what he meant by bread when he said: 'The bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh.' [17] Since we need bread and other food to keep us alive, he calls himself the bread of life which came down from heaven, meaning: 'I am the true bread of life which gives immortality to all who believe in me, by means of this visible body for the sake of which I came down. I have conferred immortality on my body, and by means of it I confer immortality on all who believe in me.' He could have said: 'I am the one who gives life'; but he said instead: 'I am the bread of life.' The immortality that is promised here we shall receive in sacramental symbols by means of the bread and the chalice. Therefore it was right that he should call himself and his body bread to teach us to honour him in the symbol. * He called himself bread because he wanted to explain these gifts and to use familiar things to remove our hesitation in receiving things that are exalted beyond description.

12. To keep alive we take nourishment in the form of bread — not that bread has this power of its own nature; it is only able to keep us alive because God decreed that it should have this power. This fact should convince us that we shall receive immortality when we eat the sacramental bread. For although it is not the nature of bread to produce this effect, once it has received the Holy Spirit and his grace, it can bring those who eat it to the enjoyment of immortality... So too it is with our Lord's body, which the bread signifies: it received immortality and conferred it on others through the power of the Holy Spirit,

Christ's body was changed, he still refers to it as a body. It is, however, immortal now, and free from the need to eat, and the other physical limitations (cf. section 13).

[16] Jn 6.41, 48.

[17] Jn 6.51.

even though it was quite devoid of immortality by its own nature.[18]

13. Our Lord's choice of bread for food and the chalice of wine mixed with water for drink was very appropriate. In the Old Testament it was already possible to call wine blood: 'He gave him wine, the blood of grapes, to drink,'[19] it says in one passage; and in another: 'He washes his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes.'[20] But Christ revealed clearly that it was wine that he gave: 'I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God.'[21] The kingdom of God he speaks of is the resurrection, because he establishes the kingdom of God in the world to come among those who rise again from the dead. Since he was to eat and drink with them after the resurrection before ascending into heaven — 'eating with them', St Luke says[22] — he shows that the passion is close at hand, and that he will not eat with them before the passion; but when he rises from the dead he will condescend to eat and drink with them to confirm the resurrection. This is the meaning of his words: 'I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the kingdom of God.' I shall not take any food or drink with you, he meant, before the passion, because it is facing me immediately; but when I rise from the dead, I shall agree to eat and drink again with you, and in so doing I shall be doing something new. The new element consists in the fact that he who is risen from the dead and become immortal by nature eats and drinks. I will do violence to the nature of things in order that you may have unhesitating faith in me, believing that I have risen from the dead and that I, the risen one, whom you knew before, have eaten and drunk with you. Since you have many doubts about the resurrection, to convince you I must do violence to the

[18] T regards immortality as a gift of the Holy Spirit, not a natural property of the soul.

[19] Deut 32.14 (adapted).

[20] Gen 49.11.

[21] Mt 26.29 (adapted).

[22] Cf. Lk 24.43; Acts 1.4 (variant).

nature of things and do something that has never been done before — eat and drink after taking an immortal nature. You above all need to understand my resurrection without hesitation, for you will have to explain it to others.

14. It is clear, then, that what Christ our Lord gave you in the chalice as a symbol of his blood is wine. It was diluted with water, either because this was the normal way of drinking wine, or else because it was appropriate that water should be added to the chalice, since it had also gone into the making of the bread — one cannot make bread without adding water to the mixture. We used this symbol for the birth of baptism, and use it again for the sacrament of food and drink. We commemorated our Lord's death in baptism, and recall it in holy communion, as St Paul said...

The Eucharistic Sacrifice: Christ the High Priest

15. *The most important point to grasp is that the food we take is a kind of sacrifice we perform.* It is true that we commemorate our Lord's death in food and drink, believing that these are the memorials of his passion, since he said himself: 'This is my body which is broken for you.'[23] But it is evident also that what we perform in the liturgy is a kind of sacrifice. *The duty of the High Priest*[24] *of the New Covenant is to offer this sacrifice which revealed the nature of the New Covenant.* It is clearly a sacrifice, although it is not something that is new or accomplished by the efforts of the bishop: it is a recalling of this true offering.[25] Since the bishop performs in symbol

[23] Adapted from 1 Cor 11.24 and Mt 26.28.

[24] I.e. Christ; the bishop is simply acting the part of the High Priest (BH 4.21).

[25] This admirably clear statement of eucharistic theology would probably have satisfied all parties in the Reformation controversies. It anticipates the theories of O. Casel and M. de la Taille that have had such an influence on Roman Catholic theology: the Eucharist *makes present* the once-for-all sacrifice of Christ. The word 'recalling', of course, implies not a mere commemoration, but actual participation in the eternal sacrifice. See the following note, and section 20.