

THE BAPTISM OF THE CHRISTIAN ADULT  
THEME AND VARIATIONS

BY

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The Feast of St Cyril of Jerusalem,  
Portsmouth.

Raymond Burnish.

THE BAPTISM OF THE CHRISTIAN ADULT

THEME AND VARIATIONS

THESIS ABSTRACT

The thesis compares the teaching about Baptism contained in the catechetical and mystagogical teaching of the fourth century Churches in Jerusalem, Antioch and Mopsuestia with that of the period 1960-1980 emanating from the Church of South India and the Catholic, Orthodox and Baptist Churches in Britain.

It considers the different approaches to catechesis and mystagogy of Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom of Antioch, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, and indicates the emphasis of Cyril on the necessity for the sincerity of the candidate, the pastoral concern and realism of John Chrysostom, and the emphasis on baptism as the symbol of the future which derives from Theodore. It also notes the differences in the situations and audiences for the material considered which is: the Procatechesis, Catecheses, and Mystagogical Catecheses of Cyril, the Catechetical Instructions of John Chrysostom, and the two works on the Faith and the Sacraments of Theodore.

In the context of printed rather than oral instruction, a

variety of modern works and liturgies are compared to give a composite view of each Church, although catechesis and mystagogy have tended to merge into one area of instruction. This modern material indicates a reversion to the earlier 'golden age of catechesis' of the fourth century, which in some situations is a conscious reversion, and in the others is an unconscious reversion to the fourth century due to the limited number of ways in which the baptismal rite can be explained. The link between baptism and ecclesiology is illustrated, as is the renewed importance of the community of the faithful in the acceptance and nurture of the candidates, and the renewal of interest in the role of the sponsor as the link between the candidate and the community.

Rev. R.F.G. Burnish BA(Theol) MTh  
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<u>ACW</u>	<u>Ancient Christian Writers series</u>
AS	A.Schmemmann: <u>Of Water and the Spirit</u>
<u>Cat.</u>	Cyril of Jerusalem: <u>Catechetical Lectures</u>
<u>Cat. Myst.</u>	Cyril of Jerusalem: <u>Mystagogical Lectures</u>
<u>CCD</u>	<u>A Catechism of Christian Doctrine</u>
CSI	Church of South India
<u>DCG</u>	<u>General Catechetical Directory</u>
<u>DVII</u>	W.M.Abbott: <u>Documents of Vatican II</u>
E.M.B.A.	East Midland Baptist Association
<u>FaCh</u>	<u>Fathers of the Church series</u>
FLC	F.L.Cross: <u>St.Cyril of Jerusalem's Lectures on the Christian Sacraments</u>
IFH	I.F.Hagood: <u>Service Book of the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Apostolic Church</u>
Mf.	<u>Montfaucon series</u>
<u>OICA</u>	<u>Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum</u>
<u>PG</u>	<u>Patrologia Graeca</u>
<u>PGL</u>	G.W.H.Lampe: <u>A Patristic Greek Lexicon</u>
<u>P-K</u>	<u>Papadopoulos-Kerameus series</u>
<u>Procat.</u>	Cyril of Jerusalem: <u>Procatechesis</u>

<u>RCIA</u>	<u>Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults</u>
<u>RR</u>	W.K.Reischl & J.Rupp: <u>S.patris nostri Cyrilli</u> <u>opera</u>
<u>SC</u>	<u>Sources chrétiennes series</u>
<u>Stav.</u>	<u>Stavronikita series</u>
<u>WS</u>	<u>Woodbrooke Studies</u>

## I N T R O D U C T I O N

The research which began this thesis was inspired by an initial interest in Melito of Sardis' Homélie sur la Pâque which was encountered during my earlier research<sup>1</sup>. This interest was directed by my first Supervisor, Rev.S.G.Hall, to the broader area of Greek Patristic Paschal Homiletic, and from that point, I discovered the 'golden age' of public catechesis. The conversion of the Emperor Constantine in 312 A.D. formed the catalyst for the catechesis delivered during the succeeding century at such centres as Milan, Jerusalem, Antioch and Mopsuestia as the Church felt the benefit of its imperial patronage, expressed in the Edict of Milan, granting religious toleration<sup>2</sup>, and the restoration of property lost during persecution<sup>3</sup>. As the church realised, slowly and cautiously, that its days of persecution and oppression were over, it began to build places of worship which it considered architecturally fitting for the worship of God, encouraged actively in Jerusalem and Tyre, for example, by the imperial family itself<sup>4</sup>. Within these centres of worship, there was scope to instruct openly those who wished to join the Church as believing adults, and to baptize them. As the century went on, large numbers wishing to join the Church meant that the paschal homily

developed into its place within the context of formal catechetical and mystagogical lectures given during the Lenten and Easter seasons and baptism itself being administered during the Easter Vigil. At first sight this may seem to be a long way from the situation today, but when the suggestion was followed of examining the developments in the Catechetical and Mystagogical explanation of Baptism during the period 1960 - 1980 in the light of the fourth century material a relationship emerged which is recorded in this thesis.

### Area of Study

This thesis will consider the three Church situations at Jerusalem, Antioch and Mopsuestia as these are reflected in the lectures given by Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom of Antioch, and his fellow student at the feet of Biodore, Theodore of Mopsuestia. The study was confined to the Eastern branch of the Church because of the wealth of catechetical material from this period in these locations, which for the most part is readily available both in the original and in excellent modern translations, and for the most part quotation will be made from these translations within the body of the thesis. From these three Church situations, the teaching given on the Baptismal theme is established from a period acknowledged to be 'the golden age of Catechesis' and examined under the headings of:

The theology of Baptism and its catechetical explanation.  
The liturgy of Baptism and its mystagogical explanation,  
The praxis of Baptism with relation to the fellowship of the Church, particularly considering sponsorship.

This produces the 'theme' of the title, coming from the classic examples of this period.

The 'variations' of the title come from the examination under the same headings of three Church situations chosen from the modern period, and their teaching on the Baptismal theme produced

during the period 1960 - 1980, and this will make it possible to consider the relationship of the modern thought about Baptismal preparation and catechesis to its fourth century ancestor. The modern Church situations have been selected to illustrate the diversity of expression of Christian faith evident during the period, although 'main-line' Churches have had to be selected to obviate problems caused in locating material from some smaller and less administratively organized denominations. Those chosen are the Baptist churches in Britain, the Roman Catholic Church particularly in Britain, and the Church of South India, and consideration is also given to the current practice of the direct descendants of the fourth century, the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Baptist Churches were chosen because they are probably the major main-line Christian denomination in Britain committed to the Baptism of believing adults, adults being defined as those whom the Church considers mature enough to answer for themselves in matters of faith and commitment. They also represent a denomination which has no great tradition of liturgical worship, but rather an avowed commitment to freedom both of worship and expression of worship. The Roman Catholic Church was selected because of the changes implied in the Second Vatican Council and executed in the spirit of that Council whereby the ordo of adult baptism has been revised to become what Aidan Kavanagh has described as 'the definitive exposition of what the Roman Catholic norm of baptism is henceforth to be'<sup>6</sup>. This change has taken place within the context of the restoration of the catechumenate<sup>7</sup>, and although it is still early days to assess the full impact of this change, material produced by those putting into practice the revised vernacular versions of the Ordo initiationis christianae adultorum have been considered and assessed. The Church of South India was expected to produce a missionary situation within the context of the ecumenical movement, but instead produced very little apart from negative evidence concerning the relationship of the convert to the

community outside the Church. The Greek Orthodox Church produced almost a time capsule effect by its adherence to the fourth century pattern, with nineteenth century words<sup>8</sup> from the American translation most commonly in use in Orthodox Churches in the English speaking parts of the world, although some recent catechetical material produced by Dr.A.Schmemmann has been studied and contrasted with the fourth century approach.

### Method of Study

The material from the fourth century has crystallized in form, and the texts are considered to provide the basis for the conclusions for this period. In Jerusalem the references to Baptism contained in Cyril's Procatechesis, Catecheses, and Mystagogical Catecheses<sup>9</sup> are collated and considered, and additional contemporary background material is obtained from the Peregrinatio Aetheriae<sup>10</sup>. A similar method is adopted in considering the extant catechetical lectures of John Chrysostom in Antioch<sup>11</sup> and those of Theodore of Mopsuestia<sup>12</sup>.

The modern period presents problems of its own in locating material, and so it has been necessary to start one stage further back to establish the material used. In two cases this has been established by letter - to Right Rev. Dr.K.T.Ware, Bishop of Diokleia, for the Greek Orthodox Church and to Bishop J.E.L.Newbigin for the Church of South India. The materials recommended by these are considered to establish the baptismal teaching and practice of their respective Churches, subject particularly in the case of the Church of South India to these materials being available in English. Although the Roman Catholic material might seem, at first sight, to be the most readily available, a circular letter sent to each Roman Catholic Ordinary in England and Wales, together with the chairman of each Diocesan Commission on the Liturgy and on Catechesis, indicates that the new Ordo is only

infrequently used, but there is evidence of a reawakening of interest in the Baptism of Adults in some dioceses fuelled by the Sadlier Christian Initiation Series describing the use of the Ordo in the United States. By their very independency, the Baptist Churches provoke problems of analysis, and this thesis identifies the material and the Baptismal practices most commonly in use by a statistical survey of some 330 ministers attending Ministers' Conferences in nine areas of England in the Spring of 1981<sup>13</sup>. The most frequently mentioned titles provide the basis for the study of the current Baptist catechetical teaching on Baptism. The liturgy has been identified from the various Baptist Union publications for the period.

#### Aim of the Study

The thesis seeks to show that the formative period for catechetical teaching was the 'golden age' of catechesis in the century following the conversion of Constantine and that the most recent years of the twentieth century have shown a reversion towards that golden age. For the Roman Catholic Church this has been a deliberate reversion, brought about by the reform of the Liturgy of Christian Initiation commissioned by Sacrosanctum Concilium from the Second Vatican Council. The new rite has reawakened interest in the classic period, and shown a tendency to canonize the fourth century theology and catechesis of baptism, and to return to the theology of the ancient Church. The Greek Orthodox Church retains the liturgy as well as the theology of the ancient Churches which are being considered, almost in a fossilized form, finding its spiritual security in a dogged adherence to the practices of the ancient Church, in spite of the efforts of theologians like Alexander Schmemmann to seek a more meaningful understanding of these practices. The Church of South India seems to have found in the concept of the baptism of the Christian adult problems too hot to handle in terms of their sociological implications within a society still

substantially geared to the caste system of Hinduism. The Baptist Churches show an unconscious reversion to the fourth century because of a limited number of ways of expressing the truths of baptism to those believers seeking instruction for it, but far-reaching differences in ecclesiology form an interesting contrast with the views of the Roman Catholic Church. The link between ecclesiology and baptism is an indissoluble one, as the theology of the church into which the candidate is being initiated must have some bearing on the theology behind the rites of that initiation, and this will become apparent as the Church situations are examined and contrasted.

### The Scope of the Thesis

When considering the subject of Baptism and the means of the Initiation into the ecclesial community of the Christian, the canvas is so broad that the scope of the subject has had to be rigidly defined to make the study both manageable and worthwhile. It seems plain that the vast majority of those attending the catechetical lectures of the fourth century were adults and able to make up their own minds about their commitment to Christ and His Church. Although the baptism of children is referred to by John Chrysostom, the whole tenor of the lectures, their content and their complexity points to a committed adult audience. For this reason modern parallels were sought amongst Churches which had a policy of the baptism of Christian adults, across a spectrum which would reflect both catholic and protestant churches. Lack of published material available for study meant that the Pentecostal Churches and other smaller protestant groups would be almost impossible areas for study, although one booklet favoured by some Baptist Ministers is from a Christian Brethren background<sup>14</sup>. Although the Anglican Church and the main-line protestant churches have a liturgy for the baptism of those able to answer for themselves, there do not seem to be a sufficiently large number of

candidates to make catechetical material particularly worthwhile or easily available, although with a decreasing number of infant baptisms, this may alter over the next decade or so. It is also reasons of space which has limited the literature studied in the modern period to that identified by respondents to their respective letter or questionnaire, and to the recognised catechetical lectures in the ancient period, particularly excluding the profusion of homiletic material with which John Chrysostom lived up to his name, the inclusion of which would have given a corpus of material so vast as to unbalance the present study. Similarly the study throughout has been restricted to the explanation of the meaning and implications of the Baptismal rite, rather than to a consideration of the whole gamut of catechetical material, which would have vastly increased the material and made it unmanageable within the restrictions of time and space available.

We therefore begin our study by an examination of the earliest of the fourth century material available, to us, namely that of St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

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13. There are in fact eleven Baptist Union Areas in England and Wales, but the South Wales Area conference is held in November, and the Southern Area divided from the South Eastern Area in February 1981, and I was not able to contact the new Superintendent in time.
14. V.Jack: Believe and Be Baptized (Bury St.Edmunds 1970)

## CHAPTER ONE

### ST. CYRIL AND THE CHURCH AT JERUSALEM

Most scholars agree that St. Cyril's Catechetical Lectures were delivered as a Lenten course in Jerusalem in about 350 AD and probably immediately before or after Cyril had been appointed to the Episcopate, which is variously dated between 349 and 351 AD<sup>1</sup>. Although a scribal note<sup>2</sup> indicated that all the lectures were given in one year, this is hard to reconcile with extensive variations in the manuscripts, particularly in view of the two recensions of Catechesis 2.16-20, and the references to the seasons which seem to reflect a British spring rather than spring time in Jerusalem - at least if they are to be held to refer to only one year<sup>3</sup>. Similarly Cyril's own references to his previous lectures in Catechesis 6.21 would either suggest a corpus of instructional material given by the Bishop each year following an unalterable pattern, or would suggest that this particular comment was made after 349 which was probably the earliest year in which Cyril would have been involved in the lecturing. However the scribal note does give a clue to the method of the preservation of the text, in that it purported to be the reporting of Cyril in shorthand as he was

speaking by some of the  $\sigma\pi\omicron\upsilon\delta\epsilon\iota\omicron\iota$  in attendance. However much stratification is present in the lectures as we have them, we have no reason to doubt their authenticity nor the fact that for our purposes they represent an accurate picture of the Jerusalem catechetical teaching during Cyril's episcopate from 349 - 387.

However the position regarding the Mystagogical Catecheses is nowhere near as clear cut, and regarding them we find an extensive division of opinion among scholars. Some doubt whether they were delivered at Jerusalem at all<sup>4</sup>, whether they were delivered by Cyril of Jerusalem or by his successor John, whether they were an innovation of John's or whether he was lecturing from a script of Cyril, and whether they belong to the same series as the Catechetical Lectures or to a later series dating from about 380 AD<sup>5</sup>. However Dr. F. L. Cross pointed out that although there are stylistic differences between the first eighteen and the remaining five lectures, there are 'a number of cross references between the two series of Catecheses which point to common authorship'<sup>6</sup>. The foremost of these he cited as Catechesis 18.33 in which Cyril plainly referred to further lectures to be heard during Easter week after the candidate's baptism.

"After Easter's holy day of salvation, you will come every day, starting Monday, immediately after the assembly into the holy place of the Resurrection, where, God willing, you will hear other lectures. In these you will be instructed again in the reasons for everything that has been done, reasons warranted by proofs from the Old and New Testaments; first concerning what is done immediately before Baptism; then how you were cleansed by the Lord 'in the bath of water by means of the word'; how like priests you have become partakers of the name of Christ; and how the seal of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit has been given to you. You will be instructed concerning the mysteries at the altar of the New Testament, those mysteries first instituted here in Jerusalem. You will hear what the Sacred Scriptures have delivered to us, and of the efficacy of these mysteries; how you must approach them, when and how to receive them, and last of all, how you must behave in word and deed worthily of the grace received that all of you may be able to enjoy life everlasting. These points will, God willing, be the burden of our talks." (7)

The contents of the Mystagogical Catecheses correspond very closely

with what Cyril promised in this passage. In Catechesis 16.26, and also in Catechesis 13.19, there were other statements which looked forward to a post-paschal series of Lectures and in the Mystagogical Catecheses there are clear references to an earlier series by the same speaker, at Mystagogical Catechesis 1.9 and 5.1. These cross-references strongly support unity of authorship, and although we are aware of the main elements of the authorship debate, for the purpose of the remainder of this study, we will refer to the author of the Mystagogical Catecheses by the name of Cyril. It may be that as our study proceeds that distinct parallels will be discerned between the references to baptism in the credal teaching of the Catecheses, and the teaching of the Mystagogical Catecheses. In spite of the debate as to the identity of the author, there is sufficient evidence to assume the probability of Jerusalem as the location of the delivery of the Mystagogical Catecheses, and to assume that they were given in the fourth century<sup>8</sup>.

The Catechetical works of Cyril are to be found in the edition by W.C.Reischl and J.Rupp<sup>9</sup>; and the edition reprinted by J.P.Migne which dates from the early eighteenth century and was produced by A.A.Touttee and P.Maran<sup>10</sup>. The Mystagogical Lectures and the Procatechesis have also been edited by F.L.Cross<sup>11</sup>. For the sake of clarity the English translation from which most of the quotations are given, is that in the 'Fathers of the Church' series which provides the only translation into English in modern times that I have been able to locate<sup>12</sup>. However some excellent background material, filling the gaps, particularly in terms of baptismal practice, which Cyril left unspecified, comes from the pages of Egeria's diary. Although many date this diary in the early fifth century, Paul Devos<sup>13</sup>, who is followed by J.Wilkinson<sup>14</sup> opts for a date around 384 AD, towards the end of Cyril's episcopate. Even if they are wrong, which the

author personally doubts, it is unlikely that baptismal practice would have changed significantly even in a forty year period once the liturgy had been crystallized, and so we are justified in referring to the Peregrinatio Aetheriae in this study. In the material which follows, we shall treat the Procatechesis and the Catecheses as the source of reference for the teaching of Cyril on the theology of baptism, and the Mystagogical Catecheses as the source of reference for the liturgy of baptism, because the Disciplina Arcani was strictly observed in Jerusalem, and reserved for the baptized only.

### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

Egeria described Cyril's baptismal lectures to us thus:

"His subject is God's law; during the forty days he goes through the whole Bible, beginning with Genesis and first relating the literal meaning of each passage, then interpreting its spiritual meaning. He also teaches them at this time all about the Resurrection and the faith." (15)

Cyril's Catecheses were in fact based on the Armenian Lectionary, and Wilkinson points out that they began with Isaiah 1:16-19, and he continues to note the close correlation between the texts of Cyril's lectures and the Armenian Lectionary<sup>16</sup>. Probably Egeria's meaning is that understood by Telfer namely that the Bishop took the whole teaching of Scripture as his syllabus<sup>17</sup>. However Telfer interprets Egeria's comments with reference to Bishop John II but more recent research has shown that she is more likely to be describing an elderly Cyril, lecturing at the close of his ministry, whilst we have in recorded form the lectures at the beginning of his ministry, probably some 35 years earlier<sup>18</sup>. Within this structure, we find Cyril giving a series of lectures on the mental preparation for baptism, on pre-baptismal penitence and repentance, on baptism, and then he concentrated on teaching the candidates the essence of Christian Doctrine and the Creed of the Church at Jerusalem.

Cyril founded his teaching on Baptism by speaking of the

Baptism of John as the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament:

"Baptism marks the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New for its author was John". (19)

Because of this he saw John as the greatest of the prophets and he explained Jesus' word 'Among those born of woman there has not arisen a greater than John'<sup>20</sup> with reference to John's greatness in comparison to Elijah, Enoch and even Moses. Even Jeremiah, sanctified from his mother's womb, was inferior to John who was not only sanctified but even prophesied in the womb<sup>21</sup>. Cyril summed up the reason for John's greatness thus:

"For since the grace of Baptism was a great one, it called for greatness in its author." (22)

John's baptism however, although it gave remission of sin and was preceded by confession of sins, remained inferior to Christian baptism<sup>23</sup>. As Cyril said:

"Glorious was he who baptized with water, but what in comparison to Him who baptizes 'with the Holy Spirit and with fire'." (24)

Indeed Christian baptism was superior to that of John in Cyril's view because:

"Jesus sanctified baptism when He Himself was baptised"....  
"He was nevertheless baptised that He might impart grace and dignity to those who receive the Sacraments." (25)

and again when speaking of the Incarnation as an article of faith to the catechuminate, he said:

"Christ came that He might be baptised and might sanctify baptism." (26)

At Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove, and Cyril explained this:

"The Holy Spirit descended when Christ was baptized to make sure that the dignity of Him who was baptized was not hidden." (27)

He went on to say that in Jesus' baptism he vanquished the dragon in the waters<sup>28</sup>. Perhaps even in Cyril's day the Palestinian fear of the

open sea was still to be seen in this reference to Job's Behemoth and Leviathan<sup>29</sup>. In any case Cyril was at pains to point out that not only these mystical monsters, but also death itself was vanquished by baptism in his phrase:

"Baptism draws death sting".

(30)

Cyril continued to put the baptism of Jesus in its historical setting as he pointed out that it preceded both His Temptations and His Ministry, stressing that before His baptism Jesus did not preach the gospel<sup>31</sup>, and that after His baptism He was tried for forty days. From this fact, Cyril encouraged his catechumens:

"so do you also, who before your baptism dared not close with your adversaries, from the moment of receiving the grace, trust henceforth in the armour of justice, do battle, and if you will, preach the gospel." (32)

They were to expect 'the grace' to be active in transforming their lives and to expect to be strengthened and empowered by the inward and spiritual grace they received in baptism.

Based upon this understanding of the baptism of our Lord by John, Cyril spoke of the Christian baptism which his catechumens were soon to undergo. Because of the nature of baptism as a sacramental mystery, he did not go into detail in his catechetical lectures about the actual details of the sacrament which the catechumens were to share. Although Christian baptism was offered to all, Cyril warned his candidates against entering the waters of baptism hypocritically, or unworthily, very early in his course of lectures by speaking of Simon Magus who:

"was dipped in the font, but he was not enlightened. While he plunged his body in the water, his heart was not enlightened by the Spirit." (33)

and by reminding his hearers of the parable of the incorrectly dressed Wedding Guest, using him as an object lesson of one ill prepared to

receive the grace that was offered freely<sup>34</sup> and stressing the need for mental preparation for baptism, and hence sincerity. He returned to this parable and to this theme later in his course of lectures, constantly putting the onus upon his catechumens to ensure their readiness to receive the sacrament<sup>35</sup>. They were to equip themselves with piety of soul with a good conscience:

"For as the water purifies the body, so the Spirit seals the soul, that having our hearts sprinkled, and our bodies washed with clear water, we may draw near to God." (36)

The preparation for baptism involved confession and exorcism, it involved the forgiveness of others and a true repentance, granted by God<sup>37</sup>, and the catechumen had to come in faith, being told to:

"Make clean your vessel that you may receive more grace, For though the remission of sins is granted to all alike, the communication of the Holy Spirit is granted in proportion to the faith of each." (38)

Cyril distinguished two effects of baptism, first the remission of sins, which all who sincerely approach the sacrament received; and secondly positive graces, or as he puts it, 'the communication of the Holy Spirit' (ἡ τοῦ Πνεύματος τοῦ ἁγίου κοινωνία). The second effect would vary, he felt, according to the fervour of faith and the intensity of love for God on the part of the recipient<sup>39</sup>. The baptism of John it should be noted, granted remission of sin but not the communication of the Holy Spirit<sup>40</sup>.

Making reference to Holy Saturday night during which the candidates were baptised in the Church of the Resurrection, brilliantly illuminated to symbolize the return of the risen light and their own sacramental enlightenment, Cyril told the candidates

"Then may the gate of Paradise be opened to every man of you and every woman. Then, may you enjoy the fragrant, Christ-bearing waters. Then may you receive Christ's name and the power of things divine." (41)

Baptism was to grant them regeneration, as he said in an allusion to the parable of the sheep and the goats, warning the candidates

against being among those on the left hand who:

"did not attain the grace of God, which is given through Christ in the regeneration of Baptism." (42)

He further illustrated the importance of this element of baptismal regeneration in reminding the candidates of the household of Cornelius<sup>43</sup>. After they received the gift of the Spirit,

"Peter 'ordered them to be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ' that after the soul had been regenerated by faith, the body also, by means of the water, might share the grace." (44)

With their regeneration in baptism would come the 'illumination' of the candidates and their enlightenment. For this reason Cyril addressed the candidates as φωτισόμενοι<sup>45</sup> (candidates for enlightenment), and was quick to point out that enlightenment only comes to those who were baptised from right motives<sup>46</sup>. In his lecture on the Credal article 'Crucified and Buried', he referred to the power of salutary baptism being granted by water to those being enlightened<sup>47</sup>. In concluding his lectures he returned to this theme, and told his candidates:

"But when the holy day of Easter dawns, and your love for Christ is enlightened by the water of regeneration you will, God willing, receive the further necessary instructions." (48)

The illuminatory qualities of baptism, as Ysaebert points out, were recognised as early as the Second century, after which time, φωτισεῖν was found as a technical term for baptism. He argues that in the second and third centuries its use is:

"not to be found in the popular writings but among the more educated writers who like also to refer to baptism as a rebirth." (49)

However, by the fourth century, Cyril was able to use this word quite freely in his address to his candidates, who were unlikely to be particularly learned men and women.

Baptism was also the way in which the spiritual adoption of

the candidates was shown and Cyril listed this in his list of the effects of baptism, describing it as *ὁ θεοθεσίας χάρισμα*<sup>50</sup>. Referring once again to Jesus' baptism and relating it to that of the candidate, he said that for them, the voice from heaven accompanying the descent of the Holy Spirit would say:

"This has now become my Son'... To you belongs 'has now become' since you do not possess the sonship by nature, but receive it by adoption. He is son eternally but you receive that grace by advancement." (51)

Cyril again made this point when he was distinguishing between the Sonship of Jesus, the only begotten Son, and the adoptive sonship of the candidates:

"Not as you, who are beginning enlightenment, now become sons of God for you also become sons, but by adoption through grace, as it is written. 'But to as many as received him he gave the power of becoming the sons of God; to those who believe in his name: who were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God!.'" (52)

He made the point that God's intention was that He might show that even before the act of Baptism Jesus was God's son, the only begotten of the Father, and this was plain from his declaration at Jesus' baptism. Ysaebert points out that in Eastern Syria, adoptive sonship was seen as the effect of the imposition of hands as a post baptismal rite<sup>53</sup>, and in the Didascalia the Scriptural basis for this was Psalm 2:7<sup>54</sup>. This quotation was alluded to by the Gospel writers in their account of the baptism of Christ and the descent of the Holy Spirit so that the gift of the Spirit appeared to be considered as linked with the baptismal act. In Antioch Chrysostom<sup>55</sup>, taught that the imposition of hands by the Bishop whilst pronouncing the baptismal formula brought about the descent of the Holy Spirit<sup>56</sup>, and so made the candidate an adoptive Son of the Father through the Spirit's work.

Cyril then described baptism as *σφραγίς ἁγία ἀκράτου*<sup>57</sup>, and Ysaebert points out that this seal was above all a mark of ownership by which the Lord recognised His own and which repelled the evil

spirits. Cyril developed this phrase later then he said:

"come forward for the mystical seal, that you may be recognisable by the Lord." (58)

He advised his candidates that if they were counted worthy of the grace of baptism:

"But if you are counted worthy of the grace, your soul will be enlightened, and you will possess a power you did not possess before. You will receive arms that cause terror to evil spirits and if you do not cast your arms away; but keep the seal upon your soul, the evil spirit will not approach; he will cower away in fear, for by the Spirit of God devils are cast out." (59)

This seal did not itself confer the Holy Spirit, but the seal was received through the operation of the Spirit.

"and receiving the seal of the Holy Spirit we may be made heirs of eternal life." (60)

Later Cyril saw it as a type of circumcision when he told the candidates that like Abraham, consequent upon their faith:

"we receive the spiritual seal, being circumcised by the Holy Spirit through the laver of baptism" (61)

Cyril used the verb (περπεμνόμενοι) to teach that the act of sealing was performed by the Spirit, and that both the water of baptism and the operation of the Spirit were necessary to gain entrance to the kingdom of heaven.

"Neither does he who is baptised, but has not been deemed worthy of the Spirit, possess perfect grace; nor will a man who acts virtuously, but does not receive the seal by water, enter into the kingdom of heaven." (62)

In support of this statement he cited the necessity of Cornelius and his family to be baptised.

G.W.H.Lampe<sup>63</sup> examined this concept but he ran into problems over the authorship and the relationship between the Catechetical and Mystagogical Lectures of Cyril which seem on the one hand to imply that the σφραγίς was given in baptism, whilst on the other hand they link it with the separate rite of Chrismation. Similarly H.M.Riley<sup>64</sup> makes scant reference to the σφραγίς of baptism in his work in which he is mainly concerned with the Mystagogical Lectures of Cyril.

A.A. Stephenson in the appended notes to his translation of the *Mystagogical Catecheses*<sup>65</sup> discusses the relationship between baptism and chrismation in both *Catecheses* and *Mystagogical Catecheses* and seeks to discover in which sacrament the Holy Spirit indwelt the candidate. He favours the theory which particularly links this with baptism, seeing chrismation as a subsidiary rite which rounded off the rite. Thus chrismation gave in one sense the fulness of the Spirit, completing, confirming, and rounding off what had been done in baptism. He develops the concept of ἡ σφραγίς and the sealing of the candidate in chrismation, and points out that chrism sanctified the senses, made the candidate incontestably Christian, enabled them to do battle with the enemy, and conferred upon them participation in the royal priesthood of Christ<sup>66</sup>.

And it was to the theme of ἡ σφραγίς that Cyril returned at the close of his Procatechesis when he prays for the candidates:

"May he fill you with heavenly treasures of the New Covenant and sign you with that seal of the Holy Spirit that no man shall break forever." (67)

Baptism was the means by which the candidate died to sin and began a new life in Christ, and Cyril described it thus:

"For you go down into the water bearing your sins, but the invocation of grace, placing a seal upon your soul, makes you proof against the dragon's maw. Though dead in sins when you went down, you will come up vivified in justice." (68)

Similarly the spiritual occurrences in baptism prepared the candidate for the resurrection, Cyril once again linking this with the seal of the Holy Spirit received in baptism:

"For this reason, the Lord, beforehand in His loving kindness has granted us the repentance of the laver of baptism, that, by casting off the chief, nay, rather the whole burden of our sins, and receiving the seal of the Holy Spirit, we may be made heirs of eternal life." (69)

Similarly he said that ἡ λύσις δὲ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ κέντρον διὰ τοῦ βαπτίσματος<sup>70</sup>, and thus enabled the candidates to share fellowship

with the sufferings of Christ, once again directing the candidates attention to Romans 6:2-4.

In this passage listing the effects of baptism, Cyril used a number of titles to convey to his candidates a composite picture of the spiritual effects of the baptismal rite:

"ransom for captives, remission of sins, death of sin, a new spiritual birth, a shining garment, a holy seal inviolable, a Heaven bound Chariot, delights of Paradise, a passport to the kingdom, the grace of the adoption of sons." (71)

The use of the phrase ἀίχμαλωτοῖς λύτρον in connection with baptism seems to belong specifically to Cyril. Professor Lampe<sup>72</sup> listed no other uses of this word in connection with baptism, and we can only assume that Cyril saw baptism in terms of identification of the believer with Christ and so the believer benefited as a result of his baptism from Christ's work of providing himself as a ransom for many<sup>73</sup>. He reaffirmed that baptism brought remission of sins, and then spoke of repentance in terms of θάνατος ἁμαρτίας, suggesting that in the new life upon which the believer embarked at baptism, he had buried the power of sin with his old life<sup>74</sup>. Such a death of sin was followed in baptism by παλιγγενεσία ψυχῆς<sup>75</sup>, and this term too was quite a familiar one with the early Greek Christian authors, based once again on Romans 6:3-4, and its use in Titus 3:5. Cyril then described baptism as ἔνδυμα φωτεινόν when Cyril is using similar terminology to Basil<sup>76</sup> who is quoting Galatians 3:27 although Basil is using the words ἐνδύματος καταξιώθημε.

Cyril then described the effect of baptism in terms of ὄχημα πρὸς οὐρανόν. This phrase seems to be a metaphor of Cyril's own, and although it is commonly translated 'chariot towards heaven'<sup>77</sup> the word ὄχημα was not used in that way in the New Testament, or the LXX and there was no reference to it in the Fathers, so perhaps a

better reading would be that which bore or supported the candidates towards heaven. Hence Cyril was using this phrase to remind his candidates in yet another way of the blessings of the new life which would be theirs if they stayed the course. In similar vein came his next metaphor *Παραδείσου Τρυφῆς*, taking up an earlier theme when he had referred to baptism as *Παραδείσου Θύρα* when he pointed his candidates to the luxurious living in Paradise which baptism would open to them, and in this connection he was saying that baptism would restore to them the experience of man's idyllic state before the fall<sup>78</sup>. Not only did he look back in his metaphors, but he described baptism as *βασιλείας πρόξενον*, using a phrase to describe the way in which baptism granted the candidate admission to the kingdom, as its effect. Finally he described baptism in this sentence as *ὁμοθεσίᾳ χάρισμα*, an area which we have looked at above<sup>79</sup>.

He often referred to baptism in terms of *χάρις* or *χάρισμα* using these terms to combine the grace which was mediated through baptism, and the grace which enabled man to come to God to receive remission of sins, and to receive the gift which God imparted to them<sup>80</sup>. However, he made it plain that this gift was mediated through men<sup>81</sup>, although he warns them against playing the hypocrite for:

"If you pretend, men will indeed baptize you, but the Spirit will not baptize you, but if you approach with faith, men will minister to you visibly, but the Holy Spirit will bestow upon you what is not visible." (82)

In this connection Cyril seems to attribute the reception of the Spirit to water<sup>83</sup> (rather than to chrism) in which he differed from the later teaching of the Mystagogical Lectures<sup>84</sup>. The idea of sacramental grace in the Catechetical Lectures was twofold - of the water and of the Spirit and these two were inseparable<sup>85</sup>. He pointed out to his candidates that this twofold grace, though freely given had to be cherished and revered once they had received it:

"It rests with God to bestow grace, but with you to accept and cherish it. Do not despise the grace because it is freely given, but rather cherish it with reverence once you have received it." (86)

To reinforce this teaching he reminded his candidates that all their deeds after baptism were recorded, whether they were deeds of almsgiving or fasts, or covetous deeds or theft:

"All these are henceforth recorded, if after Baptism you commit the same faults; for what went before is blotted out." (87)

Cyril quite obviously interpreted the several Biblical passages in this classic way, following the tradition of many of the early Fathers in respect of post baptismal sin<sup>88</sup>.

Although in general he taught that a man did not attain salvation if he did not receive baptism, Cyril followed the teaching of Tertullian and Origen<sup>89</sup> in accepting the baptism of Martyrs in blood. For Cyril it was an option, and he explained the pouring forth of blood and water from the Saviour's pierced side:

"that in time of peace men might be baptised in water, but in time of persecution in their own blood." (90)

However, Cyril's interpretation of this passage<sup>91</sup> is interesting, for it was more normally interpreted as applying to the sacraments of both baptism and the Eucharist, and even Tertullian seemed to be saying this:

"that so those who believed on his blood might be washed with water, and those who had washed with water might also drink his blood." (92)

Jerome among the Latin Fathers followed Tertullian, in referring the sign to the two Baptisms:

"The side of Christ is wounded by the spear, and the sacraments of baptism and martyrdom are poured forth together." (93)

He was followed by Rufinus<sup>94</sup> but among the Greek Fathers, Cyril was the earliest to interpret this verse in this way, and the

next major reference to it is in Euthymius Zigabenus who gave both interpretations, that of the two baptisms and of the two sacraments<sup>95</sup>.

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

The Mystagogical Catecheses were significantly shorter than the Catechetical Lectures, and so it may be that the time which Cyril had at its disposal was shorter than the three hours from 6 am to 9 am which he had available before baptism. The Mystagogical material was delivered during the five or six days following Easter<sup>96</sup> and Cyril stated his purpose thus:

"The time being now come to spread for you the board of more perfect instructions, let me explain the significance of what was done for you on that evening of your Baptism." (97)

He explained that the candidates' baptism had made them fit to receive the more/sacred Mysteries, and until they had actually received baptism he had not been at liberty to reveal the Mysteries to them. He then proceeded to deal with the component rites of the baptismal liturgy and to explain their meaning, beginning with the first act in the ceremony viz., the rite of the Renunciation of Satan, and Profession of Allegiance to Christ.

a) The Rite of Renunciation and Profession. Cyril dealt with this rite in his first Mystagogical Lecture for which his text was I Peter 5:8-11, and John Wilkinson points out that the reading prescribed in the Armenian Lectionary for the second day of Easter week was I Peter 5:8-14<sup>98</sup>. He related this passage to the drama in which his audience so recently had been involved. The Rite had taken place in the vestibule of the baptistery<sup>99</sup>. The candidates entered the vestibule, and stood facing the West and listened for the command to stretch forth their hand and to address to Satan the words of renunciation, and then turning East, they addressed to God their belief in Him.

Using the dramatic framework suggested by the reading and

the rite, Cyril described to his candidates the dramatic pursuit of Satan to enslave men, fear giving way to strength based on faith, and the support of the brotherhood, which enabled the candidate to meet Satan in a face to face encounter, and to break his power and enslavement, strengthened in this endeavour by God's power. The candidates thus began this pilgrimage under the biblical admonition to vigilance, and were plunged into the struggle and glory of salvation history, and into a new birth, as in the darkness they closed with the adversary who was in pursuit of the candidate right up to the very font of baptism itself<sup>100</sup>. However, the calmness of the candidates was not shattered as Riley points out:

"They are able to stand, to stretch forth their hand in rejection, because 'strong in faith', derived from the consciousness that they are not alone in the struggle, but that in the history of the chosen people in Egypt and now, on this evening, the struggle will end in victory, for God will give them the strength to do what must be done, even to the point of overcoming Satan whose devouring power becomes the power of death itself. And this victory will be gained in Christ." (101)

Cyril used the tyrant Pharaoh as a type in this situation, seeing Pharaoh's pursuit of the Israelites into the Red Sea after the Passover as typical of Satan's pursuit of the candidates right up to the waters of the baptistery; and leading to his destruction, as far as the candidate is concerned, and his disappearance in the baptismal waters which Cyril described as τῷ σπηλαιῷ ὕδατι<sup>102</sup>.

The candidates had thought of Satan as though actually present, and had faced the West with arms outstretched to emphasize their rejection of Satan, and declared: 'I renounce you, Satan, and all your works, and all your pomp, and your service'<sup>103</sup>. He explained the significance of the West in this manner;

"Because the West is the region of visible darkness, Satan, who is himself darkness, has his empire in darkness - that is the significance of your looking steadily towards the West while you renounce that gloomy Prince of night." (104)

and it was from the West which the candidates turned. He explained

that their turning was irrevocable, and to turn back to the things renounced would not merely return the candidate to the prebaptismal status quo but to a position far worse than before because of the annoyance and exasperation produced in the tyrant by the duplicity of the candidate:

"For if you should succumb to such practices after renouncing Satan and transferring your allegiance to Christ, you will find the usurper more cruel than ever. For if formerly, treating you as a familiar, he abated the rigors of your slavery, now he will be furiously exasperated against you. So you will lose Christ and taste Satan's tyranny." (105)

He used the familiar image of turning from δουλεία to ἐλευθερία which was also used by Chrysostom and Theodore<sup>106</sup>. To emphasize the danger of turning back to slavery and Satan, Cyril took as a type the story of Lot's wife from Genesis 19:15-26, and described her transformation for a pillar of salt as 'a monumental warning and memorial of her wicked choice (her turning back)',<sup>107</sup>. Cyril continued, reminding his candidates that they had then turned to face East:

"When you renounce Satan, trampling under foot every covenant with him, then you annul that ancient 'league with Hell', and God's paradise opens before you, that Eden, planted in the East, from which for his transgression our first father was banished. Symbolic of this is your facing about from the West to the East, the place of light. It was at this point that you were told to say: 'I believe in the Father and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, and in one Baptism of repentance'. But these subjects have been treated at large, as God's grace allowed, in the previous discourses. (Probably summarizing Jerusalem Creed)" (108)

Prof. A. Piédagnel<sup>109</sup> drew attention to the absence of the phrase 'and in one baptism of repentance' in any other documents of the rite of baptism, and he poses the question as to whether this constituted the actual liturgical formula, or was a simple resumé of it. If this were a simple resumé of the confession of faith, as Fr. Stephenson assumed in his parentheses, then the clause 'these subjects have been treated at large, as God's grace allowed, in the previous discourses', would apply to the sum total of the teaching contained in the Catechetical Lectures. Cyril also used here the imagery of light and darkness, and of the severing of the pact with hell and the entry into

Paradise, which he had used in the Procatechesis<sup>110</sup>. As-Dr.Riley

points out in commenting on Mystagogical Catechesis 1.9, for Cyril:

"The natural significance of the darkness in the region of the sunset and sunrise in the East is combined with the biblical symbol of the Garden of Paradise planted in the East, from which Adam was exiled for his transgressions."

(111)

So for Cyril, turning was a symbol of the μετάνοια which brought the candidate back to the East, the symbolic location of paradise, from which man had first been exiled.

As we have seen, Cyril described Satan as τῷ πονηρῷ καὶ ὑποτάτῳ τυράννῳ<sup>112</sup> and he described his domain in words from Hebrews 2:14-15, in terms of a power which held man in bondage as it held them enslaved, living in fear of death, over which they had no control. Satan was a clever and ruthless serpent who brought Adam and Eve to their apostasy and fall. The words of renunciation are thus designed to sever and finally break the ancient pact with Satan and with Hell<sup>113</sup>. He defined τῆς πομπῆς of Satan in terms of the spectacles offered by the pagan city as he attacked 'the craze for the theatre, the horseraces in the circus, the wild-beast hunts and all such vanity',<sup>114</sup> and included in his condemnation any items associated with idol worship, and polluted by the invocation of unclean spirits<sup>115</sup>. τῆς λατρείας of Satan, he defined as the cult of idolatry and that which attracted people towards divinations, amulets, omens and sorcerers and these were to be decisively shunned by the neophytes following their renunciation of Satan<sup>116</sup>. But for Cyril, the act of renunciation and commitment, although personal to each candidate, could only be made because of the neophyte's common bond of flesh and blood with Christ<sup>117</sup>.

Dr.Riley puts this:

"In other words, the power of the salvific act of Christ, united in the bond of common humanity with the candidate, lends him the power to break the ancient covenant with hell and death."

(118)

However this act of renunciation and commitment was of a contractual

nature, and perpetually recorded in God's books<sup>119</sup>.

b) The Rites of Baptism. Cyril's second Mystagogical Catechesis was based on Romans 6:3-14, and was mainly concerned with the rites of baptism which took place in the inner chamber. As he began, Cyril made it quite plain that these Catecheses were given daily during Easter week as introductions for the neophytes into the mysteries which they had so recently experienced<sup>120</sup>. In the inner chamber they divested themselves of their garments and stood there 'naked in the sight of all'<sup>121</sup> although F. Dölger has shown that the term 'γυμνός' need not mean of itself total nakedness, but can still apply even if one is wearing an undergarment<sup>122</sup>. Once they had removed their clothing, the candidates were then anointed with exorcised oil from the topmost hairs of their head right down to their feet<sup>123</sup>. After this anointing the candidates were led to the baptismal pool, and after making an individual confession of faith in answer to the interrogation of the celebrant, the candidate plunged three times into the water, and emerged from it three times<sup>124</sup>.

Cyril began with what Dr. Riley describes as a 'moralistic interpretation' of the nakedness of the candidates<sup>125</sup>. First of all Cyril employed a Pauline image, speaking of the neophytes 'having stripped off the old man with his deeds'<sup>126</sup> in which the Pauline metaphor was that of a person removing his clothing. With this clothing, symbolically the old self was peeled off as well, and with it the evil deeds which emanated from the old self. Cyril stated this explicitly in his Mystagogical explanation of this part of the baptismal rite:

"Immediately then on entering you removed your tunics. This was a figure of the 'stripping off of the old man with his deeds.' (Col.3.9)."

(127)

Then Cyril moved on to the dimension of mortality and immortality considering the old man from the standpoint of salvation history. Cyril associated the candidate once again directly with Christ

Himself; as he told the neophytes that in their nakedness they were:

"In this also imitating Christ, who was naked on the cross, by His nakedness 'throwing off the cosmic powers and authorities like a garment and publicly upon the cross leading them in his triumphal procession'. (quoting Col. 2.15)".

(128)

Dr. Riley points out that this association between the nakedness of the candidate and the nakedness of Christ upon the cross was peculiar to Cyril of the four fathers whom he is studying, and suggests that this was due to the unique dramatic advantage in the location of his lecture<sup>129</sup>. Whilst this reason for the connection between the two ideas is possible, I am not convinced that this is any stronger a reason for such a vivid association than simply to suggest that it is due to Cyril's own particular style of preaching, and the example which he happened to select to illustrate his point. Already he has used the imagery from Colossians of putting off the old man, what would be more natural for a preacher like Cyril to use this image of the nakedness of Christ and the triumphant result of his humiliation described earlier in Colossians as a link to the next point in which he wanted to instruct his neophytes, and contrasts the Second Adam in his nakedness with the first Adam, 'who was naked in the garden, and was not ashamed',<sup>130</sup>.

In the Pauline teaching, the discussion concerned the power of the law which could do nothing for the sinner but condemn him to death. It was this death sentence for man which God carried out once and for all on His own Son in order to abrogate it forever, to cancel the debt of humanity by 'nailing it to the Cross',<sup>131</sup>. The humiliation of Jesus on the Cross is then transformed into the triumph of the Son of God. Man's enemies are divested of their power of corruption and stripped of their power. The stripping away of Christ's garments signified the stripping away of these evil powers, and the nakedness,

meant to be a humiliation becomes thereby the final sign of victory. So too in the candidate who imitates Christ's humiliation in being himself stripped of his clothes, in his case before baptism, the old clothes, symbol of the mortality, corruption and consequent vices and sins of the old man were stripped away, and their evil effects rendered powerless in and with Christ. Cyril confirmed this point to his neophytes thus:

"For as the forces of the enemy made their lair in our members, you may no longer wear the old garment. I do not, of course, refer to this visible garment, but to 'the old man which, deluded by its lusts, is sinking towards death' (Eph.4.22). May the soul that has once put off that old self never again put it on, but say with the Bride of Christ in the Canticle of Canticles: 'I have put off my garment how shall I put it on?' (Cant. 5.3). [Marvellous! You were naked in the sight of all and were not ashamed! Truly you bore the image of the first-formed Adam, who was naked in the garden and 'was not ashamed' (Gen.2.25)". ]

(132)

Similarly the nakedness which the neophytes had experienced also signalled their return to primeval innocence. Picturing the baptismal pool as a symbol of the garden of paradise, he explained to the candidates who had stood naked before each other at that pool:

"Marvellous! You were naked in the sight of all and were not ashamed! Truly you bore the image of the first formed Adam, who was naked in the garden and 'was not ashamed'. (Gen. 2.25)".

(133)

Moving to the anointing before baptism, Cyril's explanation of this was based on a comprehensive drawing from metaphors which spoke of anointing for healing, for combat and to produce a state of union with Christ. In terms of healing and exorcism Cyril seemed for a brief moment to be speaking of a ritual which had at least an echo in the pagan purification rites, just as the ceremony of disrobing had done, but as with that ceremony, he gave it its own very Christian interpretation, which underscored the whole idea of the renunciation of Satan. He described the exorcised oil with which the ritual was performed as having the effect of dispersing 'every concentration of

the cosmic forces arrayed against us,<sup>134</sup> but with his next breath, he described it as on a par with the breathing of the saints (τὰ ἐμφυσήματα τῶν ἁγίων) and the invocation of the name of God insofar as it:

"received, through prayer and the invocation of God, power so great as not only to burn and purge away the traces of sin but also to put to rout all the invisible forces of the evil one." (135)

Professor Piédagnel noted in connection with the phrase τὰ ἐμφυσήματα τῶν ἁγίων:

"L'insufflation, qui consistait à soufflet sur le visage des catéchumènes était l'un des rites des exorcismes préparatoires au baptême ..... Les 'saints' sont sans doute les prêtres qui préparaient au baptême." (136)

He also referred to the use of ἐμφυσήσεως in Procatechesis 9 where Cyril implied that this was an alternative to ἐπορκισθήσεως within the rites of exorcism preparatory to baptism. The practice of breathing upon the candidate to expel sin was also referred to in the Tradition of the Apostles<sup>137</sup>. It was an exterior sign which was of benefit to the candidate, of the inward work of spiritual cleansing which was being wrought within them during their catechumenate as part of an integrated programme of instruction, moral assistance, spiritual advice and prayer. Thus the oil was not seen in any magical connection, with prayer it had symbolic value, and here was described as removing the 'traces of sins', that which remained from the ravages of evil in the soul, its marks and traces, being burned away in a final prebaptismal ceremony of purification and healing.

However, it was no good cleansing the soul to leave a spiritual vacuum, and so in this brief but concise paragraph, Cyril pointed out that the oil would preserve the candidate from attack by Satan, and from all hostile influence, and would also have the effect of incorporating the candidate into the life of Christ. He drew his symbolism from the use in the ceremony of olive oil, which he

explained with reference to Romans 11:17-24, where the converted gentiles are described as branches of a wild olive tree, growing in its natural state, until as a result of their faith in Christ, they were grafted into the cultivated olive tree, Israel, replacing those branches which were removed because of their refusal to believe in Christ. It was through their act of faith in Jesus Christ that the neophytes to whom Cyril was speaking had received a share in the life of Christ, being made 'partakers of the good olive tree, Jesus Christ',<sup>138</sup> This too was an idea which he had introduced to the candidates in the earlier lectures<sup>139</sup>. Dr.Riley summarizes Cyril's mystagogy thus:

"Relying on the natural symbolism of the well known fruitfulness of the olive tree in its production of oil and in its symbol fertility, and adding material from St.Paul, Cyril gives a christological unity to his mystagogy of the anointing of the body before baptism."

(140)

Following the final exorcism and anointing the candidates were led to the pool itself, and Cyril's explanation in his next paragraph formed an interesting comment on the daily lection which they were using<sup>141</sup>, for he used the image of Christ being carried from the Cross to the Sepulchre, and in this image he certainly had a topographical advantage as Dr.Riley points out:

"Cyril enjoyed the most advantageous position to capitalize on this mystagogical explanation of the act of baptism as meaning a participation in the sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus. His Mystagogical discourses, delivered in Easter week, were held, it will be remembered, in the Anastasis, the rotunda of the resurrection. Listening to Cyril's catecheses, the neophytes had, as he himself points out to them, the holy sepulcher itself before their very eyes. This 'on-the-scene' advantage is the first material from which Cyril draws the interpretation of the baptismal act as a being buried with Christ."

(142)

This imagery vividly continued Cyril's concept of the mystical association of the candidate with Christ. Although Cyril touched on other aspects of the meaning of baptism, his chief concern was to link the liturgical ceremony which the neophytes had experienced with the real historical event of the burial and resurrection of

Christ, for this was the central plank in his mystagogical platform. He made this plain at the very beginning of his explanation, stressing the presence of the sepulchre in front of his audience<sup>143</sup>. Thus the stage was set for a mystagogical comparison between the actions of the candidate and those of Christ. Before the act of baptism, the candidate was required again to affirm his personal faith in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and then underwent triple Immersion-Emersion, which Cyril explained as: 'therein mystically signifying Christ's three days burial'<sup>144</sup>. As the candidate ducked below the water and came up three times, Cyril interpreted this aspect of the ceremony which the neophytes had undergone as a symbol of the three days and three nights which Christ had spent in the tomb, explaining that the nights were symbolized by the time when the head was under water, and the days symbolized by the time when the head was above the water. This interpretation also used the natural symbolism of light and darkness, and Cyril borrowed a biblical expression from Matthew, 'three days and nights in the depths of the earth' which Christ used in describing the sign of Jonah, who 'spent three days and nights in the big fish'<sup>145</sup>. Cyril made the choice of the explanation of the symbolism rather than the more popular Trinitarian explanation, to further the christological symbolism of the baptismal act.

Although we would expect Cyril to continue this symbolism to make the seemingly obvious parallel between coming out of the pool and resurrection, he was more concerned to explain the theology of how the candidate was actually conformed sacramentally to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Cyril was well aware of the obvious interpretation as we can see from other references to it<sup>146</sup>, but it is not his main concern here. His main concern here is to teach the neophytes relationship to the sufferings of Christ, and just how the efficacy of the cross is sacramentally present in the baptismal rite.

"Let no one imagine, then, that Baptism wins only the grace of remission of sins plus adoption, as John's baptism conferred only the remission of sins. No; we know full well that Baptism not only washes away our sins and procures for us the gift of the Holy Spirit, but is also the antitype of the Passion of Christ. That is why Paul just now proclaimed: 'Do you not know that all we who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death. For through Baptism we were buried along with Him'. Perhaps this was directed against those who supposed that Baptism procures only the remission of sins and the adoption of sons and does not, beyond this, really make us imitatively partakers of the sufferings of Christ."

(147)

Although the neophytes' baptism had been only an imitative figure of Christ's real sufferings and death, Cyril taught them that it still made their salvation a reality. By their baptism they shared in the fellowship (*κοινωνίας*) of Christ's pain, by which he vouchsafed their salvation. Dr. Riley summarized Cyril's thought on this theme usefully thus:

"one might summarize Cyril's thought as follows:

- (1) Christ suffered 'once' in reality (*ἐν ἀληθείᾳ*), not just in appearance.
- (2) I have a 'share (*κοινωνία*)' in these true sufferings of Christ.
- (3) The means whereby I am enabled to share in these true sufferings of Christ is the sacramental action, in which there is an 'imitation' or 'representation (*μίμησις*)' of these true sufferings.
- (4) This 'imitation (*μίμησις*)' does not consist obviously in actual suffering on my part. Rather, my participation in the sufferings of Christ is achieved through the medium of an 'image (*ἐν εἰκότι*)' in the sacramental act.
- (5) Even though my participation in the sufferings of Christ is 'imitation through the medium of an image' (*μίμησις ἐν εἰκότι*), the salvation is not 'imitation (*μίμησις*)' but rather in reality (*ἐν ἀληθείᾳ*)
- (6) Baptism may thus be called the 'antitype (*ἀντίτυπον*)' of Christ's sufferings."

(148)

In pursuing this argument, Cyril was crossing and recrossing the thin line between mystagogy and theology, for it is difficult to see an exact parallel between the explicit details of Christ's passion and the liturgical practise of the Baptismal rite. However, we must remember that Cyril was delivering these lectures to neophytes rather than composing a cool, calculating theology of Baptism with a view to publication. If we are mindful of this it is no surprise to find that

occasionally he contradicted himself, and occasionally he was carried away with the enthusiasm of his own oratory, led on by the circumstances surrounding his lectures. The position became a little clearer in his final exposition of this relationship:

"To teach us, then, that all that Christ endured 'for us and for our salvation', He suffered in actual fact (ἐν ἀληθείᾳ) and not in mere seeming, and that we have fellowship in His passion. Paul cries aloud in unequivocal language: 'For if we have become one planting (σύνφυτοι) with him by the likeness (ὁμοίωμα) of His death, we shall be one with him by the likeness of His Resurrection also (Rom. 6:5) 'One Planting' is apt, for since the true Vine was planted here, we, by partaking in the Baptism of His death, have become 'one planting' with Him. Mark closely the words of the Apostle: he did not say: 'for if we have become one planting by His death, 'but 'by the likeness of His death. For in the case of Christ, death was real, His soul being really separated from His body. His burial, too, was real, for His sacred Body was wrapped in clean linen. In His case it all really happened. But in your case there was only a likeness (ὁμοίωμα) of death and suffering, whereas of salvation there was no likeness but the reality (ἀλήθεια)."

(149)

His reference to the vine provided a further example of his topographical references and he carefully used this term to describe the cross of Jesus, planted in Jerusalem where his lectures were being delivered, and drawing on Jesus' words from John 15:1-8, he used a further likeness to baptism as a symbol showing once again that the Christian is united to the cross of Jesus.

Cyril also used the symbol of the new birth of the neophyte:

"In the same moment you were dying and being born and that saving water was at once your grave and your mother."

(150)

Just as baptism had brought the candidate to participate in the sufferings and death of Christ, so it also brought him to participate at the same time in the resurrection of Christ, and the new life which that promised, thus the water was at one and the same time womb and tomb. Dr. Riley concludes:

"So the water tomb, into which one had immersed in death with Christ and from which one had emerged in resurrection with Christ receives now a second symbolism, and becomes the water womb."

(151)

Cyril did not develop this point any further, but contented himself with pressing home to the neophytes that their baptism had conformed them to the death and resurrection of Christ.

c) The Post-Baptismal Rites. Cyril dealt with the rites following baptism in his third Mystagogical catechesis, which was based on the lection I John 2:20-28, and this was a rite of anointing or chrismation with the purpose of setting the candidates apart, just as Christ at his baptism had been set apart for God's service. He began by reminding the neophytes that the meaning of the word Christ was 'the anointed one'. Hence as the candidates by their baptism had been made 'partakers of Christ'<sup>152</sup> they might properly be called God's anointed ones. This anointing had come with their reception of the Holy Ghost. As he explained, again using the Mystagogical image of the association of the candidate with Christ:

"He bathed in the river Jordan and, after imparting the fragrance of His Godhead to the waters, came up from them. Him the Holy Spirit visited in essential presence, like resting upon like. Similarly for you, after you had ascended from the sacred streams (ναμάτων), there was an anointing with Chrism (χρίσμα), the antitype of that with which Christ was anointed, that is of the Holy Spirit." (153)

To achieve this point, Cyril developed his previous imagery to fit the current interpretation; no longer is the baptismal font the 'pool (κολυμβήθρας)' as it was earlier<sup>154</sup>, but it has become the 'pool of sacred streams (ναμάτων)', to match the symbolism which has changed from the pool as tomb to the pool as symbol of the waters of the River Jordan. The 'type (τύπος)' is the coming of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus and its Messianic implications, the 'antitype (ἀντίτυπος)' to this salvific even being the chrismation of the neophyte. Cyril confirmed this mimesis theology which he had applied to this ceremony in this passage from the next paragraph

"As Christ was really crucified and buried and rose again, and you at Baptism are privileged to be crucified, buried and raised along with Him in a likeness (ἐν ὁμοιωματι) so also with the chrism. Christ was anointed with a mystical oil of gladness; that is with the Holy Spirit called 'oil of gladness' because He is the cause of spiritual gladness; so you, being anointed with ointment (μύρω) have become

partakers (κοινωνοί) and fellows of Christ."

(155)

His final phrase 'μέτοχοι τοῦ Χριστοῦ' referred back to the passage from Psalm 45:7 which Cyril had quoted earlier in this section.

Next he warned his audience against regarding the ointment (τὸ μύρον) as simple ointment, for after the invocation and its dedication to its sacramental use it became

"The gracious gift of Christ and the Holy Spirit, producing the advent (presence?) of His deity. With this ointment your forehead and sense organs are sacramentally anointed, in such wise that while your body is anointed with the visible oil, your soul is sanctified by the holy, quickening Spirit."

(156)

Cyril drew a parallel between the epiclesis over the bread and the epiclesis over the ointment (τὸ μύρον) but as Dr. Riley pointed out we must avoid applying the framework of later 'transubstantiation' theology to this context<sup>157</sup>. Cyril's main interest here was not to explain the oil and to discuss any possible changes in its nature and substance, but rather to discuss its dynamic use in conjunction with the operation of the Holy Spirit. So, for Cyril, with the use of the sanctified μύρον, the neophyte himself was sanctified as the Holy Spirit worked through the act of anointing within the sacraments of initiation. This inner change, wrought in the neophyte, brought about the neophyte's participation in the Anointed One Himself, in the Messiah Christ.

In marked contrast to Jesus' practice when washing his disciples' feet in the Upper Room<sup>158</sup> the neophytes whom Cyril addressed had been anointed on forehead, ears, nostrils and breast. As the biblical basis for the first anointing, Cyril used II Corinthians 3:18 and explained that man's fall from Paradise had brought with it a sense of shame, darkening man's countenance, so that it could no longer reflect his intimate gaze of union with

God. Man's sense of shame tainted his relations both with God and with his partner, and in this act of anointing on the forehead, man's sense of shame before God was removed as the gift of God's Spirit, which it represented was restored. Once again the neophyte might fulfil his purpose, and 'so you may reflect as in a glass the splendour of the Lord'<sup>159</sup>. From the context of the passage which Cyril chose to illustrate this truth to the neophytes, we may conclude that he understood this effect of the Spirit to be not one single act but a process and a progress 'from glory to glory' (ἀπὸ δόξης εἰς δόξαν),<sup>160</sup> as the neophyte developed upon his spiritual pilgrimage. Already this sense of shame before God had been removed in the neophyte's innocent nakedness before their baptism; perhaps evidence that Cyril's idea of God's work in the total sacrament of initiation took precedence over his idea of God's activity in any particular section of the sacrament.

The anointing of the ears was explained by Cyril in two verses from Scripture<sup>161</sup>. The first dealt with the communication of the divine message to the Servant of YHWH, and Cyril used this to illustrate the need for neophytes' ears to be awakened to receive the spiritual messages which God sought to communicate with them. The second passage came from a quotation of the Lord regarding the preaching of the Kingdom and thus implied the transmission of the truths revealed by God. Thus the coming of the Spirit, symbolised by the anointing of the ears, brought with it the spiritual awareness that made the neophytes learn and transmit the message of the kingdom.

The anointing of the nostrils made the neophytes aware that through the sweet smelling fragrance of the oil they were participating in Christ himself<sup>162</sup>.

Finally the anointing of the breast was used by Cyril to

teach the neophytes that they had put on 'the breastplate of righteousness',<sup>163</sup> and was symbolic of the whole armour of God which Paul described in his passage and which had its roots in the Isaianic passage<sup>164</sup> describing the virtues and characteristics of the coming Messianic King. So the Christian after his baptism and because of his incorporation into Christ was similarly armed for the fight secure in the knowledge that 'I can do all things in the Christ who strengthens me',<sup>165</sup>.

Thus each separate element in the act of anointing was explained by Cyril in terms of the equipment of the new Christian as an apostolic instrument. He was sent out, renewed in fellowship with God. As Dr. Riley concluded:

"God's kingdom, restored in Christ, and communicated to the neophyte through the anointing of the Spirit of Christ, must now manifest itself in a dynamic way, interacting with the forces in the world opposed to it, until it reaches its full growth and maturity." (166)

Coupled with this anointing, the neophytes were now called 'Christians' having been initiated into Christianity by the rites which culminated in their Chrismation<sup>167</sup>.

Cyril then drew parallels with the anointing of Aaron and of Solomon in the Old Testament, and reminded his hearers that these happened in a figure (τυπικῶς), but to the new Christians they happened in truth (ἀληθῶς) because of their anointing by the Holy Ghost. He then used the analogy of Christ's holiness as the First-fruit (ἀπαρχή), so that his holiness could be passed on (μεταβιβῆσαι) to the whole (φύραμα) as the yeast passed on its life to the dough<sup>168</sup>.

It remained however the duty of the new Christian to lead a good life, unspotted by sin and unsullied by temptation as Cyril reminded them:

"Anointed then with this holy oil, keep it in you  
unsullied, without blame making progress through good  
works and becoming well-pleasing to 'the trail blazer  
of our salvation' (τῷ ἀρχηγῷ τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμῶν )  
Christ Jesus, to whom be glory for ever and ever, Amen." (169)

Much of the remainder of the Mystagogical Catecheses were devoted to the Eucharist and the Lord's Prayer, but when referring to a passage which he ascribed to Solomon<sup>170</sup> Cyril referred to the new post-baptismal garments of the neophytes thus:

"Now that you have put off your old garments and put on those which are spiritually white, you must go clad in white all your days. I do not, of course, mean that your ordinary clothes must always be white, but that you must be clad in those true, spiritual garments which are white and shining. Then you will be able to say with the blessed Isaiah: 'Let my soul rejoice in the Lord; for he has dressed me in the garments of salvation, and with the robe of gladness he has clothed me' (Is. 61.10 LXX) (171)

The white garment had distinct connotations of purity and of joy, and had a distinct eschatological significance. The life of the Christian was to reflect the purity and joy of the coming kingdom of Christ. This formed a further extension of the idea of the Christian being one with the resurrected Christ following his baptism. As Cyril pointed out, it referred back and provided the antithesis for the removal of the garments before baptism, and although he did not make plain whether the new baptismal robe was donned, he was still quite clear that the white robe was an expressive symbol of the event of rising with Christ. As he used the phrase 'having put on Christ' as a link sentence between his second and third Mystagogical Catecheses, it may well be that the baptismal robe was donned by the neophytes immediately following their emergence from the waters of baptism. Cyril's explanation also had distinct eschatological connotations, symbolizing the robe of gladness and the sign of the consummation of life. Thus the life of the Christian, because of its association with the resurrection of Jesus, should reflect the purity and joy of the coming kingdom. It went beyond the imagery of the garment in the

Procatechesis which Cyril saw in terms of readiness for baptism, but saw rather the life of the neophyte at one with Christ, living under the sign of the eschaton to which the risen life, symbolized by the baptismal garment, tended in the Christian.

### 3. The Praxis of Baptism with Relation to the Fellowship of the Church Particularly Considering Sponsorship

We learn that the names of Cyril's candidates were enrolled at the beginning of the classes, and Cyril used a metaphor to stress the importance of this, describing it as *στρατείας κλήσις* applying the phrase used for being called to military service to the baptismal candidates. Perhaps the concept here lay in the double meaning of the word sacramentum - the Christian meaning applying to baptism, and the secular meaning applying to the oath taken by Roman soldiers pledging their personal fidelity to the Emperor. He also spoke of the candidates as *κατηξιῶθης* indicating that acceptance for registration was not automatic<sup>172</sup>. By Egeria's time, names had to be given in by the first day of Lent, and on the second day of Lent, the Bishop was seated in the middle of the great Church.

"Then one by one those seeking baptism are brought up men coming with their father, and women with their mothers. As they come in one by one, the bishop asks their neighbours questions about them: 'Is this person leading a good life? Does he respect his parents? Is he a drunkard or a boaster?' He asks about all the serious human vices. And if his inquiries show him that someone has not committed any of these misdeeds, he himself puts down his name; but if someone is guilty he is told to go away, and the bishop tells him that he is to amend his ways before he may come to the font. He asks the men and women the same questions. But it is not too easy for a visitor to come to baptism if he has not witnesses who are acquainted with him." (173)

Cyril drew a parallel too between the names of the candidates being enrolled, and their names being recorded in the *βιβλίω ζώντων* (book of the living) Cyril prayed that Jesus may

"after writing them never blot them out. For the names of many who fall away are blotted out." (174)

He further reminded them that sins committed after baptism were

recorded until the day of judgement<sup>175</sup>. So he warned them

"guard your own soul if you would avoid being trapped and would inherit, after standing fast in hope, everlasting salvation."

(176)

He made it plain that Bishop, Presbyters or Deacons could administer baptism<sup>177</sup>. In allowing Deacons to baptize with the Bishop's permission he was following Tertullian, but in contradiction to the Apostolic Constitutions which said:

" Διάκονος οὐ βαπτίζει οὐ προσφέρει " (178)

and to Epiphanius<sup>179</sup>. However the Council of Elvira (ca. 306) plainly said:

"If a deacon, that takes care of people without either bishop or presbyter, baptizes any, the bishop shall consummate them by his benediction."

(180)

Bingham pointed out that this plainly supposed that deacons had the ordinary right of baptizing in such Churches over which they presided.

At the time of enrolment from the catechumenate to become candidates for Enlightenment and their interrogation, *ῥωτισόμενοι* were accompanied by 'their fathers' and 'their mothers'. Hélène Pétré<sup>181</sup> explained that these terms denoted the office of sponsor, an office 'often enough', but we may ~~imply~~, not always, filled by the parent of the 'baptizand' when it was the case of the delayed baptism of a child of Christian parents. However, in the case of strangers in the city, Egeria wrote:

"But it is not too easy for a visitor to come to baptism if he has not witnesses who are acquainted with him."

(182)

Mlle. Pétré described these visitors as 'slaves, orphans, abandoned babies, and immigrants'. We have a picture of the Church at Jerusalem, in what was already becoming a tourist centre, being very careful about not making baptism a tourist attraction, but examining carefully both those who requested baptism and their sponsors.

Other references to sponsors are scant, although we may imply that because of their presence at the interrogation of the candidate at his enrolment, and in the light of Egeria's comments, the sponsors were expected to undertake responsibility for the candidates whom they introduced both before during and after baptism as they had to do in Antioch. The use of the parental terms also implied a paternal interest being shown, as was the case in Antioch and Mopsuestia. There is also evidence here of two distinct classes of unbaptized in the Church. Catechumens were banned from hearing these lectures until they had been accepted as candidates for enlightenment at the beginning of the Lenten season immediately prior to their baptism<sup>183</sup>.

Now we move some 300 miles North to Antioch, and to the place where the followers of Jesus were first called Christians, to consider the material provided by John Chrysostom.

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24. Cat.3.9 (RR 1.76; FaCh 61.114) quoting Matthew 3:11
25. Cat.3.11 (RR 1.78; FaCh 61.115)
26. Cat.12.15 (RR 2.18; FaCh 61.235)
27. Cat.17.9 (RR 2.260; FaCh 64.101)
28. Cat.3.11
29. cf. Job 40:18, 26; 41:13, and Jonah's choice of a sea journey rather than obedience to God.
30. Cat.3.11 (RR 1.80; FaCh 61.115)
31. Cat.3.14
32. Cat.3.13 (RR 1.80; FaCh 61.116)
33. Procat. 2 (FLC 1; FaCh 61.71) See also Origen: Hom.in num.3.1 in which he illustrated the hypocrisy of Simon.
34. Procat. 3,4 cf. Matthew 22:11-13.
35. Cat. 3.2
36. Cat. 3.4 (RR 1.68; FaCh 61.110) cf. Heb. 10.22

37. Procat. 9
38. Cat. 1.5 (RR 1.34; FaCh 61.94)
39. Cat. 17.37
40. Cat. 3.7
41. Procat 15 (FLC 9; FaCh 61.81) referring to Psalm 138.12
42. Cat. 1.2 (RR 1.30; FaCh 61.92)
43. cf. Acts 10:46
44. Cat. 3.4 (RR 1.68; FaCh 61.110,111) quoting Acts 10:48
45. Procat 1
46. Procat 2 see above note 33
47. Cat. 13.21
48. Cat. 18.32 (RR 2.336; FaCh 64.137)
49. See J.Ysaebert: Greek Baptismal Terminology (Græcitas Christianorum Primaeva: Fasciculus Primus) (Nijmegen, 1962) p.173 ff
50. Procat 16 (FLC 10; FaCh 61.82)
51. Cat. 3.14 (RR 1.82; FaCh 61.116,117)
52. Cat. 11.9 (RR 1.300; FaCh 61.215) quoting John 1:12-13
53. J.Ysaebert: op. cit p.376
54. Didascalia 2.32.3
55. J.Ysaebert: op. cit. p.378
56. Chrysostom Stav. 2.25-26
57. Procat.16 (FLC 10; FaCh 61.82)
58. Cat. 1.2 (RR 1.30; FaCh 61.92) cf. also Cat. 7.3 and Cat.17.26
59. Cat. 17.36 (RR 2.294; FaCh 64.118)
60. Cat. 4.32 (RR 1.124; FaCh 61.134)
61. Cat. 5.6 (RR 1.142; FaCh 61.143)
62. Cat. 3.4 (RR 1.68; FaCh 61.110)
63. G.W.H.Lampe: The Seal of the Spirit (London 1951)
64. H.M.Riley: Christian Initiation (Studies in Christian Antiquity 17) (Washington DC 1974)
65. See A.A.Stephenson in FaCh 64, 160; 174-180.
66. See A.A.Stephenson in FaCh 64, 176-7
67. Procat 17 (FLC 11; FaCh 61.84)
68. Cat. 3.12 (RR 1.80; FaCh 61.115)
69. Cat. 4.32 (RR 1.24; FaCh 61.134)
70. Cat. 3.11 (RR 1.80; FaCh 61.115)
71. Procat. 16 (FLC 10; FaCh 61.82)
72. G.W.H.Lampe: Patristic Greek Lexicon (Oxford 1961) p.815
73. Mark 10:45,
74. Romans 6:3-4
75. See also above
76. Basil: Des Baptismo 1.2.27
77. See FaCh 61.82; E.H.Gifford: St.Cyril Archbishop of Jerusalem: Catechetical Lectures (Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers Vol.7) (London 1894) p.5 see also G.W.Lampe: PGL 990.
78. See G.W.H.Lampe: PGL 1417
79. See above p.20
80. cf. Cat. 1.6; 2.9; 3,2,4,5,13
81. Cat. 17.35
82. Cat. 17.36 (RR 2.294-6; FaCh 64.118)
83. cf. Cat. 3. 3,4,5; 1.2,5
84. See A.A.Stephenson: FaCh 61.74 note 17 and see above p.19
85. Cat. 3.4,16
86. Cat. 1.4 (RR 1.34; FaCh 61.93) cf. Cat. 17.37
87. Cat. 15.23 (RR 2.94; FaCh 64.69)
88. Hebrews 6:4-6; Romans 2:17-21; cf. Irenaeus; Adv. Haer, IV.42.4  
Tertullian: De Baptismo 8
89. Tertullian: De Baptismo 16; Origen: Hom. 7.2; In Ev. Matthew 16:6
90. Cat. 3.10 (RR 1.78; FaCh 61.114) cf. Cat. 13.21
91. John 19:34
92. Tertullian: De Baptismo 16.
93. Jerome: Ep. 69.9 (ad Oceanum)
94. Rufinus: Comm in Symb 7.38

95. See B.F.Westcott: The Gospel According to St. John (London 1894) p. 284 ff.
96. F.L.Cross in his introduction pointed out that a phrase in Cat 18.33 seemed to look forward to a sixth Catechesis, and that it would be more natural for every day of the Paschal week to have its lecture, but there is no evidence to decide this matter. See op. cit. p. xxiv
97. Cat. Myst 1.1 (FLC 12; FaCh 64.153)
98. J.Wilkinson: op. cit. p.277
99. Cat. Myst. 1.2
100. Cat. Myst. 1.3
101. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.46
102. Cat. Myst 1.3 (FLC 13; FaCh 64.154)
103. Cat. Myst 1.4,5,6,8. A.Piédagnel (ed); Cyrille de Jérusalem: Catecheses Mystagogiques (Sources chrétiennes 126) p. 92 notes that most manuscripts have αὐτοῦ rather than σοῦ in the third phrase (Cat. Myst 1.6) but due to the free style of the catecheses he does not consider this significant. Dr.Cross's text has 'καὶ πάση τῇ πομπῇ σοῦ' without annotation, but the translation of Dr.Church which he used has 'and all his pomp'.
104. Cat. Myst 1.4 (FLC 13-14; FaCh 64.155)
105. Cat. Myst 1.8 (FLC 16; FaCh 64.158)
106. See eg. Chrysostom: Stav.2.14.27; Stav 3 = P-K 24; Theodore: Homily 12.19,23.
107. Cat. Myst 1.8 (FLC 16; FaCh 64.158)
108. Cat. Myst 1.9 (FLC 16; FaCh 64.158-9)
109. A. Piédagnel: op. cit. p.99 n.4
110. See Procat 15 (FLC 9; FaCh 61.81)
111. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.63
112. Cat. Myst 1.4 (FLC 14; FaCh 64.155)
113. Cat. Myst 1.9
114. Cat. Myst 1.6 (FLC 15; FaCh 64.156) cf. also Chrysostom: Stav 6.1
115. Cat. Myst 1.7
116. Cat. Myst 1.8
117. Cat. Myst 1.4
118. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.95
119. Cat. Myst 1.5
120. Cat. Myst 2.1
121. Cat. Myst 2.2 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.161)
122. F.Dölger: Der Exorzismus im altchristlichen Taufritual. (Paderborn 1909) p.107 ff
123. Cat. Myst 2.3
124. Cat. Myst 2.4
125. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.162
126. Colossians 3:9
127. Cat. Myst 2.2 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.161)
128. Cat. Myst 2.2 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.161)
129. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.173
130. Cat. Myst 2.2 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.162)
131. Colossians 2:14
132. Cat. Myst 2.2 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.161-2)
133. Cat. Myst 2.2 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.162)
134. Cat. Myst 2.3 (FLC 19; FaCh 64.163)
135. Cat. Myst 2.3 (FLC 19; FaCh 64.163)
136. A.Piédagnel: op. cit. SC 126 p.109 n.1
137. Tradition Apost. 20 (SC 11 p.48)
138. Cat. Myst 2.3 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.162)
139. Cat. 1.4
140. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.198
141. Romans 6:3-14
142. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.228
143. Cat. Myst 2.4
144. Cat. Myst 2.4 (FLC 19; FaCh 64.164)

145. Matthew 12:40; Jonah 2:1 (TEV)
146. See eg. Procat 2; Cat. 3.12; Cat. Myst 2.8
147. Cat. Myst 2.6 (FLC 20; FaCh 64.165-6)
148. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.235-236
149. Cat. Myst 2.7 (FLC 21; FaCh 64.167)
150. Cat. Myst 2.4 (FLC 19; FaCh 64.165)
151. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.303
152. Hebrews 3:14
153. Cat. Myst 3.1 (FLC 22; FaCh 64.169)
154. Cat. Myst 2.4
155. Cat. Myst 3.2 (FLC 23; FaCh 64.170)
156. Cat. Myst 3.3 (FLC 23; FaCh 64.170-1)
157. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.370 n.64
158. John 13:8-11
159. cf. II Corinthians 3:18; Cat. Myst 3.4 (FLC 24; FaCh 64.171-2)
160. II Corinthians 3:18
161. Isaiah 50:4; Matthew 11:15
162. Here Cyril quoted from II Corinthians 2:15
163. Ephesians 6:14
164. Isaiah 11:4
165. Philippians 4:13; Cat. Myst 3.4 (FLC 24; FaCh 64.172)
166. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.376
167. Cat. Myst. 3.5
168. Cat. Myst. 3.6
169. Cat. Myst. 3.7 (FLC 25; FaCh 64.173)
170. Ecclesiastes 9:7 LXX
171. Cat. Myst 4.8 (FLC 29; FaCh 64.184-5)
172. Procat 4
173. J.Wilkinson:op. cit. 45.2-4, pp 143-4
174. Cat. 14.30 (RR 2.148; FaCh 64.52)
175. See Cat. 15.23, 18.20
176. Procat 16 (FLC 11; FaCh 61.83-84)
177. Cat. 17.35 cf. J.Bingham: Origenes Ecclesiasticae: Antiquities II 20.9 and Tertullian: De Baptismo 17
178. Ap. Const 8.38
179. Epiphanius: Haereses 79
180. Concil Illibit 77 quoted in Bingham: op. cit. See also J.Bingham: A Scholastic History of Lay Baptism I 1.5
181. Hélène Pétré: Ethérie, Journal de Voyage (SC 21) (Paris 1948) p.255 n.3
182. Peregrinatio Aetheriae 45 (H.Petre op. cit SC 21 p.255; J.Wilkinson: op. cit. p.144)
183. Appended note to Procatechesis (FaCh 61.84-5); Procat 12 (FLC 7; FaCh 61.79)

## CHAPTER TWO

### JOHN CHRYSOSTOM AND THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH

John Chrysostom was born about 347 A.D. in Antioch, just a year or two before Cyril gave his lectures to his candidates in Jerusalem. John Chrysostom spent much of his life in Antioch, where he trained as an orator, and his reputation as an orator followed him into the Church after his baptism as an adult Christian in 370. Shortly afterwards he abandoned the world to take up the study of Scripture as both monk and hermit, but over-enthusiastic fasting and the rigors of his enforced solitude undermined his health, and forced him to return to Antioch where, in 386, he was ordained to the priesthood. He served the Church under Bishop Flavian as an exegete, preacher, and moralist until 397, when he was elevated to the patriarchate of Constantinople. This was an unhappy appointment, for although Chrysostom was spiritually an acceptable candidate, he lacked the worldly wisdom to avoid making powerful enemies among the hierarchy and at court. This resulted in his deposition in 403, his exile in 404, and his death on 14th September 407.

The catechetical material which has been discovered and

collated, much of it only in this century, comes from his priesthood in Antioch under Bishop Flavian and it seems highly likely that the material which we have comes from at least two different Lenten periods, as will appear below. So in Antioch, the catechetical lecturer was not the Bishop as he seems to have been in Jerusalem, but the task was delegated to one who was probably the most able candidate for the job. The character of the lectures too are more a pastoral than a definitive exposition of the faith, and he seems less concerned with denouncing heretics than with combatting the temptations of the hippodrome. For the purpose of this study, reference will be made only to the following material<sup>1</sup> of an overtly catechetical nature:

a) Two lectures which Abbé Montfaucon called 'Ad illuminandos catechesis prima et altera'<sup>2</sup>. These two sets of baptismal instructions were probably not the first and second lectures of the same series as there is no continuity of ideas between the two lectures<sup>3</sup>, but sometimes a duplication, and suspicions about the relationship to each other of these catechetical instructions were strengthened when the first lecture was found to belong to the series discovered by A.Papadopoulos-Kerameus in the Synodal Library of Moscow. The second lecture is found as the last of the series of twenty two homilies De statutis, preached at Antioch during the Lent of 387. Although Abbé Montfaucon was quite right in referring to them as first and second, they are not first and second in the same series, and sadly it seems that the series of which Mf.2 was the second lecture is now lost forever.

b) However the rest of the series of Mf.1 has come to light, and it now forms part of a complete series of four lectures, following the discovery and publication of lectures 2, 3 and 4 by A.Papadopoulos-Kerameus in 1909 in an obscure Russian series from the then University of St.Petersburg, since reprinted in Leipzig<sup>4</sup>. There is internal

evidence to fix Antioch as the place in which these lectures were delivered<sup>5</sup> and to link these lectures into a series<sup>6</sup>. However, the fourth lecture, a baptismal sermon addressed to the neophytes is something of a special case, because like Mf.1, P-K.4 was already known in the West, but in a Latin translation. This translation had come to the attention of Abbé Montfaucon, but for some reason he had rejected it, pronouncing upon it the verdict: 'quisquilia'. It was related by early editors to the Sacra parallela of John Damascene, and its indirect transmission in this way has been studied in the early days of this century by Sebastian Haidacher<sup>7</sup>. It also stands as the third sermon in the Stavronikita series<sup>8</sup>. Although there is some evidence to suggest that this sermon exists in two recensions, Dr. Harkins suggests that 'An Easter sermon like this might well have been published separately, and later inserted in or appended to either series'<sup>9</sup>.

c) The Stavronikita series was discovered and published by Antoine Wenger in 1955<sup>10</sup>. This series is similar to the other two series in that it has a mystagogical content, and explains the ritual leading up to the bath of regeneration. It is also different from them in that it includes five post-baptismal lectures delivered during Easter week. The structure varies accordingly, and the pre-baptismal mystagogical lectures are reduced to two, one at the beginning of the period of instruction and the other at the end. The third Instruction was given on Holy Saturday night after the candidate had been baptized and communicated, and as we have seen above this is also included as P-K.4. The last five are designed to impart moral instructions to the newly-illuminated, and to give them what Dr. Harkins describes as 'a concrete initiation into the Christian way of life'<sup>11</sup>. The moral aspect of Christian living predominates in these lectures, and Chrysostom's teaching reflects his own experience and his own mentality,

"hence he leads the catechumens along the path of asceticism and progress in virtue rather than into speculative consideration on the articles of faith. For him there was no purpose in receiving baptism if one had not first purified

the eyes of the soul for the reception of the divine illumination."

(12)

Wenger dates the Papadopoulos-Kerameus series earliest at Lent 388, and the Stavronikita series to 390 or 391<sup>13</sup>.

### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

Chrysostom in his homilies, particularly those given to baptismal candidates, used normally simple and vivid imagery and from his first homily in the Montfaucon series we find a list of titles of baptism with supporting texts so that he could build up a composite dramatic picture of baptism for the candidate, featuring not only the act of baptism but the spiritual effects which they might expect it to have:

"This cleansing is called the bath of regeneration. He saved us, says St. Paul, though the bath of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit. It is also called an enlightenment, and again it is St. Paul who calls it this. But call to mind the days gone by, in which, after you had been enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings. And again: For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and who have tasted the heavenly gift and then have fallen away, to be renewed again to repentance. It is also called baptism. For all you who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. It is called a burial. For you were buried, says St. Paul, with Him by means of baptism into death. It is called a circumcision. In Him, too, you have been circumcised with a circumcision not wrought by hand but through putting off the body of sinful flesh. It is called a cross. For our old self has been crucified with Him, in order that the old body of sin may be destroyed."

(14)

and these titles make a useful framework to begin our consideration of the theology of baptism evident from these homilies.

Describing it first as the bath of regeneration, he supported this by reference to Titus 3:5, and went on to develop this idea in the next few paragraphs<sup>15</sup>. First he contrasted the efficacy of the 'bath of the Jews' with the 'bath of grace', which completely renewed the nature of the baptizands, which merely cleansed bodily or ritual uncleanness, but not the sins on one's conscience<sup>16</sup>. He taught his candidates that their forthcoming baptism would completely

transform their lives, and make their spiritual rebirth evident:

"And why, someone will say, if the bath takes away all our sins, is it not called the bath of the remission of sins, or the bath of cleansing, rather than the bath of regeneration? The reason is that it does not simply remit our sins, nor does it simply cleanse us of our faults, but it does this just as if we were born anew. For it does create us anew and it fashions us again, not moulding us from earth, but creating us from a different element, the nature of water." (17)

Although the baptism of John the Baptist was superior to that of the Jews, it was much less than the sacrament his candidates were to receive, and it served to link the 'bath of the Jews' with the 'bath of grace'. John's baptism did not give the Holy Spirit, nor did it provide forgiveness through grace. It enjoined penance following repentance but could not forgive sins. Then he explained that the baptism of the Jews was abrogated by the institution of the sacrament of baptism by the Lord.

"Where there is the dignity of adoption, there is also the removal of evil and the granting of all good things, On that account the Jewish baptism ceases and ours begins; what occurred at the Pasch now occurs in baptism. After He had celebrated both Paschs, He abrogated the old and gave a beginning to the new; here again, after He fulfilled the baptism of the Jews, He opens the doors of the Church's baptism at the same time." (18)

However the 'bath of grace' accomplished the regeneration of its recipients without the conception, gestation and labour periods of a human birth, and when addressing the neophytes following their baptism, Chrysostom commented:

"See how many children this spiritual mother has brought forth suddenly and in a single night! But we must not be surprised. Spiritual child-bearing is such that it needs neither time nor a period of months." (19)

In this process of regeneration, it is plain that the baptizand has the Church for his spiritual mother, and Christ for his Father, as the regeneration of the Christian comes from Christ's uniting to Himself His bride<sup>20</sup>.

In the Stavronikita series, much of his imagery is matrimonial, and so there is little surprise when he pointed out to

his listeners that no man would ever have poured out his blood for the woman who was going to be his bride:

"But the kindly Master imitating His own goodness, has accepted this great and marvelous sacrifice because of His solicitude for her, that by His own blood He might sanctify her; that, having cleansed her by the bath of baptism, He might present her to Himself a Church in all her glory. To this end He poured forth His blood and endured the cross, that through this He might freely give sanctification to us too, and might cleanse us through the bath of regeneration, and might present to Himself those who before were in dishonour and unable to speak with confidence, but now are glorious, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." (21)

He also reminded the baptizands after their baptism that Christ had made them a new creation as the grace of God entered their souls, moulded them anew, and made them different from what they were<sup>22</sup>. In this he was alluding to what he has said to the candidates when describing the baptismal rites:

"Instead of the man who descended into the water, a different man comes forth, one who has wiped away all the filth of his sins, who has put off the old garment of sin and has put on the royal robe." (23)

So extensive is the transformation effected by the bath of regeneration that the person who is baptized is different, literally 'one person instead of another', as his will is made over into the possessions of God. 8/

"It did not change their substance, but made over their will, no longer permitting the tribunal of the mind's eyes to entertain an erroneous notion, but by dissipating the mist which was blinding their eyes, God's grace made them see the ugly deformity of evil and virtue's shining beauty as they truly are." (24)

However fine this may sound, Chrysostom makes it plain that he is speaking 'in theory' and that in spite of the spiritual event of baptism, the will can still sometimes be opposed to God, and so he exhorts his audience:

"I exhort you, therefore, both you who have previously been initiated and you who have just now enjoyed the Master's generosity, let us all listen to the exhortation of the Apostle, who tells us: The former things have passed away; behold, they are all made new. Let us forget the whole past and, like citizens in a new world, let us reform our lives, and let us consider in our every word and deed the dignity of Him who dwells within us." (25)

For even new creatures, regenerated through baptism, have to make an effort after baptism, as he pointed out in the Montfaucon series; where he refers to faith as a matter of trust

"He has commanded you, too, to do this as far as you can in the things which have been entrusted to you - to increase the sanctity which you have received, to render more shining your justice after the bath, and to make your grace more lustrous, just as Paul did, who, by his subsequent toils and zeal and eagerness, increased all the blessings he had received." (26)

Chrysostom further illustrates the aspect of baptismal regeneration by using the analogy of the smelting furnace which not only cleansed the gold placed in it, but made it new too. Whilst other baptisms could not remove the stain of sin, the bath of regeneration could return a life shining even more brightly than the old:

"This bath does not merely cleanse the vessel but melts the whole thing down again. Even if a vessel has been wiped off and carefully cleaned, it still has the marks of what it is and still bears the traces of the stain. But when it is thrown into the smelting furnace and is renewed by the flame, it puts aside all dross and, when it comes from the furnace, it gives forth the same sheen as newly-molded vessels. When a man takes and melts down a gold statue which has become filthy with the filth of years and smoke and dirt and rust, he returns it to us all-clean and shining. So, too, God takes this nature of ours when it is rusted with the rust of sin, when our faults have covered it with abundant soot, and when it has destroyed the beauty He put into it in the beginning, and He smelts it anew. He plunges it into the waters as into the smelting furnace and lets the grace of the Spirit fall on it instead of the flames. Then He brings us forth from the furnace, renewed like newly-molded vessels, to rival the rays of the sun with our brightness. He has broken the old man to pieces but has produced a new man who shines brighter than the old." (27)

He was then reminded of the analogy from the Psalms and Jeremiah<sup>28</sup> of the potter's vessel, and used this analogy to teach the catechumens that once their nature was renewed, even if they were to slip and fall prey to temptation, the vessel was of raw clay, not of fired terracotta, and so it could be restored to its former state by God through sincere repentance.

"It is possible for God not only to correct us through

the bath of regeneration, since we are clay, but also after we have received the working of the Spirit and then have slipped, He can lead us back through sincere repentance to our former state."

(29)

After baptism Chrysostom specifically excluded the remission of sins by a new baptism but realistically he offered the baptizands a subsequent remission of sins after the bath of regeneration. He is less clear on the details of the manner of this subsequent remission of sins, but suggested that confession to God, repentance, tears, prayers, and almsgiving were means which can win the Christian pardon for sins<sup>30</sup>.

The next name he gave to describe baptism in Montfaucon is 'an enlightenment', the point at which Cyril began his lectures, but unfortunately, the preacher in Chrysostom took over, and he was sidetracked from his syllabus after quoting Hebrews 10:32 and Hebrews 6:4-6 in support of his statement. He was sidetracked by the constraint which he felt to warn his hearers against the evils of the sins of speech and particularly the habit of swearing. Perhaps this tells us something about the differences in emphasis placed upon morality and philosophy by Chrysostom and Cyril. When preaching after Baptism to a congregation of newly baptized and established Christians during Easter Week he cited the example of Paul who was 'baptized and illumined by the light of truth'<sup>31</sup> and exhorted his congregation to

"be eager to make brighter by good deeds the light within us - I mean the grace of the Spirit - so that it is never quenched, we shall enjoy the title of newly baptized for all time."

(32)

Illumination for Chrysostom was that which after baptism led the Christian towards a virtuous lifestyle, as he made plain in his instructions to the neophytes:

"Did you see now He urges us to let the light within us shine forth not by garments but by deeds? After He said: Let your light shine, He added: in order that they may see your good works. This light does not stop with the bodily senses but illumines the soul and understanding of those who see it; after it dispels the darkness of

evil, it draws those who find it to shine with their own light and to imitate the life of virtue." (33)

Although Chrysostom was in no doubt that illumination and enlightenment came through baptism, he tends to associate illumination rather more closely with the baptismal robe, and the witness of the quality of life of the Christian after baptism than with the baptism itself<sup>34</sup>.

However he does link light with justification in the context of faith in Christ:

"By this he showed in brief that those who, by their faith in Christ, had put off like an old cloak the burden of their sins, those who had been set free from their error and been illumined by the light of justification, had put on this new and shining cloak, this royal robe. This is why he said: If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the former things have passed away; behold, they are all made new." (35)

But primarily light and illumination is provided for the Christian, Chrysostom felt, so that that light might attract others to Christ, rather than the Christian be especially enlightened in rational terms.

His third descriptive name was 'baptism' and for this he cited Galatians 3:27. However all his imagery in this connection is considered elsewhere and the baptismal liturgy which he explained is also considered separately, so we will not linger with this particular title at this stage in our consideration.

On the other side of the coin to his description of the mystic cleansing of the rite as a bath of regeneration came his next title, in which he described it as a burial, and in support of this he cited Romans 6:4. This tied in with a statement in Stavronikita 2 that 'baptism is a burial and a resurrection'<sup>36</sup>, and in doing this he was using a common idea among the Fathers<sup>37</sup>. It is also linked with his final definition in a section of the Papadopoulos-Kerameus series which was headed by the editor 'Baptism is a Cross, Death and Resurrection'<sup>38</sup>. In this passage, Chrysostom deals in more detail with the surrounding verses from Romans 6, and continued his

explanation of the titles promised in Montfaucon 1 which is also the first lecture in the Papodopoulos-Kerameus series<sup>39</sup>. He amplified his teaching on Romans 6 in his commentary on Romans:

"What does it mean that we have been baptized into His death? Just as He was baptized into His death, so too have we, for baptism is a cross. Baptism is to us what the cross and burial were to Christ, although not with regard to the same things. He died and was buried with regard to the flesh; both of these happen to us with regard to sin. Therefore, Paul did not say we have been united in Him in death but in the likeness of death (cf. Rom 6.5). Both the one and the other are death, but not of the same thing. Christ's death was death of the flesh; our death is the death of sin."

(40)

This recalled to his mind the incident with Jesus and the mother of the sons of Zebedee in which Jesus referred to his cross and passion as a baptism:

"How, then, did Christ answer? Can you drink of the cup of which I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized? You see that He called the cross a baptism. How is this clear? Can you drink, He says, of the cup of which I am about to drink? He calls His passion a cup and on this account He says: Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Did you see how He called the cross a baptism and the passion a cup?"

(41)

He then proceeded to remind his listeners of Paul's words in Romans 6 and stressed the immediate nature of baptismal death, burial and resurrection:

"For in baptism there are both burial and resurrection together at the same time. He who is baptized puts off the old man, takes the new, and rises up, just as Christ has arisen through the glory of the Father. Do you see how, again, St. Paul calls baptism a resurrection?"

(42)

But such an immediate transformation needed to issue in a radical alteration in the baptizand's moral behaviour, for death to sin had to be a once and for all thing which meant that the baptized 'have nothing to do with the passion of the flesh and the affairs of the world'<sup>43</sup>. Chrysostom then counselled his congregation of those baptized:

"For your old self, he says, has been crucified and buried through baptism. Therefore, get for yourself none of the things that are on earth, and be not active in the affairs of the present life. For your life is hidden now and unseen by those who do not believe, but the time will come

when it will be seen. But now is not your time. Since you have died once and for all, refuse to mind the things that are on earth. The greatness of your virtue is plainly seen especially when you have prevailed over the arrogance of the flesh and act toward the good things of the world just as if you were death to this life."

(44)

Those who were dead to sin and Satan's power had nothing to fear in the combat with Satan, which Chrysostom graphically described in terms of their post-baptismal life. He taught them that they were equipped for their struggle against Satan, and he used the element of the service which involved the candidate in shedding his clothes as the basis of the metaphor in which the Christian stripped for the combat against Satan, the opponent in the boxing bout and the fight<sup>45</sup>. Also from the elements of the rite, Chrysostom took the *συνθήκη*, in opposition to the *ἀπόταγμα*, for it was the positive side of the contract which the baptizand was making with Christ. In this he was in parallel with Cyril and Theodore. The verbal act of renunciation and confession for Chrysostom supplanted and made void the previous contract which had had with Satan, and this new *συνθήκη* is seen as coming into force at this point in the baptismal rite:

"We confessed His sovereignty; we rejected the domination of the devil. This was the signature, this the agreement, this the contract.

See to it that we do not again become debtors to the old contract. Christ came once; He found the certificate of our ancestral indebtedness which Adam wrote and signed. Adam contracted the debt; by our subsequent sins we increased the amount owed. In this contract are written a curse, and sin, and death, and the condemnation of the law. Christ took all these away and pardoned them."

(46)

So with the life that the Christian left behind and buried in baptism, he left also his bondage to Satan, and began to live his resurrected life in the power and commitment to Christ.

In his list of the titles of Baptism, Chrysostom next referred to it as a circumcision, citing Colossians 2:11 to support his statement. However, he did not develop this title further in these lectures, but in two series of expository sermons, there

appear passages relating baptism and circumcision. In his exposition of this text he taught:

"No longer, says St. Paul, is circumcision accomplished by the knife, but in Christ Himself, for the hand does not perform the circumcision as in the Old Law, but the Spirit circumcises not a part but the whole man. There was a body there, and there is a body here; but that body was circumcised in the flesh, this body in the Spirit; but not after the manner of the New, for you have put off not flesh but sin. When and where? In baptism." (47)

Writing of the Christian's new life in Christ acquired in baptism he compared it with the old covenant made with the New:

"Behold now the soul is new (for it has been cleansed), the body is new, the worship is new, the promises are new, the covenant, the life, the table, the robe; in a word, all things are new. Instead of the Jerusalem here below, we have gotten a heavenly Jerusalem; instead of a material temple, we see a spiritual one; instead of tables of stone, we have tables of flesh; instead of circumcision we have baptism; instead of manna, we have the body of the Master; instead of water from the rock, we have blood from His side; instead of the rod of Moses and Aaron, we have the cross; instead of the Promised Land, we have the kingdom of heaven; instead of priests without number, we have one High Priest; instead of a lamb which was a dumb creature, we have a spiritual Lamb. When St. Paul pondered on all these things, he said: they are all made new. But all things are from God through Christ and His gift." (48)

Thus he saw baptism as the physical sign of the new covenant between Christ and his Church.

As we have seen, Chrysostom was very easily deflected from his declared outline, perhaps evidence that he preached from brief notes rather than a fully prepared text. His list of the names of baptism was not inclusive, and now we shall consider other descriptions of baptism which emanate from elsewhere. Probably Chrysostom's most frequently used descriptive term for baptism was ἡ ὄψευξις, and often he used this term to imply the act of baptism without actually using the term τὸ βάπτισμα. His preference for ἡ ὄψευξις carries us into the very heart of his theology and indicates strongly his understanding of the saving work of Christ, of which baptism is a symbol, as an act of grace, completely unmerited and unearned by man, even though, as recipients of the gift, the baptizands had their own responsibility

to continue to live a life worthy of those in receipt of such a gift of God. Such a lavish gift had to be received worthily, and he scathingly contrasted those baptized on their death beds with his congregation in terms of their reception of the gracious gift of God:

"Even if the grace is the same for you and for those who are initiated on their deathbeds, neither the choice nor the preparations are the same. They receive baptism in their beds, but you receive it in the bosom of the common mother of us all, the Church; they receive baptism amidst laments and tears, but you are baptized with rejoicing and gladness; they are groaning, while you are giving thanks; their high fever leaves them in a stupor, while you are filled with an abundance of spiritual pleasure. So in your case everything befits the gift, while in their case everything is opposed to it. For the dying man weeps and laments as he is baptized, his children stand about in tears, his wife mars her cheeks with her nails, his friends are downcast, his servants' eyes well with tears, and the whole house gives the appearance of a gloomy winter's day."

(49)

The first theological point that this conception of baptism as gift led him to emphasize was that, although baptism was administered by human hands, it was really the act of God himself. He interpreted Jesus' baptism by John in the Jordan as a baptism by each member of the Trinity, by the Word which led Jesus into the water, by the Father as he spoke the words 'This is my beloved Son' and by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit which descended upon Him in the form of a dove<sup>50</sup>. Similarly for the candidates, baptism was given in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:

"For this reason, when the priest is baptizing he does not say, 'I baptize so-and-so', but, 'So-and-so is baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' In this way he shows that it is not he who baptizes but those whose names have been invoked, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit."

(51)

Similarly it was part of the grace of God for the believers to be equal before God. God gave the gifts in accordance with his gracious will alone, with no relation to merit or desert, so that the spiritual gifts which the baptized received gave no right either to boast about superiority, or wallow in inferiority:

"all these gifts are given to all of you in common, so that the rich man may not look down on the poor man, nor the poor man consider that he has any less than the rich man; for in Christ Jesus there is neither male nor female, there is no Scythian, no barbarian, no Jew, no Greek; not only is there no difference of age or nature, but even every difference of honor is canceled out; there is one esteem for all, one gift, one brotherhood, binding us together, the same grace - so then, when you have all been led into (the Church) then must you all together bend your knee and not stand erect; you must stretch your hands to heaven and thank God for this gift."

Thus Chrysostom interpreted Paul's words in Galatians 3:28 to suggest that even differences in honor were cancelled out in Christ, through the gracious gift of baptism. By baptism the believer received the forgiveness of his sins, and also was allowed the privacy of confessing his sins in a private encounter with God:

"But this is not the case in baptism. God forgives our sins and does not force us to make a parade of them in the presence of others. He seeks one thing only: that he who benefits by the forgiveness may learn the greatness of the gift."

(53)

The consideration of the gracious goodness of God should always be part of the Christian's countenance. He told the catechumens beginning their course of proximate instruction for baptism to prepare beforehand to abstain from evil deeds, and to do good<sup>54</sup>. Such a gracious invitation from the Master to those who would never be able to earn such a gift for themselves, must so affect the lives and lifestyle of those who benefit from it that Chrysostom reminded that same group of catechumens after their baptism:

"Since we have benefited from so great a gift, let us show abundant zeal, and let us remember the contract we have made with Him."

(55)

In a subsequent lecture he linked the gift of the Holy Spirit with the baptismal act, describing the newly baptized as those 'who have just been judged worthy of the gift of the Spirit'<sup>56</sup> and from this link with baptism, we may ~~imply~~ <sup>infer</sup> that a separate extra - baptismal act of confirmation was not known to Chrysostom. This raises the question of the status in terms of responsibility of the

children whose baptism he justified:

"It is on this account that we baptize even infants, although they are sinless, that they may be given the further gifts of sanctification, justice, filial adoption, and inheritance, that they may be brothers and members of Christ, and become dwelling places for the Spirit." (57)

In his list of the gifts of baptism extended to children he omits the gift of remission of sin, because presumably of his statement regarding their sinlessness, from the list which occurred on other occasions when he spoke of the benefits and gifts of baptism<sup>58</sup>. He referred to ten gifts conferred by baptism in this passage, and he lists them as freedom<sup>59</sup>, holiness<sup>60</sup>, justice<sup>61</sup>, sonship<sup>62</sup>, heirs<sup>63</sup>, brotherhood<sup>64</sup>, joint heirs<sup>65</sup>, members<sup>66</sup>, temples<sup>67</sup>, instruments of the Spirit<sup>68</sup>.

Although he was amplifying his lists for the sake of rhetoric, still his list gave quite a comprehensive list of the spiritual benefits of the Christian lifestyle begun at baptism. However, he was quite prepared to admit that even rhetoric could not fully express the grace of God evident through baptism, as he indicated when addressing the neophytes following their baptism:

"If there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents, much more fitting is it for us to exult and rejoice over so large a throng, and to glorify God in His kindness for this gift of His which defies description." (69)

Later Chrysostom indicated the need to guard such a valuable gift<sup>70</sup> by maintaining a life of integrity and virtue and a life free from the stain of post-baptismal sin, and he suggested that one of the purposes of maintaining a guard upon the gift of baptismal regeneration symbolised by the baptismal robe was to display the greatness of the gift to others:

"For the future, all of you, both you who have just deserved the gift and all who have already reaped for yourselves the benefit of His munificence, must make the excellence of your conduct visible to all and, after the fashion of a torch, you must illumine those who look upon you." (71)

Perhaps he saw this as a more actively evangelistic role for the neophytes, that not only were they enlightened, but they were to enlighten others by their illumination.

At other times Chrysostom referred to the same concept of God's undeserved gift given in baptism in terms of ἡ χάρις of baptism. On these occasions he had in mind God's gracious act in granting catechumens before their baptism:

"In this knowledge, then, my beloved, make yourselves ready to receive this grace with joy and gladness of the spirit, that you may enjoy the abundant benefits of this gift. May all of us together, by making our conduct worthy of the grace, deserve to receive eternal and ineffable gifts by the grace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ."

(72)

Once again, in the light of such grace of God's part, the least the candidates could do was to respond to the grace of God by seeking to live a life worthy of such grace. However, Chrysostom was aware that this would not be easy, and he reminded his audience that the cure for sins could be a wound for them:

"For the bath can do away with sins previously committed; but there is no small fear nor insignificant danger that we may fall again into the same sins, and then the cure becomes a wound for us. For those who sin after baptism the punishment is proportioned to the greatness of the grace we received in it."

(73)

He insisted thirdly that there must be a genuine desire and sincere intention for repentance shown in the exorcisms and at Baptism. For Chrysostom there was no such thing as faith without works, and there had to be a desire to accomplish in the outward and visible life what God had already accomplished in the inward and spiritual realm at Baptism. As we saw above<sup>74</sup> Chrysostom took the picture of gold fired in the furnace to illustrate the regenerative aspect of baptism, he also in this section described the action of baptism in terms of the brightness of baptismal grace:

"When a man takes and melts down a gold statue which has become filthy with the filth of years and smoke and dirt and rust, he returns it to us all-clean and shining. So, too, God takes this nature of ours when it is rusted with the rust of sin, when our faults have covered it with abundant soot, and when it has destroyed the beauty He put into it in the beginning, and He smelts it anew. He plunges it into the waters as into the smelting furnace and lets the grace of the Spirit fall on it instead of the flames."

(75)

and in the Stavronikita series he used a similar concept to encourage

the catechumens to enjoy the title of newly baptized for all time<sup>76</sup>.

An allied concept to that of baptismal grace was that of the kindness (ἡ φιλευθροπία) of baptism, an expression which Chrysostom used in Stavronikita 1 and Montfaucon 2. In the former this was within the context of his analogy of baptism with a marriage, contrasting the wealth of the Bridegroom with the poverty of the bride

"Let me give you, too, a glimpse of the Bridegroom's exceeding wealth and of the ineffable kindness which He shows to His bride. Let me point out to her the sordid past from which she is escaping and the glorious future she is about to enjoy. And if you wish, let us first strip from her her garb and see the condition in which she is. Despite her plight, the Bridegroom still allows her to come to Him. This clearly shows us the boundless kindness of our common Master. He does not have her come to Him as His bride because He has longed for her comeliness, or her beauty, or the bloom of her body. On the contrary, the bride He has brought into the nuptial chamber is deformed and ugly, thoroughly and shamefully sordid, and, practically, wallowing in the very mire of her sins." (77)

He highlights τὴν ἀφαιτον φιλευθροπίας of the bridegroom by sparing no blushes in his description of the bride - deformed, ugly, thoroughly and shamefully sordid, and practically wallowing in the very mire of her sins. Although the text is damaged here, there can not be much doubt as to Chrysostom's meaning of the basis of the context of what he was saying. He developed his analogy making it quite plain to his candidates that they were the doomed bride in terms of the reception and acceptance of the bride by the bridegroom:

"But when the good Master saw His bride in such a plight and swept down into what I might call the very abyss of wickedness, naked and unseemly, He considered neither her ugliness, nor her utter poverty, nor the enormity of her evils, but He manifested His own surpassing kindness and received her into His presence." (78)

He pointed out that the bridegroom is demonstrating his kindness by requiring no accounting for the bride's offences, nor did he exact judgement, but only urged her to accept his exhortation and remonstrance, and encouraged her to forget the past. He took up this theme again in Montfaucon 2 describing God's forgiveness of sins and God's discretion in that act of forgiveness in not forcing man to

make public his sins as an act of kindness to man:

"But this is not the case in baptism. God forgives our sins and does not force us to make a parade of them in the presence of others. He seeks one thing only; that he who benefits by the forgiveness may learn the greatness of the gift. When he shows us His kindness, He is satisfied to have us alone as witnesses."

(79)

Thus in baptism God's kindness is plainly demonstrated for all to see, both in receiving the candidates, and graciously and kindly granting them forgiveness of their sins and newness of life.

As we have just seen, Chrysostom used the analogy of baptism as a spiritual marriage, a union between Christ and the candidate<sup>80</sup>; and this was one of his favourite pictures. He began the Stavronikita series by telling his catechumens

"This is a time for joy and gladness of the spirit,. Behold, the days of our longing and love, the days of your spiritual marriage, are close at hand. To call what takes place today a marriage would be no blunder; not only could we call it a marriage but even a marvelous and most unusual kind of military enlistment. Nor does any contradiction exist between marriage and military service."

(81)

Dr. Harkins in his notes points out the differences between fourth century matrimonial practice and that of the twentieth century:

"The soul which is invited to become God's bride must forget its entire past, just as in marriages of the flesh. The betrothed forgets her parents and her father's home, to be united to a bridegroom whom she has never seen. We must not be surprised at this situation, which, in the social environment of the fourth century, was quite usual. The marriage was arranged between the man and the parents of the prospective bride; the betrothed couple never saw each other before the marriage night, when the groom came with great pomp to seek his bride at her parents' home and to lead her to his own. For the young bride the marriage involved a complete change in her way of life and was, indeed, 'a great mystery'."

(82)

No wedding, of course, would be complete without the bridal gown and the wedding breakfast, and in this analogy the same was true, as Chrysostom exhorted his candidates to maintain after baptism the lifestyle which they had begun at their spiritual marriage:

"This is why, in my fear of the enemy's tricks, I am continually exhorting you to keep the marriage robe in

its integrity, that with it you may enter forever into this spiritual marriage. And what takes place here is a spiritual marriage. Just as in marriage between man and woman the bridal feast is prolonged for seven days see how we too extend for the same number of days your bridal feast, setting before you the table of the mysteries, filled with good things beyond number. And why do I say seven days? If you are willing to live soberly and to keep vigilant, this banquet is prolonged for you through all time, provided that you keep your bridal robe inviolate and radiant. For in this way you will draw the Bridegroom to a fuller love and you yourselves will shine forth with increasing radiance and luster as time goes on, because grace increases more and more with the good deeds we do." (83)

Providing the neophyte was prepared to conduct himself soberly and to remain vigilant against the tricks of the enemy there was no reason why he might not keep the bridal robe bright for all times. Wenger points out in this note:

"Toujours comme je l'ai dit a plusieurs déjà, la sobriété de l'esprit est la condition de tous les biens." (84)

Chrysostom used this analogy of a spiritual marriage in the Papadopoulos-Kerameus series using in his third address in this series, probably given on Holy Thursday, material very similar to that which he developed later in Stavronikita 1. Speaking of ἡ συνθήκη of the candidate with the bridegroom he said:

"Therefore, remember these words. They are your contract with the Bridegroom. It is necessary, before a marriage, to complete an account of the gifts and the dowry; you too must do so before this marriage. He found you naked and a beggar, behaving in an unseemly manner, but He did not run away; you were the one who had to choose. Instead of a dowry, contribute these words, and Christ will consider that the wealth you bring is great - if you will keep and observe these words through all your life. For Christ finds His wealth in the salvation of our souls." (85)

However, <sup>in</sup> Montfaucon 2, the analogy seems to change to that used by Cyril of the wedding guest who refused to dress appropriately for the wedding <sup>86</sup> as Chrysostom suggested that the candidate had been invited to a spiritual wedding and a royal banquet:

"But you have been invited to a spiritual wedding and a royal banquet; consider, then, what sort of a wedding garment you should buy, because He who has invited you give you the garment as a gift, so that you can not offer your poverty as an excuse." (87)

Still, however, the emphasis was upon the gracious benevolence of the host, who not only invited those who were poor and ill-clad, but made arrangements for their clothing.

Following on from his spiritual marriage analogy, it is natural that he should see some form of kinship between those who are spiritually married to Christ through baptism. In the homily addressed to the neophytes after baptism he spoke in these terms to those newly baptized:

"My dearly beloved brothers - if I may call you my brothers - it is true that I share with you the same birth, but by my later negligence I destroyed the true perfection of our kinship. Nonetheless, let me call you brothers because of my great love, and let me urge you to show a great zeal to match the great honor bestowed on you." (88)

Similarly he addresses them in this manner in anticipation at the beginning of Montfaucon 1.

~~Similarly~~, Chrysostom reminded his audience of the honour and dignity of baptism:

"Should you not see to it that you deserve such reverence, inasmuch as you are about to acquire so great a dignity? And this is a great dignity. It coextends with the present life and the life you will live together hereafter. What is this dignity? Henceforth, through the kindness of God, you will be called a Christian and one of the faithful. There is not one dignity here, but two. Soon you will put on Christ. You must act and deliberate in all things with the knowledge that He is everywhere with you." (89)

Once this dignity was conferred upon the neophytes God intended it to be permanent. Chrysostom told them that nobody could take away the gifts and the dignity that God has bestowed upon them unless they themselves permitted it. He contrasted the earthly king who had power to take away any honour he gave, with God:

"For whenever someone obtains some dignity from an earthly king, to take it away does not lie in the will of him who received, but the one who offers the honor also has the power to take it away; when he wishes, he strips the recipient of his honor, releases him from his office, and immediately makes him a private citizen again. In the case of our King, it is altogether different. Once the dignity has been given to

us through His kindness - I mean such honors as sonship by adoption, sanctity, the grace of the Spirit - no one will ever be able to take these things away from us, unless we grow lax. What do I mean, 'take away'? If He sees that we are well disposed, He supplements what He has already bestowed of us and, according to the great honor which is ours, He will increase again the gifts He has given."

(90)

On the contrary, the honour and the dignity which God gave could grow, and the gifts develop as they had done with Paul, Chrysostom pointed out:

"He has commanded you, too, to do this as far as you can in the things which have been entrusted to you - to increase the sanctity which you have received, to render more shining your justice after the bath, and to make your grace more lustrous, just as Paul did, who, by his subsequent toils and zeal and eagerness, increased all the blessings he had received."

(91)

John Chrysostom's somewhat rambling style makes analysis of his baptismal teaching somewhat difficult, but I have attempted above to draw out the highlights of his baptismal theology of baptism as it is to be found in his catechetical material. Although there have been occasions when his catechetical teaching has overlapped his mystagogical teaching, it is to his mystagogical material that we shall now turn our attention<sup>92</sup>.

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

a) The Rite of Renunciation and Profession: The Rite began for the candidates on Good Friday afternoon at three o'clock<sup>93</sup> when they were led into the Church by the priests<sup>94</sup>. The candidates were instructed to kneel down and stretch out their hands towards heaven<sup>95</sup>. Then the bishop himself<sup>96</sup> approached each kneeling candidate individually<sup>97</sup>, rather than as a group which came to be the practice in Constantinople in the fifth century<sup>98</sup>, and prepared each candidate to recite his personal act of renunciation of Satan (ἡ ἀποταγή) and then his profession of adherence to Christ (ἡ συνθήκη)<sup>99</sup>. Answering the questions of the bishop, the candidate said: 'I renounce you, Satan, your pomps, your service, and your works'<sup>100</sup> and then made his

profession of allegiance to Christ, as he said: 'And I enter your service, O Christ'<sup>101</sup>. Following this commitment, the candidate was anointed on the forehead 'with the spiritual unguent'<sup>102</sup> which was a mixture of olive oil and unguent<sup>103</sup>. The anointing was made in the sign of the cross with the personal formula: 'So and so is anointed in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'<sup>104</sup>.

Chrysostom saw this liturgy as a drama to be interpreted from the standpoint of salvation history, and added a number of descriptive phrases to help build up the dramatic effect, and to heighten the candidates' emotional appreciation of the rite. He described the act of renunciation and profession as awesome and frightening<sup>105</sup>, and he suggested the presence of angels at the scene who inscribe the words from the tongues of candidates in the heavenly books<sup>106</sup>. He described the candidates as quivering with fear at the thought of renouncing Satan<sup>107</sup> whom he variously described as a roaring lion<sup>108</sup>, enraged and frenzied as the candidates are signed with the mark of the cross<sup>109</sup>, and he imagined the candidates being led into the arena by the priests as athletes of Christ to engage in the combat with Satan<sup>110</sup>. His chief biblical vehicle for conveying the drama of salvation his story to his audience was to use the Exodus as a type, just as Cyril had done<sup>111</sup>. The miracles of the Exodus story was repeated on a greater scale:

"The Jews saw miracles. Now you shall see greater and much more brilliant ones than those seen when the Jews went forth from Egypt. You did not see the Pharaoh and his armies drowned, but you did see the drowning of the devil and his armies. The Jews passed through the sea; you have passed through the sea of death. They were delivered from the Egyptians; you are set free from the demon. They put aside their servitude to barbarians; you have set aside the far more hazardous servitude to sin." (112)

Earlier in this homily he spoke of the power of the blood of Christ, delivering the new people of God, just as the blood of the paschal lamb had delivered the Jewish people from the angel of death. So the blood of Christ strengthened and protected those who had to

make the frightening renunciation of Satan.

"Today, will the devil not check himself all the more if he sees, not the blood of the type smeared on the doors, but the blood of the truth smeared on the mouths of the faithful, since these mouths have become doors of a temple which holds Christ? If the angel stood in awe when he saw the type, much more likely is it that the devil will flee when he sees the truth."

(113)

Having set this act of renunciation and profession in its context of salvation history, Chrysostom used the bodily movements of the candidates to develop his teaching further and he explained these elements as participation in the act of conversion. Chrysostom's candidates made the act of renunciation and profession in a kneeling position. He saw in the gesture of kneeling the fact that the baptizand was in bondage to Satan:

"Those who endure captivity of the body show by their posture their dejection at the disaster which has overcome them. So, too, when the devil's captives are about to be set free from his domination and to come under the yoke of goodness, they first remind themselves of their prior condition by their external attitude. They do this that they may be able to know from what evil they are being delivered and to what good they are hurrying, and that this very knowledge may be the foundation for greater gratitude and may make their souls even more than well disposed."

(114)

But this posture of kneeling was not only a sign of slavery to Satan, but it was also a sign of confessing the absolute rule of Christ, and he cited Philippians 2:10 to support his argument. Thus at one and the same time, the posture of kneeling suggests the transfer of the Christian from enslavement to Satan to the Lordship of Christ. Similarly the posture of kneeling reminded Chrysostom of oneness with Christ, as he interpreted it in terms of Galatians 3:28<sup>115</sup>. In doing this he was applying Paul's commentary on baptism, and making a sociological point of the equality and fraternity which came as a direct result of acknowledging Christ as Lord. The arms outstretched to heaven further strengthens the meaning of the kneeling posture in connection with the conversion of the candidate from servitude to Satan to obedience to Christ. He interpreted the outstretched arms as

a reminder to the candidates from what evil they have been delivered and to what good they would dedicate themselves<sup>116</sup>, and as a sign of thankfulness to God for the gift of faith<sup>117</sup>.

Chrysostom does not specifically mention the direction the candidates faced for the act of Renunciation and the direction they faced for the Act of Profession, but he drew the same symbol as Cyril out of the time scale of the Renunciation and Profession:

"Tomorrow, on Friday at the ninth hour, you must have certain questions asked of you and you must present your contracts to the Master. Nor do I make mention to you of that day and that hour without some purpose. A mystical lesson can be learned from them. For on Friday at the ninth hour the thief entered paradise; the darkness, which lasted from the sixth to the ninth hour, was dissolved; and the Light, perceived by both body and mind, was taken up as a sacrifice for the whole world. For at that hour Christ said: Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit. Then the sun we see looked on the Sun of Justice shining from the cross and turned back its own rays.

Therefore, when you are about to be led (into the church) at the ninth hour, do you also recall to mind the great number of your virtuous deeds and count those gifts which await you; you will no longer be on earth, but your soul will raise itself up and lay hold of heaven itself." (118)

The symbolism of the Messiahship of Christ as Sun of Justice, and the re-entry into Paradise appear in the framework of the symbolism of light. His mystagogy is more directly Christological due to the different circumstances of his liturgy, different gestures, and a different time for the rite.

It was the piety of Chrysostom which brought to bear most vividly the mystical relationship between the candidate and Christ in the act of renouncing Satan. Chrysostom began his interpretation of the rite by recalling for the candidates that they were at the foot of the cross, reminding them that the ceremony took place at the time of Christ's death upon the cross, and through the power of that death they were enabled to break the power of Satan which held them banned from Paradise. By this identification of the candidate with Christ, Chrysostom portrayed Christ as the strong ally of the

Christian, who had made the candidate superior to the demon<sup>119</sup>, and using the picture of Christ in comparison to the Olympic judge; whereas the judge is impartial, Christ does not stand aloof, but is entirely on the side of the combatant<sup>120</sup>. It is Christ who has given the candidate the armour for the battle, specifically prepared for the kind of combat in which the candidates were involved<sup>121</sup>. He used Paul's picture of Christ ransoming slaves from Satan<sup>122</sup> to bring out the relationship between the act of renunciation and commitment and the historical act of Jesus on the Cross, for it was the power of that act of Jesus which enabled the candidates to make effective by their statement the salvation already won for them in Christ<sup>123</sup>.

Chrysostom summed this up in a passage suggested by Colossians 2:14:

"Christ came once; He found the certificate of our ancestral indebtedness which Adam wrote and signed. Adam contracted the debt; by our subsequent sins we increased the amount owed. In this contract are written a curse, and sin, and death, and the condemnation of the law. Christ took all these away and pardoned them. St. Paul cries out and says: The decree of our sins which was against us, He has taken it completely away, nailing it to the cross. He did not say 'erasing the decree', nor did he say 'blotting it out', but nailing it to the cross, so that no trace of it might remain. This is why He did not erase it, but tore it to pieces. The nails of the cross tore up the decree and destroyed it utterly, so that it would not hold good for the future. Nor did He destroy the note of our debt in some secret corner but in full view of the world, from a lofty stage. Let the angels see it, He says, let the archangels and the powers above behold; let the wicked demons and the devil himself see! It was these wicked ones who made us liable to our creditors for our debts, but now the contract is destroyed, so that they may not hereafter assail us."

(124)

Chrysostom elaborated his image of the contract to stress that commitment to Christ is entirely voluntary, it was neither a forced mastership, nor did Christ demand the service of any who were not grateful to him:

"But Christ does not deal in this way; He paid the price for all of us, His precious blood. You have been bought with a price, says St. Paul. And even so, He does not force those to serve Him who are unwilling to do so. Unless you are grateful, He says, and are willing of yourself and of your own accord to be enrolled under me as your Master, I do not force or compel you."

(125)

As we have seen above he linked the *συνθήκη* with the concept of the engagement of the candidate with the Bridegroom, and the dowry contributed by the baptizand to respond to the Bridegroom's gift of salvation<sup>126</sup>. This response was not to be simply a verbal one, but to be an intelligent commitment made with the heart.

"Keep strong and unshaken your contract with the Master, which you wrote not with ink nor on paper, but with faith and in confession. Be zealous to remain all the days of your life in the same brilliance. If we shall be willing constantly to contribute our fair share, it is possible not only to remain in this shining brightness, but even to make this spiritual robe of ours more brilliant, since Paul too, after the grace of baptism, appeared all the more bright and shining as the grace within him bloomed forth with each passing day."

(127)

Thus Chrysostom strongly revealed the candidate's union with the power of Christ and the contractual nature of the act of renunciation and commitment.

Hence it is not surprising that Chrysostom interpreted the concluding anointing as a sign of belonging to Christ, and the sign of the cross upon the forehead, placed there by Christ himself to indicate that the candidate is Christ's very own, as a result of his contract with the Master<sup>128</sup>. Not only did the anointing imply ownership but it signified the candidate's appointment and equipment for his life task. Following his fondness for athletic metaphors, Chrysostom saw the anointing with the cross as a sign that the candidate has been chosen as a combatant in the spiritual arena, playing in the game on the side of Christ<sup>129</sup>. As a result of this, a struggle situation was announced in which the candidate had to be involved:

"Henceforth from that day there is strife and counter-strife with him, and on this account the priest leads you into the spiritual arena as athletes of Christ by virtue of this anointing."

(130)

However, Chrysostom went far beyond the notion of merely an external talisman for protection and exorcism, for it again linked the candidate with Christ.

"Through his contract with Christ, sign for which is this sealing, the candidate joins Christ in the struggle which His cross represents, and through the power of that cross he is protected in reliving that struggle in his own life."

(131)

He taught that the seal of the cross on the candidate's forehead radiated a power for the combat which guaranteed the confounding of the adversaries of the baptizand:

"Therefore the priest anoints you on the forehead and puts on you the sign (of the cross), in order that the enemy may turn away his eyes. For he does not dare to look you in the face when he sees the lightning flash which leaps forth from it and blinds his eyes."

(132)

Thus this anointing was a spiritual weapon to accompany the candidate in the struggle. Chrysostom summed up this mystagogy of the anointing as a sign of his appointment to the task of living the Christian life and the protection it implied in pursuing this task in these terms:

"When you are going to cross the threshold of a doorway, first speak these words; 'I renounce thee, Satan, thy pomp and service, and I enter into thy service, O Christ'. And never go forth without saying these words. This will be your staff, this will be your armor, this will be your impregnable tower. And after you speak these words, make the sign of the cross on your forehead. In this way no man will be able to hurt you, nor will the devil himself be able to do so, when he sees you appear with these weapons to protect you on every side."

(133)

Thus he interpreted the anointing as a sign of the Christian athletic combat in mystical union with the struggle of Christ under the victorious and protective power of His cross.

b) The Baptismal Rite: Following the rite of renunciation and profession, the candidate then underwent the second anointing immediately before the rite of baptism on Holy Saturday night. He had his robe stripped off him, by the bishop<sup>134</sup> in full darkness of night<sup>135</sup>, and then the bishop caused the candidate's whole body to be anointed with the 'olive oil of the spirit'<sup>136</sup>. Chrysostom's choice of the verb παρασκεύαζε indicates that others actually performed the anointing, which was understandable, given the large number of candidates and the extent of the anointing. Following the anointing, the bishop led the candidate down into the flowing water<sup>137</sup>, where

he placed his right hand on the candidate's head, pushed it down into the water and lifted it out three times, saying: So and so is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit<sup>138</sup>. Once again the formula was a personal to deflect attention away from the minister of baptism and towards the God whose agent he was.

As H.M.Riley has well pointed out<sup>139</sup>, Stavronikita 2 contains two paragraphs which in condensed form reveal practically the entire mystagogical dynamic which was at work in these explanations:

"Next after this, in the full darkness of the night, he strips off your robe and, as if he were going to lead you into heaven itself by the ritual, he causes your whole body to be anointed with that olive oil of the spirit, so that all your limbs may be fortified and unconquered by the darts which the adversary aims at you.

After this anointing the priest makes you go down into the sacred waters, burying the old man and at the same time raising up the new, who is renewed in the image of his Creator. It is at this moment that, through the words and the hand of the priest, the Holy Spirit descends upon you. Instead of the man who descended into the water, a different man comes forth, one who has wiped away all the filth of his sins, who has put off the old garment of sin and has put on the royal robe.

That you may also learn from this that the substance of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is one, baptism is conferred in the following manner. When the priest says: 'So-and-so is baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit', he puts your head down into the water three times and three times he lifts it up again, preparing you by this mystic rite to receive the descent of the Spirit. For it is not only the priest who touches the head, but also the right hand of Christ, and this is shown by the very words of the one baptizing. He does not say: 'I baptize so-and-so', but: 'So-and-so is baptized', showing that he is only the minister of grace and merely offers his hand because he has been ordained to this end by the Spirit. The one fulfilling all things is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the undivided Trinity. It is faith in this Trinity which gives the grace of remission from sin; it is this confession which gives to us the gift of filial adoption."

(140)

Chrysostom's central thought was the Pauline theology of Adam and Christ, the old man and the new man. In this light the candidate whose clothes were removed, was anointed and entered the baptismal

pool, and the neophyte who emerged, put on new clothes, and was anointed, are two 'different' men, because in the baptistry a new birth, a new creation has taken place.

Chrysostom developed his thought to think first of the old man and the deeds he would leave behind in the baptismal grave. He used the same Pauline metaphor as Cyril did, drawn from Colossians 3:9-10, to interpret the removal of garments before baptism:

"Baptism is a burial and a resurrection. For the old man is buried with his sin and the new man is resurrected, being renewed according to the image of his Creator. We put off the old garment, which has been made filthy with the abundance of our sins; we put on the new one, which is free from every stain. What am I saying? We put on Christ Himself. For all you, says St. Paul, who have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." (141)

and as we saw above, he returned to his metaphor to describe the man emerging from the baptismal pool cleansed of sin and wearing 'the royal robe'<sup>142</sup>. He expanded his mystagogy by using, once again as Cyril had done, the image of the marriage banquet, although he used it to urge the candidates to come to baptism wearing a garment suitable for a wedding feast. Thus the habit of evil deeds, symbolized in the filthy garment had to be overcome, or else the new garment could become soiled as well<sup>143</sup>. Similarly he used the invitation of the bridegroom to the bride as we have seen above<sup>144</sup>.

However, Chrysostom could not resist the implications of mystagogical stripping off of the old clothes which were for him the symbol of the vain and seductive display in terms of dress and jewellery, and he pointed out that unnecessary luxury in terms of dress and adornment was a sin against social justice:

"That you may wear a single ruby, countless poor are starved and crushed." (145)

Not only this but such a display signified vanity, and was likely to lead another to envy and even to theft. In place of such unnecessary luxury should come good works, through which the soul

would become attractive and shine. Particularly, Chrysostom directed his remarks to the female candidates for baptism, suggesting they sought to adorn themselves with almsgiving and modesty which were more becoming those born anew in Christ:

"Adorn your face, therefore, with modesty, piety, almsgiving, benevolence, love, kindness toward your husband, reasonableness, mildness and forbearance. These are the pigments of virtue; by these you draw not men but angels to you as your lovers; for these you have God Himself to praise you. When God shall approve of you, He will win over your husband to you in every way; for if wisdom illumines the face of a man, much more does virtue make the face of a woman shine forth." (146)

Cosmetics also failed to meet Chrysostom's approval. These he saw an insult to the Creator, since the need to paint the face implies defective workmanship on the part of the Creator<sup>147</sup>. Christ sought 'the beauty which came from within' and advised his female candidates most strongly to strip off such habits, as well as stripping off clothing before baptism so that such behaviour would be a sign of the return to good deeds<sup>148</sup>.

The nakedness of the candidates at baptism reminded Chrysostom of the primeval innocence of Adam and Eve, who in the garden had been naked and unashamed, and he writes in most descriptive terms of this:

"After stripping you of your robe, the priest himself leads you down into the flowing waters. But why naked? He reminds you of your former nakedness, when you were in Paradise and you were not ashamed. For Holy Writ says: Adam and Eve were naked and were not ashamed, until they took up the garment of sin, a garment heavy with abundant shame. Do not, then, feel shame here, for the bath is much better than the garden of Paradise. There can be no serpent here, but Christ is here initiating you into the regeneration that comes from the water and the Spirit. You cannot see here beautiful trees and fruits, but you can see spiritual favors." (149)

Thus from the imagery it is evident that the candidate at Baptism was re-entering into that state of innocence and bliss that Adam and Eve enjoyed before the fall, evidence of the new creation in Christ. This image of unity with the Second Adam was strengthened

in his explanation of the prebaptismal anointing of the entire body with the olive oil of the Spirit by implying association between the candidate and the life of Christ, in that it was Christ 'who anointed us as we went into the combat'<sup>150</sup>. Thus by the strength which the candidate shared with Christ he would become both strong for the battle, and invulnerable against attack, symbolized by the oiling of the athlete<sup>151</sup> and the anointing of the limbs to equip the candidate on his whole body with the necessary unfailing protective armour of the soldier.

Chrysostom's explanation of the baptismal act was at one with his earlier teaching which we have examined in section 1 above as we might expect, and there is no need to duplicate it here.

c) The Post-Baptismal Rites. Upon their emergence from the font the neophytes were embraced, greeted and kissed by all present. Other than this kiss, he did not make any specific mention of post-baptismal ceremonies, nor of any post-baptismal anointing<sup>152</sup>. The emergence from the pool was described by Chrysostom thus:

"As soon as they came forth from those sacred waters, all who are present embrace them, greet them, kiss them, rejoice with them, and congratulate them, because those who were heretofore slaves and captives have suddenly become free men and sons and have been invited to the royal table. For straightway after they come up from the waters, they are led to the awesome table heavy laden with countless favors, where they taste of the Master's body and blood, and become a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Since they have put on Christ Himself, wherever they go they are like angels on earth, rivaling the brilliance of the rays of the sun." (153)

In a sense as they go to make their first communion, Chrysostom obliquely referred to both their new light and their new robe in the last sentence, and it is plain that he was too overwhelmed at the prospect of the royal table to bother to spell out the liturgical details of dress and illumination. He wanted to leave his candidates contemplating their welcome into the fellowship of God's people.

3. The Praxis of Baptism with Relation to the Fellowship of the Church  
Particularly Considering Sponsorship.

In Chrysostom's Baptismal Instructions, we have no record of any enrolment of those beginning the proximate period of their preparation for baptism at the beginning of the Lenten season, leading to an Easter baptism, but we may assume that such a procedure took place, in some form or other, from his address to the sponsors<sup>154</sup>. J.C.Baur pointed out that it was a fairly general custom by the end of the fourth century to enrol the catechumens in two classes; the first those who were making the remote preparation for baptism and who attended only the sermons and the catechism classes; the second those who had completed this course and had been admitted as direct candidates for baptism<sup>155</sup>. Chrysostom referred obliquely to an enrolment 'in this heavenly book'<sup>156</sup> which Dr.Harkins assumes meant the Church register on the basis of the practice in Mopsuestia. Chrysostom further pointed out that the baptizands' words of renunciation are received by

"The angels who are standing by and the invisible powers rejoice at your conversion, receive the words from your tongues, and carry them up to the common Master of all things. There they are inscribed in the books of heaven." (157)

Following their enrolment as candidates early in the Lenten period those who were to be baptized had to attend catechetical instruction in which Chrysostom seemed to have been involved over a thirty day period before Easter<sup>158</sup>. It could be that others apart from Chrysostom taught the catechumens during this time of preparation<sup>159</sup> which he implied was a daily time of preparation<sup>160</sup> followed by daily exorcism as spiritual preparation for baptism.

The welcome by the fellowship mentioned above to the candidate by the arrangements which the Church had made for their reception in the awakening stage of their Christian faith by their sponsors. Chrysostom gave us no record of how sponsors were appointed and when they took up their office, but he does attest to their

existence:

"Do you wish me to address a word to those who are sponsoring you, that they too may know what recompense they deserve if they have shown great care of you, and what condemnation follows if they are careless?" (161)

He went on to elaborate on their role, albeit briefly. The candidate was baptized on the basis of the sponsor's testimony, and he used the concept of οἱ ἀναδεχόμενοι, referring to those who stood as surety for a financial loan as a metaphor for those who undertook the task of the sponsor in spiritual matters:

"If, then, those who go surety for others in a matter of money make themselves liable for the whole sum, those who go surety for others in matters of the spirit and on an account which involves virtue should be much more alert." (162)

Their task was one with serious and far-reaching implications, which should be carefully considered. Chrysostom went on to warn them of the seriousness with which they should undertake their not insignificant responsibilities and of the penalties which they would incur should those whom they sponsored become careless:

"Let them not think that what takes place is a trifling thing, but let them see clearly that they share in the credit if by their admonition they lead those entrusted to them to the path of virtue. Again, if those they sponsor become careless, the sponsors themselves will suffer great punishment. That is why it is customary to call the sponsors 'spiritual father', that they may learn by this very action how great an affection they must show to those they sponsor in the matter of spiritual instruction. If it is a noble thing to lead to a zeal for virtue those who are in no way related to us, much more should we fulfil this precept in the case of the one whom we receive as a spiritual son. You, the sponsors, have learned that no slight danger hangs over your heads if you are remiss." (163)

Dr. Wenger pointed out that Chrysostom's uses of the terms 'spiritual fathers' and 'spiritual sons' were unique<sup>164</sup>. In Byzantine Greek the term 'spiritual father' meant a director of souls, and, much later, a confessor, but there is no evidence here to suggest that this was Chrysostom's way of referring to the exorcists who played such an important part in the baptismal preparation. However from the location of the passage between the explanation of the purpose and the symbolism of exorcism, and the explanation of ἡ ἀποταγή and

ἡ συνθήκη, it could be that the sponsors had some part to play in these prebaptismal rites. Dr. Wenger further pointed out that the verb ἀναδέχομαι here has its primary sense of to receive, the counterpart of the Latin suscipere, and it is by no means impossible that in the spirit of Chrysostom, the two senses of to receive (from the baptismal waters) and of to guarantee in respect of virtue (εἰς τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς λόγον ἀναδέχομαι) were present in the same word<sup>165</sup>.

The job description of the sponsor was given in these terms by Chrysostom

"They ought to show their paternal love by encouraging counseling, and correcting those for whom they go surety." (166)

This implied a personal and individual relationship with the candidates and such a task, coupled with their far-reaching responsibility should their candidate fall, would have been equally necessary both before and after baptism. Dr. T. M. Finn comments:

"The sponsor's reception of the newly baptised as son clearly symbolised his obligation to see his 'sons' continuing formation in Christian virtue after baptism. Unfortunately Chrysostom is not explicit about his duties before baptism." (167)

This passage came in fact in a prebaptismal address and the candidate would be better described as 'newly-enrolled' rather than 'newly-baptised', but Dr. Finn's point is a valid one, that the sponsor's responsibility is as serious before baptism as it is afterwards in the continuing spiritual development of the candidate<sup>168</sup>.

Our consideration of Chrysostom completed, we now move some twenty-five miles out of the city of Antioch to consider the writing of Theodore of Mopsuestia.

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8. See below.
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21. Stav. 1.17 (SCh 50 bis 117-118 ACW 31.29-30)
22. of. Stav. 4.14
23. Stav. 2.25 (SCh 50 bis.147 ACW 31.52)
24. Stav. 4.14 (SCh 50 bis.190 ACW 31.72)
25. Stav. 4.16 (SCh 50 bis.191 ACW 31.72)
26. Mf.2.8 (PG 49.233A ACW 31.175)
27. Mf1 = P-K 1.21-22 (PG 49.227B ACW 31.138-139) of. in John 11 (PG 59.75D - 76A)
28. Psalms 2.9; Jeremiah 18.4
29. Mf1 = P-K 1.26 (PG 49.228A ACW 31.140) of. Stav 3 = P-K 4.23; Stav. 4.14
30. See ACW 31.239 n.49 for a fuller examination of this point.

31. Stav 5.19 (SCh 50 bis.209; ACW 31.88) but of of the order of events in Acts 9 where the illumination comes at v.3. and baptism only at v.17!
32. Stav 5.20 (SCh 50 bis.209)
33. Stav 4.19 (SCh 50 bis.192; ACW 31.73)
34. Cf. Stav. 7.24
35. Stav 4.12 (SCh 50 bis.189; ACW 31.71)
36. Stav 2.11 (SCh 50 bis.139; ACW 31.47)
37. See Apost. Const. 7.43; Gregory of Nazianzus (PG 36.369B); Ambrose, De sacr. 2.20; Cyril of Jerusalem 20.4
38. P-K 2.8-11
39. See above (p.49)
40. In Romans 10 (PG 60.480A)
41. P-K 2.9 (Vgs.158-9; ACW 31.151)
42. P-K 2.11 (Vgs.159; ACW 31.152)
43. Stav. 7.22 (SCh 50.bis 240; ACW 31.113)
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51. P-K 3.14 (Vgs.170.6-10; ACW 31.165)
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54. Stav. 1.26
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58. See A.Wenger (SCh 50 bis.154 n.2) For a list of 'gifts' or 'benefits' cf. in Matthew 11 (PG 57.197 A-B)
59. John 8:36
60. Romans 1:7
61. Romans 2:13
62. Romans 8:14
63. Romans 8:17
64. Matthew 12:50
65. Romans 8:17
66. I Corinthians 6:15
67. I Corinthians 3:16
68. This latter term is not found in Scripture as such but it flows directly from the notion of the temple cf. ACW 31.232 n.9
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70. Stav. 6.25
71. Stav. 7.24 (SCh 50 bis.241; ACW 31.114)
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80. Ephesians 5:31-32, also in Ephesians 20 (PG 62.140B-C, 141A - 142B) Qual due ux (PG 51.230A)
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82. ACW 31.207-208

83. Stav. 6.24-25 (SCh 50 bis 227) cf. also a parallel passage in De res dom (PG 50.441A) Chrysostom developed the theme of the baptismal robe at Stav. 4.3, 4.31, stressing the honour of wearing it, and stressing the need to keep it untarnished by sin.
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94. Stav. 2.18, P-K 3.20
95. P-K 3.21, Stav 2.18
96. From the way Chrysostom uses the term 'priest' it seems clear that it is the bishop who received the act of renunciation and profession, assisted by the priests - see T.Finn. The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instruction of St. John Chrysostom (Studies in Christian Antiquity 15) (Washington 1967) p.18-21
97. Stav. 2.18
98. Ordo of Constantinople (F.Conybeare & J.MacLean: Rituale Armenorum p.440) (Oxford 1905)
99. P-K 3.27
100. Stav. 2.20 (SCh 50 bis 145; ACW 31.51) see also P-K 3.22, 24 and Mf 2.48, 60 where partial formulas are quoted by Chrysostom
101. Stav. 2.21 (SCh 50 bis 145; ACW 31.51) cf. P-K 3.24; Mf 2.60
102. Stav. 2.22 (SCh 50 bis 145; ACW 31.51)
103. P-K 3.27
104. Stav. 2.22 (SCh 50 bis 146; ACW 31.51)
105. Stav. 2.18
106. Stav. 2.20
107. P-K 3.24
108. Stav. 2.23
109. Stav. 2.22-23; P-K 3.27
110. Stav. 2.23
111. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.23-24
112. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.24 (SCh 50 bis 164-5; ACW 31.64)
113. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.15 (SCh 50 bis 159; ACW 31.61)
114. Stav. 2.14 (SCh 50 bis 141; ACW 31.48) although this refers to exorcism the concept is the same for the act of renunciation and profession.
115. P-K 3.21
116. Stav. 2.18
117. P-K 3.21
118. P-K 3.19-20 (Vgs 171; ACW 31.166-7)
119. P-K 3.24
120. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.9
121. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.11
122. I Corinthians 7.23
123. Mf 2.50
124. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.21-22 (SCh 50 bis 163-4; ACW 31.63)
125. Mf 2.50 (PG 49.239; ACW 31.188)
126. P-K 3.26

127. Stav. 4.31 (SCh 50 bis 198; ACW 31.78)
128. P-K 3.27
129. Stav. 2.22
130. Stav. 2.23 (SCh 50 bis 147; ACW 31.52)
131. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.121
132. Stav. 2.23 (SCh 50 bis 146-7; ACW 31.52)
133. Mf 2.60 (PG 49.240; ACW 31.191)
134. P-K 3.28; for 'bishop', 'priest' may be read here and subsequently
135. Stav. 2.24
136. Stav. 2.24
137. P-K 3.28, Stav 2.25
138. Stav. 2.26, P-K 3.12-14
139. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.154
140. Stav. 2.24-26 (SCh 50 bis 147; ACW 31.52). Riley refers to paragraph 24-25.
141. Stav. 2.11 (SCh 50 bis 130; ACW 31.47)
142. Stav. 2.25
143. Mf 2.15-20
144. See above p.63
145. Mf 2.41 (PG 49.237; ACW 31.185)
146. Mf 2.43 (PG 49.237; ACW 31.186)
147. Stav. 1.37 (SCh 50 bis 127; ACW 31.38)
148. Stav. 1.38
149. P-K 3.28-29 (Vgs 173-4; ACW 31.170)
150. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.9 (SCh 50 bis 156; ACW 31.58)
151. Stav. 3 = P-K 4.9 (SCh 50 bis 156; ACW 31.58)
152. H.M.Riley: op. cit p.351 cites evidence from Proclus to suggest that the baptized probably received a lamp or a candle and a ritual white garment. To both of these Chrysostom referred although he did not mention their moment of reception within the liturgy.
153. Stav. 2.27 (SCh 50 bis 148; ACW 31.53)
154. Stav. 2.15-16
155. J.C.Baur: John Chrysostom and his time Vol. 1, trans. M.Gonganza (Westminster Md. 1960-61) p.81
156. Stav. 2.9
157. Stav. 2.20 (SCh 50 bis 145; ACW 31.51)
158. Mf = P-K 1.46 gives the candidates a ten day ultimatum to abandon the habit of swearing. This taken up at the beginning of P-K 2.1 and P-K 3.1 is quite plainly given on Holy Thursday. In Mf = P-K 1.2 and 20 Chrysostom explicitly referred to a thirty day period. On this evidence a thirty day period seems most likely -(see ACW 31.13)
159. In P-K 3.18 Chrysostom referred to instruction of the faith, and said, 'I shall leave that task for your teacher'. Dr.Harkins suggests that this refers only to the bishop's brief instruction immediately before the act of renunciation and profession (ACW 31. p.319 n.43) but I am not convinced by this suggestion.
160. Stav. 2.12
161. Stav. 2.15 (SCh 50 bis 142, ACW 31.48-49)
162. Stav. 2.15 (SCh 50 bis 142; ACW 31.49)
163. Stav. 2.16 (SCh 50 bis 142-3; ACW 31.49)
164. But cf. J.Wilkinson: Egeria's Travels 45.2-4 pp 143-4 where parental terms are used to describe the probable sponsors
165. A.Wenger (SCh 50 bis 142-3 n.3)
166. Stav. 2.15 (SCh 50 bis 142; ACW 31.49)
167. Dr.T.M.Finn:op. cit. p.57
168. See also Appendix B

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEODORE AND THE CHURCH AT MOPSUESTIA

Among his list of the works of Theodore of Mopsuestia Ebedjesu referred to the following writings:

Exstat etiam eius liber de sacramentis et qui de fide inscribitur<sup>1</sup>.

These two works de sacramentis and de fide have been made available by A.Mingana<sup>2</sup>, laboriously copied in Syriac because of the condition of the manuscript, and translated by him into English, and a later version with a phototypic reproduction of the manuscript and a French translation by R.Tonneau and T.Devresse<sup>3</sup>. Theodore presented the faith of the Church to his catechumens in sixteen homilies; the first ten homilies explained the articles of the faith as expounded by the Nicene Creed, whilst the other six explains the Lord's Prayer (11), the Liturgy of baptism (12-14) and the Eucharist (15-16). These then form the scope for our study of Theodore's catechetical material.

There seems to be no real reason to doubt Theodore's authorship of these homilies. In terms of <sup>his</sup> life, we are provided with two alternative sets of dates and locations. The first, favoured by Dr.J.Quasten, comes from the period of Theodore's life when he

served as a priest in Antioch, having been ordained there in about 383 with his lifelong friend John Chrysostom, having studied under the sophist Libanius and the exegete Diodore. Without giving any particular reasons for this statement, Dr.Quasten stated:

"Theodore delivered them most probably between 388 and 392 at Antioch whilst he was still a presbyter... It seems they were translated into Syriac shortly after his death."

(4)

It is possible that Dr.Quasten was right, but it does seem unlikely that both Theodore and John Chrysostom should be lecturing at the same place, at the same time on a very similar subject but in a very dissimilar manner. Chrysostom referred to 'other teachers'<sup>5</sup>, and although certain areas of their homilies indicate some similarities in the liturgy of the service eg. the clause 'So and so is baptized'<sup>6</sup> this need only indicate a similar liturgy between Antioch and Mopsuestia, which was likely in any case, or a common teacher in the person of Diodore. The differences in the apotaxis and syntaxis<sup>7</sup> and the distinct lack of reference to post-baptismal anointing in Chrysostom<sup>8</sup> tend to outweigh the similarities. Nor can we be quite so dogmatic in terms of their original language. W.Telfer suggests that Cyril's lectures in Jerusalem were only twenty in number so that they could be given on alternate days in Greek and Syriac for the benefit of those who could not understand the other language<sup>9</sup>. There is evidence to suggest that both Syriac and Greek were widely known and spoken in Antioch as well as Jerusalem. Thus it is quite possible that at Mopsuestia the lectures could have been given in either Syriac or Greek. Dr.Quasten in his division of the homilies argues for homilies 1 - 10 being given prior to baptism and 11 - 16 being given to neophytes in the course of the week following baptism<sup>10</sup>. This enabled him to indicate a parallel with Cyril of Jerusalem's Catechetical Homilies but unfortunately the text does not bear out these distinctions, however attractive they may be. Whereas Cyril in the Mystagogical Catecheses made it plain that he was lecturing to neophytes after their initiation, the context of Theodore plainly indicated that he was

explaining the rite of baptism to those who are about to be baptized.

"As, however, the time of the sacrament has drawn near, and you are by the grace of God about to participate in the holy baptism, it is right and necessary that we should explain before you the power of the sacrament and of the ceremonies which are accomplished in it, and the reason for which each of them is accomplished, in order that when you have learnt what is the reason for all of them you may receive the things that take place with great love."

(11)

The policy of the Church in Jerusalem meant that Cyril had to guard the mysteries of the Eucharist and of Baptism and only reveal them to those who had received baptism, whereas in Antioch and Mopsuestia Chrysostom and Theodore were allowed to reveal the mysteries to those whose baptism was imminent.

It was H. Lietzmann<sup>12</sup> who supposed that these instructions come from the time when Theodore occupied the episcopal see of Mopsuestia i.e. from 392 - 428. These homilies seem to have become something of a manual of instruction for the Syriac Church after Theodore's death, and whilst Bishop he gained a wide reputation for his learning and orthodoxy, and on balance I agree with Dr. Riley that this latter location and date are more likely to be the correct ones<sup>14</sup> and so for the purpose of this thesis, I shall assume Mopsuestia as the location and that Theodore was lecturing there as the Bishop. For the purpose of ordering the material we shall classify the material from the Lectures on the Nicene Creed as providing the theology of baptism and the material from the Lectures on the Sacraments as providing the liturgical and mystagogical explanation of baptism.

### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

For Theodore the credal declaration which his candidates were to make was in integral part of the total baptismal rite, and that he saw it as essential is evident from one of his earliest lectures in the series on the Nicene Creed.

"Now which is the faith and which are the promises through which we have our part in mysteries in the hope of these heavenly gifts in which we will delight? These are found in the profession of faith which we make before Christ our Lord at the time of our baptism. If it were possible to comprehend their power by hearing only, our words would have been useless, because their mere recitation would have made them understood by those who heard them." (14)

He was not looking to his candidates merely to repeat back the words of the Creed parrot-fashion, but he wanted to guide them to make the words of their lips reinforce the experience of their lives. So he suggested that the profession of faith contained much hidden power, and so the catechumens had to be taught the sense and the meaning hidden within it. Such a description is surely evidence that the lectures were being delivered to those enrolled for the proximate preparation for baptism rather than to a more general audience.

Unlike Chrysostom, Theodore was able to stick to his theme rather than be readily sidetracked from it as was his friend. The next four lectures dealt with the Fatherhood of God and the Divinity of the Son and there was scant reference to baptism in them. However, when Theodore came to teach about the incarnation and the humanity of the Son, he soon stressed the important place of the Baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist, Jesus, he said,

"was baptized so that He might be given an emblem to the grace of our baptism and He showed effectively in Himself the Economy of the Gospel to all men." (15)

He stressed here the fact that Christians were baptized following the example of Jesus in his submission to John's baptism of repentance in the river Jordan. The only reasons for Jesus' baptism were obedience to the command of the Father and his identification with sinful men. He stressed both these aspects when he made the point that during his earthly life, Jesus was subject to the Law:

"He practised in a right way all (things dealing with) the justification of the law, and then received baptism, from which he gave the New Testament as in a symbol." (16)

In this he was developing Hebrews 4:15 to stress Jesus' identification

with man during his earthly life. However, Theodore was also applying to John's baptism - strictly speaking a baptism of repentance only - the effects of Christian baptism outlined in the New Testament supremely by St. Paul<sup>17</sup>, for this was the only baptism which could be said to be a symbol of the message of the New Testament. It would not be consistent with the rest of Theodore's writing to suggest that he was teaching that the message of the New Testament should be understood only in terms of repentance, but rather that it also encompassed the death of the old self and the resurrection to newness of life as Paul taught, in short, the sum total of the actions which made up the New Covenant between the Christ and His Church. Theodore confirmed this point and developed it further as he taught that:

"He was also baptized so that He might perform the Economy of the Gospel according to order, and in this (Economy) He died and abolished death."

"Il s'avança aussi au baptême, afin de transmettre d'une manière ordonnée (τάξις) la vie de l'Évangile (εὐαγγέλιον) et enfin il reçut la mort et abolit la mort." (18)

Dr. Tonneau's translation makes it plain that the saving death, and resurrection of Jesus were all in view as part of the meaning of Jesus' baptism by John in the understanding of that event which Theodore taught his candidates. It prefigured the death of the Christ upon the cross, and was the symbol (τύπος) of the life and of the good news about the availability of that life which Jesus had come to bring. Through his baptism by John, Jesus was, according to Theodore, setting forth in the microcosm of the baptismal act the macrocosm of his whole ministry. He summed up:

"He was baptized so that He might give a symbol to our own baptism. In it He was freed from all the obligations of the law." (19)

However, Dr. Tonneau used a different word order in his translation to convey a different sense. Dr. Mingana coupled the idea of the Economy of the Gospel with the choice of the disciples and the teaching of Jesus, but Dr. Tonneau links the phrase with Jesus' baptism:

"Il s'avança donc au baptême pour donner un modèle à notre baptême à nous, et dès là il se détacha de toute la conduite conforme à la Loi et accomplit toute la vie de l'Évangile."

(20)

Theodore then developed his argument to teach that in baptism the candidate demonstrated a symbol of the world to come and expressed the hope of the life which he hoped to share with Christ at the resurrection from the dead<sup>21</sup>. Theodore taught them that the Christian's life was lived in the hope of the future resurrection and this future resurrection was attained only as the candidate lived according to the commandments of Christ.

"It is with justice, therefore, that He paid the debt of the law, received baptism, and showed the new Economy of the Gospel, which is the symbol of the world to come, so that we also who believed in Christ and became worthy of baptism, through which we received the symbol of the world to come, should live according to His commandments."

(22)

Urging his candidates to live a life in accordance with the Dominical commandments of love for God, for neighbour, and for fellow Christian, he quoted to them Romans 6:17 and explained their obligations to them further

"In this he shows that through baptism we have received the teaching of the new Economy which is the symbol of the world to come, and as much as possible we strive to live according to it, while remote from all sin, and so not according to law. Indeed we are baptised as men who die with him and will rise symbolically with Him, because 'so many of us as were buried into Jesus Christ were baptised into His death and were buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Jesus Christ was raised up from the dead in the glory of His Father, even so, we should walk in newness of life'.(23) After having received the grace of baptism we become strangers to all the observance of the law and we are as in another life: 'You are become dead to the law by the body of Jesus Christ'.(24) He said this because you have attained new life in the baptismal birth and have become part of the body of Christ our Lord; and we hope to have communion with Him now that we are freed from the life of this world and dead to the world and to the law, because the law has power in this world and we become strangers to all this world according to the symbol of baptism."

(25)

In one sense there is a contradiction here with his earlier teaching when he had dealt with the sense of Romans 7:4. He had

explained this using the perfect tense, indicating completed action in the past in terms of the attainment of new life and in terms of becoming part of the body of Christ. If salvation were a completed past event implied in 'you have become dead to the law by the body of Jesus Christ', then how can the new life which is implied then be conditional on the works of this life. This produces just another variant on the faith/works controversy which is seen in the New Testament by some, but within our context here we cannot make too much of this change of tense, because as Dr. Riley points out, the very nature of catechetical homilies precludes them from being presented in the 'closed, ordered form of the theological treatise'<sup>26</sup>. In any case Theodore went on to qualify what he had said:

"And in order that we may possess these future good things in a firm faith without doubt, He gave us even in this world the first fruits of the Spirit which we received as the earnest, of which the blessed Paul said: 'In whom ye believed, and ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit (of promise) which is the earnest of our inheritance'.(27) And the Economy of the grace of Christ our Lord, for which we receive baptism, is like unto this." (28)

The fact that the Christian received the Holy Spirit at baptism, just as Christ himself had done, enabled him to think of his life with Christ in a firm faith without any doubt.

He developed this point when he dealt with the phrase 'And in the Holy Spirit' from the credal statement later on in the course of lectures. He taught his candidates:

"It is in this name that we are baptised and expect that the communion of the ineffable Divine benefits will accrue to us through baptism. We would not have named at baptism a being that was not the cause of the benefits that we are expecting to possess. We name (Him) because we know that He has the power to grant us the heavenly and imperishable benefits in the hope of which we receive the gift of baptism. In the same way as (the Book) said: 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk', and showed that it was Christ who was the cause of the cure of the lame man, in this same way where it ordered, 'Baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' it clearly showed that these names which are pronounced at baptism are the cause of all the benefits which we are expecting to possess. It is not to no purpose that it says: 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost', but in order that from their names we may derive our hope of enjoying the future good things." (29)

He developed this idea, too, to explain to his candidates that the divine nature was called by the threefold name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost:

"(Our Lord) said here also: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' in order that His disciples might learn from Him that all the nations were looking for this name as the cause of all their good things, because the nature which is called 'Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost' and in which we are baptised, is truly the Lord who is able to give us the heavenly good things which we are expecting and in the hope of which we draw nigh unto the grace of baptism." (30)

He further linked the threefold name with baptism to stress the confidence which the Christian may put upon the promises of God in baptism.

"As He ordered us to name the Father in the act of our discipleship and our baptism, because He is the Divine nature which is eternal and cause of everything and because He is able to vouchsafe unto us the benefits involved in the promise of baptism; and as He ordered us to name the Son because He was an identical nature and is able to vouchsafe unto us the same benefits, it is likewise evident that He names the Holy Spirit side by side, with the Father and the Son for this very reason, that is to say because He is of the same nature as that which is eternal and cause of everything to which is truly due the name of Lord and God." (31)

The triune God could not be false to His promise and He guaranteed the benefits of baptism, so the Christian's hope of eternal benefits rested upon a sure and certain foundation, even though it remained a 'hope'.

Theodore firmly understood that baptism was indissolubly linked with the Trinitarian formula, and he quite plainly used the place of the Spirit in the baptismal formula, based on Matthew 28:19, to justify the place of the Spirit in the Trinity<sup>32</sup>; later describing the Spirit in terms of:

"One who by the mention of His name frees us from death and corruption through baptism, and renews us according to the teaching of our Lord." (33)

He further supported this with reference to the Pauline epistles<sup>34</sup> and explained to his candidates:

"We have been called to the hope of these (benefits), and we were born of baptism by the power of the Holy Spirit, and as a symbol and earnest (*ἀρραβών*) of the future things we

received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom we were reborn and by whom we obtained the gifts of being one body of Christ."

(35)

Using Ephesians 4:4-6, and applying it personally to the candidate, He explained once again that they believed in only one nature in the Godhead and that this fact made possible Paul's declaration of 'one faith'. Similarly, he taught, Paul had said 'one baptism' because he was aware that

"those names which are pronounced at baptism had only one power, one will, and one act through which the grace of our second birth was accomplished."

(36)

Dr. Mingana suggested in his footnote that the phrase 'grace of our second birth' was used to mean the spiritual birth of the candidates through baptism to newness of life in Christ. In Theodore's recapitulation at the beginning of the tenth lecture, he summed up his argument in regard to the Holy Spirit thus:

"I know that you remember that we spoke to your love concerning the Holy Spirit, when we showed the greatness of His glory from the fact that in the initiation of baptism He is believed in side by side with the Father and the Son."

(37)

Later in that lecture, Theodore dealt with the fact that even those from a polytheistic background, as many of the Gentiles had been in the days of the Early Church, had been taught that Father, Son and Holy Spirit were in fact one Divine nature. He stressed the need for a correct understanding of the position and cited this as part of the rationale behind the lectures:

"This is the reason why our Lord caused baptism to follow catechumenate, so that baptism should be the end of catechumenate. It was necessary for those who had rejected false gods and learnt that Divine nature was one, eternal and cause of everything, which is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to receive through these names the gift of baptism which is bestowed for the sake of a wonderful happiness and is the earnest of the future and ineffable benefits. Faith is professed at baptism by the mention of these names, because those who mention them designate one Divine nature which is eternal, cause of everything, and able to create all things from nothing while always caring and providing for them. We also rightly expect to be renewed and to receive the freedom of truth through these names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which are pronounced at baptism."

(38)

Baptism also incorporated the candidate into the great body of the Christian Church, making the baptized a member of what Theodore was later to describe as a new and great city. Commenting on Ephesians 3:10-11, he taught:

"He shows here that in this manifold wisdom of God the invisible powers were astonished that He assembled together all men to the worship of God, and made them as one body of Christ at the second birth from the holy baptism, and prepared them to hope that they will participate with Him in the future good things of the next world. He calls this Church the body of Christ because it received communion with Him through the regeneration of baptism, symbolically in this world but truly and effectively in the next."

(39)

He continued:

"We symbolise this state in baptism, since we die in Christ in baptism and rise again according to the testimony of the blessed Paul. This is the reason why each one of us declares: 'I will believe and be baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit through one holy Catholic Church'. (The catechumen) shows by his words: I am not preparing for baptism for the sake of little things but for the sake of great and wonderful things and heavenly benefits, as I am expecting that through baptism I shall be made a member of the Church, which is the congregation of the faithful, who through baptism became worthy to be called the body of Christ our Lord and received an ineffable holiness and the hope of the future immortality and immutability."

(40)

Dr. Mingana pointed out that Theodore made no mention of the credal article 'We acknowledge the baptism for the remission of sins' which emanated from the Council of Constantinople in 381, having not appeared in the first edition of the Nicene Creed.

Theodore concluded his study of the Creed by reminding the candidates he had been addressing that the Church Fathers at Nicaea

"taught us the profession of faith (which is to be made) at baptism in order to shew that all this is in accordance with the sequence of the teaching of our Lord who said: 'Go ye, teach and baptise in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. Thus they (the catechumens) are taught and thus they perform the (sacrament of) baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

"Those who are about to be baptised in the hope of ineffable benefits ought not to name another nature beside the one from which all benefits are bestowed on all created being. This is the reason why they added to this the profession of faith concerning the future benefits in the hope of

which we draw nigh unto the grace of baptism, as by necessity we have to know what kind of benefits are granted to this discipleship, and also that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are one Divine nature, and also that at the second birth from the Holy baptism we receive the faith in the heavenly and imperishable benefits that the Divine nature, which is eternal and cause of everything, is able to bestow upon us." (41)

This provided his candidates with a fitting and memorable summary of the contents of his last two lectures in relation to the effect of his words upon their baptism, and the effect of the Spirit's work in their lives as they prepared to profess their faith in Christ not only with their lips but with their lives.

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

a) The Rite of Renunciation and Profession. The rite of ἀποταγή and συνθήκη for Theodore's candidates also began the ceremonies closely connected with the Baptismal rite. They were made to stand barefoot on the cilicium - a sack-cloth made of goat's hair - and their outer garment was removed. They stretched forth their hands towards God imploring his help and assistance<sup>42</sup> and then knelt down upon the sackcloth, body erect, arms still stretched out imploringly to God with their gaze fixed towards heaven<sup>43</sup>. They were then approached by ministers appointed for the service and addressed with a message which was an elaboration of the message of the angel to Cornelius from

### Acts 10:4:

"God has looked upon your tribulations which you were previously undergoing and had mercy upon you because you were for a long time captives of the tyrant and served a cruel servitude to him. He saw the number and nature of the calamities which you have endured, and this moved Him to deliver you from that servitude and from the great number of your ancient tribulations, and to bring you to freedom and to grant you to participate in the ineffable heavenly benefits, which immediately after you have received, you become undoubtedly free from all calamities. It is now time for you to learn the things through which you will surely receive deliverance from your ancient tribulations and enjoy the good things that have been shown to you." (44)

Deacons then approached the candidates, who have remained upon the cilicium and prepared them for the solemn formula of renunciation

and profession of commitment. The candidate said:

"I abjure Satan and all his angels, and all his service, and all his deception, and all his worldly glamour; and I engage myself and believe, and am baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (45)

Following this the bishop, who had changed from his previous garments and was now clad in a supple and radiant linen robe, approached the candidates and signed them on the forehead with the oil of anointing and said, once again in apersonal terms:

"So-and-so is signed in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (46)

During this time the sponsors were standing behind the candidates and following the anointing they spread an orarium of linen upon the head of the candidate, raised him from his kneeling position and caused him to stand erect<sup>47</sup>.

When explaining this feature of the rite, Theodore was at pains to give a detailed explanation of the formula of renunciation itself<sup>48</sup>. However, he did explain the reasons behind the bodily positions which the candidates were required to adopt. He explained their kneeling position:

"First you genuflect, while the rest of your body is erect, and in the posture of one who prays you stretch out your arms towards God. As we have all of us fallen into sin and been driven to the dust by the sentence of death, it behooves us to 'bow our knees in the name of Jesus Christ', as the blessed Paul said, 'and to confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God His Father.' In this confession we show the things that accrue to us from the divine nature through the Economy of Christ our Lord, whom (God) raised up to heaven and showed as Lord of all and head of our salvation. Because all these things have to be performed by us all who 'are fallen to the earth' according to the words of blessed Paul, it is with justice that you who through the Sacrament become partakers of the ineffable benefits to which you have been called by your faith in Christ, bow your knees and make manifest your ancient fall, and worship God the cause of all those benefits." (49)

Thus the candidate prayed for deliverance from the fall and received the assurance that their prayers had been heard and their applications answered. The candidates knelt symbolizing man's servitude to Satan as a result of the ancient fall. In kneeling, they were reminded

that man was dust and under the sentence of God returned to the dust of the earth, and consequently were in a state of servitude to Satan. This was expressed particularly in the words spoken by the ministers appointed for the service<sup>50</sup>. He also quoted Philippians 2:10 and interpreted that kneeling as a gesture which expressed total adoration of Jesus as Lord. Thus he was using the same mystagogy of the dynamic of conversion as was used by Chrysostom. But to this Theodore added his own personal touch in referring to the conversion of St. Paul on the road to Damascus. He then proceeded to show the *μεταβολή* that took place, showing the candidates that it was through faith in Christ that the point of turning again came. Theodore emphasized not the turning but the falling and rising, stressing that Paul and his companions who had fallen to the ground were enabled to get up only through the power of Jesus, and thus it was significant that the candidates following their anointing were not left to rise unaided, but were helped to their feet by their godparents. Thus he saw the story of the conversion of St. Paul as a parallel of the actions of kneeling and rising performed by the candidates. The candidate stood as a sign that the ancient fall and captivity expressed by the kneeling had been overcome and as a symbol that the gesture of kneeling expressing acceptance of the Lordship of Christ had been accepted:

By your rising from your genuflexion you show that you have cast away your ancient fall, that you have no more communion with earth and earthly things, that your adoration and prayer to God has been accepted, that you have received the stamp which is the sign of your election to the ineffable military service, that you have been called to heaven, and that you ought henceforth to direct your course to its life and citizenship while spurning all earthly things." (51)

During the act of renunciation and commitment the gaze of the candidates had been directed to heaven, and their hands outstretched towards heaven in what Theodore described as 'the posture of one who prays'<sup>52</sup> and in this posture their attitude of mind and spirit ought to be one of prayer, imploring God to grant deliverance from the ancient fall, and to grant their participation in the heavenly

benefits<sup>53</sup>. However, at the same time the candidates ought to realise that they were kneeling as a sign of confession of Christ as Lord, and Theodore summed up:

"These engagements and promises you make in the posture which we have described above, while your knee is bowed to the ground both as a sign of adoration from you to God, and as a manifestation of your ancient fall to the ground; the rest of the body is erect and looks upward towards heaven, and your hands are outstretched in the guise of one who prays so that you may be seen to worship the God who is in heaven, from whom you expect to rise from your ancient fall. This is the reason why you have, through the promises and engagements which we have already described, directed your course towards Him and have promised to Him, that you will make yourself worthy of the expected gift. After you have looked towards Him with outstretched hands, asked grace from Him, risen from your fall and rejoiced in (future) benefits, you will necessarily receive the first-fruits of the sacrament which we believe to be the earnest of the good and ineffable things found in heaven." (54)

It was the candidates' heavenward gaze that Theodore, via the story of the conversion of St. Paul, explained in terms of light and darkness, as the candidates upturned eyes sought the light of the world in Jesus Christ, and this was reinforced by his explanation of the priest's robe of clean and radiant linen which was worn for the anointing which followed:

"the joyful appearance of which denotes the joy of the world to which you will move in the future, and the shining colour of which designates your own radiance in the life to come, while its cleanness indicates the ease and happiness of the next world." (55)

Theodore explained that the sign of the cross with which the candidate had been anointed on the forehead was to be compared with the mark of ownership, so that the candidate might have the confidence to address God with an open face, and to show him the stamp by which they were seen to be members of the household and soldiers of Christ our Lord.

Theodore also used a mystagogy based on the natural symbol of light and darkness. He was not able to be as explicit as his colleagues because of the differences in the images which he used.

In the two biblical images which he used of the conversion of Cornelius and the conversion of St. Paul, the conversion experience is described in terms of the passage from darkness to light<sup>56</sup>. These two conversions described in Acts indicated for Theodore various features of the rite of Initiation. The times - the ninth hour for Cornelius and midday for Paul - encompassed the time of the crucifixion, the appearance of Jesus in the symbolism of brilliant light, the falling to the ground and rising, the turning from darkness to light, from the dominion of Satan to God through the act of confession of faith in Jesus, the forgiveness of sins in baptism: all these linked these stories indelibly for Theodore with the rite of Initiation in which his candidates were to share.

Theodore's description of the candidates frame of mind as he knelt in the rite of renunciation and profession indicated an interpretation which implied an almost face to face encounter between the candidate and Satan:

"It is in place here to explain to you the power of these words, in order that you may know the force of the engagements, promises and words of asseveration through which you receive the happiness of this great gift. Because the devil, to whom you had listened, was for you the cause of numerous and great calamities - as he has begun his work from the time of the Father of your race - you promise to abjure him, since facts themselves and your own experience had made you feel his injuries. This is the reason why you say, 'I abjure you, Satan.' Formerly, even if you wished it, you did not dare make use of these words, because you were afraid of his servitude, but as you have, by a divine decree received deliverance from him, you proclaim and abjure him with confidence and by your own words, and this is the reason why you say, 'I abjure Satan'. In this you imply both your present separation from him, and the former association that you had with him. You rightly say, 'I abjure Satan', but you can hardly realize, that after formerly having felt the injury which he inflicted upon you in his relation to you, you could be in a position to be delivered from him." (57)

Earlier he has used similar imagery to portray the dramatic courtroom scene in the rite of exorcism<sup>58</sup>. The candidate was united with Christ

in the act of renunciation and profession, as it was by 'divine decree' that the candidate having received deliverance from Satan was able to declare: 'I abjure Satan'<sup>59</sup>. This he said was the 'great and wonderful grace, which was manifest through Christ, and which freed us from the Tyrant and delivered us from his servitude and granted us this wonderful participation in his benefits'<sup>60</sup>.

However, from the final anointing came Theodore's innovation in his implication that this produced in the candidate the first fruits of the Final Victory which Christ would ultimately win over Satan in universal terms. To establish this emphasis he drew attention to several features which surrounded the ceremony of the sealing, or final anointing, and put them into the context of the life to come. He pointed out that the Bishop exchanged his ordinary garments for a linen robe, symbolizing by its joyful appearance the joy of the life to come, by its shining whiteness the radiance of the life to come, and by its suppleness the ease and happiness of movement in the world of the future. He explained the bestowal of the orarium by the sponsor upon the head of the candidate following anointing as the emblem of freedom, commenting that it was slaves and exiles who stood bareheaded, but free men spread linen on their heads as an adornment both at home and in the market place. Theodore made a link between the anointing and the freedom symbolized by the orarium:

"... it is through this signing that you are known to have been chosen for the service of heaven. This is the reason why immediately you rise up, you spread on your head linen, which is a mark of freedom, and this signifies that you have been chosen for the heavenly service, and been freed from communion with earthly things, while obtaining the freedom which is in heaven. If a slave is not allowed in this world to do military service to a king how much more ought the person who has been detailed for the service of heaven to be remote from servitude. All of us, therefore, who have received communion with heavenly things are free men of that 'free Jerusalem which is above, and which is mother of us all', as the blessed Paul said." (61)

Within the context of the ceremony, and realizing the symbolism which Theodore applied to the bishop's robe and to rising and receiving the

orarium in connection with both freedom and the world to come, it is much easier to appreciate Theodore's particular interpretation of the anointing itself:

"... you, who have been chosen for the kingdom of heaven ... are first stamped on your forehead, that part of your head which is higher than the rest of your body, which is placed above all your body and above your face, and with which we usually draw near to one another and look at one another when we speak. You are stamped on that place so that you may be seen to possess great confidence (παρρησία). 'Because now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face, and with an open face we shall behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and shall be changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord', as the blessed Paul said, we are rightly stamped in a place that is higher than our face, so that from far we may frighten the demons, who will not then be able to come near us and injure us, and so that we may be known to possess so much confidence (παρρησία) with God that we look at Him with open face, and display before Him the stamp by which we are seen to be members of the household and soldiers of Christ our Lord." (62)

This concept of παρρησία which Theodore used twice in this passage has a particular remarkable usage here as Dr.W.C.Van Unnik points out. His thesis is that in the Peschitta, παρρησία is sometimes transliterated and at other times is replaced by an indigenous metaphor galicouth pania literally 'the uncovering or revealing of the face'<sup>63</sup>. Normally, Theodore used παρρησία in eight out of nine passages - with a strictly religious meaning to express a particular aspect of the relation between God and man, and to describe one of the specific elements of the new life of the Christian<sup>64</sup>. This παρρησία became the share of the Christians by their profession of faith at baptism<sup>65</sup>. Jesus Christ as man possessed παρρησία and by this he was able to conquer death and to grant immunity from death to all mankind<sup>66</sup>, and Jesus, Theodore taught,

"had such a παρρησία, He became a messenger on behalf of all human race so that the rest of mankind might participate with Him in His great change." (67)

In this context, Dr.Van Unnik reminds us παρρησία is not only confidence that He would conquer death, but also, and foremost, in Jesus' perfect union with the Godhead<sup>68</sup>. Through the work of Jesus

Christ and as a result of his gracious gift man attained confidence before God and friendship and fellowship with the hosts that were invisible and true to God<sup>69</sup>. Thus the Christian through the gracious work of Christ had free intercourse with God not only in the future, but it was already enjoyed here where the sacraments were proleptic eschatology and where the first fruits of the Spirit were present<sup>70</sup>. Such *παρρησία* however was awe-inspiring for the Christian and their natural feeling would be fear before such an awe-inspiring divine Presence, but fear was done away with by grace<sup>71</sup>. Dr. Van Unnik summarized his efforts to elucidate the meaning of *παρρησία* thus:

"*parrhēsia* is an expression for the new life of Christians; the 'freedom of the children of God' who, by the work of Jesus Christ, are no longer separated from the Almighty, Holy and Eternal God, and who, as citizens of God's world, converse with Him as their Father. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit, which is enjoyed here in the sacraments and prayer. It is remarkable that though this new life has its ethical implications, the word *parrhēsia* is practically restricted to the sphere of the relation between God and man and is not applied to inter-human relationships, such as the preaching of the Gospel."

(72)

He then proceeds to consider further the use of *παρρησία* in the passage which we looked at above in the context of the pre-baptismal anointing on the candidate's foreheads. Theodore called this anointing 'the first fruits of the Sacrament' and afterwards the candidate received 'the remaining part of the sacrament and were invested with the complete armour of the Spirit'. Theodore concentrated more attention on these anointings than on the other two *viz.* of the whole body and the post-baptismal anointing on the forehead. He described it by the use of two similes when he said 'The sign with which you are signed means that you have been stamped as a lamb of Christ and as a soldier of the heavenly King'. He stressed the positive side of anointing implying allegiance to Christ and the heavenly kingdom rather than the negative aspect of anointing involving only the expulsion of demons. He also explained the location of the symbol on the forehead and Dr. Van Unnik finds the combination of the two different Pauline texts<sup>73</sup> of great interest, because they were linked by the words

face and mirror; and illustrated <sup>the</sup> proleptic eschatology of Theodore's idea of the sacraments, that the sacraments 'by symbols give a share in the heavenly world of what once will be shared in reality'<sup>74</sup>. The nearest parallel to this explanation of the anointing came in Cyril, when in discussing the final anointing in Cat. Myst. 3.4, he linked it to the baptismal seal (ἡ σφραγίς) which made the receiver free from shame and allowed him to see the glory of God with an uncovered face; while in Theodore it gives παρρησία, which was the opposite of shame, so that the candidate might see the glory of God with an uncovered face<sup>75</sup>. Theodore used the concept of the uncovered face to symbolize man's freedom from shame and that the awe which a creature feels before the Holy God is taken away. Dr. Van Unnik suggests that the uncovered face is an indispensable element in the train of thought. Theodore made much of the fact that the seal was given on the forehead, and this was connected with the fact that the candidates for baptism stood bareheaded, so that their παρρησία before God did not need to be stressed so much as it was implied by their uncovered face and bare head. However this παρρησία was no subjective feeling but a παρρησία which was a share in the παρρησία of Jesus himself, and it was this share in the παρρησία of Jesus which made the anointing before baptism 'the passport for free entrance into the presence of Almighty God'.

b) The Baptismal Rite. From the first fruits of baptism, we move to a consideration of the Baptismal rite as such, which Theodore referred to as 'the remaining part of the sacrament'<sup>76</sup>. Upon arrival at the baptistry, the candidate took off all their garments and they were then anointed on their whole body with the oil of anointing. The bishop began this anointing, clad in the same shining apparel which he had put on for the first anointing which we have just considered, and then 'others appointed for the service' continued the anointing on the entire body<sup>77</sup>. Theodore reported that the Bishop had already consecrated the baptismal waters by the invocation of the Holy Spirit,

although he gave no indication of when this might have been done. The candidate descended into the baptismal water following the anointing of the whole body, and there the Bishop extended his hand and placed it on the candidate's head. Then he said 'So and so is baptized in the name of the Father', then, at the end of this phrase, he exerted pressure on the candidate's head, and the candidate, hearing these words and following the leading pressure of the bishop's hand, bowed down his head and immersed himself in the water. Then the candidate raised his head back up out of the water. The Bishop then said 'and of the Son' and in the same way, following the pressure of the Bishop's hand as he said the phrase, the candidate bowed down his head a second time and immersed himself in the water. After his head emerged from the water, the candidate heard the Bishop say the third phrase, 'and of the Holy Spirit', and for the third time following the pressure of the Bishop's hand, the candidate, bowing his head, submerged and raised his head back out of the water. Then the candidate left the pool<sup>78</sup>.

Theodore explained the removal of the garments before baptism in terms of the dimension of immortality/mortality. He based his interpretation on the story of Adam and Eve, in that God needed to make clothes for them only after they had sinned. The clothes which the candidates stripped off were the symbol of the primeval aprons. Adam had become mortal by breaking God's commandment, and he had realized the need of a covering when he lost his trust in God, and became 'self-conscious'. The apron which he received from God, was 'a sign of mortality and a reproof mark of that (divine) decree by which you were brought low to the necessity of a covering'<sup>79</sup>. Since baptism brought the candidate new birth and immortality so he removed his clothing which since Adam had been the symbol of his mortality. Similarly, Theodore saw the nakedness of the candidate preparing to receive baptism as a symbol of Adam's former state - naked and

unashamed<sup>80</sup>, although he did not present the mystagogy of the baptistry as a symbol of paradise.

Theodore's explanation of the prebaptismal anointing is a somewhat original approach:

"After you have taken off your garments, you are rightly anointed all over your body with the oil of anointing, a mark and sign that you will be receiving the covering of immortality, which through baptism you are about to put on. After you have taken off the covering which involves the sign of mortality, you receive through your anointing the sign of the covering of immortality, which you expect to receive through baptism. And you are anointed all over your body as a sign that unlike the covering used as a garment, which does not cover all the parts of the body, because although it may cover all the external limbs, it by no means covers the internal ones - all our nature will put on immortality at the time of the resurrection, and all that is seen in us, whether internal or external, will undoubtedly be changed into incorruptibility according to the working of the Holy Spirit which shall then be with us." (81)

although basically it was his own application of the concept of exorcism and healing at this point in the rite. It formed a unity with his interpretation of the removal of the garments, and this anointing becomes the sign of the immortality to come. Thus the oil healed the corruption of mortality, becoming a healing covering of the entire body. In sign, it demonstrated itself more effective in making the candidate immortal than the garments were in making him mortal, not only covering more of the external limbs than the garments could, but reaching internal limbs that the garments could not reach, symbolically elaborating the penetrating quality of oil.

He summarized the effects of the baptismal rite as a whole in these terms:

"In the same way the sentence: 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit' reveals the giver of the benefits of baptism which are: second birth, renewal, immortality, incorruptibility, impassibility, immutability, deliverance from death and servitude to all evils, happiness of freedom, and participation in the ineffable good things which we are expecting. The person who is baptized is baptized for these things." (82)

To explain the means by which these benefits were achieved Theodore

also chose the Pauline anamnesis of the death and resurrection of Christ as his principal vehicle.

"It is indeed evident to us, according to the words of the Apostle that when we perform either baptism or the Eucharist, we perform them in remembrance of the death and resurrection of Christ, in order that the hope of the latter may be strengthened in us." (83)

Quoting Romans 6:3-4, he explained in his principal statement on baptism:

"He (Paul) clearly taught here that we are baptized so that we might imitate in ourselves the death and resurrection of our Lord, and that we might receive from our remembrance of the happenings which took place the confirmation of our hope in future things." (84)

This emphasis on the baptismal act as a sign of future realities was also a hallmark of Theodore's thinking, and his mystagogical programme reflected this emphasis:

"As we have a firm belief that things that have already happened will happen to us, so (the things that happened at the resurrection of our Lord) we believe that they will happen to us. We perform, therefore, this ineffable sacrament, which contains the incomprehensible signs of the Economy of Christ our Lord, as we believe that the things implied in it will happen to us." (85)

Theodore taught that the sacrament represented the saving work of Christ but at the same time looked forward to and represented the full realization of the candidate's salvation at the neophyte's final resurrection from the dead. So the sacramental action, for him, contained not only symbols of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ, and the candidate's participation in these, but also it was a symbol of our participation in the fulfilment to come which this resurrection of Christ implied<sup>86</sup>.

He related the candidate's baptism to the death and resurrection of Christ in terms of the candidate's immersion and emergence from the pool:

"Because Christ our Lord abolished the power of death by His own resurrection (the Apostle) said: 'As many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into His death'. As if one were saying 'We know that death

has been abolished a long time ago by Christ our Lord, and we draw nigh unto Him, and are baptized with such a faith because we desire to participate in His death, in the hope of participating also in the future resurrection from the dead, in the way in which He Himself arose!" (87)

This reality is exemplified for the candidates by the liturgical actions of the baptismal act which Theodore described in first person singular terms - a reminder perhaps of the fact that baptism is often evocative of one's own baptism:

"This is the reason why, when at my baptism I plunge my head I receive the death of Christ our Lord, and desire to have his burial, and because of this I firmly believe in the resurrection of our Lord; and when I rise from the water, I think I have symbolically risen a long time ago." (88)

Although Theodore's central mystagogical statement of the act of immersion and emergence from the water was brief, this was probably because, like Chrysostom, Theodore took it for granted that this was the meaning of the liturgical action. However, he analysed the notion of entering the water as a sign of corruption and death, in a later passage in connection with a symbol of the baptismal pool as a forge, where mortal nature is tempered and changed into immortal:

"It behooves you, therefore, to think that you are going into the water as into a furnace, where you will be renewed and refashioned in order that you may move to a higher nature, after having cast away your old mortality and fully assumed an immortal and incorruptible nature. These things dealing with birth happen to you in the water, because you were fashioned at the beginning from earth and water, and having fallen later into sin you assumed a thorough corruption through the sentence of death." (89)

Using both the natural symbolism of earth and water, its biblical counterpart, and the symbol of the furnace, Theodore explained how plunging into the water exemplified the corruption of death, and how man, made in water, returned to the water, and was dissolved in it, waiting to be remade. Then he added the symbol of the potter's vessel, drawing from Jeremiah 18:1-6, suggesting that the candidate's nature was marred, and so, like a clay vessel, had to be immersed in the water so that it might be refashioned.

"The potters are also in the habit, when the vessels which they fashion are damaged, to refashion them again with water so that they may be remade and reconstructed and given the wanted form. This is the reason why God ordered also the prophet Jeremiah to repair to a potter; and he went and saw him working on a vessel which, because it was marred, he cast in the water, remade, and brought to its former state; and then God said to him: 'O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter?' said the Lord'. Because we also were made of earth and clay - as it is said: 'For thou are also made of clay like me', and 'forgive them that dwell in a house of clay because we are also made of the same clay'. When we fell and sin corrupted us, we received a complete dissolution from the (Divine) sentence of death, but afterwards our Maker and our Lord refashioned us and remade us by His ineffable power, because He abolished death by resurrection and granted to all of us the hope of resurrection from the dead, and a world higher than the present, where we shall not only dwell but also become immortal and incorruptible." (90)

So Theodore related immersion in the baptismal pool to both creation and redemption, in terms of parallels with both Adam and Christ.

However this main point was to stress that baptism was a sign of resurrection, and as Dr. Riley points out:

"His emphasis is not on how the crucifixion and death are symbolized in the baptismal act, but rather how this act is a symbol of the resurrection, related indeed in a backward glance to Christ's actual resurrection, but more especially as symbol of the baptized's participation now in the eschatological reality which is to come." (91)

Theodore saw the sacramental action of immersion principally as a sign of participation in the future rather than an imitation of the past historical events of Christ's death and resurrection as can be seen from his use of Romans 6:5, which Cyril had used to illustrate his teaching that the sacrament was an imitation of the crucifixion of Christ:

"Since, however, all this is done in symbols and signs in order to show that we do not make use of vain signs only, but of realities in which we believe and ardently desire, (Paul) said: 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also (in the likeness) of His resurrection'. In using the future tense he confirms the present event by the future reality, and from the greatness of the coming reality, he demonstrates the credibility of the greatness of its symbols, and the symbol of the coming reality in baptism. The working of the Holy Spirit is that it is in hope of the future things that you receive the grace of baptism, and that you draw nigh unto the gift of baptism in order to die and to rise with Christ so that you may be born again to the new life, and thus, after having been led by these symbols to the participation in the realities you will perform the symbol of that true

Theodore concentrated his attentions on the second part of the text and upon the notion of baptism as a sign of future resurrection stressing the Pauline usage of the future tense (ἐσόμεθα) to make his point that while the historical resurrection of Christ was present in the act of baptism, the baptismal act also looked forward to the future accomplishment of this resurrection for the baptized in the eschaton. It was this notion of baptism as a sign of the future which led Theodore to other Pauline texts than his contemporaries and he suggested an interpretation of the emergence from the water of the body of the candidate which made it similar to the risen body of Christ:

"We believe in one Godhead and are baptized and through it we become one body, according to the working on us of the Holy Spirit, in baptism, which makes us children of God and one Body of Christ our Lord, Whom we consider our Head as He is from our nature and was the first to rise from the dead, and as it is through Him that we received participation in benefits..... And we become one body of Christ, because we consider Christ our Lord in the flesh as our Head, since He was assumed from us and was the first to rise from the dead, and thus He confirmed for us our participation in the resurrection from which we expect our body to be similar to His body. Indeed, 'our conversation is in heaven from whence also we look for our Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned alike unto His glorious body .....' This will take place in reality in heaven, but we perform its symbols and its signs in baptism."

(93)

He grounded his mystagogy by using the Pauline mystagogy of the headship of Christ from I Corinthians 11:3, and he quoted Colossians 2:19 to strengthen this notion:

"We are also called the Body of Christ our Lord, Christ our Lord being our Head, as the blessed Paul said: 'Christ is the head from which all the body is joined together and increases with the increase of God'."

(94)

Thus although he used the same Adam-Christ Pauline theology as Cyril, he concentrated more on the resurrection, and that as a sign of the candidate's participation in the coming eschaton, and he summarized thus:

"You have fulfilled by your baptism in water the rite of burial, and you have received the sign of the resurrection by your rising out of the waters..... you are no more part of Adam who was mutable and burdened and made wretched by sin, but of Christ, who was completely freed from sin through the resurrection, while even before it He never drew nigh to it. It was congruous that (this sinless state) should have had its beginning in Him before (His resurrection) and that at His resurrection He should fully receive an immutable nature. In this way He confirmed to us the resurrection from the dead and our participation in incorruptibility." (95)

This difference in emphasis meant that other aspects of the baptismal ceremony received a different approach from Theodore, and the triple immersion and the invocation of the Trinity are examples of this. He used the healing of the lame man at the Gate Beautiful in Acts 3:6 to justify a Trinitarian formula for baptism, emphasizing that in that name the saving power was given, just as the lame man had been restored in the name of Christ:

"When, therefore (the priest) utters these words: 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', he reveals to you the cause of the things that take place. In as much as the one who said: 'In the name of Jesus of Nazareth rise up and walk', alluded to Christ as the cause of what would take place and to the fact that it would be He who would give (to the lame man) the power of rising and walking, so also the (priest) who says, 'In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', refers to them as the cause of the benefits conferred upon us in baptism.... The priest does not say, 'In the name of the Father and in the Name of the Son, and in the Name of the Holy Spirit', because every one of them has a separate name that does not fit that of the other." (96)

Linked with Theodore's future application of baptism was his teaching about the second birth as the Christian following baptism was risen with Christ. Christ died physically, the candidate died spiritually in baptismal death, Christ rose physically, the candidate rose spiritually in baptismal resurrection. Not content with linking the past to the present, Theodore proceeded to develop the future implications of the baptismal act, portraying baptism as a sign of hope in the future:

"And we become one body of Christ, because we consider Christ our Lord in the flesh as our Head, and thus He confirmed for us our participation in the resurrection from which we expect our body to be similar to His body.

Indeed, our conversation is in heaven, from which we look for our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body."

"We do share by imitation in baptism in the resurrection of Christ, but we also really participate in the heavenly life to come, and this real participation in this coming risen life is mediated by the sacrament. Thus, Theodore immediately adds: 'This will take place in reality in heaven, but we perform its symbol and signs in baptism'." (97)

Far from being an empty symbol of the eschaton, the sacrament was a real participation in a relationship to the future in a hope which contains the whole potency of this future. Thus, although the 'true' second birth would be a feature of the eschaton, baptism was also a second birth, because by virtue of the symbols a real participation in this future second birth had actually been established:

"You should now proceed towards baptism in which the symbols of this second birth are performed, because you will in reality receive the true second birth only after you have risen from the dead and obtained the favor to be in the state of which you were deprived by death'. Thus, Theodore instructs the candidates before their approach to the font on the meaning of baptism as second birth in terms of the eschaton. Then he adds: 'All these things will happen to you in reality at the time appointed for your birth at the resurrection; as to now you have for them the word of Christ our Lord, and in the expectation of them taking place you rightly receive their symbols and signs through this aweinspiring sacrament, so that you may not question your participation in future things'.

This perspective of Theodore, the relationship of baptism to the future flowering of the potencies which are contained in it must be borne in mind in order to appreciate his employment of the image of 'second birth' as a mystagogical explanation of the baptismal act. The perspective might be aptly labelled one of 'dynamic tension'. Second birth will indeed be accomplished in the eschaton. The act of baptism, however, because it looks back to the actual resurrection of Christ with Whom the candidate is associated, and because it contains a real relationship in hope that its recipient will one day achieve this glorious resurrection, may itself be interpreted in the terms of the image of second birth, even though, as Theodore points out, the true second birth will take place in the resurrection itself. Because, as has already been pointed out, the act of baptism is more than a mere symbol, but a reality in hope, Theodore's use of the image of second birth - and he unfolds it rather elaborately as we are about to see - will constantly hover between second birth, in which is understood the event which will transpire at the baptizand's resurrection from the dead, and second birth, in which is understood the symbolic explanation of the potentialities which the act of baptism here and now, related to the actual past resurrection of Christ and really related to the future second birth in hope, actually contains." (99)

Thus to Theodore the act of baptism looked forward to the future resurrection of the baptized, of which the past resurrection of Jesus is the model. So when Theodore spoke of baptism containing 'the symbol of the birth which we expect'<sup>100</sup>, he meant that the symbol denoted and contained actually in hope the future resurrection as opposed to the meaning of Cyril and Chrysostom who understood baptism to contain the salvific events of the earthly crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Jesus by imitation (ἐν μιμήσει). By shifting his emphasis to the future, Theodore set himself a more awesome task, for in the future eschaton, as it was unimaginable, he lost the imagery of death and resurrection, and so he had to represent in image the rising of Jesus from the tomb, and then he had to add the images of second birth in so far as they fitted into a plausible relationship to the liturgical ceremony, as we saw, for example, in his water-creation-womb metaphors. As a result he had to sever himself from the liturgy, and pursued instead this metaphorical image of second birth. This was exemplified in this his use of Romans 6:5 in this passage:

"This is the reason why, at my baptism. I plunge my head, I receive the death of Christ our Lord, and desire to have His burial, and because of this I firmly believe in the resurrection of our Lord; and when I rise from the water I think I have symbolically risen a long time ago.

Since, however, all this is done in symbols and signs, in order to show that we do not make use of vain signs only, but of realities in which we believe, and which we ardently desire, Paul said: 'For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death we shall be also (in the likeness) of his resurrection.

In using the future tense, he confirms the present event by the future reality, and from the greatness of the coming reality he demonstrates the credibility of the greatness of its symbols, and the symbol of the coming realities is baptism. The working of the Holy Spirit is that it is in the hope of the future things that you receive the grace of baptism, and that you draw nigh unto the gift of baptism in order to die and to rise with Christ so that you may be born again to the new life, and thus, after having been led by these symbols to the participation in the realities, you will perform the symbol of that true second birth."

(101)

This also led him to draw a different emphasis from others in his application of the Jesus - Nicodemus dialogue in John 3:1-8:

"You draw nigh, therefore, unto the holy baptism which contains the symbol of the birth which we expect. This is the reason why our Lord called it second birth, when He said to Nicodemus: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'

In this He showed that those who will enter the kingdom of God must have a second birth, Nicodemus, however, thought that they will be born according to a carnal birth from a woman, and said: 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?' He said this because he believed we shall be born in a way similar to our first birth. As to our Lord, He did not disclose to him then that there are two ways in which we shall in reality receive this, one of which is at the resurrection, because He knew that the subject was too much for his hearing. He, therefore, only disclosed to him the symbolic birth which is accomplished through baptism, unto which all those who believe must draw nigh so that by means of its symbols they may move to the happiness of the reality itself, and answered: 'Unless a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God!'"

(102)

Theodore added the interpretation that there was here a question of two ways to receive the second birth, one in baptism and one 'at the resurrection' which Jesus did not describe to Nicodemus because this mystery at that moment would have been beyond Nicodemus' capacity to understand. Theodore explained that this second way of receiving the second birth was directly related to the first way, 'so that by means of its symbols they may move to the happiness of the reality itself'. So he could conclude that Jesus 'called baptism a second birth because it contains the symbol of this second birth'<sup>103</sup>. He proceeded to sum up his introductory section and his exposition of the connection between the symbols of baptism and resurrection under the image of the second births:

"The power of holy baptism consists in this: it implants in you the hope of future benefits, enables you to participate in the things which we expect, and by means of the symbols and signs of the future good things it informs you with the gift of the Holy Spirit, the first-fruits of whom you receive when you are baptized."

(104)

Theodore saw the baptistry as a womb for the sacramental birth of the candidates relating to 'the water of second birth'<sup>105</sup> to the shelter of the unborn child in the womb, and he developed this concept particularly by returning a second time to the encounter

between Jesus and Nicodemus in a passage which Dr. Riley cites as a 'key example of the manner in which Theodore proceeds as mystagogue',<sup>106</sup> blending Scripture and his own theological orientation with the natural imagery of human conception, birth, and growth to explain the act of baptism to his candidates.

"Our Lord, also, when Nicodemus asked Him whether a man 'can enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born', answered: 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God'. He shows in this that as in a carnal birth the womb of the mother received the human seed, and the Divine hand fashions it according to an ancient decree, so also in baptism, the water of which becomes womb to the one who is being born, and the grace of the Spirit fashions in it, into the second birth, the one who is being baptized, and changes him completely into a new man. And inasmuch as the seed that falls into the womb of the mother has neither life, nor soul nor feeling, but after it has been fashioned by the Divine hand, it results in a living man, endowed with soul and feeling, and in a human nature capable of all human acts, so also here the one who is baptized falls into the water as into a womb, like a seed which bears no resemblance of any kind to the mark of an immortal nature, but after he has been baptized and has received the Divine and spiritual grace, he will undoubtedly undergo a complete change: he will be fashioned from a mortal into an immortal, from a corruptible into an incorruptible, and from a mutable into an immutable, nature; he will be changed completely into a new man according to the power of the one who fashions him.

And inasmuch as the one who is born of a woman has potentially in him the faculty of speaking, hearing, walking and working with his hand, but is very weak to perform all these acts in reality till the time in which God has decreed for him to perform them, so also is the case in connection with the one who is born of baptism. This one has indeed in him and possesses potentially all the faculties of an immortal and incorruptible nature, but is not now in a position to make use of them and put them into a complete and perfect act of incorruptibility, immortality, impassibility and immutability. He who receives through baptism the potential faculty of performing all these acts, will receive the power and performing them in reality at the time when he is no more a natural but a spiritual man, and when the working of the (Holy) Spirit renders the body incorruptible and the soul immutable, while sustaining and keeping the both of them by His power, as the blessed Paul said: 'It is sown in corruption it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body'. He shows here that incorruption, glory and power will come then to man through the working of the Holy Spirit, which affects both his soul and body, the former with immortality and the latter with immutability; and that the body which will rise from the dead and which (man) will put on will be a spiritual and not a natural body."

(107)

In this new life of the neophyte, there was the potential for all the faculties for an immortal and incorruptible nature to be fully developed upon the divine decree at the time when he was no more a natural but a spiritual man, when the Holy Spirit had rendered the body incorruptible and the soul immutable at the resurrection of the body. To stress this point, he drew the parallel between carnal birth and what happened in baptism, but consistent with his future application of baptism, he suggested that the faculties of immortal and incorruptible activity, although possessed by the baptized, could not be used until God decreed it, at the resurrection.

His analogy of the waters as a womb is followed by a picture of them as a furnace in which the candidate was to be renewed and refashioned in order that he might move to a higher nature, after having shed his old mortality and fully assumed an immortal and incorruptible nature. He illustrated this point with reference to Old Testament passages<sup>108</sup> which referred to man in the prophetic image of the potter's clay, to draw out the image of regeneration:

"It behooves you therefore, to think that you are going into the water as into a furnace, where you will be renewed and refashioned in order that you may move to a higher nature, after having cast away your old mortality and fully assumed an immortal and incorruptible nature. These things dealing with birth happen to you in the water, because you were fashioned at the beginning from earth and water, and having fallen later into sin you assumed a thorough corruption through the sentence of death. The potters are also in the habit, when the vessels which they fashion are damaged, to refashion them again with water so that they may be remade and reconstructed, and given the wanted form..... when we fell and sin corrupted us, we received a complete dissolution from the (Divine) sentence of death, but afterwards our Maker and our Lord refashioned us and remade us by his ineffable power, because He abolished death by resurrection and granted to all of us the hope of resurrection from the dead, and a world higher than the present, where we shall not dwell but also become immortal and incorruptible." (109)

The parallel is as before, and the tension between present potential and ultimate reality is present in this image too and its particular aptness is strengthened by the Genesis image of the creation of man<sup>110</sup>.

Theodore spelt out this in his conclusion to this section:

"We perform the symbols and signs of these things in water and are renewed and reconstructed according to the working of the Spirit on it. We who draw nigh unto baptism receive therefore, these benefits from the Sacrament in symbol, while in the next world we shall all of us receive renewal of our nature in reality. As an earthen vessel, which is being remade and refashioned in water, will remain in its softer nature and be clay as long as it has not come in contact with fire, but when it has been thrown on fire and baked on it, it will undoubtedly be remade and refashioned - so also we, who are in a mortal nature, rightly receive the grace of the Holy Spirit, which hardens us more than any fire can do." (111)

Theodore emphasized that the reconstruction of the immortal nature of the neophyte had actually taken place in the baptismal water, and that nature was hardened by the fire of the Holy Spirit, but he was careful to point out that this refashioning, though real in baptism, was a reality always in hope. This emphasis recurred in his explanation of the priestly garments worn both for the first anointing and for the baptismal act:

"It is in this apparel that he performs the gift of baptism, because it behooves him to perform all the sacraments while wearing it, as it denotes the renovation found in the next world, to which you will be transferred through this same sacrament." (112)

c) The Post-Baptismal Rites. Upon emergence from the baptistry the neophyte put on a shining white garment<sup>113</sup> and was signed upon the forehead by the bishop, who said, 'So and so is signed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'<sup>114</sup>. He does not allow much detail in his treatment of this part of the baptismal rite, and his entire mystagogy of this post-baptismal anointing is to be found in two paragraphs:

"After you have received the grace of baptism and worn a white garment that shines, the priest draws nigh unto you on your forehead, and says: 'So-and-so is signed in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit'. When Jesus came out of the water He received the grace of the Holy Spirit who descended like a dove and lighted on Him, and this is the reason why He is said to have been anointed: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because of which the Lord has anointed me'. and: 'Jesus of Nazareth whom God has anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power', texts which show that the Holy Spirit is never separated from Him, like the anointment with oil which has a durable effect on the men who are anointed, and is not separated from them. It is right, therefore, that when (the priest) signs you he says: 'So-and-so is

signed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit', so that it may be an indication to you that it is in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit that the Holy Spirit descended on you also, and you were anointed and received grace; and He will be and remain with you, as it is through Him that you possess the first-fruits. Indeed, at present you only receive symbolically the happiness of the future benefits, but at the time of the resurrection you will receive all the grace from which you will become immortal, incorruptible, impassible and immutable; even your body will then remain for ever and will not perish, while your soul will be exempt from all inclination, however slight, towards evil." (115)

This scant treatment is probably due to the fact that he had devoted a lot of time to the prebaptismal anointing, also on the forehead, and did not wish to become over-repetitive.

From his references to Scripture it is plain to see that Theodore associated this post-baptismal anointing with the communication of the Holy Spirit, and he told the candidates that the anointing with its formula was a sign 'that the Holy Spirit descended on you also'. The anointing of the neophyte was linked with the effect in Christ's life following his own baptism in the Jordan when the Holy Spirit had descended upon him in the form of a dove. This event in Jesus' life and its relationship to the candidate's post-baptismal anointing was interpreted by Theodore in the light of the future resurrection, although not neglecting reference to the past salvific event in the Jordan. Thus the liturgical anointing, in typological terms, was the type, related in retrospect to the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit, and the future benefits of the resurrected body would be the antitype. Thus the liturgical anointing itself communicated to the neophyte a possession of the Holy Spirit, looking to future revelation but already begun in the present. It had a durable effect on the spiritual life of the candidate, equipping him for ministry in the Church and the world just as it had equipped Christ for his messianic ministry. Theodore explained the robe in terms of a symbol of the union of the neophyte with the risen Christ, and here as we would expect, he related his interpretation of the shining garment to the resurrection

of Jesus as a sign of the eschatological fulfilment of the promise implied by the garment of freedom and radiance. He drew attention to the radiance of the garment as he had already done when describing the bishop's garment at the prebaptismal anointing and at baptism, which also inspired the candidates as a sign of the world to come. Although Theodore also interpreted the garment as a symbol of purity of life, this was from a unique basis, and it also fitted in with the eschatological emphasis which he brought. The robe was needed only because immortality and incorruptibility had been received only symbolically and sacramentally, rather than in reality:

"When you have received the resurrection in reality and put on immortality and incorruptibility, such a garment will be wholly unnecessary, but since you do not possess such things in reality, and have only received them sacramentally and symbolically, you are in need of garments. Of these you wear those which denote happiness, which you have now received symbolically, but which you will one day possess in reality."

(116)

This then became the counterpart of stripping off the garments before baptism, where the logical conclusion of Theodore's teaching would be that after baptism no clothing should be worn<sup>117</sup>. So Theodore stressed the temporary need of present clothing, which would be rendered unnecessary when man returned to his paradisaical condition, and so this robe took on the aspect of a future looking symbol. Theodore developed this through his choice of words, letting the light and radiance of the future world shine through the radiance of the garments of those who belong to that new world by their birth into it, whether bishop or neophyte! He saw the garment as a sign of happiness and joy, but he did not spell out, as Cyril and Chrysostom did, its symbolism of the purity of Christian action in the Christian who wore it. It was a vital intermediate step before the resurrection was actualized in the eschaton, and as such this expectation would transform the life of the Christian and produce a bias towards purity in his life, but his emphasis on the world to come precluded any emphasis on other factors for Theodore.

3. The Praxis of Baptism with Relation to the Fellowship of the Church  
Particularly Considering Sponsorship

Theodore saw the value of the role of the sponsor and perhaps gave us one of the clearest definitions of their role in the fourth century. He described them first in terms of a guide around the city and citizenship which is the venue in metaphorical terms for the Christian's new life<sup>118</sup>.

"This is the reason why, as if he were a stranger to the city and its citizenship, a specially appointed person, who is from the city in which he is going to be enrolled and who is well versed in its mode of life, conducts him to the registrar and testifies for him to the effect that he is worthy of the city and of its citizenship and that, as he is not versed in the life of the city or in the knowledge of how to behave in it, he himself would be willing to act as a guide to his inexperience." (119)

It seems from the context that the appointment of the sponsor was an individual appointment, forming a one-to-one relationship, to provide personal instruction and pastoral care during the vital period of the candidate's spiritual life both before and after baptism. It was a ministry recognised and acknowledged by the Church as an important and vital role to be fulfilled. Theodore continued:

"This rite is performed for those who are baptised by the person called godfather, who, however, does not make himself responsible for them in connection with future sins, as each one of us answers for his own sins before God. He only bears witness to what the catechumen has done and to the fact that he has prepared himself in the past to be worthy of the city and of its citizenship. He is justly called a sponsor because by his words (the catechumen) is deemed worthy to receive baptism." (120)

Theodore saw the question of individual responsibility for future sins differently from Tertullian who implied the sponsor was responsible for the sins of his candidate, and also from Chrysostom's view<sup>121</sup> and possibly this caused Dr. Mingana to comment:

"There is no question in Theodore of the Children's Baptism; all the persons admitted to baptism were adults who had received a thorough education and instruction in the theological points explained by him in his present work ad Baptizandos." (122)

The basis for the evidence which the sponsor offered was to the preparation of the candidate 'in the past' and this would refer to the three year period of remote instruction for baptism in which time

presumably the link with the sponsor would have made. The implication is also that this link would have been made some time before the enrolment for proximate preparation for baptism, as a considerable knowledge of the candidate's past was implied so that the sponsor could honestly accept the responsibility for his charge. Theodore then pointed out:

"It is for this reason that as regards you also who draw nigh unto the gift of baptism, a duly appointed person inscribes your name in the Church book together with that of your godfather, who answers for you and becomes your guide in the city and the leader of your citizenship therein. This is done in order that you may know that you are, long before the time and while still on the earth, enrolled in heaven, and that your godfather who is in it is possessed of great diligence to teach you, who are a stranger and a newcomer to that great city, all the things that pertain to it and to its citizenship, so that you should be conversant with its life without any trouble and anxiety." (123)

So the sponsor was questioned by the registrar, and upon his testimony the candidate was enrolled for baptism. A significant clue to the development of the role of the sponsor came from the translator of Theodore's lectures in Syriac, which is presumed to have been done soon after his death. Rather than using an equivalent for ἀναδεχόμενος, the translators used the word  $\chi\lambda\lambda\eta\lambda\eta$  which, in answer to my enquiry, Dr. R. Murray S.J. pointed out meant a 'guarantor'. Although unpointed, he says that it must be the nomen agentis, and not the verbal noun, and that its root is the common semitic  $\lambda\lambda\eta\lambda$  which was borrowed in Greek as ἀρροβύς. He suggests if ἀναδεχόμενος had been the Greek equivalent, then the translators did not translate arrābâ but designated the person by another aspect of his functions<sup>124</sup>. Theodore's terms 'leader of your citizenship' also implied a continuing role in the candidate's development in the Christian life.

But in Theodore the sponsors' role was not limited to accompanying the candidate and thereby ensuring his attendance at the baptismal lectures, and to the enrolment. A further role was to accompany the candidate when the time came for him to recite the Creed

to the priest and to promise adherence to it:

"You are brought by duly appointed persons to the priest, as it is before him that you have to make your engagements and promises to God. These deal with the faith and the Creed, which by a solemn asseveration you declare that you will keep steadfastly, and that you will not, like Adam, the father of our race, reject the cause of all good things, but that you will remain to the end in the doctrine of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, while thinking of the same Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one Divine nature which is eternal and cause of everything, and to the discipleship of which you have been admitted by faith. It is in their names that you receive the happiness of this enrolment which consists in the participation in heavenly benefits." (125)

Following the prebaptismal anointing on the forehead of the candidate, the sponsor had a further role to perform:

"your godfather, who is standing behind you, spreads an orarium of linen on the crown of your head, raises you, and makes you stand erect. By your rising from your genuflexion you show that you have cast away your ancient fall, that you have no more communion with earth and earthly things, that your adoration and prayer to God have been accepted, that you have received the stamp which is the sign of your election to the ineffable military service, that you have been called to heaven, and that you ought henceforth to direct your course to its life and citizenship while spurning all earthly things." (126)

"The linen which he spreads on the crown of your head denotes the freedom to which you have been called. You were before standing bareheaded, as this is the habit of the exiles and the slaves, but after you have been signed he throws on your head linen, which is the emblem of the freedom to which you have been called. Freemen are in the habit of spreading linen on their heads, and it serves them as an adornment both in the house and in the market place." (127)

Thus the sponsor was linked by this action with the freedom the candidate had received through his own declaration of this renunciation of Satan and adherence to Christ. This forged an indelible link between the candidates and the sponsor for it was the sponsor who on behalf of the Church raised the candidate to his new freedom.

Thus in Theodore we find a developed role for the sponsor and at least some indication of a continuing and lasting relationship of pastoral concern between candidate and sponsor.

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71. Homily 16.38 (SeT.145.494; WS.6.119-120)
72. W.C.Van Unnik: *art. cit.* p.16-17
73. I Corinthians 13:12; II Corinthians 3:18
74. W.C.Van Unnik: *art. cit.* p.19
75. See also in this connection Acta Thomae 26; A.F.J.Klijn ed. The Acts of Thomas (Leiden 1962) p.76ff and commentary p.205 ff
76. Homily 13.20 (SeT.145.400; WS.6.47)
77. Homily 14.8 (SeT.145.418; WS.6.54)
78. Homily 14.14, 18-19 (SeT.145.430.440.442; WS.6.58.62.63)
79. Homily 14.8 (SeT.145.418; WS.6.54)
80. Homily 14.8 (SeT.145.416; WS.6.54)
81. Homily 14.8 (SeT.145.418; WS.6.54)
82. Homily 14.17 (SeT.145.438; WS.6.62)
83. Homily 12.6 (SeT.145.330.332; WS.6.20)
84. Homily 12.7 (SeT.145.332; WS.6.20)
85. Homily 12.6 (SeT.145.330; WS.6.20)
86. See further: R.Greer, Theodore of Mopsuestia: Exegete and Theologian (London 1961) pp.66-85; T.M.Finn: 'Baptismal Death and Resurrection: A study in Fourth Century Eastern Baptismal Terminology' Worship 43 (1969) p.184-185 concerning Theodore's Doctrine of the Two Ages which formed the basis of his sacramental theology.
87. Homily 14.5 (SeT.145.412; WS.6.52) quoting Romans 6:3
88. Homily 14.5 (SeT.145.412; WS.6.52)
89. Homily 14.11 (SeT.145.424; WS.6.56-57)
90. Homily 14.11 (SeT.145.424; WS.6.57) quoting Job 33:6 and 4:19
91. H.M.Riley: *op. cit.* p.286
92. Homily 14.6 (SeT.145.412.414; WS.6.52)
93. Homily 14.21-22 (SeT.145.446.448; WS.6.64-65) quoting Phil. 3:20-21
94. Homily 14.22 (SeT.145.448; WS.6.65)

95. Homily 14.25 (SeT.145.454; WS.6.67)
96. Homily 14.15-16 (SeT.145.434.436; WS.6.60)
97. Homily 14.21-22 (SeT.145.446.448; WS.6.64-65)
98. Homily 14.2 (SeT.145.404.406; WS.6.49-50)
99. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.327
100. Homily 14.3 (SeT.145.406; WS.6.50)
101. Homily 14.5-6 (SeT.145.412.414; WS.6.52)
102. Homily 14.3 (SeT.145.406.408; WS.6.50) quoting John 3:3,4,5
103. Homily 14.4 (SeT.145.410; WS.6.51)
104. Homily 14.7 (SeT.145.416; WS.6.53-54)
105. Homily 14.7 (SeT.145.416; WS.6.53)
106. H.M.Riley: op. cit. p.333
107. Homily 14.9-10 (SeT.145.420.422.424; WS.6.55-56) quoting John 3:4-5; I Corinthians 15:42-44
108. Jeremiah 18:1-6; Job 33:6 (LXX); Job 4:19 (LXX)
109. Homily 14.11 (SeT.145.424.426; WS.6.56-57)
110. Genesis 2:7
111. Homily 14.12-13 (SeT.145.428; WS.6.57-58)
112. Homily 14.14 (SeT.145.430; WS.6.58)
113. Homily 14.26 (SeT.145.454; WS.6.68)
114. Homily 14.27 (SeT.145.456; WS.6.68)
115. Homily 14.27 (SeT.145.456.458; WS.6.68-69) quoting Luke 8:18 and Acts 10:38
116. Homily 14.26 (SeT.145.454.456; WS.6.68)
117. See above p.104
118. Philippians 3:20
119. Homily 12.14 (SeT.145.342.344; WS.6.25)
120. Homily 12.15 (SeT.145.344; WS.6.25)
121. See Appendix B and above p.79
122. WS.6.xiii
123. Homily 12.15 (SeT.145.344; WS.6.25)
124. See Appendix B
125. Homily 12.26 (SeT.145.362.364; WS.6.33)
126. Homily 13.19 (SeT.145.398; WS.6.47)
127. Homily 13.19 (SeT.145.398; WS.6.47)

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A COMPARISON OF THE CATECHETICAL AND MYSTAGOGICAL EXPLANATION OF BAPTISM OF CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, JOHN CHRYSOSTOM AND THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA.

The material which we are comparing has in common the fact that all three are Lenten lectures given to those enrolled for Baptism in the fourth century, but one is almost tempted to say that there the similarity ends! The material differs because of the homiletic style of those giving the lectures, and because of the different needs of the situations in which they were teaching, as, for example, the community based Church in Mopsuestia had a different emphasis to the more cosmopolitan situation of Antioch, and the tourist/pilgrim centre of Jerusalem. Cyril of Jerusalem made ample use of the advantages of the natural visual aids arising from his situation, whilst John Chrysostom's oratorical style was inimitable. Chrysostom refrained from using the Creed as his syllabus whilst Theodore taught both the explanation of the Creed, an explanation of the ceremonies, and the Lord's Prayer before baptism

with no evidence of post-baptismal teaching, and Cyril taught the explanation of the Creed before baptism, but was prevented by the discipline of the arcana from revealing details of the mysteries or of the Lord's Prayer to the unbaptized, as was also the case in Milan<sup>1</sup>. Chrysostom made reference to leaving the instruction on faith to 'your teacher'<sup>2</sup>, and frequently referred to 'teachers' in the plural<sup>3</sup>, referring too to a thirty day period of instruction<sup>4</sup> which he likened to 'the practice and bodily exercises in some wrestling school'. Thus we gather that he was not alone in his task of giving instruction to candidates, but rather he was one of a team which included Bishop Flavian, other clergy and possibly even visiting Bishops as well<sup>5</sup>. In this different situation, in which all the burden of lecturing apparently did not fall upon Chrysostom, quite plainly his lectures would have had both a different purpose and character from those of Cyril and Theodore, even if we were to discount the differences in personalities. However, the temptation will be resisted and some attempt will be made to compare the three sets of material on the basis of what they said.

Cyril, Chrysostom and Theodore all spoke of the baptism of Jesus himself by John, and all taught that the Baptism of John which Jesus underwent was inferior to the Christian baptism which he instituted. Cyril pointed to the greatness of John, greater than all the prophets, greater even than Jeremiah, because John both was sanctified from his mother's womb, and prophesied from the womb to herald the news of the Saviour's impending birth<sup>6</sup>, concluding that the greatness of John was necessary because of the greatness of the baptism of which he was the author<sup>7</sup>. However, John's baptism remained inferior to Christian baptism because it affected only the remission of confessed sin<sup>8</sup>, whereas Christian baptism was sanctified and given dignity by the baptism of Jesus<sup>9</sup>. Cyril also made this point in the Mystagogical Catecheses. Chrysostom concurred that the

baptism of John was superior to that of the Jews, but was inferior to Christian baptism, serving as a link between 'the bath of the Jews' and 'the bath of grace', but he pointed out that it neither gave the Holy Spirit, nor did it provide forgiveness through grace. Although it enjoined penance following repentance, and could cleanse the uncleanness of the body, it could not forgive true sins, such as adultery or theft<sup>10</sup>, and it was abrogated by the baptism instituted by Christ<sup>11</sup>. Theodore, however, saw in Jesus' submission to the baptism of John in the Jordan his obedience to the command of the Father and his identification with sinful man, and he did not seem to reduce the significance of John's baptism by an unfavourable comparison with that of Jesus. Rather he was more concerned to stress the identification of Jesus with the candidate in baptism, and as a result was theologically anachronistic in applying to the baptism of repentance administered by John in the Jordan the effects of Christian baptism<sup>12</sup>.

Cyril's interpretation of the descent of the Holy Spirit at Baptism was that it demonstrated the dignity of the one who was baptised<sup>13</sup>. Chrysostom used this feature of Jesus' own baptism to point out that not only was the Holy Spirit bestowed upon the candidates in baptism, but that the baptism of Jesus was a baptism by each member of the Trinity<sup>14</sup> and he used this to explain the threefold baptism of the candidates<sup>15</sup> and also the apersonal formula, stressing that both John and the celebrant were but agents of the godhead. Theodore interpreted the Holy Spirit in this way, but added the concept of the Holy Spirit as the guarantee to the Christian of his hope in the future<sup>16</sup>. He developed this to identify not just the Spirit but also the Father and the Son equally as guarantors of the future eternal benefits for which the Christian's hope rested upon a sure and certain foundation.

Cyril however added a salvific motif to his description of Jesus' baptism as he described Jesus' baptism in terms of his conquest of the dragon in the waters<sup>17</sup>, citing Job's imagery of Behemoth, and of Leviathan<sup>18</sup>, but this he applied to Jesus' conquest of death, and sin, citing Luke 19:18-19, to allow him to use this passage in the context of Jesus' birth rather than in the more Pauline context of Jesus' death and resurrection. This seems to be an idea peculiar to Cyril, and it was not used by Chrysostom or Theodore. Cyril put the baptism of Jesus into its historical context, and pointed out that it preceded both His temptation and His ministry, and he reminded his audience that following baptism, they could expect temptation, which they would be enabled to overcome only by the power of the Holy Spirit<sup>19</sup>. Chrysostom also suggested to his audience that they received the Holy Spirit at baptism, describing the neophytes he was addressing as 'those who have just been judged worthy of the gift of the Spirit'<sup>20</sup>, and Chrysostom did not appear to make reference to a separate act of confirmation apart from baptism in his material.

An important <sup>re</sup>quisite of Baptism was sincerity of intention, and Cyril warned his candidates against hypocrisy, suggesting Simon Magus as an example of a baptismal candidate whose heart was not enlightened by the Spirit<sup>21</sup> and whose intentions were not sincere; and illustrating this point by using the incorrectly dressed Wedding Guest as an object lesson of one ill prepared to receive the grace of salvation that was freely offered in Christ<sup>22</sup>. He constantly put the onus on his candidates to ensure their own readiness to receive baptism, by equipping themselves with both piety of soul and with a good conscience<sup>23</sup>, and making thorough preparation through confession and daily exorcism. Chrysostom also stressed that in spite of the spiritual event of baptism, the will can still sometimes be opposed to God<sup>24</sup>, and although this came from a post-baptismal lecture, he also referred to the role of daily exorcism prior to baptism, and he

used the image of gold refined in the furnace to emphasize the need for a genuine desire and sincere intention both during the exorcisms and during baptism. Chrysostom also saw baptism in terms of a spiritual marriage, and he referred to the same passage as Cyril, but stressed the gracious benevolence of the host who made suitable clothing available to those who would accept his generosity<sup>25</sup>.

According to Cyril, there were two effects of baptism, the first being the remission of sins, which all who approached the sacrament received, and the second the communication of the Holy Spirit, positive graces, which he felt would vary according to the fervour of faith and intensity of love of God on the part of the recipient<sup>26</sup>.

He described his candidates as φωτίζομενοι, those about to be enlightened, and in this connection he made the most of the advantages which lecturing in Jerusalem gave him. The candidates' baptism would take place in the Church of the Resurrection, brilliantly illuminated during the Easter Vigil to symbolize the return of the risen light, and their own sacramental enlightenment<sup>27</sup>, but enlightenment came only to those who were baptized from right motives<sup>28</sup>. Baptism was to grant regeneration to the candidates, and he cited the parable of the sheep and the goats, and the account of the conversion of Cornelius, and with regeneration would come the enlightenment of the candidates. Chrysostom also referred to enlightenment as one of the effects of baptism, quoting Hebrews 10:32 and Hebrews 6:4-6 in support of his statement, and later citing the example of Paul who was 'baptized and illumined by the light of truth'<sup>29</sup>. Illumination and enlightenment were seen by Chrysostom as that which after baptism led the Christian towards a virtuous lifestyle, and as such these qualities were more closely analogous to the baptismal robe, and the evidence of the spiritual quality of the post-baptismal life of the candidate<sup>30</sup>.

The spiritual adoption of the candidates at baptism to their new role as sons of God was accomplished by the grace of God<sup>31</sup> and Chrysostom refined Cyril's viewpoint that this happened at the moment of baptism to suggest that this adoptive relationship was mediated through the imposition of the hands of the bishop as he pronounced the baptismal formula<sup>32</sup>. Cyril's rationale for the idea of spiritual adoption came from the voice of God acknowledging Christ at his baptism, but for the candidates Cyril pointed out, the voice from heaven proclaimed 'This has now become my Son'<sup>33</sup>, and he was careful to distinguish between the Sonship of Jesus, and the adoptive sonship of the candidates, accomplished by the free grace of God. This adoption was closely linked for Cyril with the concept of ἡ σφραγίς, which asserted the Lord's ownership of the candidate, and which he described as a mystical seal upon the soul, which not only served for purposes of recognition but also as a means of protection against the evil spirits<sup>34</sup>. The protective seal was received through the operation of the Holy Spirit and was analogous to a spiritual circumcision<sup>35</sup>. The relationship between baptism and circumcision was mentioned by Chrysostom in his list of the titles of baptism, citing Colossians 2:11 in support of his statement<sup>36</sup>, but we must look outside the lectures to his expository sermons for clarification of his ideas. He concurred that circumcision was performed upon the Christian by the Spirit<sup>37</sup> and he directly compared baptism and circumcision in his comparison between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant in Christ<sup>38</sup>. Cyril further stressed the need for inward sincerity when he pointed out that both the water of baptism and the operation of the Spirit were necessary to gain entrance to the kingdom of heaven. In the absence of either component, the rite was incomplete<sup>39</sup>, and Cyril stressed this by reversing his image and applying the seal to the water rather than to the Spirit.

Cyril also described baptism in terms of the means by which

the candidates died to sin and began a new life in Christ, free from past sins and justified by grace<sup>40</sup>, and were made heirs of eternal life in Christ<sup>41</sup>. He built up this picture by listing a number of titles to convey a composite picture of the spiritual effects of the baptismal rite, bringing the candidates ransom from captivity, the remission of their sins, and both the death and burial of the power of sin in their lives. This was matched by a new spiritual birth, following the Pauline pattern from Romans 6:2-5, and the regeneration of the soul of the candidate was marked by the shining baptismal garment which he donned. This began on his journey to eternal life - a heaven bound chariot - to sample the delights of paradise, with a passport to the kingdom demonstrating his new status as an adopted son of the Father<sup>42</sup>. Chrysostom also saw baptism in terms of a burial and a resurrection<sup>43</sup>, describing it as a bath of regeneration<sup>44</sup>, and as a Cross, a death, and a resurrection<sup>45</sup>, a theme which he developed in his exposition of Romans 6<sup>46</sup>. He also stressed the immediate nature of the baptismal death, burial, resurrection and rebirth of the candidate<sup>47</sup>, but this also presupposed a radical transformation in the baptizand's moral behaviour<sup>48</sup> in short, transforming him into one person instead of another, and making the baptized a new creature<sup>49</sup>. Chrysostom illustrated this by using the analogy of the smelting furnace, which not only cleansed the gold placed in it, but made it new too<sup>50</sup> but when he developed this analogy into that of the potter's vessel, he pointed out that the vessel was made of raw clay, not of fired terracotta, and so following inadvertent sin it could be restored to its pristine baptismal state by God through sincere repentance<sup>51</sup>. In this respect he is probably more realistic than Cyril, although his realism was probably inspired by his own sense of unworthiness and failure as his discourse was broken off by his own tears<sup>52</sup>; and although he was adamant that there was no second baptism, he suggested that confession to God, sincere repentance and tears, prayers and almsgiving could all help the

Christian to win pardon for subsequent sins, but it was still far better never to have sinned at all. His own list of the benefits and gifts of baptism contained ten gifts, viz., freedom, holiness, justice, sonship, heirs, brotherhood, joint heirs, members, temples and instruments of the Spirit. Five out of the ten gifts which he listed were based upon the new relationship into which the baptized entered through their baptism and as a result of their adoptive sonship and Chrysostom had a high sense of the fraternity which should exist among the followers of Christ, although he suggested that this relationship can be marred by later negligence and failure<sup>53</sup>. Earlier he had pictured the candidates as the bride making a marriage contract with Christ the Bridegroom<sup>54</sup>, and such a common relationship to Christ in itself would involve those who had made their *συνθήκη* with Christ in a relationship to each other, after He had transformed them into new creatures. Theodore interpreted this picture of baptism as burial and resurrection in terms of a symbol of the life to come and of an expression of the candidates' hope of the life which they hoped to share with Christ at the resurrection of the dead<sup>55</sup>. This was in keeping with his teaching that the Christian's life was lived in the hope of the resurrection which was only attained if the Christian lived in accordance with the commandments of Christ. So following baptism, the Christian's life was one of constant effort to live up to their hope of resurrection life with Christ, a stranger to the law, remote from sin, freed from the life of this world, and dead to the world<sup>56</sup>. Although there is an apparent contradiction here between the actual time of possession of the Christian's new life - at baptism, or at the resurrection - he interpreted the candidate's sealing with the Holy Spirit at baptism as the guarantee of their future inheritance given that they 'may possess these future good things in a firm faith without doubt'<sup>57</sup>.

Both Cyril and Chrysostom both described in terms

of the gracious gift of God, completely unmerited and unearned by man. Cyril combined the idea of sacramental grace, mediated through baptism, and prevenient grace which enabled man to come to God to receive remission of sins, and to receive the gift which God imparted to man<sup>58</sup>. The idea of sacramental grace in the Catechetical lectures is twofold, being conveyed by water and the Spirit, and these two components were inseparable for the sacrament to be valid<sup>59</sup>. Although grace was freely given and mediated in baptism, Cyril was quite adamant that it had to be cherished and revered once it had been received by the candidate, and used this to stress once again the candidates responsibility, for his life after baptism, with all his deeds, both good and bad, being recorded by God<sup>60</sup>. Chrysostom used similar terms to describe baptism as the symbol of the saving work of Christ, completely undeserved by man, but laying upon the candidate the obligation to live a life worthy of such a lavish gift of God. Similarly it had to be received worthily, and Chrysostom attacked those who postponed baptism to their death beds, to avoid post-baptismal sin, in scathing terms, pointing out that although the grace was the same, the circumstances of the gift being bestowed were utterly inappropriate<sup>61</sup>. The grace remained the same because baptism was the act of God himself, although administered by human hands<sup>62</sup>. Chrysostom also saw the grace of God as the means of making all Christians equal before God, and the spiritual gifts which the believers received were given entirely in accordance with God's gracious will alone<sup>63</sup>. In the light of the grace which God showed by his great goodness to Christians, the least they could do was to respond to that grace by seeking to live a life worthy of such grace, but he too stresses the danger of post-baptismal sin<sup>64</sup>, although of God's grace, the Christian was granted privacy of confession for his sins<sup>65</sup>. So the Christian throughout his life must consider the grace of God which he had received, and from which he had benefitted.

So we see that the three catechists delivered their own material, using their own imagery, and stressing their own particular emphases. For Cyril, lecturing in the pilgrim/tourist centre of Jerusalem, this was to stress the need for absolute sincerity before baptism, and this he emphasized by teaching the severe punishment which would be meted out in respect of any sin after baptism. Although Chrysostom also stressed the need for genuineness and sincerity, his emphasis was upon the gracious act of God in Christ, and in describing the new life with its new relationships which God had made possible in Christ. Theodore saw things on a broader canvas, and although his references to baptism in the credal material are scant, he saw baptism as the means by which God made the Christian part of His plan for His world, and the means by which the Christian was assured of his participation in a future life with Christ. Having seen such variations in that which we are regarding as Catechetical material, we are not surprised to find similar variations in their treatment of mystagogical themes.

The first area of mystagogical explanation which we shall consider is the treatment which Cyril, Theodore and Chrysostom gave to the rite of renunciation and profession. Although they worked within a different liturgical framework within their own situations, the basic meaning of this rite for the candidates is explained by each of them with a basic unity of mystagogical interpretation. Cyril had the gesture of turning which he explained in terms of *μετάνοια*, as the candidates turned from slavery in bondage to Satan to freedom in unity with Christ<sup>66</sup>. However, although Chrysostom and Theodore had liturgical frameworks which used the gesture of kneeling, rather than turning, they were able to demonstrate the same meaning in a different way. For them the bondage of man's natural state brought him to his knees in degradation, and reminded them of the fall of Adam, which had begun the various forms of man's degradation and

enslavement<sup>67</sup>. But they were able to apply a double meaning to the posture of kneeling, to show that it expressed the candidate's return to the adoration and acknowledgment of Christ as Lord of the Universe, and they contrasted the humiliation of man kneeling before a despotic master, with man's free kneeling in reverent answer to the possibility of the restoration of man's lost fulfilment by choosing to accept the freedom of the call of the Gospel. Chrysostom took this one step further to explain the kneeling posture of the candidates as an expression of the equality of all men before God. All knelt as an expression of their unity of sinfulness, and as an expression of their new unity of faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord<sup>68</sup>. Cyril develops his mystagogy to include the story of Lot's wife and the effects of her turning back to look at Sodom<sup>69</sup>. Theodore on the other hand turned to the New Testament and to the descriptions of the conversions of Saul and Cornelius where kneeling played a role in the activities prior to baptism, and he spelt out the meaning of the eventual rising from the knees as firstly the reversal of slavery, and of the fall which was its cause, as secondly the sign that the adoration of Christ as Lord is accepted, and thirdly that the candidates' prayers for deliverance are answered<sup>70</sup>. Similarly the hand gestures, although different liturgically, were interpreted by Cyril, as a natural sign of the baptizand's rejection of Satan<sup>71</sup> whilst Chrysostom saw the outstretched arms towards heaven as a sign of deliverance from evil, a sign of the baptizand's willingness to strive for good deeds, and an act of gratitude for the gift of faith<sup>72</sup>. Theodore on the other hand saw this same gesture as a reminder of the helplessness that the fall into slavery had brought and as a prayer for deliverance from this as well as a sign of adoration of God<sup>73</sup>.

Cyril's candidates turned from West to East, and in Cyril's mystagogy there was the factor that the renunciation and profession had taken place at a night vigil, so he could build upon the natural

symbolism of the East as the place of light, and the West as the place of darkness. Although those being baptized in Antioch and Mopsuestia did not apparently make this gesture, still their mystagogues used this element in their teaching. Cyril used the natural darkness of the midnight hour, developing the idea of the West as a sign of the darkness of Satanic works and of hell, and reminding his baptizands that the East was not only the realm of light, but also the place where the Garden of Eden was planted<sup>74</sup>. For Chrysostom, the darkness came from the darkness of the crucifixion, assisted by the temporal feature that the rite of renunciation and profession took place on Good Friday at three o'clock in the afternoon in Antioch. Thus the kneeling candidate found himself looking towards both the Messiah and Paradise. The imagery which he created was more biblically based, as in mystical symbolism, the glorious Messiah, appeared shining from the cross, the natural sun turning back his rays before the splendour of 'this Sun of Justice'. From the crucifixion he also drew the picture of Paradise, and on the basis of the acceptance of the penitent thief and his admission to Paradise, Chrysostom assured his candidates that the tokens of their adoration and commitment would also be accepted<sup>75</sup>. Theodore arrived at the same point by a different route, using neither the symbolism of turning nor the temporal advantages of Good Friday afternoon, but rather the conversion accounts in Acts of Cornelius and Saul. Cornelius's vision came at the ninth hour - the time of both the Temple sacrifice and of the Crucifixion. Saul on the Damascus road was caused to fall to his knees by a light brighter than the sun, and after his encounter with Jesus, his sight was restored as a symbol of his conversion<sup>76</sup>. So the mystagogues developed a mystagogy for the bodily actions of the candidates within the liturgy which underscored in both breadth and depth the act of renunciation and commitment and thus enabled the candidates to grasp the significance of the renunciation of Satan and profession of allegiance to Christ in the fullest possible way.

Although the bodily actions were important, and underscored the significance of the act, they could not replace the importance of the words themselves with which the candidate professed his personal allegiance to Christ. In explaining the significance of the formula, the fathers rested solidly on the fact of the indispensable importance of the spoken word of a human being in revealing his state of mind and heart and the semitic concept that the word, once spoken, had a life of its own. Thus through the spoken word the interior act of conversion was made visible and publicly declared. Thus it was the candidate who dramatically confronted Satan, and the candidate was encouraged to think of Satan as virtually present, literally breathing down his neck!<sup>77</sup> In his renunciation of Satan and his rejection of the service of Satan, the candidate was summing up in his rejection all that he had come to know about his own impediments to faith through exorcism and vowing finally to reject them. Cyril saw Satan as present to hear his own rejection<sup>78</sup>, whilst Theodore and Chrysostom raised the act to a personal plane by increasing the awareness of the candidate to the strength of the network of evil which ensnared and enslaved him, but at the same time stressing the personal terror which the candidates felt at renouncing such a cruel tyrant<sup>79</sup>. All three mystagogues used the imagery of the legal contract, and pictured the verbal act of renunciation as applying to a previous contract which Scripture described man as having made with Satan as enslaving tyrant, with death, and with hell. This was dissolved at the point of renunciation and a new contract established in union with Christ. This idea, although present in all three fathers, was probably most highly developed by Chrysostom<sup>80</sup>, who also stressed the binding nature of the new covenant made with Christ. This contract was recorded in a heavenly book by God himself - a testimony to its binding and eternal nature<sup>81</sup>. Chrysostom based his mystagogical teaching on Pauline teaching. The price of invalidating the old contract was paid by Christ with His blood on the cross, but although the candidate found the price already

paid, his acceptance of the contract was voluntary, and was a non-compulsory gift, with an emphasis upon the freedom from coercion on the part of Christ who had already paid the cost of the contract in full. Chrysostom moved from here to a bridal metaphor, emphasizing the personal relationship of love involved in the verbal assent to the contract. For for him, the profession became not merely a verbal assent, but the personal response of love made by the bride to the Bridegroom's gift of Himself<sup>82</sup>. Thus the act of commitment to Christ became the dowry which the bride happily brought to the Bridegroom. As the candidates made their act of renunciation and profession, their fear and awe in confronting Satan was overcome by the fact that they were united with the struggle and the victory of Christ in liberating them from Satan. Cyril and Theodore both encouraged their candidates by emphasizing the bond which existed between Christ and the candidate at this vital moment<sup>83</sup>. Chrysostom extended his mystagogy to embrace the idea of the candidate's struggle in terms of a metaphor of the struggle at the Olympic games, where Christ as the Olympic Judge decided for the candidate, and by referring the struggle of the candidate to the struggle of Christ on the cross, using once again the temporal analogy from the time of celebration of his liturgical rite<sup>84</sup>.

Theodore and Chrysostom described in detail the interpretation of the act of anointing which followed this rite. Probably this is a further indication that for Theodore as well as for Chrysostom the rite of renunciation and profession came as a separate rite possibly one or two days before the rite of Baptism, because Cyril, whose service was a corporate one, does not mention this anointing from his situation, nor would it have been necessary when the rite of Baptism followed in a matter of minutes. Chrysostom and Theodore based their mystagogy on two elements in this ceremony. The first is the signing of the candidate's forehead with the sign of the cross, and the second in the use of oil to trace that sign onto the candidate's forehead. Both

found that this ceremony formed an apt conclusion to the rite of renunciation and profession, and a symbolic expression of what had taken place. The sealing symbolized belonging and commitment, expressing the candidate's new found relationship with Christ. Chrysostom chose II Corinthians 1:21 to emphasize that the anointing, was performed by Christ Himself albeit at the hands of the priest, and through the anointing, Christ took possession of the candidate<sup>85</sup>. Theodore also interpreted the ceremony in terms of the candidate belonging to Christ, but used Ephesians 2:19 to link the seal of the cross with the name plate of ownership in a household, once again using a favourite image of heaven as a great city, the household of God<sup>86</sup>.

The seal was also a mark of protection and appointment, and Chrysostom's image here was drawn from the combat arena, as the olive oil reminded him of the olive oil used to rub down the athletes before the combat. Because the  $\sigma\phi\epsilon\alpha\gamma\iota\varsigma$  was made in the sign of the cross, it contained the power of the cross, and thus it protected the candidate from the attack of Satan. The glistening quality of the oil used in tracing the sign of the cross on the forehead, helped Chrysostom see the cross as the power of a brilliant lightning flash which blinded the eyes of the devil<sup>87</sup>. On the other hand, Theodore's mystagogy concentrated on the sign of the cross as a sign of Christ's suffering death and victory, using II Timothy 2:11-13 to interpret the cross with which the forehead was signed in terms of the call to follow Christ through suffering to glory<sup>88</sup>. His mystagogy however rested on the central concept of freedom, which would be complete in the heavenly city, but which through the sacrament was actually present in some way at the moment of anointing and Theodore sought to explain just what this freedom meant. He did this by featuring the various aspects of the liturgy - the bishop's robe signifying the freedom and joy of heaven, the orarium bestowed by the godparent to confer the status of

a free man, and finally through the signation with the cross, he assured the candidate of his status, and that he might freely and with confidence (παρρησία) approach God face to face, in just the same way as the Son of God gazed eternally at His Father. In some senses, Theodore seemed to forget that he was talking to candidates who had not at this point been baptized, and yet he was speaking to them<sup>as</sup> though they had received all the prerogatives of baptism. Dr. Riley explains this in terms of the Eastern mode of thought, which saw the process of initiation 'not as a linear series of points on a straight line, but rather as a circle or ellipse, as a totality, the center of which can 'unlogically' influence the other parts, even in an anticipatory way'<sup>89</sup>.

By comparing the Christological approach of Chrysostom and Theodore to this anointing, we discover that they do exhibit a common element in teaching the candidate about his participation in the life of Christ. For Theodore, the interior gift of confidence which the candidate demonstrated before God by virtue of his signation came directly from the candidate's participation in the παρρησία which the man Jesus possessed in His unity with the Godhead, and in which, as the first fruits of the sacrament, the candidate participated<sup>90</sup>. Chrysostom also spoke of participation in the life of Christ, but he expressed this in terms of the image of the cross, stamped by God himself on the candidates forehead, and he linked this idea with the culminating expression of παρρησία, uttered by Jesus on Good Friday, giving man access to the Holy God: 'Father into thy hands I commend my Spirit'<sup>91</sup>. In both cases, the candidates were being taught that they were participating in the life of Christ. Theodore used this concept to speak of the citizenship of heaven, and the confidence and freedom which belonging to that city implied. For Chrysostom, the candidate was appointed through his anointing to join in the struggle of Jesus, and thus coming to the ultimate victory under the

protection of the sign of the cross of Christ. As we move towards the baptismal rite as such, we find that the fathers chose very similar points to emphasise, and although diverse in approach, there seems to have been a basic unity about their teaching. The previous rite of renunciation and profession was linked firmly to this new phase in the rite of initiation. Cyril mentioned the movement of the candidates from the outer chamber to the inner chamber<sup>92</sup>, whilst Chrysostom emphasized this transition by his stress on the time difference<sup>93</sup>, and Theodore described the baptismal rite as 'the remaining part of the sacrament'<sup>94</sup>. Their explanation began with two ceremonies which preceded the baptismal act, viz., the removal of the candidates' garments, and the anointing of the whole body with oil.

Cyril and Chrysostom taught that the removal of clothing before baptism was on the basis of the Pauline metaphor of laying aside the deeds of the old man as one might lay aside old clothing. They added to this the Gospel allegory of the wedding feast, and used both as an exhortation to increased moral effort, so as not to come improperly clad to the feast. Cyril used this image in the Procatechesis, and commented that although a candidate with soiled clothes could get into the catechetical assembly by following the crowd, he had to face the embarrassment of ultimate exposure, but even at that point there was still opportunity for the candidate to mend his ways<sup>95</sup>. Chrysostom applied the allegory in the same way, as an instruction to those who were going to be baptized, and he stressed the imagery of coming to baptism - the wedding feast - to highlight the candidates' need for serious moral purpose<sup>96</sup>. Similarly the imagery of the bridal call with a special emphasis on the clothing of the bride was used by both Cyril and Chrysostom. For both, soiled clothing represented an unworthy condition for appearing for the marriage, but whilst for Cyril the garments had to be washed, representing conversion from evil deeds, for Chrysostom, the bridegroom himself

would take care of this, and would not make this cause for rejecting the bride. Chrysostom went further than Cyril in dealing with the deeds of the old man, and thus for him the implications of clothing were expressed in terms of the reality of Christian conduct. Sins were part of the burden of the old life which had to be laid aside, just as old clothing was discarded, and Chrysostom developed this to include the implications of the clothing which the candidates wore, to include economic considerations, as jewelled clothing could imply that the poor had been exploited to make it available, social considerations, and the envy and jealousy which could be caused by oversumptuous dress, and moral considerations, particularly concerning the dress and make up of women<sup>98</sup>. In this area, Chrysostom was meeting some of the pastoral realities in the environment of the candidates, and possibly this implies that he had a closer pastoral relationship with the candidates than was possible for Cyril. The candidates were naked following the removal of their clothing, and this nakedness Cyril and Theodore explained with a similar underlying theme, although with different mystagogies. Cyril's explanation was based on the vivid image of the crucifixion which he described, noting the fact that Christ was stripped on the cross, and thus overcame the power of corruption, a feature emphasized by his use of the Pauline interpretation of the triumph represented by the cross<sup>99</sup>. Theodore chose rather to reflect on the mortality of Adam, represented by the clothing, the sign of his fall, which he wore to cover his shame. The clothes which the candidates removed were symbols of the aprons God made Adam and Eve, and as such were a symbol of sin and ultimate death. By removing these garments the candidates demonstrated their call to immortality, and the reversal of the fall of Adam and all its consequences<sup>100</sup>. Whilst Theodore saw this in terms of Adam, Cyril took this imagery from the new Adam, and it was through Christ that the reversal of the fall had taken place, and so the garments removed represented the history of sin and the power of sin, and consequently the mortality of man. All three

fathers pointed to the picture from Genesis of Adam and Eve, naked and yet unashamed, to explain that it was as a result of the candidates' own restoration to the state of primeval innocence that they also had not been ashamed in their moment of nakedness. Cyril and Chrysostom depicted the baptismal pool as a symbol of paradise, and Theodore's point was the same although he did not use the term Paradise to describe the Baptismal pool<sup>101</sup>.

The body anointing which preceded baptism was described in three fundamental ways; in terms of exorcism and healing, in terms of fortifying and protecting, and in terms of union with Christ, and once again a unity of interpretation emerges. Both Cyril and Theodore used the natural symbolism of oil as a healing agent. Cyril explained the image by considering the oil itself, the prayers used in its blessing, and its relationship to the exorcism programme which ran throughout the proximate period of baptismal preparation and this caused his mystagogy to develop from the natural symbolism, with which it began, to the symbolism of sin as corruption, which left its traces in the souls of the candidates and had to be healed by this medicinal oil<sup>102</sup>. From this same natural symbolism of oil as a healing agent, Theodore reverted to his former image of clothing as a sign of corruption, and showed how the oil penetrated and covered the body, removing sin and its effects. Thus the oil was seen to replace the clothing, the healing power of immortality set over against the decaying power of corruption and mortality<sup>103</sup>. The idea of oil fortifying and protecting the candidate comes most strongly from Chrysostom. In a sense his idea was related to that of Theodore which we have just considered, and he used the additional pictures of the athlete, oiled to enhance the suppleness and agility of their muscles and of the soldier, clad from head to toe in protective armour<sup>104</sup>. Dr. Riley summarizes the interpretation of these effects of pre-baptismal anointing thus:

"by removing the traces of sin or 'ethical sickness' by use of this medicinal oil, the candidates' weakness of 'mortality' and 'corruptibility' was removed and in its place comes an invulnerability or 'cloak of immortality' which protects and strengthens him as a soldier or an athlete is strengthened or protected." (105)

The fathers then related these effects to the power of Christ, and the union of the candidates with Christ. Cyril took the Pauline image of the cultivated olive tree and the wild olive tree from Romans 11:17ff and for his candidates the oil became a direct christological symbol, a sign of richness of the life of Christ shared by the candidate as he was anointed<sup>106</sup>. Chrysostom used II Corinthians 1:21 to depict for his candidates Christ anointing them, so that Christ made the candidate an athlete and a soldier of Christ<sup>107</sup>. Theodore described the anointing in terms of the action of the Holy Spirit who in the sign communicated to the candidates the gift of heavenly immortality now<sup>108</sup>. Once again he interpreted this action in line with his eschatological views.

When teaching their candidates about the nature of the baptismal act per se, once again we find the same fundamental unity of view, although variously expressed, concerning baptism as a participation in the cross, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As a basic framework this was seen by the mystagogues to signify the actions of the candidates in entering the pool, in being immersed in the water, and in leaving the pool. From this framework, they used their particular liturgical framework to teach how this revealed the candidates' new status as associates of Christ in his death and resurrection. Each mystagogue quoted from the Pauline passage in Romans 6:3ff, but Cyril possessed the especial and unique advantage of being at the very scene of the events of Christ's death and resurrection, and so he was able to present to his candidates the stark comparison between the body of Christ being brought from the cross and buried in the tomb and the movement of the candidate to the pool<sup>109</sup>. He developed this advantage of location to press home his  $\mu\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\gamma\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$  theology, and his own unique interpretation of the candidates' triple immersion/emersion as a

sign of the three days which Christ spent in the tomb<sup>110</sup>. Chrysostom portrayed entry to the pool as burial with Christ, and he linked the candidates with salvation history as he suggested that the baptistry was reminiscent of the garden of Eden, stressing that following his death to sin and burial with Christ, the Christian must live a life of detachment from sin<sup>111</sup>. Theodore on the other hand recreated the salvation history of sin and death also by alluding to water and earth as the elements of creation, so the pool was not only the tomb but also a furnace for refashioning the marred and corrupted vessel, and a potter's tank into which the clay pot was cast by the Maker to be refashioned and remade<sup>112</sup>.

Cyril and Chrysostom also sought to show that baptism also forgave sins, because it was related to the crucifixion of Christ, which contained the power to forgive the sins of men, although Cyril found it impossible to explain this mystagogically, and had to use the theological image of the Vine 'planted in Jerusalem' to explain to his candidates their participation in the sufferings and crucifixion of Christ<sup>113</sup>. Chrysostom also occupied himself with the question of how baptism was the cross and found the basis for his answer in the word of Jesus to the mother of James and John that the baptism of Jesus' followers is an association in His cross<sup>114</sup>. He linked the baptismal bath with the crucifixion by reminding his audience of neophytes that blood and water had poured forth from the side of Christ<sup>115</sup>, and applying this to his audiences through the Pauline statement in Romans 6:5.

Coming out of the pool was seen by the fathers as a sign of the resurrection and, although Cyril did not develop this point in the Mystagogical Catecheses, he made it strongly in the Catechetical Lectures as we have seen above. Chrysostom links his explanation of the resurrection with the mystagogy which he applied to death placing

it under his pastoral emphasis of death to sin and detachment from it. The baptized, he taught, emerged from the pool possessing the new, resurrected, but hidden life of Christ which would show itself in his Christian conduct before the world<sup>116</sup>. Theodore developed this idea of emergence from the pool as a sign of resurrection more fully than his contemporaries, as we might expect from his basic concept that the sacrament was a participation in the future reality rather than an imitation of the past historical events of salvation. He took the second part of Romans 6:5 to emphasize the baptized's conformity to the risen Christ in the eschaton, and because of this emphasis on future resurrection Theodore chose texts referring to the glorious body of Christ to which the baptized will ultimately be conformed<sup>117</sup>, and he continued this development in his explanation of baptism as new birth.

For all the fathers, their image of baptism as a new birth was rooted deeply in the New Testament, but their task was to apply this image to their baptismal liturgy to show how that liturgy itself could suggest that in some way the candidate is reborn in baptism, and this was an image which derived from the notion of the resurrection. Chrysostom concentrated on the scriptural description of baptism as the 'bath of rebirth', but rather than explaining it, his teaching was more in the nature of a pastoral meditation, and verged upon the mystical. His mystical approach was particularly evident through its application of the bridal metaphor, seeing the baptismal bath as the bridal bath, and describing regeneration in terms of the power of love of the Bridegroom for His bride<sup>118</sup>. This mystagogy was presented in terms of the blood and water flowing from the open side of Christ into the baptismal pool, endowing the bath its power of cleansing and regeneration, and he pictured the baptized begotten from the side of Christ 'asleep' on the cross, just as Eve was begotten from the side of the sleeping Adam, but this elaboration was only used by Chrysostom. Theodore seized upon the imagery of new birth as being the most apt to get

across his theological <sup>e</sup>preoccupation with the future. He combined scripture references about the future resurrection with a detailed illustration embracing the whole process of conception and birth in order to demonstrate how baptism was a new birth, a symbol of the real new birth that would take place for the Christian in the eschatological resurrection of the body. He interpreted the Jesus/Nicodemus dialogue in John 3 in terms of two new births, of which he explained baptism as the type and the future resurrection as the antitype<sup>119</sup>.

Thus the image of the baptismal pool as womb emerged, and Cyril graphically stated the paradox of the pool being womb and tomb at the same time, describing the candidates' death to their old selves in the pool and rebirth from it to newness of life in Christ<sup>120</sup>. Chrysostom extended this imagery to remind the neophytes that they were brought forth without the customary pains or time of birth labour<sup>121</sup>. He proceeded to explain the supernatural character of the rebirth of the candidates by using the allusion of the Virgin Birth<sup>122</sup>; while for Theodore it was the invocation of the Holy Spirit upon the waters of the baptismal font that transformed it into the womb of rebirth<sup>123</sup>. He then went on to explain why in the Jesus-Nicodemus dialogue, Jesus called baptism a second birth, basing his explanation on the distinction between the child in the womb, in one sense, born there in his conception, and the actual coming out of the womb and being born, when the child began to be able to use his faculties and sense. On this basis he explained that at the second birth of baptism, just like the child in the womb, the candidate had all the potential faculties but could not use them, but that the second birth of the resurrection in the future eschaton was like the emergence of the child from the womb. The other image within this framework of baptism as rebirth which was used by Chrysostom and Theodore was that of the potter remaking the imperfect clay vessel. Theodore, as by now we would expect, suggested that the object would reach its final restoration

only in the eschaton<sup>124</sup>. Chrysostom demonstrated the pastoral concern which we have come to expect from him, and drew the distinction between the terracotta vessel which once shattered can never be restored, and a clay vessel which could be remade<sup>125</sup>, and Dr. Riley pointed out that he alone of the fathers added 'the realistic pastoral note that God's forgiveness which brings about the regeneration in baptism can extend to post-baptismal falls as well',<sup>126</sup>.

The post-baptismal rites of anointing, and the bestowal of the Baptismal Garment similarly exhibit a unity of basic theme although with a diversity of interpretation. In presenting the anointing Cyril explained this in terms of the picture of Christ in the Jordan, anointed by the Holy Spirit following his baptism, as he had done in his catechetical material, and developed this in terms of *μύμησις* theology to present the interpretation of the anointing of the different senses under the aspect of the Christian's conformity to Christ and to his mission in the world, and he chose appropriate Scripture texts to reinforce this concept<sup>127</sup>. Theodore, on the other hand, with his eschatological perspective, placed the emphasis upon the anointing as a sign of the coming resurrection, with the presence of the Spirit given as the 'first fruit' for the purpose of protecting the Christian on his way to incorruptibility, but he did not develop the explanation of the detailed anointing of the senses in terms of mission<sup>128</sup>. Cyril coupled his teaching with a play on the words 'Christ', 'Christian' and 'chrism' which enabled him to present the communication of the Spirit as a closer association with Christ Himself in this way, demonstrating how the Holy Spirit was the Spirit of Christ. As a result of his anointing the candidate became another *Χριστός*, and Cyril's particular *μύμησις* mystagogy showed his candidates just how this took place<sup>129</sup>. Based upon this anointing, Cyril developed his *μύρον* theology, and he warned his candidates against regarding the oil as simple ointment<sup>130</sup>, because after the epiclesis it became the

gracious gift of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and thus linked the Christian with Christ. He concluded his third mystagogical lecture by using the Isaianic picture of the banquet with its anointing of the guests and emphasizing the eschatological dimension to the rite of anointing, depicting the Spirit as the eschatological gift already anticipated in the foregoing liturgy in which Christ and the Christian were united in the Messianic work which led the world to his goal<sup>131</sup>. Although Theodore did not use this image, he returned to his favourite eschatological theme and to teach that the first fruits of the Spirit would flower in incorruptibility and immortality, impassibility and immutability<sup>132</sup>.

The other aspect of the post-baptismal rites was the baptismal robe, of which the most important mystagogical aspect was the symbolism of union with the Risen Christ. As a practicality, some clothing was necessary at this point in the baptismal liturgy, but it also formed a counterpart to the act of removing the garments before entering the pool, and so it became a ritual garment. Cyril and Chrysostom both used the ready made imagery of Galatians 3:27, teaching that putting on the garment was like putting on Christ. Cyril was content to spell this out literally by stating that this means conformity to the risen body of Christ, using Philippians 3:21<sup>133</sup>. Chrysostom on the other hand, referred to the robe in each of his lectures to neophytes and built a composite picture featuring the newness of the robe, the radiance of the robe, and its resemblance to a bridal garment to spell out for his audience what conformity to the risen body of Christ meant for them<sup>134</sup>. So the robe became for Chrysostom a central symbol to call to mind all the aspects of baptism. He saw in the radiance of the robe the manifestation in the individual of the indwelling of the Trinity<sup>135</sup>. Theodore seemed to assume the robe was a symbol of union with Christ without actually spelling it out, but he did describe its radiance as a sign of the coming joy of the

resurrection at the eschaton<sup>136</sup>. The garment was also seen as a symbol of the forgiveness of sins, and this picture was drawn by Cyril with the assistance of the candidate's recollection of the liturgical procession into the Church for the Eucharist<sup>137</sup>. Chrysostom noted that the radiance of the white garment indicated that inner transformation of forgiveness which had taken place in the neophytes. He also added two further images of the robe as the symbol of forgiveness, as a royal robe given to the former beggar, and as a bridal robe thrown over the shame of nakedness<sup>138</sup>. Thirdly the clean, white robe was described as a symbol of purity of life, and Chrysostom developed this symbolism most thoroughly to stress the need for the neophytes to make an effort to keep their robe spotless, to increase its lustre, and by it to attract others to Christ. Ultimately it became the eschatological banquet robe<sup>139</sup>. Cyril's mystagogy was basically similar, although only in précis form<sup>140</sup>. Theodore saw in the works represented by the wearing of the robe the reflection of the joy of eschatological fulfilment already present in Christian action<sup>141</sup>.

The comparative baptismal praxis of the Fathers, particularly relating to sponsorship is to be found in my printed communication in Appendix B, and will not be duplicated here<sup>142</sup>.

So we see the theme for our study was fixed in the classic fourth century period by the fathers, Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Although there was a unity of theme, even in the fourth century there were variations of approach to the preparation of the Christian adult for the rite of baptism. Cyril gave a particular emphasis to the relationship between the liturgical actions of baptism and the actual events of the life of Christ, especially the salvific events of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, building upon his particular advantage of being at the very place where the death and resurrection of Jesus took place.

Chrysostom applied his teaching pastorally to the everyday lives of his candidates in a secular city, amidst the horseracing and spectacles, constantly challenging them to live out the new life which they had applied to themselves by faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Theodore directed his interpretation towards the future, and explained those same events described in the liturgical actions, the life, death and resurrection of Christ, with reference to the Christian's sure and certain hope through those actions in the resurrection with Christ at the last days, a resurrection and rebirth already begun in symbol.

So from the standpoints of the past, present, and future applications of this teaching in the fourth century, we pass on to examine this same theme from the viewpoint of the variations current in selected Church situations in the last twenty years, from 1960 to 1980.

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137. Cyril: Cat. Myst 4.8
138. Chrysostom: Stav. 7.24; 2.25; P-K 3.6-7
139. Stav. 5.18; 8.25; 5.24-26; 6.24-25
140. Cyril: Cat. Myst 4.8
141. Theodore: Homily 14.26
142. See Appendix B

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE ORTHODOX CHURCH - DIRECT HEIRS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

It seemed necessary to consider the practice of the Orthodox Church in the twentieth century to provide a bridge between the two areas of study, and in this respect I have been advised by Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia that the present day material given to candidates would be contained in Dr. Alexander Schmemmann's 'Of Water and the Spirit',<sup>1</sup> and the service followed would be that of the translation of the Service Book of the Holy Orthodox Catholic Apostolic Church by Miss I.F. Hapgood<sup>2</sup>. I am also most grateful to Bishop Kallistos for reading my original draft manuscript, and commenting upon it so thoroughly, thus providing me with valuable material for the final draft.

Dr. Schmemmann's book is basically mystagogical, and is evidence of the fact that catechesis and mystagogy seem to have merged since the falling into disuse of the disciplina arcani in the fifth century and he follows in the footsteps and tradition of Cyril, Theodore, and John Chrysostom in his attempts to explain the meaning

and symbolism of baptism within the Orthodox Church. In a sense Dr.Schmemmann has a more difficult task than his forebears as he is attempting to explain a liturgy designed for adults to a church which sees infant baptism as the norm - hence his final section.

Miss Isabel F.Hapgood makes a special note of this point in her translation of the Service Book:

"It will be observed that this rite remains in its ancient form; that is to say, as arranged for adults - the Catechumens being all adults in the early Church." (3)

Dr.Schmemmann points out:

"For centuries now the Church has been practising almost exclusively infant baptism. It is all the more significant, then, that liturgically the sacrament has nevertheless preserved the form and the structure it had when the majority of those baptised were adults." (4)

However we will examine those elements of the work which appear to give a catechetical explanation of baptism first.

#### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

This is primarily contained in two consecutive sections<sup>5</sup> entitled 'Form' and 'Essence' and 'In the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection'. As he attempts to explain to his catechumens the place of Baptism in the life of the Church. Dr.Schmemmann has to define his own understanding of Baptism because of the effect of centuries of theology which have separated the 'form' of what is done in baptism and the 'essence' of what the Church believes to happen. He feels that a reaffirmation of the Early Church's understanding of Baptism is vital if Baptism is not to be for so many an 'incomprehensible means' of an equally 'incomprehensible grace'. He is alarmed at the inability of much post-patristic theology to explain the relationship between Baptism and the Death and Resurrection of Christ, and he suggests that this is because of the breach of the organic connection between Baptism and the Pascha. Although he does not want to enter the immersion/sprinkling debate, the common practice of sprinkling candidates detracts from the connection between water

and the tomb, and thus, in my view, is a further point of division between the form of the sacrament and its essence.

Dr. Schmemmann points out that Baptism was always accepted as the self-evident beginning of the Christian life, but that from rather early in the Church's history theologians experienced difficulty in holding together the various aspects of the effects of the baptismal rite, and experienced the utter inadequacy of human words to express the totality of the baptismal mystery. So there appeared a certain distinction between Baptism per se, the liturgy and symbols of the form of the Baptismal rite, and the various theological explanations and definitions of Baptism. This became particularly pronounced when theology began to be understood as a rational explanation and interpretation of the faith of the Church. Lipservice is still paid to the baptismal 'symbolism' of death and resurrection, but the real emphasis is put on the way in which baptism cleansed the candidate from original sin and bestowed grace upon him and he cites the fact that in virtually every manual of systematic theology the two essential references in explaining Baptism refer to original sin and grace<sup>6</sup>. Baptism is a means of grace, removing from man and liberating him from original sin and bestowing upon him the grace necessary for his Christian life. Still it is absolutely essential for salvation, but it is no longer presented as being truly death and resurrection.

So he poses the question:

"What does Tradition mean when it affirms baptism to be in the LIKENESS and AFTER THE PATTERN of Christ's Death and Resurrection and why in modern theology does this affirmation seem to have lost its focal position?" (7)

This in turn presented the broader question of the relationship in the sacrament between form and essence - what is done and what the Church believes to happen. He suggests that it is in their answer to these questions that the post-patristic theology which permeates orthodox manuals and catechisms moved away from the experience of the early

Church which played such a large part in the formulation of that early sacramental vision. Thus the post-patristic theologians in emphasizing questions of sacramental validity have a deeply and radically altered both the understanding of the sacraments and their place in the life of both Christian and Church. Once again Dr. Schmemmann is guilty of a generalization in oversimplifying the case in the cause of writing for a popular audience. Bishop Kallistos points out that he overlooks the emphasis of Eustratios Argenti in 'Ἐνυχσιπίδιον περὶ βαπτίσματος, who stresses the integral connection between baptism and the death and resurrection of Christ. However this emphasis derives from a work written to challenge the validity of the baptism practised in Western Churches<sup>8</sup>.

The approach of the Early Church was basically to ignore the question of the dichotomy between form and essence. In the early Church the terms 'likeness' and 'pattern' most obviously refer to the form of baptism. Yet it was this form of Baptism which manifests and fulfills the essence, and so the terms 'likeness' both describes the form of Baptism and reveals and communicates its essence.

"Baptism being performed 'in the likeness' and 'after the pattern' of death and resurrection therefore is death and resurrection." (9)

It was this clarity of vision concerning Baptism which allowed the early Church to put to one side the 'why', the 'what', and the 'how' of Baptism, and to start instead with the knowledge that to follow Christ one must begin by dying and rising again in Him and with Him<sup>10</sup>. Because Baptism is an event, the distinction between form and essence is 'an irrelevant abstraction'. For the early Church the experience of the Baptismal event, of death and resurrection, in Christ was so self evident, so direct, that initially she did not explain it but saw it as the source and the condition of all explanations, and of all theologies.

However, the time came, although Dr. Schmemmann, prone to generalize because of the nature of his potential readers, does not specify when this was, when the Church decided that the essence of the sacrament could be known and defined apart from its form, and it then insisted that the essence of the sacrament must be known apart from its form as a preliminary condition for understanding the sacraments. This began the progress to an entirely different view of Baptism. The form was preserved but not for the same reason as in the Early Church. In the early tradition, the importance of the form had been due to its epiphanic nature, as it revealed, fulfilled, and was the essence, and was seen as the means by which the essence was known and explained. In the new approach, however, the form was no longer an epiphany, but merely an external sign. Thus it became the guarantee that a particular essence had been duly bestowed and communicated by the Church to the candidate. The essence itself must be capable of independent definition, prior to its communication, so that all they may know what is being signified and guaranteed by means of the form. So the form is that which makes a sacrament valid, but no longer is it the revelation of that which is made valid in the sacrament.

Dr. Schmemmann comments that the controversies raging concerning the form of baptism are centred almost exclusively on the issue of validity, rather than upon the issue of meaning or essence<sup>11</sup>. However, the tragedy is that by applying the dichotomy between form and essence, the notion of the essence of the sacraments has been altered and impoverished. Whilst there is nothing new in defining essence as 'grace', indeed it is scriptural to do so, in reality the term grace acquired new connotations and a kind of 'self-sufficiency' it did not have before precisely because of its identification with what the Church believes to happen rather than with what is done. In the early Church grace meant above all the victory of Christ himself, and the way in which man was allowed to share in that victory, applying it to

himself through Baptism. So the grace of Baptism in the early Church was the event of man dying and rising again following the pattern set by Christ's death and resurrection. It opened up to the candidate the unique and totally new possibility of walking in newness of life with Christ.

"All this was grace: the 'likeness' revealed and experienced as 'reality', the baptismal death manifesting again the destruction of death by Christ, the baptismal resurrection 'making sure' again Christ's resurrection, becoming the very gift of the new life which shone forth from the grave. All this was grace!" (12)

Dr.Schmemmann concludes that grace for the early Church was so bound up with their experience of Christ, that they saw no need to define it in itself. Possibly this points the way to the reason for the difficulty which modern scholars have discovered in their search for definitions of grace in the earliest period of the Christian era<sup>13</sup>.

However, gradually the understanding of grace began to change, and it became what Dr.Schmemmann describes as an 'essence in itself'. It was divorced from its form, and was given and received through all kinds of means of grace and yet remained distinct from each of them. The Church in the West defined grace as a created substance, distinct from God and the world, and whilst the Eastern Church denounced 'created grace' as a Western heresy, Dr.Schmemmann points out that it adopted a very similar approach in its own theology and Dr.Ware points out that St.Gregory Palamas (c1296-1359) even used the phrase 'created grace'. So an abstract 'grace' replaced the concrete 'event' as the focus of the theological explanations of the sacrament, and the function of the 'form' of the sacrament was to assure its validity. For this approach, there is no interest in either death or resurrection, and the real purpose of Baptism is regarded as the endowment of grace upon the baptizand. And whilst this grace may be the fruit of Christ's death and resurrection, it is no longer an event which must be termed essentially death and resurrection in both its form and its essence.

Dr. Schmemmann concludes that the sacraments have been transformed by this thinking into mere obligations, which have often lost their meaning even for the faithful. Very few experience them as the joyful source of their lives as Christians, but rather for so many they have become an 'incomprehensible means' of an equally 'incomprehensible grace'. In the twentieth century, both faith and piety have ceased to experience them as genuine and true events of that 'newness of life' which is grace.

He appeals for a deeper understanding of what truly happens in Baptism, and asks why it happens, and how baptism makes a Christian. The Early Church knew, and they knew it even before they could express it or explain it. The Early Church realised as part of the baptismal mystery that in Baptism we must truly die and truly rise again with Christ, and Dr. Schmemmann suggests that we must return to this principle if we want Baptism to recover its original function in the Church. And he poses the ultimate questions:

"How do we die in the likeness of Christ's death? HOW do we rise again in the pattern of His Resurrection? and why is this, and this alone, our entrance into the newlife in Him and with Him?" (14)

He begins his answer by making the point that Christ's own death was a voluntary death. Jesus was willing to give up his life, of his own free will, and for this reason the Father loved Him<sup>15</sup>. His sinless humanity was in no way subject to death, but his free choice to die in obedience to the Father's will makes it a saving death, and the Church needs to recover the true significance of Christ's desire to die, and his willingness to obey the Father's commands.

Dr. Schmemmann demonstrates that the Christian view of death has changed since the New Testament era in such a way as to obscure the spiritual meaning of death. The majority of Christians see death

as a physical event, marking the end of this life, beyond which faith posits another, purely spiritual, endless life in speaking of an immortal soul, thus death becomes the mode of passage from one to the other. However, this view obscures the fact that Christ at his resurrection destroyed death<sup>16</sup> and destroys death for those who share his death and resurrection. Christians no longer know what to make of the destruction of death by Christ<sup>17</sup>. In biological terms nothing has changed. Saints die as well as sinners, and death remains the organic principle of the world's existence.

He begins his explanation by defining spiritual death as man's separation from life, from the giver of life, and ultimately from God. Death is the opposite term to the true life which is the light of man<sup>18</sup>. Man has rejected this life and so chose death - a choice which Dr. Schmemmann defines as original sin. But there remains that

"Mysterious inner certitude in man which no sin could ever destroy, which makes him always and everywhere seek salvation." (19)

X "Whole' death he suggests is not the biological phenomenon, but the spiritual reality whose 'sting is sin'<sup>20</sup> as man rejects the only true life given him by God. He chooses rather spiritual death which makes his life solitude, suffering, fear, illusion, enslavement to sin, emptiness, lust, and meaninglessness. Man's physical death then becomes the ultimate fruit of a death filled life - total separation, total solitude, and total darkness. It was this spiritual death which Christ came to abolish, and from which he came to save man.

Man dies spiritually because he prefers something else to God, and desires his own life and his own will more than God's life. On the other hand Christ's life is made up entirely of His desire to do God's will, to save man, to free him from that death into which man has transformed his life, and to restore man to the life which he has lost

in sin. So he suggests Christ's life was truly deathless. There was no death in it because there was no desire in Christ's life to do anything other than serve God. He sums up:

"His death, being the ultimate manifestation of love as life and of life as love, removes from death its 'sting' of sin and truly destroys death as the power of Satan and sin over the world." (21)

So Dr. Schmemann argues, Christ does not abolish physical death, because He does not abolish this world of which physical death is a principle of life and growth. But He does remove the sting of sin from death, as He fills it with Himself, with His love and His life. Thus He transforms death into a joyful passage into a fuller life. Paul gave death a new meaning when he described it as being with Christ<sup>22</sup>, and death becomes the sign and the power of Christ's victory, by the way he transformed it.

Thus baptism into the likeness of Christ's death and Resurrection means that in baptism the Christian begins his spiritual life. The likeness is there before it is fulfilled in the rite - for it is the Christian's faith in Christ, his love for Him, and above all his desire to do what He desired. In baptism the Christian is expressing a wish to be like Christ:

"We are saved not because we believe in His 'supernatural' power - such faith He does not want from us - but because we accept with our whole being and make ours the DESIRE that fills His life, which IS His life and ultimately makes Him descend into death to abolish it." (23)

Baptism expresses a desire for such a realization of faith that it truly can be described as death and resurrection. Thus it is the very first fruit and work of faith itself. Christ was truly dead to this spiritually dead world - to its self-sufficiency, to the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eye, to the pride of life<sup>24</sup> and the baptizand seeks to share that reality of life in God which Christ experienced.

"Finally, it is impossible to know Christ without desiring to drink of the cup that He drinks of, and to be baptised with the baptism that He is baptized with (Matt. 20:22), without desiring in other words, that ultimate encounter and fight with sin and death which made Him 'lay down His life' for the salvation of the world."

(25)

It is faith that desires baptism, it is faith that knows baptism to be truly dying and truly rising with Christ.

We must recognise that the views and emphases are primarily those of Dr.Schmemmann himself, and we must bear in mind the context in which he was writing, expecting his work to help ordinary Christians to rediscover the meaning of baptism in their lives, rather than to form an authoritative statement of the theology of baptism of the orthodox Church. As a result, he may be forgiven some of the oversimplifications which he makes in sacrificing detail to the cause of communication. We shall continue to consider his work in the context of the Baptismal Liturgy and its mystagogical explanation.

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

The Orthodox liturgy as we have seen above is one which remains in its ancient form, designed for adults and applied to infants with very little concession made to the different abilities of those infants. Although liturgically the form and structure have been preserved from the ancient traditions of the fourth century, the liturgy itself has been telescoped to enable rites which would have been celebrated on separate occasions over a two month period to be celebrated in a single service.

a) The Reception of Catechumens. The Liturgy begins with a brief office 'The Prayers at the Reception of Catechumens'<sup>26</sup>. In the fourth century this would have taken place during the period of proximate preparation for baptism<sup>27</sup> which probably lasted about forty days. Miss Hapgood's rubric and her explanation of it give us some clue to the difficulties encountered above by Dr.Schmemmann:

"The priest looseth the girdle of the Person who desireth illumination, and removeth it, and putteth it off from him; and placeth him with his face towards the east, clothed in one garment only, unshod and with head uncovered, and with his arms hanging by his sides; and he breatheth thrice in his face; and signeth his brow and his breast thrice with the sign of the cross; and layeth his hand upon his head." (28)

"The removal of the Catechumen's garment signifies the putting off of the old man and his sinful life, inasmuch as this Order is required only in the baptism of adults; that is of persons above seven years of age, who are received only after due examination and their own expressed desire to be baptised. With such, also, the procedure differs, according as they may be Jews, Mahometans, or members of some other non-Christian body; in which case, each must specifically renounce the errors of his former belief. But the rite (presumably from the point of insufflation) is alike for all infants (that is, persons under seven years of age), whether they be of Orthodox or non-Orthodox parents; and of them, through their Sponsor, only the third catechizing, to which the answer is the Symbol of Faith (the Nicene Creed), is required." (29)

Dr. Schmemann's solution to the problem he faces is advanced in his thesis, whereby he explains the liturgy in terms of the double rhythm of preparation and fulfilment. He uses this theme to explain that baptism always requires preparation even in the case of an infant only a few days old. He suggests that:

"The Orthodox Church, radically different in this from some 'rationalistic' sects, has never posited 'understanding' as the condition for Baptism. She would rather say that true 'understanding' is made possible by Baptism, is its result and fruit, rather than its condition. We are very far from the flat idea that Baptism cannot be received unless it is 'understood' and 'accepted', and therefore is to be given only to 'adults'. Maybe the ultimate grace of Baptism is needed that it makes us children, restores in us that 'childhood' without which, in the words of Christ Himself it is impossible to receive the Kingdom of God. What preparation means therefore is a total act of the Church, the recapitulation by her of all that makes baptismal regeneration possible. For the whole Church is charged, enriched and fulfilled when another child of God is integrated into her life, and becomes a member of Christ's body." (30)

I am not sure that his understanding of the true teaching of some of the 'rationalistic' sects he criticised was not clouded by a difference in terminology<sup>31</sup>. Certainly Cyril and Theodore expected at least an understanding of what was implied by faith in Jesus Christ from their catechumens. Otherwise one must ask what purpose was to be served at Jerusalem for example by the recitation of the creed, which the

catechumen had learned by heart and had had explained in great detail before the act of baptism. Although there is no evidence to suggest the expulsion of the catechumen who could not recite the Creed before the bishop, we cannot rule out this possibility purely upon the evidence of silence. Bishop Kallistos agrees with me that Dr.Schmemmann is over-reacting to what he sees as 'rationalism' which is also probably demonstrated in his polemic against those who seek to have baptism understood<sup>32</sup>. Bishop Kallistos also points out that fallen man before baptism still possesses a certain natural power of understanding.

The first prayer of the office<sup>33</sup>, which as we have seen supercedes the enrolment of the candidate at the beginning of Lent, expresses the catechumen's flight from captivity in a world in which he has been deluded into serving the Devil and he comes seeking to be filled with

"the faith, hope and love which are in Thee; that he may know that Thou art the only true God with Thine Only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and Thy Holy Spirit."

(34)

The first act of the baptismal liturgy is an act of protection, as the Bishop's hand was laid upon the catechumen, symbolizing the refuge of the salvation which Christ brought. Under this protection and rescued from his delusion the prayer asks that the catechumen's name might be inscribed in the Book of Life and united with 'the flock of Thine inheritance'<sup>35</sup>. At the same time, the candidates true life is described to him, as opposed to the life man has lost in sin. The true life is described in these words:

"that he may render praise unto Thee, may sing, worship and glorify Thy great and exalted Name always, all the days of his life."

(36)

The office continues with three exorcisms in which the Devil and all his works are laid under the Lord's ban. Once again, these have

their history in the early Church rite, when the catechumens were instructed to attend regularly before the exorcist during their proximate preparation for the baptismal rite. Dr.Schmemmann explains that although the tendency is to rationalize evil simply as the absence of good, the Church teaches that evil is a real presence, a force which must be rejected and hated. The view of the Devil which he puts forward is of one

"among the very first, and the best creatures of God. He is, so to speak, perfect enough, wise enough, powerful enough, one can almost say divine enough, to know God and not to surrender to Him - to know Him and yet to opt against Him, to desire freedom from Him. But since this freedom is impossible in the love and light which always lead to God and to a free surrender to Him, it must of necessity be fulfilled negation, hatred and rebellion." (37)

He goes on to point out that human beings know nothing about the initial catastrophe in the spiritual world, but only know about its effects in their own personal experience, as their pride prompts them to stand against God and to choose their own way. After this choice has been made, humans realise their fallen state, and must begin to seek a means of being reunited with God. He concludes:

"If there is only one thing we learn from spiritual experience, it is that evil is not to be 'explained' but faced and fought. This is the way God dealt with evil. He did not explain it. He sent His Only Begotten Son to be crucified by all the powers of evil so as to destroy them by His love, faith and obedience." (38)

It was, of course, Jesus' experience that immediately following His Baptism in the Jordan by John, the descent of the Dove, and his acknowledgment by God, He was driven away into the wilderness to face the temptation of the Devil. Similarly it is the Christian's experience that we meet the Devil at the very moment we make the decision to choose to follow Christ, and also immediately after Baptism, just as Christ did. In Dr.Schmemmann's words:

"In the baptismal rite, which is an act of liberation and victory the exorcism comes first because on our path to the baptismal font we unavoidably 'hit' the dark and powerful figure that obstructs this path. It must be

removed, chased away, if we are to proceed. The moment that the celebrant's hand has touched the head of a child of God and marked it with the sign of Christ, the Devil is there defending that which he has stolen from God and claims as his possession."

(39)

Dr. Schmemmann describes the exorcisms as a poem in the deepest sense of the word which in Greek means 'creation'. They are poems because

"It truly manifests and does that which it announces; it makes powerful that which it states; it again fills words with the divine energy from which they stem."

(40)

And it is because it is given in the name of Christ that exorcism does this, for it is filled with the power of Christ as we see plainly from the Second Exorcism:

"I abjure thee by the redeeming Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his precious Body and Blood, and by his terrible Coming-again; for he shall come and shall not tarry, to judge the whole earth; and he shall chastise thee and the confederate host with burning Gehenna, committing thee to outer darkness, where the worm ceaseth not and the fire is not quenched. For of Christ our God is the dominion, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now, and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen."

(41)

It is through Christ's redeeming Passion that he has broken into enemy territory and mortally wounded the enemy, and so he has earned the right to lay the enemy under his ban and adjuration.

Following the adjuration of the evil power, the priest says that the candidate might be liberated from its power, and this liberation is the beginning of man's restoration. As the symbol of the act of purification during this prayer the rubric explains

"Then the Priest breatheth upon his mouth, his brow, and his breast, saying: Expel from him (her) every evil and impure spirit which hideth and maketh its lair in his (her) heart. (And this he saith thrice). The spirit of error, the spirit of guile, the spirit of idolatry, and of every concupiscence; the spirit of deceit and of uncleanness which operateth through the prompting of the Devil. And make him (her) a reason endowed sheep in the holy flock of thy Christ, an honourable member of thy Church, a consecrated vessel, a child of the light, and an heir of thy kingdom; that having lived in accordance with thy commandments, and preserved inviolate the seal, and kept his (her) garment undefiled, he (she) may receive the blessedness of the Saints in thy kingdom."

(42)

Following the exorcism, the catechumen is thought to be restored to man's intended status as a free being capable of a true freedom, the freedom to receive again the true life which comes from God and leads to God, and thus the way is prepared for the next step in the baptismal liturgy, the apotaxis and syntaxis, which in Cyril's day took place either on Good Friday or Holy Saturday, before the Baptism itself<sup>43</sup>.

b) The Rite of Renunciation and Profession. The rubric introduces this section of the service with the words:

"Then the priest turneth the person who is come to Baptism to face the west unclad, unshod, and having his hands uplifted." (44)

Miss Hapgood notes that from the west comes darkness; and Satan therefore has his dominion there. The uplifted hands of the Catechumen indicate the realm of the evil spirits of the air<sup>45</sup>. Dr. Schmemmann also reminds us of Chrysostom's teaching regarding the Catechumen's slave status, pointing out that:

"The catechumen is deprived of all that concealed from him his status as a slave, that made him appear to be a free man, not even knowing his enslavement, his misery, and his prison. Now, however, he knows that he was a captive - 'and the captives go naked and unshod'. He has put aside all that masked his captivity, his belonging to Satan. He 'knows from what evil he is being delivered, and to what good he is hurrying.....' His uplifted hands indicate, that he surrenders to Christ, wants now to be His captive, seeks the captivity which according to St. John Chrysostom, 'changes slavery into freedom..... drives from one foreign soil, and leads him to his homeland, the heavenly Jerusalem.....'." (46)

There seems to be a divergence of opinion in connection with the meaning of the catechumen's uplifted hands. Dr. Schmemmann's suggestion seems to fit more closely the syntaxis than the apotaxis, but by this point the catechumen has been turned to face the east, and has his hands lowered, and so I think I prefer Miss Hapgood's explanation as the more likely to fit in with the terms of the apotaxis which follows, but symbolism is by its nature fluid and so symbols can have more than one meaning.

We discover that the apotaxis is basically unchanged, even

though it dates from a time when to be a Christian was to be radically opposed to the life of the people around, and to adopt a non-conformist lifestyle. Today for many Christians, Christianity has become so much a part of the world that the idea that there is anything to renounce is alien to them. As Dr. Schmemmann comments:

"The very idea that a Christian has to renounce something and that this 'something' is not a few obviously sinful and immoral acts, but above all a certain vision of life, a 'set of priorities', a fundamental attitude towards the world, the idea that Christian life is always a 'narrow path' and a fight: all this has been virtually given up and is no longer at the heart of our Christian world view."

(47)

And this threefold apotaxis remains, not discarded as irrelevant to the views of twentieth century man, but there as a sobering reminder of the inability of serving two masters. For to renounce Satan is to reject an entire world view built upon pride and self affirmation, and to pledge to have done with it and all that it implies. So the catechumen is instructed

"Breathe and spit upon him."

(48)

Dr. Schmemmann interprets this as a declaration of war, upon Satan, a struggle whose real <sup>issue</sup> is either eternal life or eternal damnation, for this struggle is the essence of Christianity<sup>49</sup>. Bishop Kallistos points out that spitting is also a gesture of contempt.

The syntaxis is indicated by the rubric:

"And when he hath done this, the priest turneth him to the East with his hands lowered, and saith: Dost thou united thyself to Christ?"

(50)

Just as darkness proceeds from the west, so light comes from the east, the place of paradise<sup>51</sup> and Dr. Finn points out in Constantinople the instruction was given by the bishop to the catechumens: 'Turn toward the East, lower your hands, stand in reverence'<sup>52</sup>. It is from this position and in this posture that the catechumen makes his profession of personal attachment to Christ, and Dr. Schmemmann reminds us that this implies an unconditional commitment to Christ<sup>53</sup>. The Catechumen

professes his faith in Christ as King and as God which reflects the earliest baptismal confession 'Jesus Christ is Lord', and reminds the Christians of the unconditional obedience which they pledge to Christ.

The symbol of faith, is then given back to the Church which first gave it to the candidate, as the catechumen recites the creed in the presence of the congregation. Dr. Schmemmann comments:

"Now the knowledge about Christ is become the knowledge of Christ; the truth preserved by the Church in her Tradition is to become the faith and life of the new member of the Church." (54)

This act and the syntaxis itself is sealed by the candidate bowing down before the triune Godhead as a symbol of reverence, love and obedience, just as the apotaxis was sealed by the catechumen breathing and spitting upon Satan, and the first office concludes with the prayer:

"O Master, Lord our God, call thy servant, N, to thy holy illumination, and grant unto him (her) that great grace of thy holy Baptism. Put off from him (her) the old man, and renew him (her) unto life everlasting; and fill him (her) with the power of thy Holy Spirit, in the unity of thy Christ; that he (she) may be no more a child of the body, but a child of thy Kingdom. Through the good will and grace of thine Only Begotten Son, with whom thou art blessed, together with thy most holy, and good and life-giving Spirit, now, and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen." (55)

This prayer provides a clear summary of what has gone before.

c) Baptism. The second office of the rite is the Office of Holy Baptism itself which follows immediately. The rubric indicates that

"The priest entereth the Sanctuary and putteth on white vestments, and his gauntlets. And when he hath lighted all the tapers, he taketh the censor and goeth to the Font. and censeth round about it; and having given the censor to be held, he maketh a reverence." (56)

Miss Hapgood explains the symbolism of his vestments and of the tapers by her statement that the white vestments and the lights speak of the spiritual joy and illumination which comes through baptism. Dr. Schmemmann laments that this particular rubric is more honoured in

the observance and points out that this particular rubric is all that remains from the greatest of all solemnities of the early Church, the paschal celebration of Baptism and the baptismal celebration of Pascha<sup>57</sup>. It is important for Baptism to be performed with the participation of the people of God:

"as an event in which the whole church acknowledges herself as passage - Pascha - from 'this world' into the kingdom of God, as participation in the decisive events of Christ's Death and Resurrection." (58)

He deplores the reduction of Baptism to a bare 'minimum' and reminds us

"that whenever and wherever Baptism is celebrated, we find ourselves - spiritually at least! - on the eve of Pascha, at the very end of the great and holy 'sabbath', at the very beginning of that unique night which every year truly makes us enter into the Kingdom of God." (59)

The office begins with the solemn blessing of the water begun by the deacon, whilst the priest prays secretly for the catechumen and for himself. The deacon's prayer in litany form contains some very strong echoes of the fourth century teaching in Jerusalem and Antioch:

"That this water may be sanctified with the power and effectual operation and descent of the Holy Spirit: ✠  
That there may be sent down into it the grace of redemption, the blessing of Jordan: ✠  
That there may come upon this water the purifying operation of the super-substantial Trinity: ✠  
That we may be illuminated by the light of understanding and piety, and by the descent of the Holy Spirit: ✠  
That this water may prove effectual unto the averting of every snare of enemies, both visible and invisible: ✠  
That he (she) who is baptised therein may be made worthy of the kingdom incorruptible: ✠  
For him (her) who is now come unto holy Baptism, and for his (her) salvation: ✠  
That he (she) may prove himself (herself) a child of the light, and an heir of eternal good things: ✠  
That he (she) may be a member and partaker of the death and resurrection of Christ our God: ✠  
That he (she) may preserve his baptismal garment and the earnest of the Spirit pure and undefiled unto the dread Day of Christ our God: ✠  
That this water may be to him (her) a laver of regeneration, unto the remission of sins, and a garment of incorruption: ✠  
That the Lord God will hearken unto the voice of our petition: ✠  
That he will deliver him (her) and us from all tribulation, wrath and necessity: ✠" (60)

It is the water which reveals to us the meaning of baptism, as we see from the prayer above, as it reveals the relation of Baptism to the world and to matter, to life and all its aspects. Dr.Schmemmann suggests these essential dimensions of the symbolism of water from the Christian point of view:

"cosmical, because it is the sacrament of the New Creation; ecclesiological, because it is the sacrament of the Church, eschatological, because it is the sacrament of the Kingdom, It is by entering into this mystery of water that we begin to understand why, in order to save a man, we must first of all immerse him in water." (61)

Then the priest formally blesses and consecrates the water in a prayer which is a solemn act of praise and thanksgiving, and Dr.Schmemmann points out that this eucharistic prayer has a preface, an anamnesis, an epiclesis which begins with the bidding:

"the priest signeth the water thrice with the sign of the cross, dipping his fingers therein. And breathing upon it, he saith: Let all adverse powers be crushed beneath the sign of the image of Thy cross. (Thrice)" (62)

and as it continues the priest asks that the water be shown

"to be the water of redemption, the water of sanctification, the purification of flesh and spirit, the loosing of bonds, the remission of sins, the illumination of the soul, the laver of regeneration, the renewal of the Spirit, the gift of adoption to sonship, the garment of incorruption, the fountain of life." (63)

In this way the water is seen to be a means to an end , as indeed all matter is seen as a means to an end rather than an end in itself, and that end is man's knowledge of God, and communion with God. So the water comes to be seen to mean the re-creation of matter in Christ.

"It is the gift of that world to man. It is the gift of the world as communion with God, as life, salvation, and deification." (64)

Following the blessing of the water, it is anointed with oil, as the symbol of life, not as mere existence, but of the life which Jesus came to bring, life in all its fulness<sup>65</sup>. Once again a similar pattern is followed for the blessing of the oil of gladness. First the oil is exorcised and restored to its true function, as

revealed in its symbolism, of bringing healing light and thereby joy to man. Then follows an anamnesis, as the congregation and catechumens are reminded of the meaning of oil in the history of salvation, and a thanksgiving to God for the oil, and all that he has made it. Finally there comes the anointment itself as the priest

"singing Alleluia with the people maketh three signs of the cross in the water with the oil" (66)

After the water has been anointed with oil, then the catechumen is anointed as

"The priest taketh of the oil with two fingers, and maketh the sign of the cross upon his brow, his breast, and between his shoulders saying:

The servant of God, N, is anointed with the oil of gladness; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

And he anointeth his breast and shoulders. On the breast saying:

Unto the healing of soul and body.

On the ears

Unto the hearing of faith

On the hands

Thy hands have made me and fashioned me.

On the feet

That he may walk in the way of thy commandments." (67)

So the catechumen is to be reshaped, restored and reconciled to God, and in God, to the world.

We now reach the climax of the Service, the actual act of baptism itself. The rubric instructs:

"And when his whole body is thus anointed, the Priest baptizeth him, holding him upright and looking roward the east, as he saith:

The servant of God, N, is baptized, in the name of the Father, Amen. And of the Son, Amen. And of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

At each invocation he immerseth him and raiseth him again." (68)

We note the threefold immersion, and the fact that the words of the rite point away from the human agency to the divine, using the passive rather than the active voice as with all the sacraments of the Orthodox Church. The sacrament of course is a personal application of the gifts which Christ makes available, as baptismal grace. It is the grace of the catechumen's participation in an event which is aimed

at each one of us and

"was from the beginning and totally a gift which can and must be received, accepted, loved and appropriated by each one of us. In Baptism, the Death and Resurrection of Christ are fulfilled as His Death for me. His Resurrection for me, and therefore my death in Christ, and my resurrection in him." (69)

The congregation as representatives of the whole Church affirms each of the three immersions with an 'Amen', testifying they have seen and experienced once more the Death and Resurrection of Christ, so that in Him

"we may die to our mortal life and be partakers, here and now - of the 'day without evening'." (70)

The final Amen continues into the singing of Psalm 32, which through its words expands the affirmation of the Amens, that once more the congregation has witnessed God's mercy and forgiveness, and has witnessed the recreation of the world and of man in that world. Once more they find themselves at a beginning, as they have witnessed a new man made again into the likeness of Him who made him in a new world filled with God's glory. And to all this the Psalm bears fitting testimony and praise.

d) Post-baptismal Rites. Immediately after this, the newly-baptised is dressed in his new robe, which Dr. Schmemmann deals with at the beginning of his section on 'The Sacrament of the Holy Spirit' but which Miss Hapgood has as the concluding action of the office of Baptism. The white garment in which the candidate is vested is described by the priest as the robe of righteousness, and by the congregation as the robe of light:

"Then, as he putteth his garment upon him, the Priest saith:  
The servant of God, N, is clothed with the robe of righteousness; in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.  
Then shall be sung the following Hymn (Tropar) in Tone VIII  
Vouchsafe unto me the robe of light, O Thou who clothest thyself with light as a garment, Christ our God, plenteous in mercy." (71)

John Chrysostom described the robe variously as a shining garment, a royal robe, a garment of immortality<sup>72</sup>, and it symbolizes the state of spiritual purity and righteous<sup>ness</sup> which God intends for his people, as it

symbolizes the new life which begins at baptism.

The candidate is also given a lighted candle to hold to emphasize the relationship between baptism and enlightenment. Baptism is seen as a sacrament of illumination, both of the candidate, and of the world through the candidate.

The next prayer begins the Office of Holy Chrismation<sup>73</sup> and following a prayer in which God's help is invoked for the newly baptized to maintain his baptismal purity, the act of Chrismation takes place:

"And after this prayer, he ancinteth with the Holy Chrism, the person who hath been baptised, making the sign of the cross: On the brow, and on the eyes, and the nostrils, and the lips, and on both ears, and the breast, and the hands and the feet, saying each time:  
The seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit, Amen." (74)

Miss Hapgood points out that the purpose of the ancinting of the newly baptized with the holy Chrism is so that he may receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit to rear and strengthen him in the Spiritual life and

"to render him strong firm and invincible, in faith, in love, and hope; in boldness, that without fear he may confess before all men the name of Christ; that he may grow in all virtues, free himself from the Evil One, and all his guile, and preserve his soul in purity and righteousness." (75)

Dr.Schmemmann explains that Chrismation is performed as the fulfilment of baptism, just as participation in the Eucharist is the fulfilment of chrismation, and Miss Hapgood points out that the child after chrismation can receive the Eucharist without preliminary confession until he reaches his seventh birthday. The garment is bestowed upon the baptizand because he has been baptized and in order to be ancinted<sup>76</sup>. The chrismation of the whole body imparts to the candidate the gift of the Holy Spirit<sup>77</sup> rather than gifts in the plural, and Dr.Schmemmann explains the significance of the personal Pentecost:

"Are we able to understand that the impossible uniqueness of this personal Pentecost is that we receive as gift Him Whom Christ and only Christ has by nature: the Holy Spirit, eternally bestowed by the Father upon His Son and Who, at the Jordan, descends on Christ and on Him alone, revealing Christ as the Anointed, as the beloved Son and the Saviour; that, in other words, we receive as gift the Spirit who belongs to Christ as His Spirit, Who abides in Christ as His life?"

(78)

Thus Chrismation sums up the union of the candidate with Christ, as adopted sons of the Father. It makes the candidate prophet, priest and king and Dr. Schmemmann begins to spell out the implications of this fact in the life of the baptized<sup>79</sup>. Man, created as king in authority over the creatures of the world, has lost his kingship in the fall, and can only be restored to his role as a redeemed being, and this redemption is revealed, manifested and fulfilled in the baptismal mystery, and his baptism into the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection.

In lamenting the neglect of the priestly dimension of the Christian he draws the attention of his readers to the Early Church:

"As to the early Church, she firmly held and affirmed both the institutional priesthood in the Church and the 'royal priesthood' of the Church as the two essential and complementary dimensions of her very life: essential as stemming from her experience both of Christ and of His unique priesthood, complementary as revealing in their mutual correlation each other's place and significance in the life and work of the Church."

(80)

The role of priest is to offer sacrifice, he says, and to be the mediator between God and creation, a role which man refused at the fall, and to which the baptized is recalled at baptism, but it remains the vocation of Christ.

"Their priesthood is not their but Christ's; their vocation is to have no vocation save the personal vocation of Christ, to assure the presence and the power of His Priesthood in the Church, its continuity until the consummation of all things in God. As the Father sends His Son to save the world, the Son chooses and sends those whom He entrusts with the continuation of His saving ministry, the power of His unique Priesthood."

(81)

He explains the prophetic role of man originally in terms of God speaking to Adam<sup>82</sup>, and of man's rejection of this role at the fall by his pride. Man at baptism is restored by Christ through the sacrament of the Holy Spirit to his role of prophet which Dr.Schmemmann describes as the gift of sobriety

"Sobriety is that inner wholeness and integrity, that harmony between soul and body, reason and heart, which alone can discern and therefore understand and therefore possess reality in its totality, as it is, to lead man to the only true 'objectivity'. Sobriety is understanding because it discerns first of all and in everything - in almost unconscious movements of the soul as well as in 'great events' - the good and the evil, because it 'sees through' evil, even when evil vests itself, as it usually does, in garments of light. Sobriety is possession because, being the openness of the whole man to God, to His will and to His presence, the constant awareness of God, it makes man capable of receiving everything as coming from God and leading to Him, of, in other words, of giving everything meaning and value."

(83)

This particular role also highlights the task of the baptized to witness to the world.

But primarily, the candidate at chrismation receives the Holy Spirit Himself. Dr.Schmemmann then proceeds to pose the question of what this means for the baptized. He explains that the knowledge of the Holy Spirit is only possible by his presence in the Christian, a presence which is manifested above all by ineffable joy, peace, and fulness. He describes the gift of the Holy Spirit in these terms:

"Such is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the meaning of our personal Pentecost in the sacrament of the holy anointment. It seals, i.e. makes, reveals, confirms, us as members of the Church, the Body of Christ, as citizens of the Kingdom of God, as partakers of the Holy Spirit. And by this seal, it truly makes us into ourselves, 'ordains' each one of us to be and to become that which God from all eternity wants us to be, revealing our true personality and thus our only self-fulfillment."

(84)

Following the chrismation, the Priest and the Sponsors, together with the newly baptised, make a processional circuit of the baptismal font, singing three times the words:

"As many as have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ. Alleluia."

(85)

The circle is the liturgical type of eternity, and so the triple circling of the font with the lighted tapers signifies that the newly baptised and illumined person has entered into an eternal union with Christ the Light of the world. Then the service proceeds with the epistle and gospel<sup>86</sup> followed by prayers, first for the sponsor, his mercy, life, peace, health, salvation and remission of sins and then for the neophyte<sup>87</sup>.

Dr. Schmemmann then proceeds to explain to his readers the interdependence of the sacraments of baptism, chrismation, and the eucharist, seeing the Eucharist as the sacrament of the Church, rather than one of the sacraments of the Church, but to examine this at length will take us outside the scope of this thesis. So we note the relationship and pass on.

This is usually followed by a part of the service which comes from the Rites of the Eighth Day, when the neophyte was brought again to the Church for the concluding act of the rite of Baptism. Now this time lapse is disregarded, and the Ablution and Tonsure are now performed as part of the same service as the preceding Offices. Originally, the Rite of the Eighth Day followed the week of mystagogical instruction following Baptism itself<sup>88</sup>, but such teaching and close fellowship enjoyed by the newly baptized had to have an end, and the newly baptized had to return into the world. So the baptismal liturgy concludes with rites which express the return of the Christian into the world, and which signify the beginning of Christian life as mission and witnessing, and the commissioning of the newly baptised to witness to the light of light of Christ in the world.

The first rite of the Eighth Day is the Washing off of Holy

Chrism which prepares the newly baptised for that fight which is the content of the Christian life, and the first prayer is phrased in a context which befits a fight or struggle:

"Maintain the shield of his (her) faith unassailed by the enemy. Preserve pure and unpolluted the garment of incorruption wherewith thou hast endued him (her), upholding inviolate in him (her) by thy grace, the seal of the Spirit, and showing mercy upon him (her) and unto us, through the multitude of thy mercies." (89)

and the second prayer is similar:

"Keep him (her) ever a warrior invincible in every attack of those who assail him (her) and us; and make us all victors even unto the end, through thy crown incorruptible." (90)

Then the external symbols of the liturgical rite can be removed as superfluous, for from now on nothing that is merely external can be of any help. As Dr. Schmemmann points out:

"only the inner appropriation by man of the gift of grace, faith, and faithfulness will sustain him. When the real fight begins, the bright and colourful uniform is of no use and is replaced by battle fatigues." (91)

So the white garment is removed. To do battle with the Enemy, Christ Himself put aside His Godhead, and took upon Himself the form of a slave. But the Son of Man was glorified precisely because he was prepared to humble himself and become obedient to death on a cross. The Holy Chrism is removed as it was given to be transformed into the life of the neophyte. So the neophyte is addressed by the priest with these words, as the Holy Chrism is washed off:

"Thou art justified, Thou art illumined. Thou art sanctified. Thou art washed: in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God."  
"Thou art baptised. Thou art illumined. Thou hast received anointment with Holy Chrism. Thou art sanctified. Thou art washed: in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (92)

The last rite is that of the Tonsure, or the cutting of the hair, and Miss Hapgood points out:

"The shearing of the hair signifies that the newly baptised person has dedicated himself to the service of God, and to obedience; because the cutting of the hair has always been the symbol of submission and servitude." (93)

Dr. Schmemmann has some very interesting comments on the way in which a man's hair becomes the symbol of his national identity, or of pathological deviations in man<sup>94</sup>. It is also the symbol of the offering of the first fruits to the Lord:

"Bless, now, thy servant, N, who is come to make a first offering shorn from the hair of his head." (95)

So the new life begins by sacrificing to God and making him an offering - 'man's first free and joyful sacrifice of himself to God'<sup>96</sup>.

Now the neophyte is ready to live his life for God, in God's world, in the strength he has received through his Baptismal experience.

Dr. Schmemmann sums up:

"Just as the whole life of the Church stems from Pascha and taken us through Pentecost and the time 'after Pentecost' to another Pascha, our whole life stemming from Baptism has been made into a 'passage' - the pilgrimage and the ascension towards the 'day without evening' of God's eternal Kingdom. And as we proceed and fight and work, the mysterious light of that Day already illumines our way, shines everywhere, transforms everything, makes everything life in God, and the way to God. It is when the baptismal liturgy is accomplished that Baptism begins to work in us." (97)

### 3. The Praxis of Baptism with Relation to the Fellowship of the Church Particularly Considering Sponsorship

As one might expect with a service which has come to be used for the initiation of infants, the sponsors play quite an important role. Miss Hapgood's explanatory notes in her Appendix to the service however yield some points to note. Parts of the service, she points out, are of relevance only to adults:

"that is, persons above seven years of age, who are received only after due examination, and their own expressed desire to be baptised." (98)

Thus it is implied that adulthood in spiritual terms is the notional age when children are considered able to answer for themselves, and to recognise the faults in their former lives. Thus it is the adults' conscious decision to seek baptism, and they are prepared to submit to due examination of their beliefs. However, in spite of this definition of

adulthood as 'seven years of age', a greater maturity is required of the sponsor, and so a higher minimum age limit is imposed:

"For a man or boy, one sponsor (male) not younger than fifteen years of age is indispensable. For a woman or girl one female sponsor not younger than thirteen years of age is indispensable. The Church does not forbid other sponsors. The sponsor ought to be a member of the Holy Orthodox Apostolic Church of the East but if a member of another Church should, for any reason, stand sponsor, he (she) is required to recite the Symbol of the Faith of the Orthodox Church. In such a case a non-Orthodox man or woman may stand as additional sponsor." (99)

Thus a sponsor is to be a mature believer who is able to support the catechumen through his spiritual life. Previously, some of the words of the Appendix suggest that spiritual parenthood or sponsorship supercedes the claims of human parents, particularly in the case of an infant:

"It is not customary for either father or mother to be present at the baptism; though it is not forbidden for the father. Provided forty days have elapsed since the birth of the child, the mother is permitted to be present." (100)

The spelling out of the dichotomy between physical and spiritual lives, reinforces our understanding of the dichotomy behind Dr. Schmemmann's views of biological death and spiritual death .

Dr. Schmemmann comments that the role of the sponsors has become virtually a nominal one, and he suggests that they have an essential part to play today. In his notes on Chapter 1 he cites some of the evidence from the early church which I have mentioned in my paper . He goes on to point out that now the sponsors have only liturgical functions. They are to hold the child during the baptismal rites, they hold lighted tapers to signify their faith in the illumination which the Holy Spirit confers upon the candidate, they make answers for him, they read the creed and receive him from the font. Dr. Schmemmann suggests that choice of sponsors has become a purely family matter, and often they are selected for reasons which have nothing to do with the Church, her faith, and with the spiritual welfare of the baptizand. Nothing is requested from them, nobody

challenges them with any duties or responsibilities, and he suggests that the request that they be Orthodox sounds irrelevant. In this respect Dr. Schmemmann is exaggerating the true position to add more force to his point. Bishop Kallistos points out that many sponsors do take their duties very seriously, and they are expected to do so. In the Greek Church in particular to become a sponsor is regarded as a very serious obligation, and one which is not accepted lightly. However, Dr. Schmemmann insists that in the twentieth century they have an even more vital role to fulfil, because the Church is no longer backed up by a society and culture in which its values are respected, and there exists a very real problem of keeping the baptized within the Church. He suggests:

"There is the need to 'follow up' children, especially when, after having been baptized, they simply 'disappear' from Church life due to their parents' indifference or neglect. There is the need for a much more systematic instruction in faith of converts to Orthodoxy. There is the need, finally, for a much closer interrelation between the educational agencies of the parish (church school, adult education, etc.) and its sacramental and liturgical life." (104)

To remedy the problem he suggests for discussion a series of four suggestions for restoring sponsorship to its rightful place within the Church's responsibility rather than that of the family. He suggests that at least one of the sponsors be appointed by the Priest from among those members of the Church whose qualifications for such a spiritually responsible office are established by the Church. This Church-appointed sponsor has the duty of following-up entrusted to him by the Church, and reporting all problems to the Priest. He suggests a special book of Baptisms be kept in which the religious story of each baptized child be recorded so that continuity can be maintained in the midst of changing times. Finally he suggests that for converts, in addition to formal instruction, one family should be appointed to sponsor each convert to help his integration into the

larger family of the Church and life of the parish.

He concludes his note:

"The essential point in all this is that SPONSORSHIP is an important spiritual function within the Church and that therefore the Church, and not the family, ought to define and control it."

(105)

although Bishop Kallistos comments that when the relationship between parents, Church and priest is right, then surely both Church and family should define and control the role of sponsorship.

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4. AS p.15
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14. AS p.60
15. John 10:17-18
16. I Corinthians 15:54ff
17. The Corinthians do not appear to have found it all that easy either!
18. John 1:2
19. AS p.63
20. I Corinthians 15:56
21. AS p.64
22. Philippians 1:21
23. AS p. 65
24. I John 2:16
25. AS p.66
26. IFH p.271
27. see above p.126 et al
28. IFH p.271
29. IFH p.601-2 (underlined parenthesis mine)
30. AS p.18
31. See below p.54ff
32. See above p.40,120
33. IFH p.271
34. IFH p.271
35. IFH p.271
36. IFH p.271
37. AS p.23
38. AS p.23
39. AS p.23-4
40. AS p.24
41. IFH p.273
42. IFH p.273-4 Miss Hagood notes that the phrase 'reason endowed sheep' is used to distinguish the candidate from dumb animals.
43. See above p.136
44. IFH p.274
45. IFH p.603 cf. Cyril: Cat. Myst 1.4
46. AS p.27-8 cf. Chrysostom Bapt. Inst. 10; 14,15
47. AS p.29
48. IFH p.274
49. AS p.30
50. IFH p.274
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52. T.M.Finn: The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instruction of St. John Chrysostom (Washington 1967) p. 116
53. AS p.31
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57. AS p.37
58. AS p.38
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60. IFH p.276-7
61. AS p.40
62. IFH p.278
63. IFH p.279
64. AS p.51
65. John 10:10
66. IFH p.279
67. IFH p.279-80
68. IFH p.280
69. AS p.70
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71. IFH p.280
72. See above p.149f
73. IFH p.281
74. IFH p.281
75. IFH p.603
76. AS p.78
77. AS p.79
78. AS p.79
79. AS p.81
80. AS p.94
81. AS p.98
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87. IFH p.282-3
88. See above p.126f
89. IFH p.283
90. IFH p.284
91. AS p.126
92. IFH p.284
93. IFH p.603
94. See AS p.127
95. IFH p.284
96. AS p.128
97. AS p.129
98. IFH p. 602
99. IFH p.602 (Underlining mine)
100. IFH p.602
101. cf Supra
102. AS p.160
103. See below Appendix B
104. AS p.161-2
105. AS p.162

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA

The Church of South India was originally chosen as a missionary situation, where one might expect some frequency of adult baptism in response to missionary activity. It also seemed to be interesting as baptism and confirmation were separated by a further series of catechetical classes rather than being administered as part of the same rite. However, its detailed study seemed to produce a number of major difficulties, not least of which was that all the catechetical material was produced in the national languages.

#### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

There does not seem to have been any far reaching discussion of Baptism available in English, except for the reports of discussions between Lutherans, Baptists and the Church of South India in 1948-49<sup>1</sup>, which are not remarkable and for the Report of a Consultation: The Meaning of Conversion and Baptism in the Cultural Context of India<sup>2</sup> suggesting that baptism as a rite was too divisive within the communal life of India. The symbolism of baptism as such, of dying to the old life and being born again to the new life, left the candidate bereft

of a place in society, and so the contention is that the admission of converts to the Eucharist rather than to baptism would be more acceptable as in this way the candidate would still belong to his original community. The author suggests that the command to baptise is an addition to the teaching of the Church, probably from the mystery religions or as a development of John's baptism, and was certainly not a dominical command. It is not possible to ascertain how much support there is for this view within the Church of South India at present.

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

We must confine, therefore, ourselves to the most readily available material, and consider the material contained in The Order for Holy Baptism - I The Baptism of Persons able to answer for themselves<sup>3</sup>.

The published order begins with the Office for Making a Catechumen, which it is suggested should take place after the Lessons at a service of public worship. At this point in the service the candidate is presented by his sponsors to the presbyter who introduces him to the congregation with the words:

"N, who is present here, desires to be received as a catechumen. He has promised to undergo regular instruction. Let us therefore pray for him and welcome him with brotherly love." (4)

After a brief prayer for the candidate, the presbyter then interrogates the candidate to establish his sincerity:

"He then asks: N, what do you desire?"

Answer: I ask of you Christian teaching and Holy Baptism  
Do you accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour?

Answer: I do

Are you willing to place yourself under our guidance and instruction, that you may be prepared for admission into the Church by baptism?

Answer: I am willing.

Do you renounce all those customs and practices and teachings which you know to be contrary to Christ's will?

Answer: I do

Do you promise to be diligent in prayer, regular at public worship of the Church, faithful in receiving instruction and in

witnessing to others?  
Answer: I promise."

(5)

Following his interrogation the candidate is received by the presbyter and the Church as a catechumen, and the service concluded in prayer for the new catechumen. The sponsors only appear to have a role in this service. They are not mentioned in any of the rubrics in the Baptismal or in the Confirmation Service. Even in the service of Baptism of Infants their role is only acknowledged in parenthesis after that of the parents<sup>6</sup>.

In the Baptismal Service itself, there is little or no reference to the catechumenate. After prayer, readings and an exposition of the teaching of Scripture concerning Baptism, the candidates are then called to renounce evil:

"You have presented yourselves here for baptism. You must therefore answer sincerely before God and his Church the questions which I now put to you.

Do you renounce (idolatry and) all the works of the Devil?

Answer: I renounce them

Do you renounce the pride and vanity of this world?

Answer: I renounce them

Do you renounce impurity, strife, covetousness, and all other works of the flesh?

Answer: I renounce them."

(7)

The alternative words in the first renunciation '(idolatry and)' remind us of the non-Christian background from which a number of the candidates are expected to have come, and does illustrate the way in which Baptism divides the candidate from all that has gone before.

The renunciation is followed by the profession of faith, which is basically the question:

"Do you believe in one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I believe."

(8)

followed by the statement of the Apostles' Creed not only by the candidates but by the whole community, thus the candidates are united with their fellow Christians early in the service as they affirm this

common symbol of their faith together.

Attention moves back to the candidates for their further interrogation in the promises:

"Do you desire to be baptised in this faith?

Answer: I Do.

Will you keep God's holy will and commandments and walk in them all the days of your life?

Answer: By God's grace, I will." (9)

There then follows a further question if the candidates are husband and wife which borrows the phrase 'continue together in love' from the blessing of the mangalasutra (ring) in the marriage service<sup>10</sup>, and which adds the requirement to nurture the children in the Christian faith:

"Will you, in obedience to Christ's teaching, continue together in love, and nurture your children in the Christian faith?

Husband and wife answer together: By God's grace, we will." (11)

This further question illustrates once again the life-changing nature of the act of conversion of which baptism is a visible part, as it quite openly stresses the new dimension to marriage which comes through commitment to Jesus Christ, and this feature is borne out in the prayer which concludes this section.

The rite of baptism itself begins with a period of both silent and spoken prayer for the candidates. The first stated means of baptism in the rubric is immersion, and effusion is the alternative. As the candidate is baptised the formula is the standard trinitarian formula for a single act of immersion or effusion:

"N, I baptise thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." (12)

Immediately following each baptism, the statement is made:

"We have received this person into the congregation of Christ's flock (+ and do sign him with the sign of the cross)."

(13)

When all have been baptised, the minister says for all together:

"May these persons never be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but continue Christ's faithful servants unto their lives end. Amen.

The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you: the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.  
Amen. (Num.6:24-26)" (14)

The putting on of a white garment, and the giving of a lighted lamp or taper follows, although these are both optional sections of the service. In both instances there is a dialogue between the newly baptised and the minister stressing the meaning of the symbols:

"We will rejoice greatly in the Lord:  
OUR SOULS SHALL BE JOYFUL IN OUR GOD.  
For he hath clothed us with the garments of salvation:  
HE HATH COVERED US WITH THE ROBES OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.  
Put off your old nature, and be renewed in the spirit  
of your minds:  
WE WILL PUT ON THE NEW NATURE, CREATED AFTER THE  
LIKENESS OF GOD." (15)

These are the words to accompany the appearance of the candidates before the Church in their new white robes, and the reception of the Light is marked with the words:

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may  
see your good works:  
AND GIVE GLORY TO OUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN. (Matt.5:16)" (16)

The congregation then join in prayer, first in the Lord's prayer, and then in a Prayer and Thanksgiving for the reception by Christ of the baptised:

"We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased thee to receive these thy servants for thine own children by adoption and to incorporate them into thy holy Church. And we humbly beseech thee to grant that they may more and more show forth in their lives that which they now are by thy calling; so that as they are made partakers of the death of thy Son, they may also be partakers of his resurrection, and finally with all thy Church, inherit thine everlasting kingdom; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen." (17)

There are hints in this prayer, particularly in the words 'that they may more and more show forth in their lives that which they now are by thy calling'<sup>18</sup>, which reminds both the candidates and the Church of the continuous nature of the salvation which is being celebrated in the sacrament of baptism. There is no suggestion of baptism being

an end in itself, but rather a beginning of a long and strenuous journey. This feature is further stressed in the formal charges to Church and candidate:

"These our brothers and sisters in Christ have, after profession of their repentance and faith, been received into the household of God. I charge you, and especially the elders among you to befriend them, and to remind them what solemn promises they have made before this congregation. Support them, therefore with your prayers, and encourage them to attend diligently to right instruction in God's holy word, and so to prepare themselves for Confirmation, that being established in faith by the Holy Spirit, they may come with due preparation to receive the Lord's Supper, and may go forth into the world to serve God faithfully in the fellowship of his Church. Will you endeavour to do all these things?  
WE WILL, GOD BEING OUR HELPER; AND WE RECEIVE THEM INTO OUR FELLOWSHIP.

And you, beloved, have now by baptism put off your old nature and put on Christ. You are accepted as children of God and of the light, by faith in Jesus Christ, and should walk as becomes children of light. Remember always that baptism unites us with Christ in the likeness of his death and resurrection. We who are baptised must reckon ourselves dead unto sin and no longer in bondage to it. We have been raised together with Christ so that we may overcome all evil desires and walk in newness of life. Let us therefore bear witness to the world that Christ is our life, knowing that when he is manifested then they that are his shall also be manifested with him in glory." (19)

The charge for the Church transfers the role of encourager and befrienders from the sponsors to the whole membership of the Church, and further points out the need for further instruction prior to Confirmation and reception of the Lord's Supper. The charge to the baptizands lays further stress on the meaning of the symbolism of the service, and lays stress on the need to witness to the world of the Lordship of Christ.

### 3. The Praxis of Baptism with Relation to the Fellowship of the Church, Particularly Considering Sponsorship

The sponsor seems to have no role in the Church of South India beyond the presentation of the candidate for admission to the catechumenate, and his role in infant baptism seems scarcely to extend

beyond that of holding the baby! The obligation latterly laid upon the sponsor by the later revision which we shall consider are committed here to the whole Church fellowship as we have seen above. Perhaps this rite indicates by the virtual absence of the sponsors in 1963 just how recently their potential role has been rediscovered by the Churches of the Roman communion, and how the role of the sponsor has begun to be recognised afresh.

From even a brief study of the service, it seems to be an inescapable fact that baptism does divide a person from his old life if it is to be taken seriously, but then so does commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord, and I do not think the problem is to be answered by sidestepping the issues, or by suggesting the Lord's Supper as a viable alternative means of permanent identification with the Church<sup>20</sup>.

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5. op. cit. p.102-3
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9. op. cit. p.107
10. op. cit. p.142
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12. op. cit. p.109
13. op. cit. p.109
14. op. cit. p.109-110
15. op. cit. p.110
16. op. cit. p.110
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18. op. cit. p.111 the plurals are italicized throughout
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20. See above p.187-8

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

#### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

At the beginning of the later period of this study the norm of Catholic teaching about Baptism was to be found in

'A Catechism of Christian Doctrine'<sup>1</sup>. In answer to the question

'What is Baptism?' was given the reply:

"Baptism is a sacrament which cleanses us from original sin, makes us Christians, children of God, and members of the Church. Baptism also forgives actual sins, with all punishment due to them, when it is received in proper dispositions by those who have been guilty of actual sin.

We promise in Baptism to renounce the devil and all his work and pomp. Baptism is necessary to salvation, because Christ has said 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' (2)

So it is Baptism which sacramentally makes a person Christian, and whilst the negative renunciation of Satan takes an important part in the section of the catechism, the more positive allegiance to Christ is not mentioned. Although those who have committed actual sin are mentioned, it is plain that the norm is infant baptism from the answer to the questions 'How is Baptism given?':

"Baptism is given by pouring water on the head of the child, saying at the same time these words: 'I Baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit'."

(3)

8/ However, during these last two turbulent decades, particularly since Vatican II a number of these statements have been qualified and expanded. The current Directorium Catechetikum Generale<sup>4</sup> of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy, in its early section, notes the problem which has been exacerbated by indiscriminate infant baptism, namely that 'many baptised persons who have withdrawn so far from their religion that they profess a form of indifferentism or something close to atheism'<sup>5</sup>. As a result of this reaction, Vatican II time and again urged renewal of the ministry of the word in the Church. The DCG comments upon this renewal entering a period of crisis due to those who have failed to fully understand the thinking upon which it was based. It points out that

"In fact, the catechetical plan is to be thoroughly renewed, and this renewal has to do with a continuing education in the Faith, not only for children but also for adults." (6)

and renewed catechesis should take place within the context of general pastoral renewal. So catechesis ought to take its beginning from the gift of divine love from a God who wishes to communicate himself to man, carrying out a plan which proceeds from love<sup>7</sup>. As such it must always be related to the task of evangelization. DCG points out:

"Catechesis proper presupposes a global adherence to Christ's Gospel as presented by the Church. Often, however, it is directed to men who, though they belong to the Church, have in fact never given a true personal adherence to the message of revelation."

"This shows that, according to circumstances, evangelization can precede or accompany the work of catechesis proper. In every case, however, one must keep in mind that the element of conversion is always present in the dynamism of Faith, and for that reason any form of catechesis must also perform the role of evangelization." (8)

It notes the pattern in regions which have a historic Christian

tradition of giving catechesis to children and young people both within and without the educational system. But also it recognises in these regions 'catechumenate programmes for those who are preparing themselves for the reception of baptism, or for those who have been baptized but lack a proper Christian initiation'<sup>9</sup>, and it makes the sober comment:

"Very often the actual conditions of large number of the faithful necessarily demands that some form of evangelization of the baptized precede catechesis." (10)

On the other hand, special importance is placed on evangelizing in the strict sense in national churches that have been recently established, and accordingly 'they have the well-known form of the catechumenate for those who are being initiated in the Faith so that they may prepare themselves for receiving baptism'<sup>11</sup>.

Bishops, referred to in DCG as 'shepherds of souls', have the clear responsibility of the provision of adequate pastoral support and teaching, and they are to give catechesis for adults a high priority:

"They should also remember that catechesis for adults, since it deals with persons who are capable of an adherence that is fully responsible, must be considered the chief form of catechesis. All the other forms, which are indeed always necessary, are in some way oriented to it. In obedience to the norms of the Second Vatican Council, shepherds of souls should also strive 'to re-establish or better adapt the instruction of adult catechumens'." (12)

and the maturity of Faith of all those within their care must be a priority upon their activity.

So we are not surprised to discover in DCG a significantly different definition of baptism, putting into effect the principles of catechesis enunciated in the Directory:

"Baptism cleanses man from original sin and from all personal sins, gives him rebirth as a child of God, incorporates him into the Church, sanctifies him with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and impressing on his soul an indelible character, initiates him in Christ's priestly, prophetic and kingly roles (cf. I Peter 2:9)."

 (13)

The part of faith is clearly emphasized in the preceding section, and by the move of personal sins to a position nearer original sin in the definition, by the addition of the element of sanctification, and by the reference to the priestly prophetic and kingly roles of Christ, as well as the use of the term 'man' rather than 'child', it seems that the move towards adult baptism based on the personal faith of the candidate is far clearer here than in the earlier document. An even more radical change occurs in the definition of confirmation:

"Confirmation is a sacrament by which we receive the Holy Spirit, in order to make us strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ." (14)

"Confirmation binds the Christian more perfectly to the Church, and enriches him with a special strength of the Holy Spirit, that he may live in the world as a witness of Christ." (15)

This renewed emphasis on the Christian's witnessing role in the world is seen in Lumen Gentium and Ad gentes from the Second Vatican Council.

Speaking of the priestly role of all the faithful, Lumen Gentium states:

"It is through the sacraments and the exercise of the virtues that the sacred nature and organic structure of the priestly community is brought into operation. Incorporated into the Church through baptism, the faithful are consecrated by the baptismal character to the exercise of the cult of the Christian religion. Reborn as sons of God, they must confess before men the faith which they have received from God through the Church. Bound more intimately to the Church by the sacrament of confirmation, they are endowed by the Holy Spirit with special strength. Hence they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith both by word and by deed as true witnesses of Christ." (16)

Ad gentes clarifies this idea of a witnessing community of the faithful when it states:

"For, wherever they live, all Christians are bound to show faith, by the example of their lives and by the witness of their speech, that new man which they put on at baptism, and that power of the Holy Spirit by whom they were strengthened at confirmation." (17)

The teaching of the DCG found flesh in the booklet 'Basic Teaching for Catholic Religious Education'<sup>18</sup> and this examined the recommended syllabus and delineates it thus:

1. Mystery of one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. True Worship of God in a world that ignores Him.
3. Knowledge of God and the witness of Christian love.
4. Jesus Christ, Son of God, the First born of all Creation and Saviour.
5. Creation, the beginning of the History of Man's Savlation
6. Jesus Christ the Centre of all God's Saving Works
7. Jesus Christ, true man and true God in the Unity of the Divine Person
8. Jesus Christ, Saviour and Redeemer of the World.
9. The Holy Spirit in the Church and in the Life of the Christian.
10. The Sacraments, actions of Christ in the Church (the universal Sacrament)
11. Religious Instruction of the Sacraments
12. The Eucharist, the Centre of all Sacramental Life.
13. The Sacrament of Matrimony
14. The New man in the Spirit
15. Human and Christian Freedom
16. The Sins of Man
17. The Moral Life of Christians
18. The Perfection of Christian Love
19. Specific in the Teaching of Morality
20. The Church, People of God and Institution for Salvation
21. The Church as a Community
22. The Quest for Unity
23. The Church as the Institution for Salvation
24. Mary, Mother of God, Mother and Model of the Church
25. Final Reunion with God.

(19)

Contemporary with the thinking crystallized by Vatican II, and slightly earlier than DCG came the publication of 'A New Catechism', commissioned by the hierarchy of the Netherlands and produced by the Higher Catechetical Institute of Nijmegen<sup>20</sup>. Subtitled 'The Catholic Faith for Adults' this book took seriously the spirit of the Sacrosanctum Concilium statement which it anticipated that

"The catechumenate for adults, comprising several distinct steps, is to be restored and to put into use at the discretion of the local ordinary." (21)

Sadly however, the Church outside the Netherlands was not ready for their exposition of the Catholic Faith, and the document received the ecclesiological equivalent of an 'X' certificate, in that the Nihil Obstat and Imprimatur were 'granted on the basis that the CATECHISM is interpreted according to the modifications outlined in the SUPPLEMENT'<sup>22</sup>.

The syllabus developed by the authors of the 'New Catechism'

may be summarized thus from the Part headings and Section headings:

Part One	The Mystery of Existence	
Part Two	The Way to Christ	
	A. The Way of the Nations	
	B. The Way of Israel	
Part Three	The Son of Man (a chronological account of the gospels)	
Part Four	The Way of Christ (covering the growth and history of the Church, the Sacraments, Sin and Redemption, Faith, Hope, Love, Christian Prayer, Sunday, Words of Eternal Life, the Eucharist, Priestly People, Pastoral Priesthood, Marriage and the Family, the Evangelical Counsels, Church and State, Reverence for Life, Possessions on Earth, Helping the Needy, the Business of Living, the Quest for Truth, Failures of Christians, Forgiveness.	
Part Five	The Way to the End.	(23)

In its approach to the Gospel account chronologically, its first reference to baptism comes in dealing with the place of John the Baptist in the gospel narrative, and in discussion the place and nature of the baptism which he offered those who responded to his call to repentance. John's ablutionary baptism is seen as a preparation for the baptism with the Holy Spirit and fire of 'He who comes'. This rite of John's gave men the opportunity of showing their readiness for conversion, and their openness to Christ, but nowhere is it suggested that it is a means of entry to the Kingdom as Christian baptism is, rather it pointed the way to the coming of Christ<sup>24</sup>. When Jesus came to submit to the baptism of John, his public ministry began, and

"It is to be expected that Jesus' first public appearance will be described in such a way that the whole kernel of his mission will become apparent." (25)

and the authors point out that Jesus' baptism by John is the second of the initial saving acts celebrated at the Epiphany, but in the story, outward images are used as the expression of a reality which cannot be fully articulated, the contact of the Father with Jesus, and the power of the Holy Spirit. This contact is summed up in the words reported in Mark 1:11: 'Thou art my Son, my beloved; with thee I am well pleased' with all its vital echoes of Isaiah's Servant Songs<sup>26</sup>.

So the writers remind their readers:

"Hence the baptism is a sign of Jesus' role as servant, of his submission and suffering, indeed of his death. Twice Jesus was later to describe his death by the word 'baptism' (Mt. 20:33; Lk 12:50). The beloved Son dedicates himself as servant, sets out on his path of lowliness to be the lamb who bears all sin. This is his vocation." (27)

As the Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove, so the ablutionary baptism of John was given a new significance by this Spirit-baptism. It becomes a symbol of the baptism with the Spirit which will be conferred on all future believers. But the gospel makes it very plain that Jesus' choice of the servant role led him along the path of temptation and ultimately to death, as it brought him into conflict with Satan, and the temptations, the opposite of his baptism<sup>28</sup>. However as the authors remind their catechumens:

"His baptism signified readiness to submit and suffer, to share the common lot, to be a servant, even unto death. In a word he chose not success but service. To be faithful to his task was his joy, and it brought a new joy into the world." (29)

In part Four the writers develop their teaching on baptism in the Church today, and think about its meaning for their readers. They begin by following 'step by step the ceremonies of the solemn celebration of the baptism of adults'<sup>30</sup>, and they begin by defining Baptism as 'the visible sign under which we enter the people of God'<sup>31</sup>. As the ceremonies begin with the admission to the catechumenate, it is made plain to the candidate that he is a long way from his goal by the symbolism of the physical location of the rite, outside the door of the Church, and the fact that the stole of the priest is purple, the colour of Advent and Lent. Indeed, all this rite is rich in symbolism down to its last detail. After the candidate's identity is established, the second question establishes that he is seeking that which is necessary for eternal life. Thus man realizes his inadequacy to attain eternal life apart from the gift of faith, which he cannot produce for himself. Having established the preparedness of the candidate for baptism the priest performs Jesus' paschal gesture

of breathing upon the candidate, bidding the evil spirits depart, and to make way for the Holy Spirit.

The writers then proceed to discuss exorcism which occurs frequently during the baptismal ceremonies and to explain its significance. The evil which threatens man is told to go away, and is always addressed in personal terms as the devil, but the words used envisage all evil, the influence of the sins of others, the evil inclinations of the subject, and his previous errors as regards God. The ceremony shows quite plainly and starkly the battle of light against darkness. There is no room for compromise with evil, for 'the ceremony is a brief and vigorous restatement of a vital hour'<sup>32</sup>. The struggle for life, the conversion of the candidate is summed up without nuances with a biblical succinctness and profundity. The candidate is well aware of the temptation dilemma, darkness and despair which have presented themselves, and will return but he is forcibly reminded of God's peace, goodness and joy set over against them, and well able to triumph over them. The rite continues as the priest makes the sign of the cross on the body of the candidate, so that the whole body may be enlightened by the victory of the cross. At this first meeting between candidate and Church, the eucharist cannot be given, but salt is given in its place, signifying the candidate's preservation against corruption, heralding his new life savouring the things of God, and creating a thirst for water. So the catechumenate begins, which can sometimes last for years.

The second ceremony also depicts the struggle in the catechumen's life between God and Satan. The candidate says the Lord's Prayer and his sponsors join with the priest in making the sign of the cross over him, and evil is bidden to depart by a sharp command. Then the candidate is led into Church for a moment of quiet thanksgiving and then says out loud the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's

Prayer. Thus in public and before God, he calls God his Father, and affirms all that he has experienced in his life and all the instruction given to him in private. Although this public statement may be difficult for some, it is part of the sacrament for:

"It is not an interior monologue in which Christ alone addresses the catechumen. It is a dialogue where the man answers audibly in the framework of the ecclesiastical community."

(33)

Then Christ speaks and acts through the Church, as he does in all sacraments, and following another exorcism, the great gesture of Jesus' touching the ears of the deaf man with saliva is repeated. The writers explain that Jesus' miracles were symbols of the profound healing which he confers in the sacrament. The priest then says 'Emphatha',<sup>34</sup> and also touches the nostrils as a sign that candidate is to receive the sweet odour of Christ. The catechumen is then anointed between the shoulders with the oil of catechumens, signifying suppleness and strength for the combat. This too is 'an answer from Christ, given through the sign performed by his Church the strength to be steadfast',<sup>35</sup>.

The writers follow the spirit of Vatican II closely in commenting upon the particular suitability of the Easter Vigil as a time for baptism. They cite the liturgy of the Easter Vigil which goes right through Scripture to meditate upon the tremendous significance attached to water, from the primeval waters over which God's Spirit passed, through the floods of the deluge, and of the Red Sea, to the water which flowed from the side of Jesus. At the Easter Vigil, the baptismal water is consecrated to its sacred purpose. The writers suggest examples from modern psychology, science and obstetrics to enhance the significance of the water, and describe water as

"the most motherly of all elements, (this) has been set aside by God to be the efficacious sign of our heavenly rebirth."

(36)

Thus the baptizand enters the Church by a birth, as he receives new life of water and the Holy Spirit. Baptism should not be thought of simply in terms of enrolment, for through it the Holy Spirit causes new birth, and makes the baptizand new in and through the community. Just before baptism, the candidate is again interrogated about his faith, and is then asked whether he has come to be baptised of his own free will, and then baptism takes place by effusion in the triune name, and the writers explain:

"The water signifies birth, the words specify what birth it is, namely that the Holy Spirit enters into us, gives us life, and makes us children of the Father." (37)

Baptism itself is followed by the anointing of the neophyte with chrism, signifying the good odour of the Holy Spirit.

Through the Christ who sanctifies, the writers explain, we are Christ and Christ is in us. The baptized are filled with sanctifying grace. This mystery can be expressed in three different ways which all mean the same thing: to receive the Holy Spirit, to receive sanctifying grace (to be in a state of grace) to be in Christ. They go on to explain to the baptized that to be 'in Christ' is to live his life, which is only made possible by the Holy Spirit, and so the baptized begin to share in the new creation.

The flowing water of baptism also signifies cleansing and is a reminder that sin has no place in the baptized who have been taken up into Christ. It washes away actual sin, and it even conquers the roots of sin through this contact with Jesus, although this conquest cannot be separated from man's whole life struggle to overcome sin. The baptized's cleansed state through baptism enables him to be a friend of God, and to make a fresh start in all purity, and it is plain light has conquered the darkness in his life. The authors comment that this is why baptism is also called illumination<sup>38</sup>. After their chrismation, the baptized are blessed and given a white garment and a

burning candle, symbolizing their purity and light. However, baptismal cleansing is a once for all event, 'as is expressed by saying that baptism of water confers a character which can never be effaced'<sup>39</sup>. The exception, the writers point out is where the will not to be baptised exists during the baptism, and they promise to speak of child baptism later. At this point, the Supplement<sup>40</sup> sought to explain more fully the points raised subsequent to baptism being a once for all event. It added the concept of the baptizand through baptism participating in the priesthood of Christ, as with confirmation, and in a special way with orders, as it sought to explain further the concept of a 'character' conferred by baptism. They go on to say:

"A person is baptized, confirmed and ordained priest for ever. Hence these sacraments cannot be repeated. But if someone during his baptism explicitly wishes not to be baptized, he is of course not baptized." (41)

The Catechism then takes up the point of the idea of sharing Christ's burial in baptism, and they point out the double significance of water, meaning both salvation and destruction. Taking their starting point in Romans 6:3-4, they point out that the symbolism of these verses is best served by the practice of immersion, in which the 'old man' is given over to death, and thus the 'old man' in baptism dies and vanishes along with Christ's death<sup>42</sup>. Although this means primarily the forgiveness of sin, it also means the transformation of the life of the baptized. Reminding their readers of what was said above when discussing Jesus' baptism by John they state that the baptized affirms their solidarity with Christ's way of service, of suffering and finally of death and they teach:

"Our death is our truest baptism. We accept it like Jesus, with Jesus, and in Jesus. The fact that our Lord has redeemed us does not mean that he has set us beyond sin and sufferings. It means that we must join him in redeeming ourselves and others in his way." (43)

The whole-life struggle of the Christian is to be humble and serviceable, peacemakers and poor of spirit, strengthened by Christ's example, Christ's strength and by partaking wholly in his Spirit.

Death is thus the last act of Christian service, which sets the Christian wholly free to serve his Lord. This can be fruitful because God has turned the woes of mankind into the birth pangs of new life.

They explain:

"When we enter the water it is a symbol of death; when we leave it, it is the symbol of resurrection and rebirth. That is why baptism is conferred on the happy night of Easter."

(44)

But as they have already said, baptism is not a solitary, individual matter, concerning only individual contact with the Lord. That contact only takes place because the baptized is taken into the Church, and as it builds up the body of Christ, Baptism 'builds new stones into the church'<sup>45</sup>. Without distinction of race, class or intelligence, Baptism causes the adoption of the baptized into the fellowship which seeks to be a servant along with Jesus:

"Together we pass through the Red Sea, to be obedient to our call and to place our little lives and our death under the sign of service. We become little ones by joining in with God's little ones, just as Christ joined in and became a common man along with us. And likewise we break with the opposite attitude to life."

(46)

Thus this sacrament of fellowship sets up a line of demarcation in the midst of humanity, between those who make Christ's baptism unto death come true in their own lives, through the baptism of service, and those who make Satan's temptation of power the pattern for their way of life. Here the decisive factor is not the reception of baptism, but whether baptism is allowed to 'come true' in the life of the baptized. However, this dividing line seems to run straight through the self, as part of the self responds to the call of Christ 'I am ready', whilst the other part responds 'I will not serve'<sup>47</sup>.

The authors comment that sometimes baptism is marked by a

sudden spiritual growth and greater purity, whilst on other occasions, there is no perceptible change in the baptized. They stress that neither baptism nor the Christian life should not be viewed in isolation, but seen as part of the whole life of the Church.

"the centuries have been marked by a broad deep stream of quiet goodness and unassuming service. The new innocence which the Spirit has created, the new personality into which so many millions have been born, have really changed the face of the earth. We cannot imagine what the harshness of mankind might have been without the Baptism brought by Jesus." (48)

And in a further brief paragraph they view the content of the community in ecumenical fashion, acknowledging the reality of the baptism of those baptized outside the Catholic Church. But what of those who have not been baptized, but who have voluntarily accepted a life of readiness to serve. The authors tell us that they make contact with Jesus in any case by the fact that they are born because 'they have Jesus as their fellow man'<sup>49</sup> and they point out that the Church is convinced that if they are men of good will, they will share in the blessings of Jesus' redemption. Loyalty to their task in life, service to the end, baptizes them with the baptism with which Jesus was baptised. They then discuss baptism of blood, and the baptism of desire, which can include even unconscious desire, and teach that 'everyone who is prepared to be 'obedient unto death' is touched by Christian baptism'<sup>50</sup>. However, this does not mean that the baptism of water, the efficacious sign, may be omitted and they depict its function as threefold:

"It shows that we need the forgiveness which it brings. It proclaims that the Lord is in contact with us. It gathers us, visibly and tangibly, as one people to which the Spirit is given and where forgiveness is at work." (51)

The authors of the supplement want to make this more explicit and to add the idea of rebirth to the third element:

"The dignity of the baptism of desire should not make us draw the false conclusion that the efficacious sign of the baptism of water can be omitted. The sign had a threefold task to perform. It shows that we have need of forgiveness. It proclaims that the Lord is in contact with us. It gathers us tangibly and visibly into one

people, and hence causes our rebirth through the Spirit who lives in this people."

(52)

These elements are not formalities, but as they link baptism with Christian preaching and the intensity of Christ's forgiveness, they mean that baptism brings about a reality, the reality of the presence of Christ in the world.

The authors then go on to speak about Infant baptism and about the fate of unbaptized infants, which time precludes us from considering here. However, in a closing paragraph, they plead for Baptism to be seen as part of a totality:

"It is important not to isolate baptism and envisage it only as something individual and momentary, which takes place between God and the soul. As soon as the baptism of water is taken out of the whole great context, strange problems arise, as the history of the Church has shown. Just as the hand is only really a hand in the totality of the body, so too baptism is only a genuine sign of Christ in the totality in which he gives it to us, the totality of our life and death, the totality of Christian upbringing, of the fellowship of the Church and of mankind." (53)

In a later paragraph concerning the relationship between confirmation and baptism, the authors explain the connection in that the gift of the Spirit which is bestowed in baptism is strengthened in confirmation, the 'Pentecostal Finale' of baptism. They note the original timing of confirmation immediately after baptism and remind their readers:

"Just as Jesus was anointed by the Spirit after coming out of the Jordan, and just as he breathed the Spirit upon his disciples soon after rising from the dead (and just as, in fact, the people were anointed with perfumes after bathing), so too, after the purification on which the emphasis is laid at baptism, the joy and strength of the Holy Spirit are celebrated once more very specially at confirmation." (54)

Thus although this document predates OICA by some four years, and bases its catechesis on the previous service of baptism of adults it does incorporate the thinking and principles of Vatican II

into its explanation of that service, and in so doing marks an early attempt to deal catechetically with the innovations and clarification of Vatican II.

In 1976 a more orthodox Catechism was published entitled 'The Teaching of Christ'<sup>55</sup>. It has a preface, subscribed by the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Clergy and very closely models its teachings on the syllabus outlined in the DCG and the Basic Teachings for Catholic Religious Education<sup>56</sup>, and unlike the New Catechism was at least mentioned by some of my correspondents; even if the title was not always exact!

Baptism, the authors tell us, is conferred by water and the Holy Spirit and at confirmation, the Christian receives a strengthening in the power of the Holy Spirit. The essential task of the Holy Spirit in the lives of Christians is to make them holy, and this task begins at baptism when the Holy Spirit begins 'to dwell in the soul, to endow it with sanctifying grace, to implant in it faith and love and other rich gifts'<sup>57</sup>. By baptism the Christian is born to newness of life and Christ Himself is always the minister of baptism:

"Though men serve as agents for Christ, Christ Himself is the principal minister of baptism and of every sacrament. For this reason the Church declares that the sacred signs we call sacraments are deeds of Christ in His Church. Sacraments are outward signs instituted by Christ to give grace. Sacramental participation underscores both aspects of the mystery of grace. The initiative is entirely the Lord's. The sacraments are His actions, His saving deeds, performed by Him, through His ministers. But they are fruitful in an adult, only when there is in the recipient a free inner disposition, a willing response to grace."

(58)

The major section on Baptism and the Sacraments of Initiation begins with a definition of those Sacraments of Initiation from the Introduction of the Rite of Baptism for Children<sup>59</sup>:

"The three sacraments of Christian initiation closely combine to bring the faithful to the full stature of Christ and to enable them to carry out the mission of the entire people of God in the Church and in the world."

(60)

They begin by thinking of baptism in terms of salvation history, and they begin with the liturgy of the Holy Saturday Vigil which richly expresses the meaning of baptism. The liturgy takes its starting point from the creation story (Genesis 1:1-2:2) illustrating the power of God and culminating in the creation of human life, and the authors explain that this narrative of divine power is a symbol of that which Paul would call a new creation. This new creation actually takes place at the climax of the vigil in baptism. The second reading from Genesis 22:1-18 shows Abraham's readiness to sacrifice Isaac in obedience to the Lord's command. This is a foreshadowing of Christ's sacrifice in obedience to the command of God, from which baptism receives its power. Isaac was spared and rose from the altar alive, and a ram was offered in his place. Jesus died, but rose again in a resurrection far greater than Isaac's. The third reading from Exodus 14:15-15:1 tells of the deliverance of the Jews from the Egyptians at the Red Sea. This is linked with the account of the paschal sacrifice, anticipated on Maundy Thursday, and centering upon the idea of deliverance through water, a necessary background for understanding the Lord's use of water and for understanding the power of baptism. The double symbolism of water, symbolising death and destruction as well as life and salvation, becomes even clearer in the story of Noah which is alluded to in the fourth reading from Isaiah 54:5-14, when water is used by God to destroy his enemies and save those who are faithful to him. The remaining readings from Isaiah 55:1-11; Baruch 3:9-15; 32-44; Ezekiel 26:16-17a; 18-28 celebrate God's wonderful use of water, and point forward to the new creation by promising a new heart and a new Spirit to men. Thus the vigil sets the stage for the celebration of the events of the fulness

of time, when John the Baptist made his appearance in the Judaeen desert, proclaiming the need for baptism for repentance and for the forgiveness of sins. It was to John that Jesus came,

"going down into the waters of the Jordan, brings this long dramatic sequence of water events to completion. Sinless Himself, He leads His people from sin through the waters of baptism to a new covenant with the Father." (61)

By the waters of baptism, sins and evil are destroyed and the baptized rises to a new life sharing in the resurrection of Jesus. As Paul wrote to the Romans:

"our old self was crucified with Him so that the sinful body might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin." (62)

Then, the catechumens are assured, the whole paschal mystery the dying and rising of Christ as it envelops the baptized is summarized by Paul in a passage read on Easter morning:

"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died and your life is hid with Christ in God." (63)

So the authors set their baptismal catechesis against the biblical and liturgical background of salvation history culminating in Christ. Their starting point is the events leading up to the baptismal rite, and from there they mention the long period of preparation for the adult catechumen which is completed by the Easter Vigil. The Vigil itself begins with a Light Service. The Paschal candle is lighted from a new fire symbolising the risen Christ. This Paschal candle is carried in procession to the sanctuary, and as it does its light is diffused throughout the congregation as others light their candles from it. Following the readings discussed above, the emphasis moves to the joy of the resurrection as altar candles are lighted, a Gloria is sung and the church bells are rung. Then all is ready to welcome the passage of the neophytes through the waters of baptism to the resurrection Christ offers them. First the

water is blessed with a prayer which sums up the salvation history just recounted in the readings. The paschal candle is lowered into the water of the baptistry and through the risen Christ whom the candle signifies, the font now becomes life-giving and

"The font, the womb of the Church, will bring forth children of God, as once more the Spirit of God is 'moving over the face of the waters'." (64)

Then the baptismal promises are pronounced, followed by a profession of faith, and finally there is the baptism itself. Those baptized are then anointed with chrism, recalling Christ's anointing by the Spirit which is now shared by the new Christians. This foreshadows and anticipates the anointing of confirmation which may take place at this point. The baptized thus become members of the community of God's covenanted people and will now be allowed to share in the 'holy priesthood' in its work of offering sacrifices acceptable to God. The ceremony is completed by the investment of those being baptized with a symbolic white garment, which is a token of their baptismal innocence, and they are then ready to share in the Eucharist, with which the vigil continues, and in which the death and resurrection of the Lord is celebrated and renewed.

The authors comment that OICA lays a major emphasis on the community aspect of baptism<sup>65</sup>, and they point out that Lent belongs to the whole community as a period of penance and renewal, as well as to the catechumens who are preparing their lives to commit them to Christ. The whole community are encouraged to share this time with the catechumens not only as elder statesmen, but

"The baptized Christian is encouraged to approach each Easter as one should when solemnly preparing for baptism. Today also every Christian has in Lent the opportunity to relive his baptism experience and deepen the realization of its meaning as he renews his baptismal vows at the Easter Vigil." (66)

The authors then move on to discuss the rite of Baptism

and its effects. The rite of baptism deals basically with the practicalities of baptism stressing at the outset that even when baptism is not celebrated at Easter, 'still the spirit of the paschal mystery must always penetrate its celebration'<sup>67</sup>. The rite, they tell their readers, may either be administered by triple immersion or effusion in the name of the Trinity, and both water and words symbolize the new life to which the candidate is called. Bishops, Priests and Deacons are the ordinary ministers of baptism although anyone can administer baptism, even a non-Christian, 'by performing the rite with the serious intent to baptize in accord with the mind of the Church'<sup>68</sup>. Each baptismal candidate should have at least one godparent who should be a mature Catholic, living the faith, and able to fulfil a role of spiritual concern for the one baptized. A Christian name, normally a saint's name is to be given at baptism.

Whereas the 'New Catechism' took as its basis the then current service of Baptism of Adults, in looking at the effects of baptism, 'The Teaching of Christ' uses as a basis the General Introduction of the Rite of Baptism for Children, which they tell us, 'crystallizes' the Church's teachings on the sacrament'<sup>69</sup>. One of these teachings concerns the manner of man's justification through grace. Man is justified by God's grace and gifts, and this is 'not only a remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the inner man...'<sup>70</sup>. The Church insists that it is an interior sanctification, a true inward renewal, which is accomplished 'when by the merit of the same most holy passion, the charity of God is poured forth through the Holy Spirit in the hearts (cf. Romans 5:5) of those who are justified and inheres in them'<sup>71</sup>. By baptism men are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ; they die with Him, are buried with Him and rise with Him. Baptism produces all its effects by the power of the mystery of the Lord's passion and resurrection<sup>72</sup>.

The first effect examined is that of the death of the old self when the baptized passes through the cleansing waters of baptism and is set on a new way of life. When an adult is baptized, his sins are forgiven even as he receives a new life of grace, for divine grace, because of the death and resurrection of Christ has a forgiving and healing effect. Baptism remits all original sin, and for those baptized after infancy, all personal sins of which he sincerely repents. Indeed the convert to Christ is forgiven by a divine amnesty in baptism, he does not need to submit to the power of the keys by confessing his sins. However he is not freed from the inclination to sin by his rebirth in baptism but

"It is 'left for us to wrestle with', but it 'cannot harm those who do not consent but manfully resist through the grace of Jesus Christ'." (73)

This agonising struggle with his own desires involves the baptized in a lifelong sharing in the dying of Jesus. God permits this struggle so that the faithful may more fully share in the great work of their own redemption. Sometimes the struggle seems almost too severe, but steadfastness is made possible by the healing and quickening grace of the risen Jesus who ensures victory to those who desire victory.

The baptized die with Christ only to rise with Him to share His life, so it is only logical to consider 'Rising with Christ' as the next effect of baptism. It is the risen life of Christ which the baptized share, and this produces the interior renewal which they experience. But to share the risen life of Christ is to become a member of the community where his risen life is celebrated, so baptism also makes them members of the Church, and the authors describe this as a radical change for the new Christian who is vitally joined to the body of Christ by an all pervading bond of life.

But baptism effects both a rising with Christ and a new

birth so that the baptized become the children of God, albeit by adoption:

"Baptism, the cleansing with water by the power of the living Word, makes us sharers in God's own life and his adopted children." (74)

Jesus himself assures the baptized that they become the children of God through baptism in John 3:5, the authors tell their readers. Since Jesus is the only Son of God the baptized receive the status of adopted sons (Galatians 4:5) but this adoption is no legal fiction. They go on to point out that offspring share the nature of their parents, and so the baptized must in some way share in the nature and life of God if they are truly children of God.

The fourth effect of baptism to which the reader's attention is drawn is that of the Royal Priesthood of which Peter speaks in I Peter 2:5. In this passage Peter is recalling the Exodus where all the Jewish people were spoken of as a royal priesthood (Exodus 19:6) although only the Levites were specially designated for divine service.

"In a similar way, while a new order of priests, sharing Christ's High Priesthood, has been instituted to continue and renew His sacrifice all the baptized are now called to join in worshipping God fully, consciously and actively." (75)

Peter is quite plainly speaking of the worship of the people not only in the liturgical sense, but in the wider sense of embracing and sanctifying all the duties of life. Picking up the idea of I Peter 2:9 the Rite of Baptism for Children brings these ideas together, and states that:

"baptism is the sacrament by which men and women are incorporated into the Church, built into a house where God lives, in the Spirit into a holy nation and a royal priesthood." (76)

The authors then go on to deal with infant baptism in a fairly brief section which cannot concern us here. They then write of the necessity for baptism, reminding their readers that the Church, heeding the words of the Gospel teaches that no one can enter the

kingdom of heaven unless he is baptized, and they go on to explain the difference between sacramental baptism, baptism in blood, and baptism of desire in similar terms to that of the New Catechism<sup>77</sup>, but replacing 'a good life' for a 'life of faithful obedience' implied in the New Catechism.

The question of the baptismal character concerns them next, and they point out that the Church teaches that baptism, like confirmation and orders, imprints a permanent character or sign on the life of the baptized. This, they say is analogous to the Scriptural idea of the seal which marked or identified ownership. Yet, they say, 'the sacramental character is visible only in that it is conferred in a visible rite'<sup>78</sup>. The term character is associated with sacraments which cannot be repeated, for apart from the grace which they confer the sacraments have a lasting effect. The character or seal points to the stability of the Church and its permanence, and it cries out a message of the endurance of God's gifts and of his great mercy among those whom He has chosen. So the baptismal character is that

"all participate in a basic way in the royal priesthood of Christ, are designated for divine worship, and are rendered capable of offering their whole lives in union with His sacrifice. Even if they fall they can be reconciled to the Church by the sacrament of penance without a repetition of baptism."

(79)

By the baptismal character Christ marks out His chosen ones. It is the sign at once of the Christian's permanent vocation, of his call by Jesus Christ, in the first place of God's initial and undiscourageable love.

The emphasis however, seems to be on what the sacraments do for the baptized <sup>rather</sup> than on the faith expressed by the baptized in obedience to Christ, and in response to the love of God. This seems to be a retrenchment of the position from some part of OICA.

Similarly the insistence on separating confirmation from baptism and to suggest a special propriety in its conferment by the bishop<sup>80</sup> is also moving back from the position expressed in OICA's interpretation of Vatican II. This gives weight to the fears expressed by Ralph Keifer in connection with his comments about the new initiatory rites which he welcomed but commented:

"They are in many ways out of step with the presuppositions of those who must use them. They also provide a possible critique of church life as it is presently lived. For those reasons they are not apt to be received with open arms and they will not be easily understood." (81)

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

Having introduced the new ordo in such a tantalizing way, we must now turn our attention to its contents, although at this point we note once again the fact that in the twentieth century, even more than in the fourth century, catechesis and mystagogy have become interwoven and entwined together in the preparation of candidates for initiation. For the most part the mystagogy will be drawn from the rubric of the service, but some material produced in the United States by those using the new Ordo and recommended by various clergy in the United Kingdom is also under consideration in this section.

On the feast of the Epiphany, January 6th 1972, the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship issued its decree<sup>82</sup> authorising the use of a new typical edition of the rite for the Christian Initiation for Adults replacing the rite of the baptism of adults which was presently in the Roman Ritual:

"The Second Vatican Council prescribed the revision of the rite of baptism of adults and decreed that the catechumenate for adults in several stages should be restored. This was to be done so that the period of the catechumenate, a period of appropriate formation, might be sanctified by liturgical rites celebrated at various times. In addition the council decreed that both the solemn and simple rites of adult baptism should be revised in the light of the restored catechumenate.

In observance of these decrees, the Congregation for Divine

Worship prepared a new rite for the Christian initiation of adults, which has been approved by Pope Paul VI. The congregation has published this rite and declares the present edition to be the typical edition, to replace the rite of baptism of adults now in the Roman Ritual. It likewise decrees that this new rite may be used at once in Latin and in the vernacular from the day to be indicated by the episcopal conference after it has prepared a translation and had it confirmed by the Apostolic See." (83)

This rite marks an important advance in the thinking of the Catholic Church, following Vatican II and thus provides a further variation on the Baptismal theme; as this Church began to look back to the ancient practice of the Church, and to model their present day practice upon it insófar as it was relevant to them.

Early in the introduction it is noted that the rites of the catechumenate are included in the new order, because Vatican II had decreed that the catechumenate should be restored, revised, and accommodated to local traditions, noting that it was approved by the ancient practice of the Church, and adapted to contemporary missionary work throughout the world.

"The catechumenate for adults, comprising several distinct steps, is to be restored and to be put into use at the discretion of the local ordinary. By this means the period of the catechumenat e, which is intended as a time of suitable instruction, may be sanctified by sacred rites to be celebrated at successive intervals." (84)

The purpose of the catechumenate, particularly in missionary work, is defined in Ad gentes:

"Those who, through the Church, have accepted from God a belief in Christ should be admitted to the catechumenate by liturgical rites. The catechumenate is not a mere expounding of doctrines and precepts, but a training period for the whole Christian life. It is an apprenticeship of appropriate length during which disciples are joined to Christ their Teacher. Therefore, catechumens should be properly instructed in the mystery of salvation and in the practice of gospel morality. By sacred rites which are to be held in successive intervals, they should be introduced into the life of faith, liturgy, and love, which God's People live.

Then, when the sacraments of Christian initiation have freed them from the power of darkness (cf. Col. 1:13) having died with Christ, been buried with Him, and risen with Him (cf. Rom. 6:4-11; Col. 2:12-13;

I Pet. 3:21-22; Mk. 16:16), they receive the Spirit (cf. I Th. 3:5-7; Acts 8:14-17) who makes them adopted sons, and celebrate the remembrance of the Lord's death and resurrection together with the whole People of God.

It is the desire of this Council that the liturgy of the Lenten and Easter seasons be restored in such a way as to dispose the hearts of the catechumens to celebrate the paschal mystery at whose solemn ceremonies they are reborn to Christ through baptism.

But this Christian initiation through the catechumenate should be taken care of not only by catechists or priests, but by the entire community of the faithful, especially by the sponsors. Thus, right from the outset the catechumens will feel that they belong to the People of God. Since the life of the Church is an apostolic one, the catechumens should also learn to co-operate actively, by the witness of their lives and by the profession of their faith, in the spread of the gospel and in the upbuilding of the Church.

Finally, the juridical status of catechumens should be clearly defined in the new code of canon law. For since they are joined to the Church they are already of the household of Christ. In many cases they are already leading a life of faith, hope and charity." (85)

I have quoted this passage at length, because it is a key passage in indicating the changes which are made through the new office.

Particularly noteworthy are paragraphs 4, mentioning the important role of the sponsors, which is reflected in the Liturgy, and paragraph 5, which hints at some of the problems for the Church of those who are baptized as infants, but who have:

"withdrawn so far from their religion that they profess a form of indifferentism, or something close to atheism." (86)

Thus the purpose of catechetical training is defined<sup>as</sup> such as will make men's faith become living conscious and active through the light of instruction. For this purpose, instruction should be based on

"sacred Scripture, tradition, the liturgy, the teaching authority and life of the Church." (87)

And this section lays upon bishops the clear and stated responsibility to:

"re-establish or better adapt the instruction of adult catechumens." (88)

The introduction to the office makes it plain that the initiation of catechumens is part of the overall life of the Church, and should take place in the midst of the community of the faithful,

"Together with the catechumens, the faithful reflect upon the value of the paschal mystery, renew their own conversion, and by their example lead the catechumens to obey the Holy Spirit more generously." (89)

Following the analogy of the Spiritual journey from Ad gentes:

"This conversion, to be sure, must be regarded as a beginning. Yet it is sufficient that a man realize that he has been snatched away from sin and led into the mystery of the love of God, who has called him to enter into a personal relationship with Him in Christ. For, by the workings of divine grace, the new convert sets out on a spiritual journey. Already sharing through faith in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, he journeys from the old man to the new one, perfected in Christ (cf. Col. 3:5-10; Eph. 4:20-24)" (90)

the introduction defines the spiritual journey of the catechumen towards baptism in three stages:

- a) First stage: at the point of initial conversion, he wishes to become a Christian and is accepted as a catechumen by the Church.
- b) Second stage: when his faith has grown and the catechumenate is almost completed, he is admitted to a more profound preparation for the sacraments.
- c) Third stage: after the spiritual preparation is completed, he receives the sacraments by which a Christian is initiated.

These three stages, steps, or gateways are to be considered as major, more serious moments of initiation and are marked by liturgical rites: the first by the rite of becoming a catechumen, the second by the election or choice, and the third by the celebration of the sacraments.

7. These stages lead to periods of investigation and maturation, or the latter prepare for the stages.

- a) The first period consists of inquiry by the candidate and evangelization and the pre-catechumenate on the part of the Church. It ends with entrance into the order of catechumens.
- b) The second period which begins with this entrance into the order of catechumens and may last for several years, includes catechesis and the rites connected with catechesis. It is completed on the day of election.
- c) The third period, shorter in length, ordinarily occupies the Lenten preparation for the Easter celebration and the sacraments. It is a time of purification and enlightenment of 'illumination'.
- d) The final period goes through the whole Easter season and is called the postbaptismal catechesis or 'mystagogia'. It is a time for deepening the Christian experience, for gaining spiritual fruit, and for entering more closely into the life and unity of the community of the faithful.

Thus there are four continuous periods:

- the precatechumenate, a time for hearing the first preaching of the Gospel.
- the catechumenate, set aside for a complete catechesis;
- the period of purification and enlightenment or illumination (Lent) for a more profound spiritual preparation; and
- the postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogia (Easter season), marked with the new experience of the sacraments and of the Christian community." (91)

On the surface there seems to be a divergence between Ad gentes and OICA concerning the point at which the Christian comes to faith in Christ. Ad gentes appears to define the point of faith before the admission to the catechumenate, whilst OICA suggests that the desire to become a Christian is the qualification for admission to the catechumenate, and then suggesting that when faith has grown the candidate is admitted to the profound period of preparation for the sacraments. In a sense this is a chicken-and-egg situation, of which the solution probably lies in the definition of the sacrament as an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. It is interesting to note the involvement of the sponsors at the precatechumenate stage<sup>92</sup>, and of the steps to involve the whole community rather than simply the priesthood at this early point in the catechumen's spiritual journey<sup>93</sup>.

It is the plainly stated intention of the rite to restore Baptism particularly for adults to its paschal setting.

Sacrosanctum Concilium points out that the Lenten Season has a twofold character:

"it recalls baptism or prepares for it; 2) it stresses a penitential spirit..... In the liturgy itself and in liturgy centred instruction, these baptismal and penitential themes should be more pronounced. Hence:  
 a) Wider use is to be made of the baptismal features proper to the Lenten Liturgy; some elements which belong to a now lapsed tradition may be opportunely restored." (94)

The initiation of Christians is described as 'the first sacramental sharing in the death and rising of Christ'<sup>95</sup>, and the Easter Vigil is considered to be the proper occasion for the sacraments of initiation.

For the Catholic Church the proximate preparation for sacramental initiation begins with the celebration of the election, or enrolment of names. This rite ends the catechumenate, and completes the lengthy formation of the mind and heart. The Catechumen is expected to demonstrate a conversion of mind and morals, a sense of faith and charity, and a sufficient knowledge of Christian teaching. He must have an enlightened faith, and a deliberate intention of receiving the sacraments of the Church.

In this rite, which is called election

"because the admission made by the Church is founded in the election by God, in whose name the Church acts. It is also called the enrolment or inscription of names because the candidates, as a pledge of fidelity write their names in the book of the elect." (96)

the church begins by hearing the testimony of the godparents and catechists<sup>97</sup>. The candidates reaffirm in the rite their intention and their faith, and then the Church passes judgment on their state of preparation and states whether they may go on to the Easter sacraments. The candidates are from this point onward described as the 'elect', the 'enlightened' or 'illumed', or as 'competentes' - mature catechumens who contend to receive the sacraments of Christ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The rite of election normally takes place on the first Sunday in Lent, so that the final preparation of the elect is

"in harmony with the lenten season which will benefit the elect because of its own proper liturgical structure and the community's participation." (98)

The rite of Election begins with the priest's statement to the celebrant who is the Bishop or his delegate :

"Reverend Father:

As Easter draws near, these catechumens are completing their period of preparation. They have been strengthened by God's grace and supported by this community's example and prayers. Now they request that, after further preparation and the celebration of the scrutinies, they will be allowed to receive the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the eucharist."

Heavy stress is laid upon the support from the community which has been given and which must continue to be given to these mature catechumens. It is not seen as an individual act, but the Church community is heavily involved at this stage, and indeed at each step of the spiritual journey. The elect are then called forward with their sponsors by name and questioned because, in the celebrant's words:

"God's holy Church wishes to be certain that these catechumens are ready to be admitted among the ranks of the chosen for the coming celebration of Easter." (100)

The sponsors are asked whether the candidates have been attentive to the proclamation of God's word, whether the candidates are living lives which bear testimony to their Christian commitment and whether they have joined regularly in prayer and worship with their Christian Brethren. After they have answered these questions, the whole congregation is asked to indicate its assent. Then the candidates have to affirm their intention to receive

"Christ's sacraments of entry into his Church, the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and the eucharist." (101)

Following their satisfactory answer they are enrolled as those who have been chosen to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at the Easter Vigil, and they are reminded of their duty both to seek the help of God, and to strive courageously to reach the goal that their calling opens up to them. The sponsors are reminded too that their duties continue:

"These catechumens have been entrusted to you in the Lord, and you have given us a favourable report. By your loving care and example continue to help them until they receive the sacraments of God's life." (102)

The Rite concludes with the prayer and the dismissal of the elect by the celebrant with the promise that 'we shall meet you again'.

For the elect, their spiritual and catechetical preparation is completed through the scrutinies and presentations which take place throughout the Lenten period. The scrutinies are intended to

purify the catechumens' minds and hearts, to strengthen them against temptation, to purify their intentions and to make firm their decision, so that they may make progress in their efforts to love God more deeply<sup>103</sup>. The scrutinies have a twofold purpose, to reveal anything that is weak, defective, or sinful in the hearts of the elect, so that it may be healed, and to reveal anything that is upright, strong and holy, so that it may be strengthened.

"The scrutinies are intended to free them from sin and the devil and to give them strength in Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life for his chosen ones." (104)

The elect are expected to progress in sincere self knowledge, in a serious appraisal of self, and in true penance. They are helped in this by the rites of exorcism:

"In it, the Church teaches the elect about the mystery of Christ who frees from sin. By exorcism they are freed from the effects of sin and from the influence of the devil, and they are strengthened in their spiritual journey and open their hearts to receive the gifts of the Savior." (105)

They are further assisted by the Lections chosen for the Third, Fourth and Fifth Sundays of Lent, reminding them that Christ is the Living Water, the Light, and the Resurrection and the Life. During the scrutinies, the elect are accompanied by their godparents who remind them physically of their presence by placing their right hand on the shoulder of the one they are sponsoring<sup>106</sup>. This physical contact and companionship is seen as a means of strength for the elect in their battle to expel sin from their lives. They are also aware of being surrounded by the prayers of the faithful.

Although the presentations may be anticipated<sup>107</sup>, their intended place is at a Weekday Mass, between the scrutinies, when the Church entrusts the elect with the documents which are considered a summary of its faith and prayer from ancient time, to lead them to enlightenment. In the presentations of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer the intention is to deepen the faith and joy of the elect as their salvation is recalled, and as they are reminded of their

sonship of the God whom they call Father<sup>108</sup>. The profession of faith, is given to be memorized and given back as it is recited in the service of Baptism. The Lord's Prayer is given so that when, as neophytes, they take part in their first eucharist, they will say it together with the rest of the baptised.

It is intended that as far as possible Holy Saturday should be used by the elect as a time of prayer, recollection of mind, and as a time of fasting, in accordance with their ability to fast, as an extension of the Paschal fast which is mandatory on Good Friday<sup>109</sup>. Thus this day is to be used as a real time of spiritual preparation for baptism. Also on Holy Saturday it is suggested that some of the rites that are immediately preparatory to baptism may be celebrated:

"such as the recitation of the profession of faith, the ephphatha or opening of ears and mouth, the choosing of a Christian name, and, if it is to be done, the anointing with the oil of catechumens." (110)

The recitation of the profession of faith is to prepare the elect to profess their baptismal faith, and to teach them their duty of proclaiming the Gospel message throughout their Christian lives.

As the prayer suggests:

"Lord  
our chosen brothers and sisters  
have accepted your loving plan of salvation  
and the mysteries of Christ's life.  
May they proclaim these mysteries in prayer,  
be true to them in faith,  
and accomplish your will in their lives." (111)

The rite of the ephphatha demonstrates that grace is needed for anyone to be able to hear the word of God and to work for salvation. A new 'Christian' name may also be given, stressing the point of the newness of life to which the candidate is raised following his baptism. The rubric concerning the anointing with oil indicates a little of the transient state of the Catholic Church's liturgical revisions:

"The anointing with the oil of catechumens may be conferred on Holy Saturday if the episcopal conference decides to continue this practice and if it cannot be done during the Easter Vigil because of lack of time. It may be done either separately or with the recitation of the profession of faith or creed; or it may be done before it, to prepare for the profession of faith or creed, or after it, to confirm it."

(112)

The three sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the eucharist are seen as the final stage of the initiation of the elect into the Church. The elect come forward, and, with their sins forgiven, are admitted into the people of God. They receive the adoption of the sons of God, and are led by the Holy Spirit into the promised fulness of time, and, in the eucharistic sacrifice and meal, to the banquet of the Kingdom of God.

The introduction to the rite explains that preparation for the celebration of baptism is by means of the blessing of the baptismal water and the profession of faith. The blessing of the water recalls the dispensation of the paschal mystery, and the choice of water for the sacramental operation of the mystery, thus the mystery is declared before all those present. The purpose of the profession of faith is stated clearly:

"The rites of the renunciation of sin and the profession of faith also recall, in the active faith of those to be baptised, the same paschal mystery which has been recalled in the blessing of water and briefly professed by the celebrant in the words of baptism. Adults are not saved unless they come forward of their own accord and are willing to accept the gift of God by faith. Baptism is the sacrament of faith, not only the faith of the Church, but also the candidates' own faith, and it is expected that it will be an active faith in them. When they are baptised, they should not receive such a sacrament passively, for of their own will they enter into a covenant with Christ, rejecting their errors and adhering to the true God."

(113)

The stress is rightly laid upon the adults free choice to be baptised and thus to be saved, and their need willingly to accept the gift of God. Very much it is baptism of believers which is being talked about here, although there is a grey area with regard to the actual point

of a person's commitment. Paragraph 18 implies that conversion which leads to the catechumenate is spiritually the decisive stage for the individual. Similarly paragraph 19(2) describes that conversion experience in these terms:

"Already sharing through faith in the mystery of Christ's death and resurrection, they pass from the old man to the new one made perfect in Christ." (114)

On the other hand this paragraph (30) seems to indicate that there is no salvation without baptism, or at least the willingness to undergo it. The rite of immersion or of infusion, or of pouring, is to be seen not merely as a rite of purification but as the sacrament of union with Christ<sup>115</sup>. The plunging into the water, however achieved, signifies the neophytes' participation in the paschal mystery of Christ, and the efficacy of this rite is seen to be due to the Trinity itself who 'called on by the celebrant, brings about the numbering of the elect among the adopted children of God and unites them to his purpose'<sup>116</sup>. Through the rite, the believer mystically shares in the death and resurrection of Christ, so the introduction suggests that this point should be expressed as clearly and as forcefully as possible, as it is the whole basis for the Christian hope. Father Dujarier however comments that:

"We do find it somewhat surprising that after stressing so much that Baptism is primarily participation in the death and rising of Christ, the new rite continues to speak of baptism as a 'washing' (OICA 28 and 31)" (117)

The rubric of the rite stresses these elements from the Introduction, although, not surprisingly the authors ignore the point made by Fr.Dujarier. It points out that the water is blessed, recalling the wonderful works of God from the creation of the world and the human race to the mystery of God's love; then by calling on the Holy Spirit and by announcing the death and rising of Christ, the newness of the washing of regeneration by the Lord is taught; through Baptism Christians share in his death and rising and are made the holy people of God<sup>118</sup>.

The rubric continues:

"The renunciation of Satan and the profession of faith form one rite which reaches its full strength in the baptism of adults. Since baptism is a sacrament of faith by which the catechumens adhere to God and at the same time are given new life by him, it is fitting that the washing with water is preceded by each person's actions. By these actions, as was prefigured in the covenant of the patriarchs, they renounce sin and Satan completely so that they adhere for ever to the promises of the Savior and the mystery of the Trinity. By this profession which they make in the presence of the celebrant and the community, they signify their intention, brought to maturity during the catechumenate of entering into a new covenant with Christ. These adults embrace this faith handed on by the Church with God's help, and in this faith they are baptized."

(119)

Although much of the imagery of the dreadful Satan as tyrant is gone, still the congregation are bidden to pray for courageous hearts for the candidates as they renounce Satan and profess their faith in Christ<sup>120</sup>. Satan, rather than being seen as a dreadful tyrant is seen as a confidence trickster, or a politician, because 'all his empty promises' are renounced by the candidate<sup>121</sup>. It is only in Formula C that Satan is described as father of sin and prince of darkness.

There is a suggestion that the anointing of the candidate with the oil of catechumens might take place here, and in this case the prayer implies that it is to give the candidate the strength for the profession of faith in Christ, although a more important place to strengthen the candidate would seem to be before the rite of renunciation, if the implications of this rite as a confrontation with evil are to be taken seriously. The rite of profession includes a précised version of the Creed, divided into three questions thus:

"N, do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

Answer: I do

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hands of the Father?

Answer: I Do

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Answer: I do."

(122)

Then follows the immersion of the candidate, decency and

decorum prevailing. The immersion or infusion is threefold using the name of the Trinity only once, and is followed by a welcoming physical touch from their sponsors<sup>125</sup>.

The rite has attached to it three complementary rites which explain the significance of what has just been effected in the rite of Baptism. These follow baptism immediately and are detailed thus:

"The anointing with chrism after baptism is a sign of the royal priesthood of the baptized and their enrolment in the fellowship of the people of God. The white robe is a symbol of their new dignity, and the lighted candle shows their vocation of living as befits the children of light." (124)

The prayer of anointing which accompanies the chrism reminds the baptizand that he is to share the threefold ministry of Christ:

"God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has freed you from all sin;  
given you a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit,  
and welcomed you into his holy people.  
He now anoints you with chrism of salvation.  
As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet, and King,  
so may you live always as a member of his body,  
sharing everlasting life." (125)

Similarly he is reminded of his new status as a new creation, clothed in Christ as he is told of his responsibility to maintain the new life

"Take this white garment  
and bring it unstained to the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus  
Christ so that you may have everlasting life." (126)

As the godparents deliver to the neophyte the light of Christ, the neophyte is reminded

"You have been enlightened by Christ.  
Walk always as children of the light  
and keep the flame of faith alive in your hearts.  
When the Lord comes may you go out to meet him  
with all the saints in the heavenly kingdom." (127)

Then follows the Celebration of the Confirmation of Adults, which in its introduction and rubric raises some interesting questions, and poses some delicate problems. The introduction begins:

"According to the ancient practice maintained in the Roman liturgy, an adult is not to be baptized unless he receives confirmation immediately afterwards (See No.44), provided no serious obstacles exist. This connection signifies the

unity of the paschal mystery, the close relationship between the mission of the Son and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, and the joint celebration of the sacraments by which the Son and the Spirit come with the Father upon those who have been baptized. Confirmation is celebrated after the complementary rites of baptism; the post-baptismal anointing is omitted (No.224)." (128)

Paragraph 44 referred to above picks up the intention of Sacrosanctum Concilium concerning the restoration of the catechumenate for adults, and makes it plain that the bishop should make this priority the active role in the catechumenate. As Dom Kavanagh points out:

"While bishops, to whose office confirmation has been closely restricted in the Roman Rite, are urged to preside at the Lenten catechumenal liturgies, to celebrate the rite of election, and to preside at the sacraments of initiation during the Easter Vigil (OICA 44), their necessary absence from the latter should not continue to force confirmation to be done quite apart from baptism and the eucharist." (129)

Indeed the document defines quite broadly the presbyters who may act as the delegate of the bishop in the celebration of confirmation immediately following baptism:

"When the bishop is absent, the presbyter who baptized an adult or a child of catechetical age should also confer confirmation unless this sacrament is to be given at another time (See no.56). When there are very many to be confirmed the minister of the Sacrament of confirmation may associate other presbyters with himself in its administration.

It is necessary that these presbyters:

- a) have a particular function or office in the diocese, namely, that of vicars general, episcopal vicars or delegates, district or regional vicars, or those who by mandate of the ordinary hold equivalent offices;
- b) be the parish pastors of the places where confirmation is celebrated or pastors of the places where the candidates belong, or presbyters who did special work in this catechetical preparation." (130)

This change affects the traditional episcopal hegemony regarding confirmation in the Roman Rite but it makes practicable a closer connection between all three sacraments which make up the order of initiation. Dom Kavanagh believes that this will remove the restriction which limited the bishop's role to confirmation and will

"enhance this ministry by emphasizing the real sacramental importance of the bishop as the one who normally should preside throughout the whole process of Christian initiation." (131)

It also stresses the importance and responsibility of the local church

which is a vital element throughout the whole of the liturgy of OICA.

However, not only Dom Kavanagh, but other writers both in that book and elsewhere, raise the question of the theological point implicit in OICA 34, as to why only adults and children of catechetical age should receive confirmation in the same liturgical event as baptism. He suggests:

"Unless the theological point is dismissed as mere rhetoric, it seems inescapable that all who are deemed fit for baptism no matter what their physical age, should also be confirmed within the same liturgical event." (132)

He suggests this seems to have been the practice in the Roman Church until the early Middle Ages, and as we have seen it still is the practice of the Orthodox Churches. He questions the ability of the continued Western practice of the deferral of confirmation to stand up to the theological principle stated in OICA 34, because it would mean that physical age would have to be seen as a serious obstacle to the reception of the sacraments. He concludes:

"But if this is proved, then it is inevitable that the same question be posed about baptism of infants: if age is a serious obstacle to receiving confirmation, why then is age not a serious obstacle to receiving baptism?" (133)

Although it begins to move out of our sphere of reference, we shall remain with this area just long enough to give an answering argument, and a summary of a conference of American Liturgists, so they help to set the tone of the situation against which the catechetical teaching is given<sup>134</sup>. In answer to Dom Kavanagh's implicit statement that infants should not be baptized, Christopher Kiesling avers that suggestions to abandon the practice of infant baptism place too much emphasis on the meaningfulness of the ceremony and the conscious participation of the subject:

"..... the idea of postponing baptism until a child is old enough to make up his own mind is an idea which overemphasizes the ceremonial aspect of baptism at the expense of the more important gift of God's grace which is already at work in the gift of upbringing by Christian parents and the Christian community, and which the ceremony of baptism celebrates.

Postponement of baptism is an idea which overstresses the individualness of salvation by not recognizing sufficiently the intimacy of human relations, especially between a child and his family and community, through which God grants his grace. It is an idea, finally, which threatens to cut off from a child a critical grace from God - the pledge of Christian parents and the community to rear a child so that he is oriented to God in the likeness of Christ in the depths of his personality." (135)

This point is in fact not too far from Dom Kavanagh, except in so far that this recognition should be called baptism. He argues that some changes in indiscriminate infant baptism are inevitable if the Church is to be consistent with the implications of adult initiation. He suggests that these changes would include a restored, and intelligible, initiation sequence in which these inconsistencies could be absorbed:

"Such a restored sequence may well involve as normal:  
a) enrolling infants as catechumens at an early age;  
b) guiding them through the catechumenate in a careful progression until an age of free acceptance of Christ and his Church is determined by catechist, family, pastor and congregation; c) full initiation through Lenten observance, baptism - confirmation - eucharist on Holy Saturday - Easter and post-baptismal catechesis through that Eastertide. This is largely what we do now, except that we baptize infants at a) reconcile them through penance and education and communicate them at b) and confirm them at c) with some more education." (136)

Dr. Braxton comments that in Dom Kavanagh's view this restructuring would simply clarify some of the ambiguities in the present sequence. For the present practice of making confirmation a kind of adult initiation implicitly states that infant baptism is in fact functioning as an enrolment in a catechetical process. He then reports the statement on the practice of initiation which emanated from a meeting of seventy five American liturgists in Arizona in December 1973 on the tenth anniversary of Sacrosanctum Concilium. He suggests that these are a representative cross section of American opinion:

"1. The rite of Christian initiation should normally consist of the unified sacramental event in which the three now separated moments (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) are integrated. The full rite is to be used at any age when a person is initiated (emphasis added). As an act of the Church, the rite of initiation is most properly celebrated in the midst of the congregation.

2. Within the economy of the sacraments, adult initiation should be the practical norm. The Church's understanding of baptism is most fully demonstrated when an adult is baptized.
3. Infant baptism derives from the adult form. It places specific responsibilities on the adult community. When parents and the congregation accept these responsibilities, the celebration of infant baptism proclaims the initiative of God's love.
4. The entire Easter season from Lent to Pentecost is derived from the public practice of adult Baptism. The meaning of Baptism is best demonstrated when it is celebrated within the context of the Church's dramatic shaping of time, whose climax is the Easter Season.
5. For children of responsible Christian parents, two different patterns of initiation might well co-exist; the celebration of the full rite of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) shortly after birth, to be followed by catechesis appropriate to succeeding stages of development; or enrolment of the infant as a catechumen, with initiation to be celebrated at a later age after catechesis.
6. Catechumenate. The development of viable and visible catechumenate structures on a parish, inter-parish, or diocesan basis is essential to the renewal of the sacrament of initiation. We urge that everywhere this thoroughly restored and fully celebrated rite be implemented and adapted and that the simpler forms of the new ritual be reserved for extreme exceptions." (137)

Ralph Keifer suggests that perhaps the solution lies in following the practice proposed by the Episcopal Church in American unifying initiation whilst providing for a repeatable rite as the reaffirmation of the baptismal commitment<sup>138</sup>. However, this group of seventy five liturgists must have been very well connected ecclesiastically, if we compare their forward thinking statements based on the Latin revision published less than two years earlier, with Fr.Kemp's experience:

"From the time the rite was published in Latin until 1974 (two and a half years later) you had to have a friend on the International Committee on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) in order to obtain even a poorly xeroxed copy of the text." (139)

This problem of communication is an indication of the uncertainty and fluidity of the situation which is being experienced by this radical change reverting to the fourth century norm of baptism as theologians seek to grapple with its implications for a church long used to infant baptism and its implications.

8/ Dom Kavanagh also draws attention to the omission of the anointing with chrism following baptism, when this rite is to be immediately followed by confirmation. He points out that although the structure which would find two chrismations so closely together too cumbersome is simplified, the language is not enlarged in the way that such a claim might be seen to require. The prayers at the two chrismations differ. The first, following baptism speaks of the meaning of the act in terms of the neophyte being anointed 'As Christ was anointed Priest, Prophet and King',<sup>140</sup> so that he or she may always live as a member of his body, the Church. The second, on the other hand, at confirmation speaks instead of the neophyte being given the Holy Spirit and his seven fold gifts<sup>141</sup>. This anomaly helps greatly to enhance the pneumatic element in sacramental initiation<sup>142</sup>.

Following confirmation, the full rite moves onward to the celebration of the eucharist at which the neophytes for the first time have the full right to participate. Their presence is marked in the prayers, particularly in the eucharistic prayer, and, so too is the task and responsibility of the godparents; and some of the neophytes carry the gifts when they are brought to the altar.

"With the whole community they take part in the action of the sacrifice and they say the Lord's Prayer, thus showing the spirit of adoption as God's children they have received in baptism. Then, by receiving the body that was handed over and the blood that was shed, they confirm the gifts they have received and acquire a foretaste of eternal things." (143)

Fr. Dujarier points out that the Eucharist is thus seen as the climax of the initiation of the neophytes, and he comments that their proclamation of the Lord's Prayer is made possible by their becoming adopted children of God by Baptism<sup>144</sup>. It is also noted in OICA that

"It is most desirable that the neophytes receive communion under both species, together with their godparents, parents, spouses and catechists." (145)

This stresses once again the fact that OICA is based firmly in the community and it needs the community to participate at every stage. This needs to be contrasted with the earlier practice to which Fr. Hovda testifies in his article:

"As a former adult candidate for admission into communion with the Roman See, I cannot help thinking, however, that it would have been kind of nice to have had some slight indication, back in 1943, that the faith community, I was joining was just a bit interested in me, even if it were manifest in prying. There was no prying, no snooping, and no apparent interest. Working with the warm bodies of one priest and one sponsor, I had to conjure up a Church." (146)

He goes on the point out that in OICA' initiation becomes a project of the local church, a community process in which the already initiated members of the church are as much involved as the candidates themselves.<sup>147</sup>

But lest the neophytes should think that their spiritual journey, a favourite metaphor of OICA, ended at baptism, OICA proceeds to lay down guidelines for the period of post-baptismal catechesis or Mystagogia which constitutes the final stage of their initiation. This is a stage which once again is shared with the faithful who are charged with welcoming them with charity (41.(5)) and to help them

"carefully and familiarly in all circumstances by the community of the faithful, by their godparents and by their pastors. Great care should be taken that they obtain full and joyful insertion into the life of the community." (148)

It is the aim of OICA that this 'full and joyful insertion' should be assisted by the experience of 'frequenting the sacraments':

"This new frequenting of the sacraments enlightens the neophytes' understanding of the holy scriptures and also increases their knowledge of men and develops the experience in the community itself. As a result the relationship of the neophyte with the rest of the faithful becomes easier and more beneficial. The time of post baptismal catechesis is of great importance so that the neophytes, helped by their sponsors, may enter into a closer relationship with the faithful and bring them renewed vision and a new impetus." (149)

It suggests that the main place for post-baptismal catechesis should be the Sunday Masses of the Easter Season, following the Year A of the lectionary. It should also be made plain to the faithful that they too should be present at these Masses, and that they are not simply for neophytes and their sponsors<sup>150</sup>. Although it could be argued that post-baptismal catechesis never really finishes, just as 'there is no such thing as a fully 'mature' Christian this side of the eschaton'<sup>151</sup>, the immediate period of post-baptismal catechesis should close around Pentecost with some form of celebration, adding external festivities according to local customs<sup>152</sup>.

Fr. Kemp writes of his experiences in using this order in his Washington parish, and of his attempt to put the recommendations of OICA into practice:

"We have renamed this period 'Deeper into the Mystery'. This period is not one of 'me and my notebook', as indeed the whole process of Christian initiation cannot be compared to the formal system of college or graduate work. This period is for experiencing the family history as our own, a time for celebrating the power that the Lord has shared in allowing us to be called His daughters and sons. This is a seven week period of coming home for the first time. The mystagogia is the full Easter-to-Pentecost season, a celebration of a particular community of faith that has grown close to new members who have come to share the full experience of the family's reason for existence." (153)

This feeling of 'being at home' is essential if the neophytes are to be able to feel comfortable in bringing the family a renewed vision of what being 'in Christ' means to them. He suggests that the rite makes it clear that every parish should regularly be treated to such an experiencing of new life. He develops his understanding of the rite's instructions as he points out that the recommendation of the year A cycle is to create a mood in which both neophytes and sponsors can freely speak to the family assembly of the personal impact of initiation, and he puts such a high priority on this that he is prepared to extend the Mass beyond its expected fifty minutes<sup>154</sup>. He writes of his experience in his own parish of extending the week night meetings begun during Lent into this Easter period:

"At Saints Paul and Augustine parish we continue the once-a-week evening sessions during this period and create a festive atmosphere by adding more refreshments to the normal coffee and tea. Hearing the readings for the approaching Sunday leads easily into discussion of the personal impact of the sacramental encounters with Christ. From these weekly sessions, catechist and pastor/priest select stories and insights worth repeating at the Sunday celebrations. The sponsors' experiences gained from close association with the neophytes are valuable and intimately related to the purpose of the season. They should be heard on Sunday as well. By Pentecost the Eucharist assembly should have heard from every neophyte and sponsor at least once..... The neophytes are the ministers of the Easter season to the whole parish."

(155)

He suggests that prayer should be offered that the enthusiasm of the neophytes might become contagious, and goes on to suggest ways in which the neophytes can express their faith and their newfound enthusiasm for Christ, resulting in the enrichment of the programme for the whole community of the faithful. James Dunning points out that apart from the ministry of the neophytes en bloc to the community, each should be encouraged to discern what service or ministry they might offer to the Church, and to celebrate that decision at a Commitment Sunday<sup>156</sup>. It may be that the Pentecost celebration to mark the close of the post-baptismal period of catechesis should be used to this end<sup>157</sup>.

In its suggestion of some note being taken of the anniversary of baptism, OICA is further stressing the aspect of the Christian life as a journey in faith:

"On the anniversary of their baptism, it is desirable that the neophytes gather together again to give thanks to God, to share their spiritual experience with one another, and to gain new strength."

(158)

This could be seen as a divisive feature in dividing the neophytes from the faithful community once again, and Fr. Dujarier mentions the practice of some parishes which celebrate not only the first but also the fifth, tenth and twentieth anniversaries of Baptism.

"All the members of the faithful who will celebrate a solemn anniversary that year form small groups and participate in days of recollection and a communal

retreat. This is also a good way of inaugurating and establishing post-baptismal stages which are necessary if one wants to grow continually in the Christian life. Such periodic celebrations can also coincide with celebrations which publicly recognize the ministries and vocations which the former neophytes have been called to and have accepted."

(154)

All in all this constitutes a very exciting revision and reappraisal of the Catholic Church's whole process of thinking about what it means to be baptized and it will continue to cause ripples - one hopes not tidal waves - over the baptismal waters for years to come. Some of its enthusiasts describe it thus:

"The new Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) of 1972 is one of the best kept secrets since Vatican Council II.

For some it denotes an ominous department of the American intelligence community. For others it is just one more document, written in the day language of 'Vaticanese', imposed on us by the rite-makers immediately after the Council. Still others claim either it is one more archaism based on the principle that 'old means better', or it is obviously written for missionary countries and not for lands supposedly firm in faith (as if the Church could ever be not-on-mission).

Perhaps other intuitively sense that this rite confronts our most fundamental assumptions about Church and with good reason keep their distance. Perhaps they sense that the RCIA is indeed new wine."

(160)

Father Dujarier describes it as the most far-reaching and ambitious of all the post-Vatican liturgical reforms<sup>161</sup> and R.A. Keifer comments:

"It is ironic that we have so often cried out to Rome to turn radical, so often expecting in turn obscurantism, time serving, and conservatism of a conventional sort, that we have not been able to perceive radical revision, and drastic change when Rome presents us with it. As far as the liturgical books are concerned that is precisely the change that Rome has undertaken, reversing a thousand years of practices and attitudes. This change has gone unnoticed, virtually without comment, and with scarcely a word of dissent. Under the aegis of an Ecumenical Council, with the approval of the Roman see, and over the signature of the Roman pontiff, the primary rites of initiation (those for the baptism and confirmation of adults and the baptism of children) have been turned upside down and inside out, heralding a cry to begin a reform and renewal of the most radical sort."

(162)

Fr. Lewinski, summarizes the changes in ten points:

1) The RCIA is really given to us for church renewal. The initiation of adults is for the life of the Church, not just for converts. This new rite is one of the principal ways in which the church continually renews itself as the already baptized, moved by newcomers, are given the opportunity year after year to reflect in a very positive way on their own baptism.

2) The RCIA teaches us that Christians are made, not born. That means that there is nothing automatic or instant in the rite of Christian initiation. The development of faith takes time; it cannot be rushed. The candidates must be allowed sufficient time for their faith to ripen. Ordinarily, this means anywhere from one to two years of formation, depending, of course, on the background and spiritual maturity of the candidates. What we should be clear about at this point is that the Christian initiation of adults includes much more than just a celebration of baptism, confirmation and eucharist; there is a whole maturing process for faith and conversion.

3) The RCIA is not an educational program or schooling experience. While candidates' formation does include some doctrinal instruction, the whole process is not an educational program. There is, it seems, in our own time an education myth: education will solve all our personal and societal problems. While education is certainly valuable and necessary, it is not the answer to all our problems or the secret to a happy fulfilled life. The initiation of adults is not essentially an education program because it aims at changing the heart and transforming the persons's spirit and not just supplying a bank of knowledge.

4) The initiation of adults involves a variety of ministries. It is virtually impossible for the priest alone to provide all that is necessary for a candidate. Furthermore, it would be unfair to the candidate not to expose him or her to the faith and the care of other members of the community.

5) The initiation of adults takes place in community; it is not a private celebration or process. In addition to the ministers involved and the team members that may have direct contact with the candidates, the entire community should be made aware of the candidates' journey and should support the candidates by prayer and encouragement. Along the same lines, the initiation of adults, although it takes place in a local parish, is not a congregationalist effort. In other words, what we do in welcoming adults into the household of the church affects the entire church. Consequently, there should always be a direct link with the bishop. He is really the one responsible for initiating new Christians in his diocese. And there should be much collaboration and co-operation between parishes to keep a balance between the local parish and the larger church, and to let each parish profit from the experience of the others.

6) The initiation of adults includes counsel and direction. Although the initiation envisioned by the new rite involves other ministries and takes place in community, this does not mean that private counsel and spiritual direction are not necessary. The individual needs of each candidate must be attended to. They must be listened to; candidates must be given every opportunity to discuss their own personal questions, doubts, hopes and aspirations.

- 7) The RCIA is not a program, but the very life of the church. The newness of this rite can very subtly tempt pastoral teams to make it the 'program of the year'. However, it is not a program; it is not a fad. It is a whole new policy that must become part of the church's natural rhythm, well integrated into the worship and liturgical year of the Christian assembly.
- 8) The RCIA restores the focus of primary of the Easter mystery. This means, first of all, that the whole initiation process is seen as a gradual penetration of incorporation into the Easter mystery that is Jesus Christ. And secondly, the Easter Vigil becomes the honored time for initiation. Only for serious pastoral reasons will the initiation take place outside the Easter Vigil.
- 9) The initiation of adults is a flexible ministry. Again, it is not a program. Thus, the process of initiating adults must always be flexible enough to accommodate the personal development of each candidate. The RCIA is not a spiritual obstacle course that candidates must pass through before they are received into the Church; it is the minister's tool in assisting the candidates in their journey of faith.
- 10) The RCIA means: WELCOME! The initiation of adults is not a theoretical initiation. It is a welcoming ministry that is only truly accomplished when the candidate is welcomed, feels welcomed. When we initiate Christians we do not welcome them into a theological no-man's land, but hopefully into the flesh and blood body of believers. And the newcomer has every right to expect a warm, sincere welcome from us. For each time we initiate a new Christian we establish a new living bond between the newcomer and ourselves as church." (163)

Sadly the implications of this change have not yet shown much sign of being grasped by Catholics in England and Wales. As part of this research three letters were sent to each of the five Archdioceses and the sixteen Dioceses, one for the ordinary, and one for a representative of both his liturgical and catechetical commission. A copy was also sent to the Liturgical Commission of the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales, and to the National Adviser for Religious Education. Twenty one replies were received, representing four of the Archdioceses, and seven of the dioceses and both the National bodies. Canon Regan of Cardiff has a significant paragraph:

"While interest is beginning to grow in the rite of christian initiation of adults, as yet there is no widespread use of this rite. It seems to many that this rite contains within in the germ of a whole renewal of Parish life."

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and from Father Anthony Churchill, General Secretary of the Liturgy Commission came the statement 'In fact, the Bishop's Conference as a body has not yet considered RCIA',<sup>165</sup>. This delay from the hierarchy has resulted in the fact that there was no record in any of the replies of the rite being used, although interest in the principles contained in the order was widely expressed among those who did reply. Father Norman Swinton of the Portsmouth diocese wrote that the last Plenary Session of the National Liturgical Commission, which met in September 1981, was agreed on the necessity of the rite but they still await the reaction of the hierarchy to their Minute. He adds his personal observations:

"I feel this is the most radical of all the Liturgical reforms promulgated by Vatican II. It touches not just the individual concerned out the whole Parish Community; for the Parish must reconsider its function in the life of the Church, not only locally but in a universal context. Rightly understood, it places the onus of promulgating the Gospel fairly and squarely on the shoulders of the Christian Community, and therefore it imposes the obligation on that Community of informing itself comprehensively and thoroughly of that Faith which it professes. The emphasis of the Rite is towards an individual becoming part of a Community which is thoroughly committed to Christ, and absolutely integrated in Him - alteri Christi, as St. Paul says."

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The Centre for Parish Catechetics together with the National Catechetical Association had adopted OICA 'as normative for all catechesis, not only for sacramental preparation',<sup>167</sup>, and as a Catechetical basis, a fair amount of work is being done on OICA beginning with the National Pastoral Congress in Liverpool in May 1980 at which study/workshops are held and Summer Schools planned for July 1981-1982. But as Miss P. Jones from the Archdiocese of Liverpool points out 'to use it (OICA) simply as a process of renewal is, I'm sure, to neglect the richness of the rite',<sup>168</sup>. However, she seems to voice the comments of many in regard to the few completely unchurched adults available for initiation. One wonders whether the difference between the Catholic Church and the Church in the United States lies in their commitment to look for the unchurched, as

Father Dunning pointed out above in his parenthesis '(as if the Church could ever be not-on-mission)',<sup>169</sup>. From the Diocese of Clifton comes the comment from Fr. Matthew Hayes:

"The rite of Christian Initiation, as you know, takes up a large section of Volume I of the Revised Rites of the Catholic Church. This is right, for it is the contribution of the Missionary Church. It made a big impact at Vatican II. Christian Initiation is a living experience of the Missionary Church and the 'established' Church is willing to learn from and adopt it." (170)

One hopes for the benefit of the Kingdom of God, that Father Hayes is right, and that the 'established' Church is not afraid to learn.

From the eloquent testimony from America, it seems that the Church which dares, wins, for neophytes, as they challenge the community with their new life and new faith, with all its enthusiasm, will encourage that community to attract new members to a commitment to Christ, and only then will the precatechumenate get under way.

Father Kemp stresses this:

"Not to be missed are the possibilities inherent in the neophytes sitting with interested inquirers and assisting and strengthening their desire at least to try the precatechumenate stage which will begin immediately after Pentecost." (171)

Thus we see a contrast between the catechesis of some of the American Catholics who are thoroughly committed to taking seriously both the theory of Vatican II and the liturgical revision which it instituted, and the non-action of the British Catholics who are only slowly grasping the implications of the reversion to the fourth century, and to a perception of the Church with a real missionary task. The fundamental documents are the same for both sides of the Atlantic, but the activity based upon the documents varies radically.

### 3. The Praxis of Baptism with relation to the Fellowship of the Church Particularly considering Sponsorship

The Second Vatican Council swiftly despatched the notions of some nineteenth writers that catechumens have no need of sponsors

because they are adults<sup>172</sup> when it decreed not only to restore the Rite of Initiation to its Paschal context but also decreed

"This Christian initiation through the catechumenate should be taken care of not only by catechists or priests, but by the entire community of the faithful, especially by the sponsors. Thus, right from the outset the catechumens will feel that they belong to the people of God. Since the life of the Church is an apostolic one, the catechumens should also learn to co-operate actively, by the witness of their lives and by the profession of their faith, in the spread of the gospel and in the upbuilding of the Church." (173)

This decree finds its way into OICA, where the concept of sponsorship turns into some flesh and blood suggestions for the task and role of the sponsors and the godparent. OICA quite plainly differentiates between the two ministries although hinting that one and the same person may fulfil both functions.

"The candidate should be accompanied by a sponsor when he asks to be admitted as a catechumen. This sponsor is to be a man or woman who knows the candidate, helps him, and witnesses to his morals, faith and intention. It may happen that this person is not to fulfill the function of godparent in the period of purification and enlightenment or illumination and in the period of postbaptismal catechesis or mystagogia. In this case another person takes on this responsibility." (174)

During the precatechumenate their role is first mentioned during the suggested reception of sympathizers on 'a suitable occasion of friendly exchange. The inquirer or sympathizer is presented by a friend, and then he is welcomed and received by the priest'<sup>175</sup>. These may also have been the 'lay persons' referred to in OICA 11 who in an informal and faith-sharing way 'suitably explain the gospel to the candidates'. Fr. Dujarier points out the original role of the sponsor, rather than being the latest on the scene, was to be the first mover 'in the process of conversion and their function remained of primordial importance, even during the process of catechesis', a 'true spiritual fatherhood' to use a fourth century expression. He suggests:

"There is a real need for an effective system of personal sponsorship to guide the catechumen on his first steps towards conversion, and for an ecclesial sponsorship which, without supplanting the irreplaceable role of the personal sponsor, will restore its full value by making it the

The sponsors share the catechumenate period with their protégés, their names being enrolled alongside those of the catechumens in the register of catechumens, and they are bidden to help the pastors, together with deacons and catechists to judge the external indications of the genuineness of the candidate's conversion<sup>177</sup>.

At the rite of election the role of sponsors may be replaced with that of the godparent although the fluidity of this arrangement means that quite frequently OICA speaks of 'sponsors and godparents' and then after baptism reverts to the seemingly generic title of 'sponsor' although others suggest that OICA seems to associate sponsor with a prebaptismal role and godparent with a post-baptismal role<sup>178</sup>. Fr. Dunning suggests however that the concern is for a pastoral relationship, and suggests that both the initial sponsor and the church-appointed friend, witness, and guide should share the spiritual journey of the candidate. The important feature is that the candidate receives their pastoral support, 'they can flip coins over the title of sponsor and godparent'<sup>179</sup>.

OICA defines the godparent's ministry as one

"who is close to the candidate because of his example, character and friendship, is delegated by the local Christian community and is approved by the priest. He accompanies the candidate on the day of election, in the celebration of the sacraments, and during the period of post-baptismal catechesis. It is his responsibility to show the catechumen in a friendly way the place of the Gospel in his own life and in society, to help him in doubts and anxieties, to give public testimony for him, and to watch over the progress of his baptismal life. Already a friend before the election, this person exercised his office publicly from the day of election when he gives his testimony about the catechumen before the community. His responsibility remains important when the neophyte has received the sacraments and needs to be helped to remain faithful to his baptismal promises."

On the other hand <sup>that</sup> a different emphasis is indicated for the choice of the godparent is evident from the introduction to the rite of election:

"The godparents are chosen beforehand by the catechumens with the consent of the priest, and as far as possible should be accepted by the community. Now the godparents exercise their first act of ministry: they are called by name at the beginning of the rite and approach with the catechumens (no.143), and testify in their behalf before the community (no.144); if desired they write their names with them in the register (no.146)." (181)

The rite also suggests that they should share in the deliberation on the suitability of the candidates with the delegates of the local community, and presbyters, deacons and catechists<sup>182</sup>.

In the rite of election, the godparents are called up on to three questions on behalf of their proteges:

"Have they faithfully listened to the word of God proclaimed by the Church?  
Have they been true in the word they have received and begun to walk in God's presence?  
Have they sought the fellowship of their brothers and sisters and joined with them in prayer?" (183)

Following the call of the candidates to the Easter sacraments by the Church expressed by the Bishop, and their election being noted in the rite itself, the celebrant reminds the godparents of their responsibilities:

"These catechumens have been entrusted to you in the Lord, and you have given us a favourable report. By your loving care and example continue to help them until they receive the sacrament of God's life." (184)

The godparents join with the elect in the scrutinies and encourage the elect by placing their right hand on the shoulder of the one they are sponsoring<sup>185</sup>, and accompany them during the presentations.

In the rite of baptism, the godparents accompany the candidate to the baptismal pool, and following their baptism put their hand on the candidate's shoulder<sup>186</sup>. It is the godparents who place the white garment on the neophyte<sup>187</sup>, and they also give

the newly baptized the light of Christ, as they light a candle from the Easter candle and hand it to the neophyte<sup>188</sup>. They accompany the neophyte at confirmation, and encourage the neophyte with the touch of the right hand upon his shoulder<sup>189</sup>. In the first Eucharist, their continuing work is prayed for and they receive communion in both species with the neophyte<sup>190</sup>, and during the succeeding eucharists they are mandated to accompany their neophyte and to ensure their integration into the community of the faithful<sup>191</sup>, and to help the neophytes to bring to the community 'renewed vision and a new impetus'<sup>192</sup>.

Father Lewinski suggests the possibility of family sponsorship in terms reminiscent of those of Derek Buckingham<sup>193</sup>

"In this case the family would welcome the candidate into their home and family circle, where the candidate could witness the faith, hope and love of the Christian community." (194)

and he further comments that some parishes train sponsors for their responsibilities which include:

"Keeping regular contact with the candidate, encouraging them, listening to their faith and their doubt, being open to sharing time and experience in a friendly manner, participating in the catechumenate sessions, praying with and for the candidates, and introducing candidates to the other members of the community." (195)

He readily recognises that it takes a very special person to be a sponsor, and among the qualities he looks for are a strong faith and the ability to communicate it sympathetically, and a sincere interest in others. He points out that, like the sponsor, the godparent must also be able to relate effectively with the candidate. But for him the difference between the two ministries lies in the fact that the godparent's responsibility is both a permanent and a sacramental one, whilst that of the sponsor need not last beyond baptism. The relationship between godparent and Baptised 'is sealed and bound by the sacraments of initiation'<sup>196</sup> and just as the sacrament cannot be dissolved, neither can the spiritual tie established at baptism.

Father Dujarier suggests that in the rite of election godparents exercise their liturgical office, and express their own commitment. As they testify in the candidate's behalf to the community they commit themselves to accompany their godchild

"not only during the immediate preparation for Baptism and the time of mystagogical catechesis, but also during what follows - helping the neophyte to remain faithful to what he or she promised in Baptism."

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On the other hand, Father Kemp, speaking from the pastoral situation, seems not to differentiate between roles basing his practice on the rubric to the rite rather than its introduction, whereby the godparent/sponsor is chosen by the candidate, approved by the priest and the catechesis, and if possible by the community. It may be that from a pastoral point of view he sees more hope for a lasting voluntary relationship than one imposed by however benign an authority<sup>198</sup>. Later he clarifies his viewpoint to explain that

"When the choice of the catechumen is for a godparent who is part of our parish and who is able to participate with the total process of initiation, the godparent and sponsor are one and the same."

"When the catechumen has a faith relationship with a person he or she desires as a godparent but that person cannot, for whatever reason participate directly in the formative process, then we generally accept the catechumen's choice of godparent. However we do insist on a parishioner becoming sponsor for the catechumen and participating in the formative process to the same degree called for by the godparents in the Rite."

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He further points out that <sup>the</sup> godparents' touch during various stages of the liturgical process is 'one of the community's signs of support for the completion of the conversion process in the lives of the elect'<sup>200</sup>.

In a different article, Fr. Dujarier points out that the sponsor's function is a witness-guarantor and a paternal guide, witnessing to the catechumen of what it means to be possessed by the

Lord in faith, and witnessing for the catechumen before the community; and guiding him into the life, the customs, the ongoing ministries and the celebrations of the community<sup>201</sup>. The first aspect of witnessing is important, and particularly it is important to sustain this emphasis for 'converts need to see the Gospel concretely lived by Christians like them'<sup>202</sup>. He sums up:

"Prophet and king by virtue of his roles of witness and guide, the Christian sponsor, finally exercises a certain priesthood via his own active participation in the liturgical celebrations. In our opinion, therefore, the function of sponsorship is an implementation of the sponsor's consecration to Christ as prophet, priest and king that derives from baptism. And this explains why no Christian need wait to be designated sponsor. Quite the contrary, every baptized person is a potential sponsor, but it is only when he/she begins to exercise this function that the Church recognizes sponsorship as such." (203)

Father Dunning, however, makes the valid point that although any Christian may serve the demanding nature of the task means that only one or two candidates should be allocated to one sponsor at a time<sup>204</sup>, otherwise the task will be inadequately fulfilled, and its tremendous potential for spiritual development and growth not be realised.

The community of faith is re-established in a vital place, and the personal faith of the candidate is placed once again in a high priority, but whether ultimately the 'established' national Catholic Church will accept this emphasis from the 'missionary' churches or whether it will be left to slumber away below that point of the agenda which is ever reached is still in a state of flux, as is the relationship of baptism to confirmation. When Pope John Paul II preached on Baptism at Westminster Cathedral he stressed the incorporation of the Christian into Christ at Baptism, and his incorporation into the Church at Baptism<sup>205</sup>, and used the full rite from the Ordo. However two days later at the Coventry Airport Mass he confirmed a fourteen year old from Nottingham who had been baptized the previous September<sup>206</sup>, when apparently baptism had been

administered and the suggestion that confirmation should follow in the same service was not taken up, probably because few had actually seen OICA celebrated before the Papal visit<sup>207</sup>. So it will take the passage of more time to assess the full response of the English Catholic Church to the insights and suggestions of OICA.

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201. See M.Dujarier and T.Villaca: 'The Various Ministries in Christian Initiation' W.J.Reedy (Ed): in Becoming a Catholic Christian (New York 1979) p.148-9
202. Dujarier/Villaca: art. cit. p.149
203. Dujarier/Villaca: art. cit. p.149
204. J.B.Dunning: op. cit. p.65
205. The Times: No. 61246, 29th May 1982
206. Nottingham Evening Post: 12th May 1982 & 'photo, 1st June 1982
207. Letter from Rev.A.Churchill: Secretary, Liturgical Commission  
18th January 1982.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### BAPTIST CHURCHES IN BRITAIN

It has been necessary to treat the Baptist Churches in a different way in order to achieve comparable results which form a useful comparison with other denominations. This is because of the independence of each local Church and the fact that any grouping of Churches beyond the local church is a matter of voluntary association in which the only authority which exists is in terms of the trust deed and its interpretation if, as is increasingly the case, the local Church have invited the Baptist Union or the local association to undertake the office of trustee. Historically, the Baptists belong to the Protestant Free Church branch of the Christian family, and they are a body of people drawn together on the basis of their belief in the authority of Scripture, the independence of the local Church, and a belief based upon the first point that baptism should be administered only to those with a personal faith in Christ. This may be demonstrated from the first point of the Declaration of Principle to which the 2058 Churches in membership with the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland subscribe:

"1. That our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, is the sole and absolute authority in all matters pertaining to faith and practice, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and that each Church has liberty, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to interpret and administer His laws." (1)

As a result of this spirit of independence, it has been necessary to establish the degree to which the views expressed in the various catechetical leaflets are held, for they need be only the personal view of the author, and also it was necessary to delve deeper than the leaflets to the ecumenical discussions of the 1960s to discover expressions of the underlying theology of Baptism upon which at least some of the catechetical material will have been based.

### 1. The Theology of Baptism and its Catechetical Explanation

Sadly this spirit of independence is often interpreted as such rather than as a spirit of interdependence, and this may account for the differences in Baptismal practice seen in the results of the Questionnaire<sup>2</sup>, and also for the fact that more than a quarter of those answering the question with regard to the syllabus they used in baptismal instruction answered in non-specific terms, from which it was not possible to arrive at any useful conclusions regarding their practice in this respect. It certainly bore out Dr. Payne's statement in Baptist and Christian Initiation:

"Baptists have no standard, authorised procedure." (3)

However, from those who did give further information, it was possible to produce the following diagrams indicating the theological areas of importance which their baptismal instruction covered<sup>4</sup>. For the bulk of the questionnaires, responses to this question were sought from the respondents in a non-determinative way. However, it soon became obvious from the pattern of responses from the first eight areas that this would not yield particularly valuable results, and so for area three, the remaining area, a sheet was added on which syllabus topics culled from the published material were listed,

and those responding 'my own' were asked to signify which areas they would cover. The results from these nineteen responses from area three are marked in red on figure 2. In general they follow the pattern from the rest of the country, although in respect of the topic of **stewardship**, the only responses indicating this as an area of instruction came from area three. It is of course entirely possible that others have included this non-specifically in their own syllabuses under the general heading of Church Membership and Worship, which in fact scores the highest response. But a similar situation occurs with the topic of Life Everlasting and the Last Things, which although it is referred to in two of the most popular published syllabuses, is referred to only by those prompted to respond in area three, and in this case there does not seem to be any other area into which this might have been absorbed. Similarly, it is evident that few ministers would have included the problems of suffering and evil, and the topics of knowing God's will and assurance in their own lists, one and two respectively, these scored a proportionately higher figure when these subjects were suggested to them. If this is evident in one third of the responses, then it may be assumed that a similar rule applies to the rest of the responses and we may take the nineteen responses from Area three as representative of a typical picture of what would have been found if the topic sheet had been available for their responses. So it seems that the pattern of syllabus for those who produce their own material would definitely include, at some point before or after baptism:

- The work of Christ and man's response
- Baptism
- The Bible
- Prayer
- The Holy Spirit
- Church Membership and Worship
- Stewardship
- Christian Service and Commitment
- The Person of Christ
- Witnessing
- Belief in God
- The Christian Heritage and the Baptist Family.

Additionally, teaching may be included on: Knowing God's will,

Maturity and Growth, Temptation and evil, Suffering, Eschatology and Eternal Life, the Trinity and Assurance of Salvation<sup>5</sup>.

The area three proportions appear to be at variance with those of the rest of the sample, but this is partly due to the small size of the area three example (27) and the fact that the response 'my own' with no further details in answer to the questions on syllabus were effectively excluded, when those who responded in this way accounted for 91 cases.

The seven most frequently used syllabuses<sup>6</sup> for catechetical instruction explain the ordinance of believer's baptism as one would expect at some length<sup>7</sup>. The intention of this material is to provide basic instructions for catechumens whose experience of Church life may vary from many years to no experience at all, whose abilities may range from the academically brilliant to those who find it almost impossible to read and write. As a result the level at which this catechetical material must of necessity be set may give undue credence to Dr. Payne's statement: 'Baptists have rarely been very clear or consistent theologians. Nor has their practice been well ordered and regular'<sup>8</sup>. For some candidates the material may be the basis for classes of instruction led by a minister, for others it may be a leaflet put into their hand, and the only instruction they receive. Thus we see that the theology of baptism passed on to the candidates depends upon the quality of source material which is chosen for them. So we will look now at the background theology of baptism, which at least reflects the period when 207 (63%) of the ministers who responded to the questionnaire were being trained, and so hopefully these represent the views which will have permeated the pastoral theology lectures they received.

Union of Great Britain and Ireland, there is a ready made definition of Baptism in the constitution which holds that Union in existence:

"2. That Christian Baptism is the immersion in water into the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, of those who have professed repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ who 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures: was buried, and rose again the third day'." (9)

This quotation from I Corinthians 15:3, reminds us again of the recourse to Scripture in part 1, of the Declaration of Principle<sup>10</sup>, but this section also reminds us of the liberty of interpretation which has long been one of the strongest planks in the Baptist platform.

Historically, A.C. Underwood<sup>11</sup> provides a summary which illustrates some of the diversity of Baptist thought and interpretation in regard to the interpretation of Baptism, and although he is writing in the first edition of his History in 1947, what he says remains true for the most part. He points out that some Baptists are content to view baptism in symbolic terms, as a symbol of the inward experience of conversion, and of the experience of dying to the old sinful life, and rising again to newness of life in Christ. Baptism is also seen by them as an act of obedience <sup>and the symbolic utterance of the candidate's purpose to live for Christ,</sup> to a command of Christ, and join His people. However, he points out that other Baptists have abandoned this view in favour of a sacramental interpretation of believer's baptism. They reject as superstitious the ex opere operato doctrine of the sacraments, and refuse to make the form of baptism necessary for salvation. In their view, all that can make a man a Christian is a personal response to the grace of God in Christ. However, they point out that in the New Testament the gift of the Spirit is an element of the conversion experience, just as the baptism of believers is, and that as a matter of fact those baptized as believers find that the actual experience of baptism carried them beyond mere symbolism to

"an unforgettable religious experience of the first rank, in which God does something for them in response to their repentance and faith. They receive from Him a further endowment of the Spirit and further power to walk in newness of life. It makes their surrender to Christ more absolute and changes their union with Him. It quickens

their sense of responsibility to Him as Lord, deepens their service of pardon and sin forgiven, and brings them a profounder experience of that Divine grace they had already embraced by faith at their conversion." (12)

Thus they would say baptism is something more than a sign and a statement, it is in fact a genuine sacrament, a means of grace in which God, in response to their faith, uses material media as the vehicle of his grace. The mode of baptism by immersion can be seen to contribute to this sacramental experience, as it symbolises very pointedly the candidate's complete surrender to Christ, death to sin, burial with Christ, and resurrection to a new life in Him. In a footnote, Dr.Underwood suggests:

"It may be added that the baptism of a believer by immersion engraves upon the mind the cardinal doctrines of the evangelical faith and explains why Baptists, in spite of their creedless condition, remain loyal to these doctrines." (13)

The value of this fuller doctrine of believers baptism to Baptist apologetic is plain according to Dr.Underwood. For this fuller doctrine advances the early Baptists' claim that their loyalty to the New Testament prevented them from modifying a scriptural ordinance, to a further claim that they alone preserve the full sacramental value of believer's baptism as a means of grace, and that baptism is impoverished of its divine intention of enriching the soul of the recipient when it is administered to any who have not already made a personal surrender and commitment to Christ. Dr.Underwood proceeds to compare the practice of admission to Baptism and Communion:

"Most Christians safeguard the sacramental value of the Lord's Supper by confining it to professing Christians. Baptists claim that the same principle should be applied to both sacraments, if they are to be efficacious symbols of the divine grace. They maintain that they alone make baptism an ethical act on the part of the recipient, and thus a genuine sacramental experience." (14)

This diversity is further illustrated by two articles in Concilium for example. These two articles written some twenty years

after Dr. Underwood's work indicate that the Baptist position is not as clear as it might seem. Dr. James McClendon, the first author, is a Southern Baptist from the United States, and he begins his article by a simple statement of Baptist practice:

"Baptists first seek to proclaim the Gospel. When (and only when) hearers, whether our own children or outsiders, respond by confessing faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour, are they accepted as candidates immersed in the triune name in the presence of the congregation by the Minister, and (in most churches) thereby admitted to membership in the congregation as brothers of Christ." (16)

He proceeds to examine the New Testament evidence of Baptism, coming to the conclusion at an early stage in his article that the Christian baptisms which the New Testament witnesses to were without exception the baptism of those who came to baptism confessing their own faith commitment. His analysis of early Christian baptism (by which he means the baptism in the New Testament era) was that it retained some elements of John's baptism viz., it was conversion - baptism, forgiveness - baptism, and it was baptism that admitted to the eschatological community, the Church, but also it contained some new elements as well viz., it was baptism in Jesus' name, implying either it was on the authority of Jesus, or established a relationship with Him, it was confession baptism, and it was Baptism in the Holy Spirit. But apart from this analysis, he makes little attempt to explain baptism in Sacramental terms.

Neville Clark<sup>17</sup> writing in 'Christian Baptism' in 1959 adopts on the other hand a very sacramental approach to Baptism. He points out that the apostles defined the limits of Jesus' earthly ministry by reference to His baptism by John and His death, resurrection and ascension. The participation of Jesus in the baptism of John in the Jordan profoundly altered that baptism:

"By virtue of His participation in it, it was, at one and the same time, broken and remade, negated and fulfilled..... If the old was taken and used, it was also transformed." (18)

But the baptism of Jesus at the Jordan was incomplete, because His baptism is, in the end, His cross, and Mr. Clark goes on to remind us of the water than flowed from the pierced side of Christ:

"It is from His side that the water flows (cf. John 19.34); it is His crucified and risen body that links Johannine and Christian baptism together and bridges the gulf between them." (19)

He does not develop this verse to argue a baptism of blood<sup>20</sup> but his use of this particular verse in a baptismal connection is rare.

However, these statements enable him to state that the initiation of the baptizing mission of the Church belongs inevitably to the risen and ascending Lord, thus Christian baptism becomes possible at the ascension of our Lord. So he develops his argument:

"So it is that the passing of the baptism at Jordan through the cross-resurrection by those who live in the light of the ascension produces the constant threefold emphasis of New Testament baptismal theology. Baptism in this normative period, implies, embodies, and effects forgiveness of sin, initiation into the Church, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Each and all stem from John's baptism and the participation of Jesus in it, each and all are transfigured by the fulfilment that the cross and the resurrection provide; each and all are marked by the tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet' which characterizes the Christian era. The baptism of Jesus was 'a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins' (Luke 3:3) and this emphasis is taken up in the Acts and unwarrantably heightened in the early Fathers<sup>21</sup>; but the epistles of Paul subject this note to the richer, and more positive concept of new life in Christ, as the Christological criterion begins to overwhelm the inheritance of the past and the original symbolism of the baptismal act (Romans 6:3,4)." (22)

"Baptism effects initiation into the life of the blessed Trinity and all the blessings of the new 'age', and so embodies the wholeness of redemption. It is 'into Christ', into the crucified, risen and ascended Lord, into the drama of his redemption achievement. We are incorporated into Christ that we may be crucified with Christ. We are crucified with Christ that we may share His resurrection. But 'in Christ'..... is primarily an ecclesiological formula. That is to say our incorporation is into the crucified and risen body of the Lord, the organic unity animated by the Holy Spirit, Christ in His church, Totus Christus, the whole Christ, head and members." (22)

Following his initial statement Mr. Clark proceeds to examine the theology of baptism in terms that Fr. Michael Hurley described as 'highly controversial writing for a Baptist'<sup>23</sup>.

In his article, Fr. Hurley also refers to the views of Dr. G. R. Beasley Murray, which in fact set something of a middle course between the views expressed by Dr. McClendon and those of Mr. Clark in terms of whether Baptism should be understood as a symbol or as a sacrament. Having examined to his own satisfaction the New Testament evidence, Dr. Beasley Murray<sup>25</sup> proceeds to review Baptism in Baptist Churches today, and faces the problem as to why Baptists resist sacramental theology, and appear to retreat to the defence of a symbolic ordinance which is apparently ineffective. He answers the problem in these terms:

"On the one hand they have reacted strongly to a type of sacramentalism that has savoured to them more of superstition than of Christ's true religion, and on the other hand they have been intensely concerned to observe the spiritual reality of baptism, namely participation in the redemption of Christ through faith - union with Him and the reception of his Holy Spirit." (26)

For personal religion and freedom of the individual under the lordship of Christ are watchwords that dominate Baptist life. However, this can lead to the danger of the significance of baptism being minimized. For where the symbolism of Baptism is stressed, then the emphasis is placed upon the aspects of obedience and witness expressed in baptism, and thus baptism can become the end of obedience, and the rite can also become a public ratification of a confession already made in public.

He suggests that the difficulty might be overcome if Baptists ceased to define Baptism in purely human terms, because it has been separated from conversion:

"We have assumed that the essential transaction between God and man has been done with, issues have been settled with our Maker and Redeemer, and in baptism we tell the world so. But this view has not been taken from the New Testament. Baptism is never defined by the apostolic writers in this fashion. This is our own construction on the event, contrived by our judgment about faith as an interior response to the grace of God and the presumption that therefore an outward event like baptism can have only a secondary and confirmatory function." (27)

However, the essence of believers' baptism has from New Testament times been that it is conversion-baptism. Conversion is fulfilled and

expressed in Baptism, and Baptism is conversion, itself a work of the Spirit and filled with the Spirit's gift to the penitent convert.

A further contribution to the debate on the symbolic or sacramental meaning of baptism comes from R.L.Child<sup>28</sup>. He defines a symbol as representing an idea other than itself and admits that it is related to that of the sacrament although not precisely similar. He defines Baptism as:

"a form of symbolic action, and..... one which is particularly rich in meaning and power it is used in a religious setting. The church, through its ministers acting in God's Name, uses certain words and performs certain actions as the divinely appointed means whereby men are made more deeply aware of the reality of God's presence, and more susceptible of his truth and grace." (29)

He proceeds to give the clue to the relation between sacrament and symbol in the fact that every symbol takes its character from what it symbolizes or represents, whether that be good or bad:

"this language of symbolism is made use of in the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion in order to mediate the presence and power of God in Jesus Christ." (30)

Later in his book he points out that Baptism has a twofold value:

"It put everyone in mind of the sovereign work of Christ on the Cross for all mankind; and it proclaimed the fact that through the preaching of the Gospel, the work of redemption and renewal is still going forward, and fresh lives are constantly being brought by the power of the Holy Spirit to acknowledge Jesus as Lord." (31)

However, from the New Testament he makes it plain that Baptism did not simply announce something or remind people of a fact:

"it also effected something - or rather, God did. For his Spirit working through the rite transformed the individual experience of the candidates into a corporate fact..... They were in very truth 'members one of another'." (32)

He is quite convinced that the most important participant in baptism is God and sees it as a rite administered by divine authority and not man even though he defines the candidates share in the rite thus:

"Baptism gave to the candidate the opportunity of testifying openly to his change of heart, and his desire to identify himself with Jesus Christ and his cause."

But even so, God alone, by His Spirit is able to make Baptism effective<sup>34</sup>.

The contributors to the work edited by Mr. Gilmore<sup>35</sup> were also the main representatives from the Baptists at the Parish and People Conference on 'The Baptismal Life' held at Swanwick in 1965, the papers from which are published in 'Crisis for Baptism'<sup>36</sup>. The conference as such is apparently neglected by non-Anglicans (42/260) and laity (53/260) and the editor comments

"It was not surprising in these circumstances that the particular problems of the clergy of the Church of England in administering baptism should dominate the commission reports and plenary sessions of the conference." (37)

However, the comments and paper by the Baptists speaking<sup>38</sup> do advance our understanding of the Baptist view of Baptism current in 1965 and so we shall look at them from that point of view.

Mr. Gilmore comments on the primeval connection between creation and water; and so concludes logically that in this present age it is natural that 'water should be used by the creator to recreate his people'<sup>39</sup>. However, he goes on to point out that in the baptism of Jesus God is concerned not only with the re-creation of people, but with the re-creation of fallen nature. He goes on to quote Gregory of Nyssa

"As he emerges, with the water which runs off his body he elevates the whole world." (40)

to support his view that in baptism, by being immersed in the waters of the Jordan, symbols of the forces of the earth Jesus sanctified matter. Jesus initiated in his baptism, he suggests, 'a sovereign process of divine activity'<sup>44</sup> restoring the original plan of creation. Thus the baptized finds that his whole view of the world is transformed, as he shares in Christ's work of the creation and sanctification of the world. Just as the baptism of Jesus found fulfilment in his cross and in his resurrection, so the baptized's share in creation is not confined to immersion but it too points to death, which is the gateway

to life, as the old is surrendered to make way for the new.

He concedes that although the faithful committed believer is most obviously involved in the process of re-creation, this is happening independently of him, for Christ has already performed this act of baptism once and for all. His baptism was all-embracing and even the greatest of human efforts are of small value compared to his power at work in the world and in the lives of men and women.

However, Mr. Gilmore then returns to the idea of the re-creation of God's people in baptism. He asserts that this sharing in the work of re-creation is most faithfully and consistently achieved where <sup>people</sup> are who are faithfully and consistently offering themselves and their world to God, particularly through the focal point of the rite of Holy Communion. He concludes his comment upon Dr. D. Jenkins paper thus:

"And since it is the believer who commits himself to this task of offering therefore it seems to me that the act of baptism which initiates the process of sharing in creation, should be reserved for those who are able, in knowledge and understanding, to commit themselves to it. To relate baptism to creation and then to natural birth seems rather to miss the point that it is not the first appearing of matter that we are concerned with, but rather its continual creation and re-creation according to the purpose of God. This God has done, can do, and will do in spite of us; but there are those who help him by continually presenting themselves to him and allowing their minds and lives to be remoulded from within. It is this aspect of creation that is focused in baptism and the Lord's Supper." (42)

Rev. N. Clark contributed a paper to the Conference on Baptism and Redemption, and he states that a basic understanding of baptism can only derive from the Christ-event but this must be done in the face of the danger of losing history in theology, maintaining a proper balance between the old and new covenant, and maintaining the proper balance between continuity and discontinuity in salvation history. He insists that 'the historical basis of the baptismal rite and the

historic actuality of the incarnate Jesus (must) be allowed to remain properly normative<sup>43</sup>. This can only be achieved, he maintains by the clear recognition that the theology of baptism comes from the twin realities of the baptism of Jesus at Jordan and its fulfilment at the Cross and Resurrection. The link that binds Jesus' baptism with Christian baptism after Pentecost is the crucified and risen Lord, and the baptism of repentance that John practised at Jordan is modified by passing through the Cross and Resurrection.

The baptism of John was heavy with eschatological overtones, and Mr. Clark describes it:

"It was concerned with the initiation of the sinful into the remnant prepared for the appearance of a royal messiah coming in judgement to pour out holy spirit. But by his participation in the rite Jesus transformed it. For the actuality was other than the expectation." (44)

But the transformation was incomplete because fulfilment in terms of the cross and resurrection still lay ahead. Only beyond Calvary could the redemptive work of Jesus be accomplished; and whilst at Jordan he had begun to fill baptism with new meaning, thus humanity could become inclusive only through redemptive death and resurrection, and only thus could baptism receive the new meaning in all its fulness.

Mr. Clark reminds us that it is the risen and ascending Lord who initiates the Church's mission to baptize. The baptism initiated continues the significances inherent in Jordan baptism - forgiveness of sin, initiation into the Israel of God, the gift of the Holy Spirit - but all have been transformed and are now controlled by the redemptive act of Calvary. So to speak of Christian baptism is to speak of a reality that belongs to the period between Pentecost and Parousia, and Mr. Clark points out that there is unity and distinction in the understanding of redemption:

"There is unity. The Christ who has come is the Christ who will come. There is distinction. At the Cross and Resurrection we were redeemed. At the parousia we shall be redeemed. This is the tension of eschatology. Between

the redemptive realities of past and future and under the eschatological tension his the Church, the saving community, charged by Word and baptism to extend the redemptive purpose of God. Baptism is incorporation into this body."

(45)

He suggests that a similar balance, just as delicate, exists in the relationship between the Church and the Kingdom. For the Church is the representation and servant of the kingdom, living as it does between Pentecost and Parousia, it is not the kingdom per se.

Baptism, he concludes, belong with the Church, as a sacrament of inaugurated eschatology. It is grounded in the work of redemption wrought by Christ, its incarnate Lord, and it looks forward to the Parousia. Thus it must not be too simply and directly related to one or other of the two moments of redemption. Baptism is neither the declaration of a redemption already accomplished, nor the guarantee of a redemption which at last will be. It is the incorporation into Christ of the baptized, and the initiation of the baptized into the Servant People of God.

Rev.S.F.Winward contributed a comment on Fr.Charles Davis' paper Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, and in his comment raised first the question of the relation between confirmation and baptism in terms of 'What is given at confirmation that has not already been given at baptism?'<sup>46</sup>. He suggests that Fr.Davis had not given the answers most widely known among the Anglican Communion, emanating from Dr.L.S.Thornton and Dom Gregory Dix. Dr.Thornton suggests that new birth takes place at baptism and the gift of the Spirit is given at confirmation, and both theologians lay stress on confirmation rather than baptism as the predominant element in Christian initiation, in Mr.Winward's view. Not surprisingly for a Baptist,Mr. Winward feels that such a distinction cannot be maintained on the basis of a 'faithful exegesis of the New Testament'<sup>47</sup>. He accepts that Fr.Davis does not make or accept the distinction, but

rather states quite plainly that the Holy Spirit is present in the baptised, as are his gifts. Confirmation does not produce a new indwelling, but its effect is implied in baptismal regeneration. Fr.Davis also says, Mr.Winward reports, that baptism is the door into the life of the community, and that it achieves the oneness with Christ, which carries the entire gift of salvation with it. Mr.Winward understands Fr.Davis' argument to be:

"Confirmation is an act of commissioning for the work of witness, at which an additional gift of the Spirit is imparted for that vocation." (48)

Mr.Winward however insists that the New Testament ascribes without exception this gift to baptism. It is through baptism, he affirms, that we are united with Christ, share his risen life, possess the Holy Spirit, are consecrated to God and made members of his Church, and he poses the question:

"How can the Christian thus share in his life and fellowship without being thereby involved in the vocation of the Church? The Church is mission - the people of God elected for the service and salvation of mankind. There can be no incorporation into this people apart from the purpose for which God has called the people. We are baptised into the one body for service and witness." (49)

He suggests the view that laying on of hands with prayer does not add anything to baptism but underscores the acceptance of the catechumen into the community and he is commissioned because he is accepted into a community whose nature is mission. He concludes that both baptism and the laying on of hands should be seen as two aspects of one individual whole.

Mr.Winward then comments on Fr.Davis' views about the Church's 'economy' in regard to the sacraments; and questions whether the administration of baptism, confirmation and the eucharist to children who have not yet responded to the gospel in faith is in harmony with the essential nature of the Gospel sacraments. Mr.Winward wishes to stress the need for word and sacrament, stressing the

importance of preaching and of a response to the proclaimed word in repentance and faith before the administration of any of the sacraments of initiation. He states:

"If the sacraments are to be administered in harmony with their essential nature they must never be severed from the Church, the Body of Christ, from the proclamation of the Gospel, from hearing the Gospel with faith, and from the vocation of the Christian in the world." (50)

In their more recent study, written from an overtly conservative evangelical position, Donald Bridge and David Phypers cover very similar ground<sup>51</sup>. They stress in their examination of the New Testament evidence that baptism in water and baptism in the Spirit, although administered independently, belong to each other.

"They are different aspects of one great initiation complex which includes the inward attitudes of repentance and faith, the outward marks of water baptism and the laying on of hands, and the declaration by God of sin's forgiveness and heart renewal." (52)

They imply that the difference comes in the subjective enjoyment, particularly of the inner aspects of forgiveness and renewal, which may be delayed even appear to be disconnected.

They also consider the status of baptism as symbol or sacrament, and conclude that a straight either/or is less appropriate than a response of both/and. They readily point out the appropriateness of the symbol of baptism to the elements of salvation in the New Testament, particularly the way in which baptism portrays the death, burial and resurrection which the Christian shares with Christ. But this association in itself makes it plain that baptism is also a sacrament - a means of God's grace, and they conclude

"To the New Testament writers there is no problem. Baptism is integral to the salvation process, of value in itself, bringing with it the full blessing of God upon the Christian." (53)

They too affirm the vital part which the individual's response in faith to the grace of God in Christ must play in any act of initiation, and this element must be the key to any Baptist theology of Baptism.

We will now look at how this background theology is interpreted and given flesh, in the printed word of the catechetical leaflets, and we shall begin with an 'approved' publication, ie. one published with the approval of the Joint Publications Committee of the Baptist Missionary Society, the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, Baptist Union of Scotland and the Baptist Union of Wales, D.F. Neil's 'The Way of Christ'<sup>54</sup>. In typically Baptist fashion he begins with the New Testament, and suggested that for the Christians who lived in New Testament times, baptism was the inevitable development of faith in Christ. He suggests that the disciples saw the conversion experience in four stages, vis., repentance, faith, baptism and belonging to the fellowship. If any of these four stages were omitted, then this resulted in an incomplete view of what was involved in becoming a Christian. He suggests that the New Testament knows nothing of an unbaptized Christian, apparently unwilling to confuse his candidates by referring to those who had received John's baptism in Acts 19:1-5, and although this argument is from silence it does seem likely that the disciples rigidly adhered to the Dominical command to make disciples and baptise<sup>55</sup>. It is from this commission that he makes his first point, that Baptism is an act of obedience to the command of Christ. Baptism follows commitment to Christ as his disciple, and is the outward declaration of an inward act of repentance and faith. He suggests that it is the way in which the candidate begins a life of obedience in acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ, and suggests baptism is an inevitable consequence of confessing Jesus Christ as Lord. Next he suggests that baptism is a declaration of the union of the baptized with Christ, and points out that immersion in water in the name of Jesus is an acted parable of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ:

"In the act of baptism we declare these two great truths of the Christian faith, and we also declare their personal relevance to our own lives - we have become one with Christ in his death and resurrection."  
(56)

and he cites Romans 6:3-4 as his New Testament basis for this statement. Baptism is further the outward act that demonstrates the response of God to the baptizand's response in repentance and faith; as the baptizand receives new life in Christ. Faced with the question of the spiritual function of baptism in terms of 'blessings' received, Mr. Neil first established a link for the catechumens between faith and baptism, and suggests that the early Christians saw baptism as the outward accompaniment of faith. Having made his link, and supported it with James Denney's quotation: 'Baptism and faith are but the outside and the inside of the same thing'. Having established his link between baptism and faith to the satisfaction of his non-sacramental readers he says:

"When baptism is linked to faith in this way we can better understand the New Testament teaching that baptism results in the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38), union with Christ (Galatians 3:27), and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)" (57)

He then proceeds to make the point that baptism is the mark of entry into the Church, and this he does with his exegesis of Galatians 3:27,28, and suggesting that one way for the phrase 'baptised into Christ' to be understood is that the baptizand is being baptized into the Christian Community. For it is through baptism that the baptizand is brought into the fellowship of Christ and united with those who are Christ's disciples. Paul's affirmation 'by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body',<sup>58</sup> makes this point with even greater clarity and Mr. Neil points out in this passage Paul is speaking of the Church as the body of Christ. But baptism, he points out, is not merely identification with the Church but commitment to the life and work of the people of Christ. Finally he suggests that baptism is an act of public declaration of allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord.

A similar booklet produced by the Baptist Union is by

Rev.R.E.O.White<sup>59</sup>. His examination is more detailed, as his booklet was written specifically about baptism, whereas Mr.Neil wrote of baptism in the somewhat broader context of a life of committed discipleship. Viewing Mr.Neil's booklet as a syllabus for instruction, baptism would take up one of twelve lessons in a course, Mr.White's booklet would involve a complete course of eight lessons on baptism! Because his approach is at more depth and the stress is upon baptism per se there are closer comparisons with some of the Catholic material which we have considered above.

He begins by considering the baptism of Jesus by John, and linking this to Jesus' call to the first disciples to follow him. He suggests that to seek to follow Christ involves not only knowledge of Christ, admiration of him, faith in him, and fellowship with Christ, but also the deliberate surrender of all life's decisions to His direction and control. He describes the baptism of Jesus by John as 'a supreme instance of His unhesitating obedience to every call of God, however it came'<sup>60</sup>. Jesus' obedience provided him with an opportunity to publicly identify himself with the word and work of God in our own generation, but, Mr.White points out, the baptism of Jesus by John also earths the faith of the candidate through baptism to the historic events of Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection. By appealing to Christ's own example as the motive for baptism, Mr.White suggests an implication that baptism possesses Christ's authority and rests on His command and he cites the apostolic practice after Pentecost as they obeyed the dominical commission as his chief evidence. He also refers to Jesus baptizing at the hands of his disciples<sup>61</sup>, which is a rarely used passage to stress baptism's identity with Christ. He sums up by saying:

"In passages like these the apostolic Church expressed its deep conviction that Christian baptism derived from the express command of Jesus. Behind that conviction lay also their knowledge that He Himself had been baptised. And that knowledge was given added weight and importance by the fact

which is virtually certain, that only Jesus Himself could have described for them exactly what happened." (62)

From this point he highlights the implication of the baptism of Jesus and suggests that because nothing which Jesus shared could possibly be meaningless, the baptized also must expect some positive, spiritual, and permanent effect from baptism. He states that four things happened to Jesus in his baptism, acknowledgment, empowering, commissioning and temptation and comments:

"We would hesitate to conclude that anything like this should happen to us in baptism, if the New Testament did not give us (as we shall see) considerable ground for believing that it is our privilege not only to follow our Lord obediently through the waters of baptism, but to share in some measure in the experience which came to him there." (63)

In his next chapter Mr.White examines the fundamental meaning of the rite of baptism being practised by John, and in particular with the idea of washing and cleansing from the defilement of sin. In a passage reminiscent of Tertullian he mentions the Old Testament precursors of baptisms and the regulations for bathing the body and washing the clothes and proceeds to show that the root-idea of baptism as purification is an important part of Christian thought by referring to numerous New Testament passages which link baptism to the cleansing of both body and soul<sup>64</sup>. Baptism expresses confession, repentance, and pardon, but must of necessity be sincere,

"If we truly wish it, the moment of baptism could be for us the moment when all our past regrets, our failures, our repeated resolves to put away the sin that 'doth so easily beset us', our intermittent moods of patience, our prayers for a better life, are all gathered up in one deliberate, public and irrevocable act (for whatever happens, we can never undo our baptism) - an act expressing once and for all our break with sin and our faith in the forgiveness of God." (65)

This is very reminiscent of the Catholic teaching on the character of baptism.

Next Mr.White devotes a chapter to the relationship between faith and baptism, remarking on the revolutionary nature of the

confession 'Jesus Christ is Lord' in the days immediately after the execution of Jesus at the hands - albeit the washed hands - of the representative of Lord Caesar, and stressing the danger of such or faith in times of persecution, but once the crucial confession was made, then the next step for the early Christians was to share symbolically in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and to be baptised into his name - to pass their lives into the ownership of Christ. Mr. White suggests that there is a very real place in a baptismal service today for an opportunity to confess the Lordship of Christ in the life of the candidate by question and answer, or by testimony which as we have been has been incorporated into the Catholic rite, although it has for sometime been a point of Baptist practice. He goes on to point out that baptism united the candidate to the Church, and this supports the stand which he is making in witnessing to the power of Christ at work in his life.

He points out in his next chapter that this sharing in fellowship is a real part of what it meant to be baptised in Christ, but the major part of being in Christ was dependent upon the candidates real and living relationship to Christ Himself. He suggests that in baptism

"Christ is present when in the fellowship of the gathered Church, a new convert makes his act of repentance, confession, obedience, faith, imitation, resolve, commitment and witness. An act so richly significant, to which the heart has been led by the Holy Spirit Himself, must receive blessing. And the blessing is, that Christ receives the baptized into fullest fellowship and union with Himself." (66)

He proceeds next to develop more fully the idea of baptism into the death of Christ, and begins by stating 'something in us must die if the Christ-life is to survive and flourish'<sup>67</sup> Although essentially this is just a re-statement of the truth of repentance, He points out the importance of the element of identification with Christ, and shows the transformation in Paul's thinking of the

baptistery from a pool of cleansing to a tomb, a grace in which the old self now put to death on Christ's cross, is finally buried<sup>68</sup>. Freedom, newness, victory, are the practical, experimental, fruits of baptism into Christ's death, he suggests, and following baptism the baptizand is pledged to oppose all evil:

"to cut out, resolutely and without compromise, all that is sensual, selfish, impure, dishonest, corrupting to ourselves or to others, or in any way or degree alien to Christ's spirit - from our conduct, from our business, from our entertainment and reading and conversations, from our secret thoughts. We are dead to everything he died to." (69)

In his chapter 'Baptized into One Body', Mr. White lays stress upon the authority of the local Church to baptize. In this he is demonstrating the difference of Catholic and Baptist views of the Church. The baptizer acts only on the authority of the Church, and this is an authority which should be exercised responsibly in Christ's name:

"As essentially a Church act, baptism implies the clear obligation of the Church to see that her converts are baptized, that they are rightly prepared for baptism, and that afterwards they are cherished, trained and used within the Church's fellowship. The candidate for baptism, on his part, can scarcely help acknowledging that this same Church which accepts his young faith as sincere, and under Christ prescribes the form of his confession, has authority also to instruct him further in the Christian life, and can under God be the means of untold grace to his growing soul." (70)

Also expected of the candidate is the sincere intention to love and defend, to serve and support, financially, and otherwise, the Church into which they come.

He then proceeds to note the connection of the Holy Spirit with baptism, and suggests:

"When a sincere convert makes his act of confession, commitment, and obedience, in the way divinely appointed, the Spirit who has led him to baptism will come upon him in altogether the new fullness and power, and abiding with him, lead, empower, and sanctify him, and see him safe to glory." (71)

Mr. White then questions the practice of the association of laying on of hands with the coming of the Spirit, within the baptismal rite. He suggests that it was used in Acts to regularise the baptism of the Samaritan Christians<sup>72</sup> and to complete the baptism of the 'disciples' at Ephesus who had received only the baptism of John<sup>73</sup>. In these cases the laying on of hands is an exceptional supplement to an inadequate baptism, and he suggests that these are the circumstances in which it should be used. He suggests that the laying on of hands 'is simply a gesture of solidarity among believers'<sup>74</sup>.

He concludes his booklet by looking at the doubts which prevent baptism, or are used as an excuse for its delay, and makes the interesting point that the faith 'required' of the candidates is not faith in himself but

"In the last resort Christ Himself is the Baptizer, as He is the head of the Church we join, Giver of the Spirit we receive, Host at the Table where we shall be renewed. Minister, congregation, Church Meeting are agents of His action. The promise is 'He shall baptize you.....'." (75)

Mr. White's approach is an interesting one and illustrates well the lack of any form of official view, for example, we find his view of the laying on of hands somewhat at variance with that of the next author we shall look at whose work is also published by the Baptist Union.

The sub-title of Rev. S. F. Winward's booklet 'Your Baptism' is 'a booklet for the instruction of candidates for baptism and Church membership'<sup>76</sup> His booklet is divided into four parts, three of which are divided into subsections. Part One - Before Baptism has the subsection headings: The Lord Jesus Christ; The Holy Spirit; The Gospel; Repentance; Faith; The Pattern of Teaching. Part Three - After Baptism has the headings: The Christians Life; Life in the Church; Life in the World; Eternal Life. Part Four - The Baptismal Service contains both a liturgy for baptism and for the laying on of hands

which he suggests is an essential part of the initiatory rite. But it is with Part Two - At Baptism that we shall concern ourselves here. Mr. Winward begins his explanation by stating that of his seven subsections, the first four describe the action of the Lord in baptism, and the last three describes the action of the candidate in response. He, too, in common with both previous authors, stresses the unity of faith and baptism 'Baptism presupposes faith, and faith implies baptism'<sup>77</sup>. Having made this plain, he turns first to the gifts, and blessings which God promises to faith and baptism, and begins to think of the baptizand being in union with Christ. The phrase 'in Christ' describes the relationship of the Christian with the risen and glorified Lord who was crucified. The essential element of that relationship is unity with Christ through faith and baptism. This unity with Christ makes the baptizand a son of God<sup>78</sup>. Similarly it is only this unity with Christ through faith that makes it possible for the baptizand to share in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ<sup>79</sup>, and although these saving acts of God in Christ took place long before the candidate's birth, through faith and baptism they may be shared, because of the unity between candidate and Lord. Mr. Winward suggests that this participation in the death and rising of the Saviour of the world has revolutionary implication for the life and conduct of the candidate:

"He is therefore under obligation to make this accomplished fact real in daily life by saying No to the old sinful life and yes to the new life in Christ." (80)

The life of the candidates is redirected towards God and God's plan for his world when the baptizand becomes one in Christ through faith and baptism.

Through his union with Christ, the believer received the promised forgiveness of sin, which is Mr. Winward's next section. He begins with the statement:

"The washing of the body with water is the outward and visible sign of the cleansing of the personality from

but he soon makes it very plain that

"God alone can forgive sin and cleanse the sinner. This he does through the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ offered once for all on the cross, and effective for all time through the priesthood and perpetual intercession of our risen and exalted Lord." (82)

He develops the links between both internal and external cleansing from both Old and New Testament and on Ephesians 5:25-26 he comments in regard to the clause 'cleansing it by water and the word' that the cleansing of the Church by Jesus was by the water of baptism and the word which was both preached and believed, particularly as the candidate made the confession of his faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

Next Mr. Winward considers the relationship between baptism and the gift of the Spirit, and linking this to Jesus' baptism by John says 'The baptism of the disciple, like that of the Master, is with water and Spirit'<sup>83</sup>. Although he freely admits that the Spirit is at work in the candidates lives long before the administration of baptism, he suggests that the activity and gift of the Spirit in baptism is related to Christ, to the Church, to our vocation, and to our response:

"Because we are baptized into union with Christ, into his death and resurrection, and through him are cleansed and forgiven, we receive the gift of the Spirit. Because we are baptized into the Church, the community created and indwelt by the Spirit, we receive the gift of the Spirit for life in fellowship. Because we are baptized into the royal priesthood, that is, into the interceding and witnessing community, we receive the gift of the Spirit for the fulfilment of that vocation. Because we are baptized in obedient response to the activity of the Spirit in our hearts, we receive a fuller measure of the divine gift." (84)

In Baptism, Mr. Winward assures the catechumens for whom he is writing, God anoints and seals the baptizand as his own by the Holy Spirit.

In joining the baptizand to Christ, the Holy Spirit also joins him to his brethren in Christ, which brings Mr. Winward to his next point: Membership in the Church, which he defines as the fellowship in which all former divisions between men are destroyed and all are

one in Christ. He is writing in terms of the Church universal and explains to his readers:

"It is possible to be enrolled as a member of a local Church only because, by faith and baptism, the Spirit has already joined you to the one universal Church." (85)

Turning to the other side of the covenant, the response made by the candidate in baptism, Mr. Winward first stresses that baptism is in obedience to the Lord's command. Jesus' own baptism in the Jordan was in obedience to the express will of God. Before leaving his disciples he commanded them to make disciples, baptize and teach<sup>86</sup>, and for this reason if the catechumen claims to love Christ, then baptism is an imperative response of obedience.

But it is not restricted to obedience. Mr. Winward proceeds to point out that for the candidate, baptism is a public confession of a personal faith in Jesus Christ. This confession of faith in Christ has a threefold effect. It gives joy to the Lord, to whom the confession is made. It confirms and strengthens the faith of the candidate who thereby makes a public commitment of his faith before family and friends, before the Church and the world. The good confession thus made is used by the Holy Spirit to create or strengthen faith in those present among the witnesses who have not yet come to faith and baptism. He then proceeds to point out the implications of the simple confession 'Jesus is Lord' as its meaning is drawn out in the New Testament and in the creeds, and confessions of the Church:

"We confess our faith in the one eternal God, Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, our Maker, known through Christ as our Father, active in Christ as our Redeemer. We confess our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, as God manifest in the flesh, who has saved us from sin and death. We confess our faith in the Holy Spirit, who sanctifies the people of God, the Paraclete who guides, helps and strengthens us." (87)

However it is by both water and word, by act and statement that the good confession is made.

Finally he reminds his readers that in baptism they are pledging their allegiance to Christ. He points out the allusion implied in I Peter 3:20-22 of the pledge arising from the interrogation and consent by two parties to a contract. In baptism, he suggests, the soldier of Christ is taking his oath of allegiance, his sacramentum, just as the Roman recruit swore an oath of allegiance to the Emperor. Such a vow, taken publicly, is necessary because of the frailty of human nature. To strengthen their resolve, the Christian community 'commit and bind ourselves to live in the light of the heavenly vision'<sup>88</sup>.

Mr. Winward sums up this part:

"And so, in obeying, in confessing, and in promising, we make full response to him who unites us with Christ, cleanses us from sin, seals us with the Holy Spirit, and makes us members of his Church." (89)

Mr. Winward has also produced a booklet of daily Bible readings on the instruction of Candidates for baptism, entitled 'The New Testament Teaching on Baptism'<sup>90</sup>. The main intention of the booklet is 'to provide daily Bible reading for one month'<sup>91</sup> for the author believes the best preparation for baptism to be prayer inspired by the New Testament. The comments which accompany the readings are for the most part brief, occupying about 200 words, and they are followed by a one or two sentence question for further thought. They act as reinforcement to the later leaflet but he makes a few additional points. He too notes Jesus' practice of baptizing disciples referred to in John's gospel<sup>92</sup> and states quite unequivocally

"Jesus was not only baptised himself, but practised baptism during his ministry - although his disciples performed the actual rite. We can see here why the first Christians practised baptism immediately after Pentecost. They had not only the command of Jesus and not only his personal example, but also his habitual practice of baptizing disciples." (93)

Throughout the readings in Acts he traces a pattern of

conversion, baptism, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and incorporation into the fellowship of the Church through the laying on of hands. However he points out that 'God who is free and sovereign is not bound to any sequence or order'<sup>94</sup> for these events. He interprets the laying on of hands as confirmation and comments

"If we are true to our New Testament we shall regard conversion - baptism - confirmation as one act through the whole of which God imparts his Holy Spirit. The three should only be separated, as here, by very short periods of time." (95)

He is also quite adamant in commenting on the 'household' baptisms in Acts that there is no evidence that conversion - hearing and believing - was waived as an essential prerequisite of baptism. He reminds his readers that the jailer at Philippi was baptized with all his family only after Paul and Silas had spoken 'the word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house'<sup>96</sup>, and he suggests that personal faith was still essential for baptism.

Having considered the writing on Baptism of the Epistles, which he developed later in the booklet above, he summarizes the actions and effects of baptism:

"(a) What I do in my Baptism

- I. I turn to God in repentance and faith
- II. I make a public confession of my personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.
- III. I follow the example of the Lord Jesus Christ who was himself baptized.
- IV. I obey the command of Jesus Christ that all disciples are to be baptized.
- V. I make a vow of allegiance to Christ

(b) What the Lord does for me in my Conversion and Baptism

- I. He brings me into union with the Lord Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.
- II. He washes away all my sin, granting to me full remission and forgiveness
- III. He clothes me with the new nature of the Lord Jesus Christ
- IV. He gives to me the Holy Spirit, through whom I become a son of God.
- V. He incorporates me into the Body of Christ, the Universal Church." (97)

and this booklet also reached the top seven catechetical syllabi in the questionnaire. It aims to cover the broader canvas of Christian discipleship and so believer's baptism per se occupies only one of seven chapters. It sets baptism in context following conversion and suggests that believer's baptism is one of the ways in which a concrete response to God's love in Christ may be expressed. It freely acknowledges 'Believer's' Baptism is not essential and those who belong to other Church traditions have different ways of expressing their response<sup>99</sup>. Baptists however believe the believer's Baptism belongs to the very heart of the faith, has New Testament authority, and adds something important to a believer's commitment to God in Jesus Christ. In this outline, intended as the basis of discussion - between candidates and minister or Church leader, they cite six reasons for the importance of baptism: a) the example and teaching of Jesus Christ, b) as an expression of commitment, c) the symbolism of immersion in terms of both cleansing and resurrection, d) as a response of faith, promptly expressed, e) as an affirmation of discipleship and f) as a strengthening of commitment to Christ through the experience of the presence of God in a real way.

Of similar date but from a different theological and ecclesiological background comes Victor Jack's booklet 'Believe and be baptized'<sup>100</sup>. Mr. Jack works in Suffolk as an evangelist with the Counties Evangelistic Work, and does not make clear any connection with a Church of the Baptist Denomination, but he still polled a significant response in the questionnaire. He aims to provide a simple explanation of baptism for candidates and to put baptism into perspective by showing it to be part of the developing experience of the Christian rather than an end in itself, leading to a life of active fellowship in the Church. He bases his booklet on Acts 2:21-47<sup>101</sup> and begins by setting baptism into its context following conversion to Jesus Christ. He describes baptism as the badge of discipleship,

showing that the baptizand belong to Christ, although he stresses that it must follow sincere belief in Jesus Christ, and baptism cannot in itself produce salvation, drawing the contrast that a person is not baptized to make him a Christian, but to show he is a Christian. Mr. Jack makes it plain that it is the action of God in effecting the inward change of heart and granting faith rather than the outward sign of immersion that accomplishes salvation.

He is quite convinced that baptism is not an optional extra but an act of obedience to the command of Christ, and an act of owning Jesus Christ as Lord. It is an act of dedication to Christ, and he reminds his readers:

"The two ordinances, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, which Jesus gave His disciples whereby they could show their allegiance to Him were soon known as 'sacraments'." (102)

and he goes on to describe the action of a sacrament in terms of sealing a promise made to God by the baptizand at his conversion. But he describes the main and deeper meaning of baptism as identification with Jesus Christ. In this connection he thinks first of Christ's identification with man by his baptism in the Jordan and by his baptism on the cross. Then he thinks of the baptizand's identification with Christ in terms of sharing his death, burial and resurrection. In the first of two appendices he looks at the reasons for the practice of immersion citing the evidence of the meaning of the words βαπτίζω, the practice of the Jews, the practice of John, the Baptism of Jesus, the practice of the early Church, and the teaching of the Apostles and concludes: 'Baptism by immersion is the clearest and most appropriate way of expressing these wonderful truths'<sup>103</sup> of the new life in Christ. In the second he looks at an Old Testament picture of Baptism as drawn by Paul in I Corinthians 10:1-11, and reminds his catechumens of the dangers of failing to live lives consistent with the profession made in baptism. Following his examination of baptism he looks at the various aspects of the life of the fellowship into which the catechumen

will be admitted by baptism.

'New Horizons' is the title of a booklet produced by Rev. Bryan Gilbert under the auspices of the One Step Forward Movement<sup>104</sup>. It too received a substantial response, although this was probably from ministers who had come into contact with the One Step Forward Campaigns through their Churches. Its format is that of a workbook with questions interspersed into the text, and, amongst its aims, it seeks to:

- "2. GIVE guidance to new believers in reading their Bible and in praying.
3. EXPLAIN clearly the steps of Believer's Baptism and Church Membership as well as the place of personal stewardship of money." (105)

It was intended that the lessons could be used as the basis for group discussion in classes or meetings, and the broad syllabus may be seen on figure 3 below.

In the lesson on Believer's Baptism, Mr. Gilbert begins by stating that the lesson is to show 'why believers should seriously consider taking this step'<sup>106</sup>. We should note that the first priority is belief, and baptism for Mr. Gilbert is something which should be considered by those who believe. He then examines the reasons for this consideration by asking his readers to look at a selection of verses and evoke from them that baptism follows the example of Jesus (Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21) and obeys the command of Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20). The pattern of the early Church was to baptize believers (Acts 2:38-41; 8:12; 16:30-33), and for them baptism was the symbol of forgiveness (Matthew 3:6) and the sign of a new beginning (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). On the basis of Jesus' baptism (Mark 1:9-10) the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:36-39) and Paul's description of baptism (Acts 6:3-4) he suggests to his readers that baptism should be by immersion.

Mr. Gilbert then asks when Baptism should take place and on the basis of Acts 2:41;8:36-39;9:18 he suggests the answer that baptism should follow immediately upon conversion. He then poses the question of re-baptism for those baptised in infancy and cites Acts 19:1-6 as evidence for this practise which many of his more ecumenically sensitive brethren would wish to sweep beneath the carpet for the acceptance of re-baptism implies an invalidity for an infant baptism not strengthened by subsequent confirmation. And whilst most Baptists would tactitly accept this viewpoint many would be embarrassed in the context of ecumenical dialogue for it to be spelt out. But this passage as such is a very weak plank on which to build an **argument** for re-baptism. John's baptism was given as a token of repentance to Jews awaiting the Messiah and wishing to express their readiness for the Messianic age. As such it had nothing to do with initiation, and still less to do with the Christian Church. And to suggest this baptism of John was in any way analogous to infant baptism, and so this passage gives Baptists the grounds for re-baptism upon request is to build an argument upon a weak premise indeed. A much stronger case can be built on the practice of the early Church, on the example and command of Christ, and by stressing the essential prerequisite of a personal belief in Jesus Christ as Lord.

However, Mr. Gilbert is sufficiently confident of his point of view to write:

"In the light of what has been said, and what you have read in the inspired word of God, surely no Christian should hesitate to obey the wishes of the Lord Jesus Christ." (107)

and he goes on to stress that Believer's Baptism marks a break with the old life of self and sin and marks the start of a new life with Christ in control. But then he makes some very sacramental comments, applying to baptism aspects which properly belong to faith and conversion, although not linking these aspects elsewhere, except in reference to baptism, immediately following conversion:

"The believer 'dies to self' (Galatians 2:20) and the old sinful past is buried. He arises from the water in the strength of the Risen Christ through the simple act of obedience." (108)

Finally he notes that far from being the goal of Christian life, baptism is rather the gateway into further experience of following Christ. It should not be delayed, but he reminds his readers: 'You are baptised as a sinner needing every bit of help God can give (Ephesians 3:14-21)'.<sup>109</sup> The diversity in approach which we have seen illustrates both the independency of Baptists, and their stress on inward faith rather than outward symbol, and upon God's work in the candidate's life before baptism expressed in baptism rather than upon what the sacrament accomplishes in itself. This same emphasis will be apparent as we consider the suggested liturgies of the period under consideration.

## 2. The Liturgy of Baptism and its Mystagogical Explanation

Baptists interpret their independency of action and their freedom to interpret the leading of the Holy Spirit in their worship as well as in their theology. This finds expression in a stress upon extempore prayer and worship among many Baptists, although over the last twenty years there has been a growing interest in liturgy and liturgical expressions of worship among some Baptists, probably as a result of the ecumenical movement and of the drawing into dialogue of the various sections of the Christian Church. For example in the Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised) published in 1933<sup>110</sup> the only evident items of liturgical prayer were the Lord's Prayer and three benedictions, the edition containing chants and anthems cost more and not at all widely purchased. On the other hand, the Baptist Hymn Book published in 1962<sup>111</sup> included as well as the Lord' Prayer and four benedictions, a General Confession, a General Thanksgiving, the Sursum Corda, nine canticles for chanting, fifty nine Psalms, also arranged for chanting, and thirty seven responsive readings

in the standard edition. This indicates a growing demand for worship material in which the congregation could participate, and although relatively few churches use chants, large numbers use canticles, Psalms and readings as spoken corporate or responsive readings. Similarly the two books of suggested orders and prayers<sup>112</sup> have taken account of this growth in liturgical interest by including sections of both general prayers and prayers for the Christian year, although the earlier book had to adopt a very persuasive approach in its introduction to encourage ministers to make use of it in worship. The interest however is still by no means universal, and many ministers still prefer to use extempore prayer, presumably limiting the Holy Spirit to working through their extemporised prayers. However it is likely that most churches would use for Baptism a rite which is at least recognisable as being of the same species as those which we will consider from the two printed books and the leaflet, even though variations on the printed service may be legion.

The services which we shall consider do not include a rite of election because as we shall see below the equivalent action takes place at the Church meeting when on the basis of the reports of the sponsors, the candidate is elected to membership of the Church subject to his subsequent baptism. The reports of the sponsors testify to the faith of the candidate, of his commitment to Christ, and of his genuine intention to endeavour to serve the Church and the world. Upon the basis of their reports, and in the candidate's absence, he is accepted into the membership of the Church following the profession of faith he is to make at his subsequent baptism.

The earliest service from the period under discussion dates from 1960 and comes from the book 'Orders and Prayers for Church Worship', written to replace the earlier Minister's Manual, by E.A. Payne and S.F. Winward, two Baptists known for their interest in

liturgy. This order notes that the Baptism of Believers should be administered in the presence of the congregation during public worship. It is noted as desirable for Baptism to be followed by the Communion Service, at which the new members might be received into the membership of the local Church<sup>113</sup>. The wording is tentative, as Baptist ministers have shown a tendency to over-react to any suggestion of direction. The Baptismal rite per se begins with the singing of a Baptismal Hymn, and following this the Minister introduces this part of the service reading a selection of passages of Scripture which relate either to the Baptism of Jesus by John, or Baptism as practised by the early Church in the New Testament which he has chosen from the selection suggested<sup>114</sup>. The selection may be concluded with the Great Commission from Matthew 28:18-20. As a further suggestion, other longer passages are mentioned as suitable 'especially for the main New Testament Lesson during the service'<sup>115</sup>. There is little or no reference to any Old Testament passages, or to the build up of salvation history based upon water which we find in the Catholic material. Baptists tend to place a stress on the New Testament, and would be more concerned with the faith of the candidate than with the efficiency of the sacramental elements.

These readings are followed by a statement of the benefits which the believer is promised and might expect from Baptism, read by the Minister:

"Let us now set forth the great benefits which we are to receive from the Lord, according to his word and promise, in this holy sacrament.

In baptism we are united with Christ through faith, dying with him unto sin and rising with him unto newness of life.

The washing of our bodies with water is the outward and visible sign of the cleansing of our souls from sin through the sacrifice of our Saviour.

The Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, by whose unseen operation we have already been brought to repentance and faith, is given and sealed to us in this sacrament of grace.

By this same Holy Spirit, we are baptised into one body and made members of the Holy catholic and apostolic Church, the blessed company of all Christ's faithful people." (116)

In this statement Baptism is defined as a holy sacrament - one of the two dominical sacraments which the Baptist accept, and have accepted since their early confessions of faith - uniting the Christian with Christ, cleansing the soul from sin, sealing the candidates soul by the Holy Spirit, and joining the Christian into membership with the company of all Christ's faithful people. The statement continues by applying this as we have come to expect to the individual believer, defining baptism in terms of an act of personal obedience, a following of the example of Christ, and of union with him, a public confession of faith in Christ, and a pledge of personal allegiance to Christ:

"For all such believers, baptism is:

An act of obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ:

A following of the example of our Lord Jesus Christ who was baptised in the river Jordan, that he might fulfil all righteousness:

A public confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord:

A vow or pledge of allegiance to Jesus Christ, an engagement to be his for ever." (117)

Thus the implication of the union of the candidate with Christ because of his response to Christ in faith is spelt out in this public definition of baptism. These implications are then stressed further as the candidates are then asked by the Minister two questions; the first concerning their repentance and faith, the second concerning their obedience and dedication:

"Do you make profession of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ?"

"Do you promise, in dependence on divine grace, to follow Christ and to serve him for ever in the fellowship of his Church?" (118)

This is then followed by the Baptismal Prayer for the candidates which seeks the bestowal of the inward and spiritual grace of baptism upon the believers who submit themselves to its outward and visible sign. Following this prayer, the candidates are baptised as a single immersion in the baptistry in the following formula after being addressed by name:

"On thy profession of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." (119)

Each candidate's baptism is then followed by the Aaronic benediction<sup>120</sup>, or the congregation may also sing a baptismal sentence<sup>121</sup>, or the verse of a hymn or the doxology, as the candidate emerges from the baptistry. A brief prayer follows for the candidates, who have now left the sanctuary to dry themselves, and the rubric states:

"If desired, a Hymn may now follow, and the normal order of public worship be continued." (122)

If however, it is the end of the service, then the Minister dismisses the people with an appropriate prayer of dismissal.

The developing practice of receiving newly baptized members into the fellowship of the Church by the laying on of hands is reflected by the following rubric from the service 'The Laying on of Hands with Prayer upon those who have been Baptized'

"This order may follow baptism, either as part of the baptismal service, or as soon afterwards as convenient. It should be followed by the administration of the Lord's Supper." (123)

Lest any Baptist should see in 'the rite of Laying on of Hands' traces of Catholic sacerdotal theology, a statement by the Minister explaining that the laying on of hands was practised by the apostles, and explaining its significance as an act of acceptance and commissioning:

"Beloved brethren: we are now to pray for and lay our hands upon those who have been baptized, and receive them into Church membership. This rite practiced by apostles is an act of acceptance and commissioning. Let us pray therefore that they, being blessed and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, may be fully equipped for their vocation and ministry as priests and servants of Jesus Christ. We also, in accepting them, commend them to your love and fellowship, and exhort you to encourage, help, and build them up in the Lord." (124)

This statement is followed by one or more Scripture sentences relating to the function and purpose of the Church as shown in its members<sup>125</sup>, and this in turn is followed by the following prayer seeking the neophytes equipment for their work as Christians and Church Members:

"Almighty and everlasting God, strengthen we beseech thee these thy servants with the Holy Spirit the Paraclete: the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, piety, and godly fear. Grant that they may continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. Enable them as royal priests of Jesus Christ to bring others to thee in prayer, and to take thee to others in witness. In all their vocation and ministry may they truly serve thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord." (126)

As we would expect in a non-episcopal Church, the laying on of hands is performed by the Minister, and 'one or two other appointed representatives of the Church'<sup>127</sup>. Appropriate verses of blessing are spoken by the Minister following which the candidates stand, and are welcomed by the Minister with the statement:

"So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone." (128)

The service continues with the administration of the Lord's Supper, which most Baptist Churches observe twice each month.

This service was an innovation at this particular period, and the large majority of candidates were received into membership by the more usual service in which they were welcomed by the Right Hand of Fellowship being extended to them instead of the Laying on of Hands<sup>129</sup>. It was also less common for the Holy Communion Service to be part of the same service as the Baptism of Believers. Indeed the Holy Communion Service at that time was far more commonly regarded as an appendage, and was usually celebrated following the main service of worship rather than as the climax to worship and an integral part of the Service, as it is seen in many Baptist Churches today - twenty years on.

Something of this development may be seen from the next service under review which was prepared by Revd.S.F.Winward in 1969 as part of his leaflet 'Your Baptism' which was found to be used by

a high proportion of ministers in 1981, at least for instructing their candidates, if not for the actual liturgy of the Baptismal rite<sup>130</sup>. However, we may assume that it is likely that most of the services would bear some reference to the material used for instructing the candidates, and Mr. Winward's explanation makes it plain that this is his intention:

"The following liturgy for baptism is appended to illustrate the teaching of this booklet, and to provide a general indication of the pattern order, and content of the service. It is not suggested that all these words will necessarily be used; it is illustrative and typical." Baptism is normally administered in the presence of the congregation at Sunday Morning or Evening Service. It should, if possible, be followed by the Lord's Supper, at which the reception of the new members takes place." (131)

Mr. Winward is much more definite concerning his preference for the place of the Baptismal liturgy in the service, suggesting that it should be preceded by the Service of the Word. Although he does not say why baptism should follow the service of the word, it is plain from his booklet that baptism should always be performed in the presence of the worshipping community. The liturgy itself begins with the words of the great commission, read by the minister who then proceeds with the preface to the service as follows:

"Brethren, you have heard the command of Christ to his Church to make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. According to the scriptures, baptism is to be administered to those who profess repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. I call upon you therefore to hear and witness the profession of repentance, the confession of faith, and the promise of allegiance which the candidates are now to make." (132)

This preface is quite considerably condensed from its predecessor, and the emphasis has shifted towards the candidates' faith, and away from the sacramental action of baptism<sup>133</sup>, an example of the constant ebb and flow of sacramental theology.

In this liturgy the questions also vary from those above<sup>134</sup> and the aspect of repentance and faith is spelt out more clearly. The sacramental benefits of baptism are implicit in the questions posed

to the candidate, particularly concerning his confession of faith:

"Do you turn to God in Christ, repent of your sins and renounce evil?

Do you confess your faith in God as your Creator and Father, in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier and Helper?

Do you promise to follow Christ, and to serve him in the fellowship and in the world?" (135)

In a sense Mr. Winward is bringing back the emphasis from the fourth century liturgies in his first and second questions; for the first might at least be related to the earlier apotaxis and the second an heir - if a weak, non-conformist heir - to the syntaxis. Mr. Winward is one of the few Baptist writers to make any reference to fourth century practice, though he makes this reference in the context of catechetical instruction referring to the catechumenate at Rome<sup>136</sup>. And these elements are far more explicitly expressed than in the service examined above.

Following the questions, a time of silent prayer for the candidates is invited and then the minister prays the baptismal prayer:

"We give thanks to you, eternal God, our heavenly Father, for you have created all things and your compassion is over all that you have made.

We give thanks to you for your beloved Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and was buried, and was raised to life on the third day.

We give thanks to you for the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who has given us a new birth and is changing us into likeness of your Son.

Accept and bless these disciples who are now to be baptised in your name.

Grant that, being united with Christ in his death and resurrection they may die to sin and live to righteousness.

Grant that, according to your promise, they may receive the forgiveness of their sin and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Grant that, being baptized into one body, they may always continue in the fellowship of your faithful and elect people.

Grant that, putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, they may receive out of his fullness, grace upon grace, and evermore abide in him.

Through whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory be to you, Father almighty, for ever and ever." (137)

As his preface is simpler he introduces into his prayer much of the statement about baptism duplicated in the prayer in the service we

considered above. Mr. Winward is committed to a policy of so ordering the worship which he conducts that there is no scope for repetition or duplication. This demands an alert and aware congregation if none of the impact of the worship is to be lost, and unfortunately one must admit that all Baptist congregations do not fit into the category. If one argues that the service is intended to benefit the candidate alone, then Mr. Winward is covered by the fact that his liturgy comes at the end of a booklet in which the meaning of baptism has been plainly set forth. Similarly if one may assume the congregation is so steeped in the knowledge of what Baptism is about, then it is not necessary to spell out its meaning for the Church to benefit fully from its involvement in the service. But traditionally Churches have found that a service of Believer's Baptism is one at which they are joined by a number of outsiders, there to witness the spectacle of believer's baptism, and for a group such as these the impact of the prayer used as an explanation of the Sacrament of Baptism may be lost.

The Baptismal formula has been simplified too and reduced to a bare minimum; evidence once again of Mr. Winward's policy of not duplicating his material within the service, and perhaps a reversion to the simpler formula of the fourth century, although using the active voice.

"A...B... I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." (138)

and there follows the rubric:

"After each baptism, the people may sing a response. When all have been baptized, a hymn is sung. If there is to be no laying on of hands or celebration of the Lord's Supper, the service concludes with the Benediction." (139)

"When a baptismal service is to include the laying on of hands and communion, a hymn, the intercessions, the notices and the offering should FOLLOW the baptisms. During this time the candidates change their clothes, and while the hymn following the offering is sung, return to their places in front of the Table." (140)

As we would expect, Mr. Winward's liturgy for the rite of laying on of hands is simplified, but adds the reminder that the laying on of hands was not only an acceptance and commissioning, but also an act of blessing. Perhaps having introduced the idea in the earlier service, he felt free some six years later to elaborate upon it, although once again he transforms some of the statement into a prayer:

"We are now to pray for and lay our hands upon these brothers and sisters who have been baptized, invoking the blessing of God upon them, accepting them into the membership of the Church, and commissioning them for the service of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us stand for the prayer.

We thank you, our God and Father, for these brothers and sisters who in baptism have made confession of their faith, and have been united with your Son and Saviour in his body the Church. Strengthen them with the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of wisdom, power and love, that they may grow up in every way into Christ. Help us by our prayers, our friendship and our example to encourage them in the Christian life, that they may continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers. Defend them in all trials and temptations, and grant that serving you faithfully here on earth, they may inherit eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord." (141)

He omits the Bible passages above altogether. Following this prayer the congregation are encouraged to pray silently for the newly baptized and then the minister, with one or two others, lays hands on the candidate, and offers prayers based upon verses of blessing as in the earlier service. In Mr. Winward's service, the Aaronic benediction is offered over each of the newly baptized at this point rather than immediately following their baptism, and to the words of welcome above he adds the words of I Peter 2:9 thus:

"So then you are no longer outsiders and aliens, but fellow-citizens with God's people, members of God's household. You are built upon the foundation laid by the apostles and prophets, and Christ Jesus himself is the foundation stone.

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." (142)

The minister then proceeds with the administration of the Lord's Supper.

An indication of the changes in thinking about the whole area of Christian initiation throughout the Christian Church is to be seen in the introduction to the suggested order of service for baptism in 'Praise God',<sup>143</sup>. This replacement to 'Order and Prayers for Church Worship' aims, according to its subtitle to be 'A Collection of Resource Material for Christian Worship', and, sadly, there is often more to provoke and stimulate thought in the introduction to the sections than in the liturgies offered themselves.

"Among Baptists of late there has been a growing tendency to bring closer together the act of baptism, reception into membership and admission to communion. In other branches of the church at the same time there has been a tendency to see the wholeness of the Christian initiation in terms of strengthening the links between baptism, confession of faith (or confirmation) and communion. One result of this theological discussion for Baptists is that the act of baptism as a confession of faith is increasingly seen as part of a larger act of initiation which often then finds expression in one service of baptism and communion." (144)

They go on to note that the practice is by no means universal, and that often baptism and reception into membership are still separated by either several hours on the same day, or by several weeks.

They offer five essential elements in the whole process of Christian initiation which they suggest should find expression in the worship, whether it be in one service or two.

1. Reading of Scripture (including the gospel) and our reasons for engaging in Christian initiation, including the fact that baptism bears witness to what God has done and continues to do, and that our act of baptism is our response to that love.
2. Profession of faith and commitment
3. Prayers, including a prayer for God's action in the Spirit that those who are baptised may become children of God, entering into newness of life in Christ, becoming part of his body and sharing his Spirit.
4. Baptism in the name of the Trinity, possibly with the laying on of hands.
5. Reception into membership and admission to communion." (145)

They suggest the following order of service to illustrate the application of their points:

The Preparation

Call to Worship

HYMN

Prayer of confession and assurance of forgiveness

Responsive Reading

The Word

Reading of Scripture

HYMN

Sermon

The Response

Statement of belief concerning Christian initiation  
including gospel reading\*

BAPTISMAL HYMN

Act of Baptism

Invitation to Baptism

Offering

Prayers of Intercession

The Communion

HYMN

Reception into membership\*

Presentation of gifts, including bread and wine

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Words of Institution (including the breaking of the  
bread and the raising of the cup)

Sharing of bread and wine

Silence, followed by the Lord's Prayer

HYMN

Dismissal."

(146)

They expand upon the items marked with asterisks in the text which follows to offer an updated version of the material in Order and Prayers, although they do not offer a Baptismal Prayer at all in this section of the book. One is offered in the Epiphany material but no reference is made to this in this particular liturgy. The statement offered is:

"Let us now recall what we understand concerning the benefits promised by our Lord to those who receive believers' baptism and become members of his church.

In baptism we become one with Christ through faith, sharing with him in his death and resurrection, and the washing of our bodies with water is a sign of the cleansing of the whole of our life and personality.

In baptism we mark the receiving of the Holy Spirit who has brought us to the moment of commitment and who will strengthen us for future endeavour.

In sharing in this act we are obeying the commandments of our Lord, making confession of our personal faith in him, and becoming part of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church." (147)

There is little new here, apart from the phraseology, which, while it is a little easier to understand than its predecessor, does not really add to the dignity of the liturgy.

The questions offered omit any reference to repentance, let alone the renunciation of evil, and simply ask the candidate for his acknowledgment of Christ and for a promise of service:

"Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

Do you promise with the help of the Holy Spirit to serve him in the Church and in the world unto your life's end?" (148)

This is followed by the Baptismal Formula. Although the text does not give any indication of a division between Statement, Questions and the Formula the order of service suggests that a baptismal hymn should be inserted somewhere between the first and third element. The formula itself is based on the earlier order, but it includes the interesting phrase 'at your own request' which reminds those present that the candidate comes of his own volition to make this step of commitment and faith:

"A.B. upon a profession of your faith and at your own request I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." (149)

There is once again no reference to any act of blessing as the candidate emerges from the water, although presumably the practice of some musical sentence or verse established in many congregations will continue. However, the following suggestion of an invitation to Baptism must stand on its own as an instruction from a Service Book of any denomination.

"Since the act of baptism very often leads others to ask for baptism, once all the candidates are baptised the minister may then wish to invite those present who have not made this act of commitment either to come forward there and then (though not necessarily with a view to being baptised at that moment) or to meet him in the vestry afterwards." (150)

It does make the point of the evangelistic emphasis of the service which is always a major emphasis in any celebration of Believer's Baptism in a Baptist Church.

The introductory statement for the rite of the Reception of the Candidates into Membership, the other area to which the authors give their attention in terms of a printed suggestion of

suitable wording, is basically a modernised version of the statement from Order and Prayers. Once again the idea of the Laying on of Hands as an act of blessing is not mentioned as one of the reasons for the service:

"The laying on of hands, as practised by the apostles, is an act of acceptance and commissioning. In accepting these candidates we pray for them, and we invite all of you to continue daily to pray for those who have accepted the claims of Jesus Christ on their lives. In commissioning them for service we both pray and believe that the Holy Spirit will strengthen them that they may fulfil their calling as servants of Jesus Christ." (151)

but this element of blessing is plainly there in the prayer which is suggested:

"Bless, O Lord, this your servant. Strengthen HIM by the Holy Spirit, as we now in your name commission HIM for the service and ministry of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." (152)

This prayer is quoted directly from Order and Prayers with the alteration of 'you' for 'thy' but it is the only prayer suggested in the 'Praise God' Liturgy. The other more biblical prayers are omitted. It is also pointed out that Ministers who do not wish to lay hands on candidates may use the same prayers and emphasis together with the right hand of fellowship. The existence of this role is a timely reminder of the built in individuality of the Baptist minister, and of the lack of any formally agreed liturgical structure.

### 3. The Praxis of Baptism with Relation to the Fellowship of the Church Particularly Considering Sponsorship.

As we have seen the Church community plays an important part both in the baptismal service and in the acceptance of the baptizand into the membership of the local Church. We have mentioned above that it is the practice of many Baptist Churches for the Church Meeting to invite two of their number to sponsor the application for Baptism and/or Church Membership being made by the catechumen. Eighty seven per cent of those responding<sup>153</sup> to the questionnaire indicated that

sponsors were appointed for baptism and Church Membership and the practice seems to indicate an appointment made by the Church on the recommendation of the deacons' meeting<sup>154</sup>. In the majority of the Churches visitors were appointed after the decision for baptism had been made by the candidate and after the classes had been held. The practice is summarized in the Baptist Union leaflet: 'Church Membership: Suggestions for Visitors to Candidates'<sup>155</sup>. Visitors to Candidates are to represent the Church fellowship and go to express the pastoral love and care of the fellowship for the candidate, and not, the leaflet points out, to put him or her on trial. On the Church's behalf, the visitors are to satisfy themselves of the sincerity of the faith of the catechumen in Jesus Christ and that he has made commitment of his life to Christ, to the fellowship of the people of Christ and to His work.

The suggested natural starting point for the meeting of visitors and candidates is to ask the candidate to speak about his spiritual experience of Jesus Christ and the reasons for his desire for church membership. And the visitors are advised that it must be made clear

"That the heart of Christian discipleship is in a personal relationship of love and obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ and no where else." (156)

Faith is, and must always be, the essential pre-requisite for believer's baptism, and the visitors are forcibly reminded of this by the advised action when it becomes clear that the candidate has not really reached the point of personal commitment to Christ. In this situation the candidate should be advised to wait for a time to think more deeply about the implications and meaning of baptism and church membership, supported by the love and prayer and encouragement of the visitors and further spiritual help from the minister. It is hoped that this time of

"Further reflection and help may bring about a more convinced acceptance of Christ, and a deeper under-

The next responsibility of the visitors is to emphasize the relationship with the local and universal church which comes through being united with Christ. Baptism and Church membership bring with them responsibilities to the Christian community and although the relationship with Christ of the individual is founded upon individual faith, that faith brings with it a responsibility to a community of others who share a common life in His Spirit. This relationship should express itself in commitment to the services of the Church, to the maintenance of the finances of the Church, and in commitment to live 'a life of Christian example and influence in the world'<sup>158</sup>. To sustain this life, the candidate is encouraged to develop regular habits of prayer and Bible reading, and reminded that the process of initiation is the beginning of a new stage on the journey of faith:

"We are to be ever going on with Him, ever growing up into the knowledge, love, mercy and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and ever more deeply involved in His service using every gift His Spirit gives." (159)

Following the visit and presentation of the report, the leaflet has one final, grossly inadequate paragraph headed AND AFTER

"Let the visitors decide which of them is going to keep in touch with the candidate in the days ahead to pray for him, encourage him, be a counsellor and loving friend so that he comes to the fulness of his being as a person and a Christian in all the purposes of God for him both in the Church and in every part of his life."(160)

It is precisely because this ongoing responsibility is expressed so informally that a large proportion of those responding to the questionnaire saw no purpose or role for sponsors in the initiatory process, a stark comparison with the vital role of the sponsor in the fourth century and the role that is emerging for sponsors in the Catholic Church. Three out of every four ministers saw no role for the visitors in preparing for baptism, two out of every five saw no

place for them in preparation for membership, one in every three could find no continuing role after baptism, and only half of those questioned even used the visitors within the baptismal service. Coupled with this of course, one minister in every eight does not have visitors at all! Ministers are also fairly reticent to respond to articles in which the gauntlet of this practice of visitors to candidates and their more effective use was thrown down. An article produced for the journal of the Baptist Minister's Fellowship<sup>161</sup> produced only one letter, expressing the hope that the author might produce some material for training people for sponsorship. In his letter, Rev.D.F.Neil, the author of 'The Way of Christ'<sup>162</sup> writes:

"My own conviction is that personal sponsorship at a deep level is the way forward. I have not managed this successfully yet in my ministry, but I live in hope! About fourteen years ago in my previous Church, I developed a sponsorship scheme. We had seen quite a number coming to faith in Christ and I asked fifteen of our members if they would each accept responsibility for one new Christian for eighteen months and meet with them once a fortnight. To my dismay, the scheme collapsed, not because the new converts did not want it but because the mature members soon realised that such a task required a total commitment on their part and it brought out into the open the reality, (or the lack of it) of their own Christian experience. Since then I have arranged a bit of sponsoring, but this has been an individual arrangement when compatibility made it appropriate.

The conclusion I have come to is that our need is to train people to be sponsors.....

If, as a result of your research you could develop some kind of programme of the training of sponsors and you made your findings available to a wider circle, I am sure you would fill a large gap in our present church structures. I for one would be immensely grateful." (163)

At least there was one response, which provided an interesting contrast with the Catholic practice of following up baptism with a Catholic education programme, rather than further training for the sponsor/godparent<sup>164</sup>. A second article written for the 'Baptist Times' drawing attention to some of the results of the questionnaire produced no response at all either in the correspondence column or in terms of personal comments.

Writing in his booklet 'Caring for New Christians'<sup>165</sup>

Rev. Derek Buckingham devotes a page and a half to the possible role of Godparents. He mentions in his first footnote the leaflet we have examined above but in such vague terms it is unlikely that he has read it. However, the procedure advocated is similar although in his chapter, he devotes more time to the aspect of faith in Christ than to the aspect of commitment to the fellowship. Church Visitors, he suggests, should have:

"\*a radiant love for God  
\*a real concern for new Christians  
\*a strong commitment to the Fellowship." (166)

He suggests the ideal location for the visit should be in a Christian home, and the aim of the visit should be to have 'an enjoyable time of Christian fellowship in which everyone feels free to talk about their experience of God'<sup>167</sup>. As a result of the visit, he expresses the hope that the beginning of a strong Christian friendship will be laid so that the convert feels welcome to call at the home at any time. This would certainly remove the element of the candidate feeling on trial during the visit. The visitors are to look for a sincere trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord in the candidate, and evidence of a real desire to follow Christ.

He also suggests that part of the responsibility of Church visitors should be to meet with the new Christian the week following his baptism, in order to show continuing interest, and to deliver a pack of material from the Church. Whilst the idea of showing continuing interest is a good one, should this really be restricted to the week following baptism? If the material from the Church is an excuse to call, what has happened to the strong Christian friendship aimed for above? But in theory, his idea is a good one to help:

"to make new Christians feel wanted, cared for, and part of the whole Fellowship." (168)

However, Mr. Buckingham also points out that some Churches

do not leave the individual relationship between a visitor and a candidate to chance, but appoint one of the visitors as a 'kind of spiritual "Godparents"',<sup>169</sup>. Sadly his footnote is of very little help in locating these churches, or verifying their existence, other than in theory, but he does describe the anticipated role of the Godparent:

"He is expected to pray for the new Christian regularly, to meet him from time to time and do all he can to encourage him in the Christian life." (170)

The ideal is that each new Christian should be entrusted to the care of a mature Christian who is able to teach others, and who undertakes to provide regular personal and progressive teaching in the Christian faith over a fairly lengthy period of time. He is obviously aware of some of the pitfalls Mr. Neil experienced as he suggests:

"A church embarking on such schemes be well advised to set down in writing what 'God parent' or 'Disciplers' are expected to do; to seek some commitment from them to do it; and to have some means of accountability, to check what has been done and needs to be done." (171)

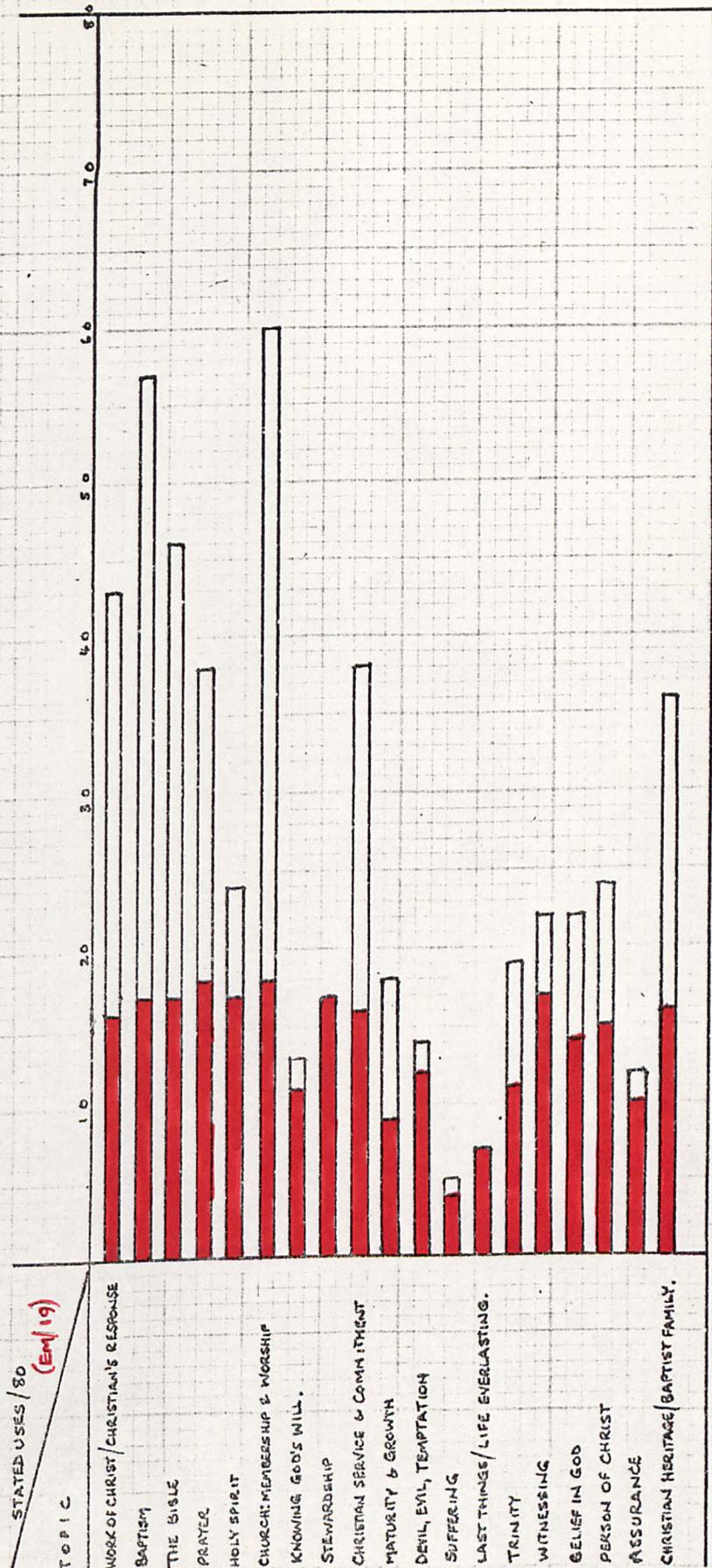
Although it is unlikely that Mr. Buckingham's booklet points the way ahead for all churches, it is heartening to find an awareness of the resources, even if as yet Baptists in general have not really begun to exploit the relationship built up between baptizand and sponsors. It provides at least a hope for the future that some of the horrifying statistics mentioned in my article<sup>172</sup> of those baptized who subsequently leave the Church may at least be reduced, and some hope too that the life of the fellowship of the Church may be strengthened through deepened interpersonal relationships.

So we find the Baptists theology of baptism and their liturgy of baptism stress the importance of the personal faith and commitment to Christ of the candidate. Although they take the view that the inward and spiritual grace is more important than the outward

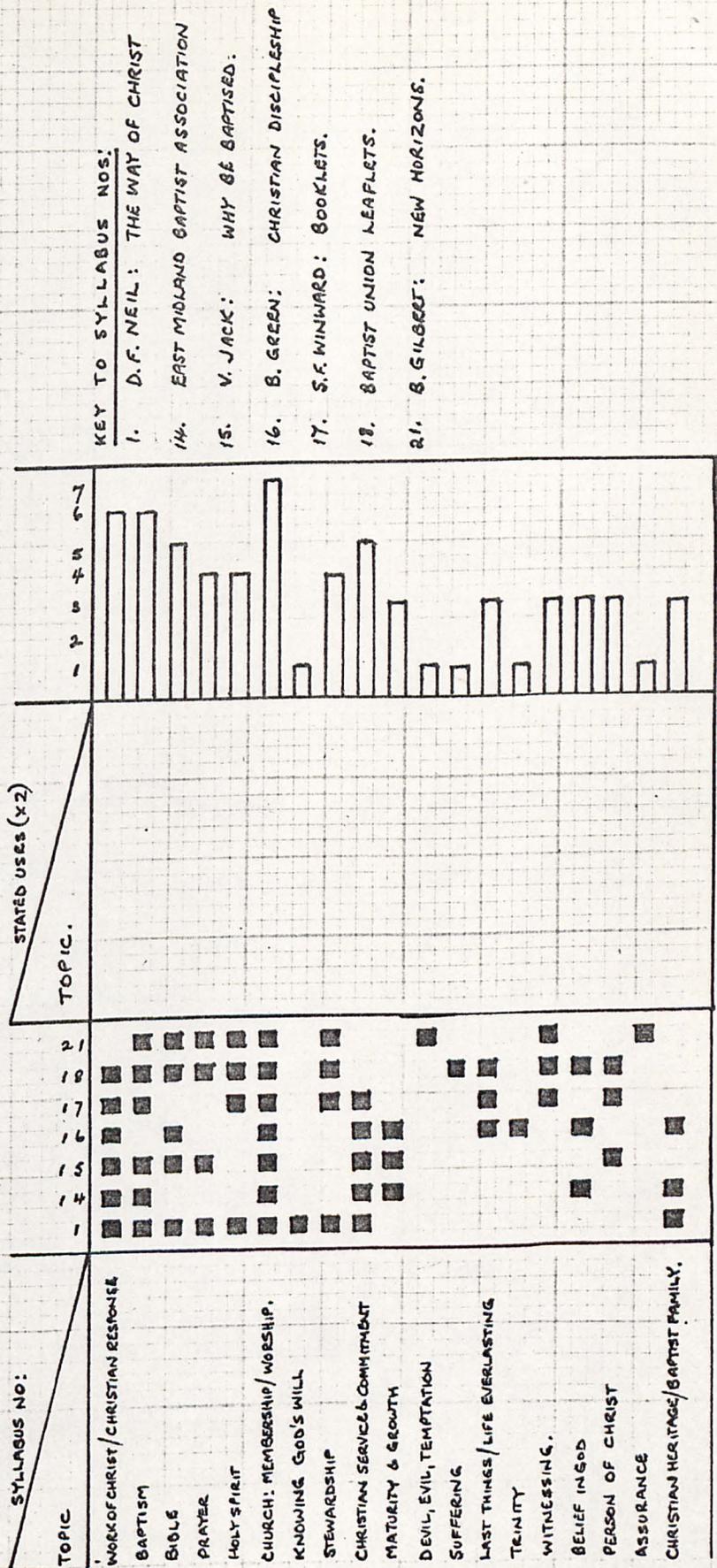
and visible sign, they still see baptism in sacramental terms emphasizing the way in which Baptism unites the candidate to Christ, and grants him participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. In both its liturgical setting and its theological background, they have set baptism in the midst of the Church community, but in terms of sponsorship putting this relationship to the Church into practice, Baptists seem to have lost their way and have lost sight of the very real value of this role in terms of bonds of pastoral care between candidate and community. But having now reviewed the four variations to our theme individually, we shall proceed to compare them.



COMPARISON OF SYLLABUS CONTENT



COMPARISON OF CONTENTS OF PUBLISHED MATERIAL SCORING A FREQUENCY OF 10+



KEY TO SYLLABUS NOS:

- 1. D.F. NEIL: THE WAY OF CHRIST
- 14. EAST MIDLAND BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
- 15. V. JACK: WHY BE BAPTISED.
- 16. B. GREEN: CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP
- 17. S.F. WINWARD: BOOKLETS.
- 18. BAPTIST UNION LEAFLETS.
- 21. B. GILBERT: NEW HORIZONS.

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3. E.A.Payne: 'Baptists & Christian Initiation' in Baptist Quarterly  
XXVI (October 1979) p.147
4. See figs. 1 and 2 - for the purpose of the syllabus comparison I  
have not differentiated between instruction before and after baptism.
5. The ministers who responded to this section form approximately one  
third of all the cases surveyed. Included for analysis are those  
who indicated a more general response, specifying a New Testament  
basis, or a series based on the Apostles' Creed, and some used  
published material for one part of the course, and their own  
material for other parts of their catechetical preparation. To  
enable a picture to be built up of this third, I list some of the  
significant responses and compare them with the responses to the  
whole sample as a fraction; with the area three figures in  
parenthesis.

### Age of Respondent

21 - 30 14/31 (3/5)      31 - 40 32/95 (3/3)      41 - 50 28/87 (3/5)  
51 - 60 14/64 (4/6)      61 - 70 21/43 (5/7)      70+ 4/9 (1/1)

### Length of Ministry

1 - 10yrs 38/114 (6/8)    11 - 20 yrs 31/93 (4/6)    21 - 30 yrs 12/32 (3/4)  
40+ years 9/13 (1/1)

### Number of Meetings before Baptism

1 - 4 17/52 (3/4)    5 - 6 45/140 (9/14)    7 - 10 41/109 (4/6)    10+ 11/20 (3/3)

### Duration of Prebaptismal Classes

1 month 17/41 (2/2)    3 months 73/206 (13/19)    6 months 14/40 (3/4)  
Others 8/26 (1/2)      Varies 1/4 (-)

### Number of Meetings after Baptism

1 - 2 24/72 (3/4)    3 - 4 25/72 (4/6)    over 4 18/38 (3/3)  
Never 29/95 (7/10)    Other 5/15 (1/1)

### Duration of Postbaptismal Course

1 month 16/55 (3/4)    2 months 2/4 (-)    3 months 27/78 (2/2)  
6 months 15/35 (7/10)    6+ months 7/17 (1/2)

### Appointment of Visitors

yes 103/285 (17/21)      No 12/43 (2/6)

6. On the basis of answers to questions re. syllabus on the  
Questionnaires. These are compared diagramatically in figure 3  
below
7. However one syllabus intended for post-baptismal instruction does  
not mention it in the chapter headings.
8. E.A.Payne: op. cit. p.147
9. Constitution of the Baptist Union of Great Britian & Ireland
10. See above p. 255
11. A.C.Underwood: A History of English Baptists. Baptist Union  
(London 1961) p.268ff
12. A.C.Underwood: op. cit. p.269
13. A.C.Underwood: op. cit. p.269-270

14. A.C.Underwood: op. cit. p.270
15. Concilium IV No. 3 p.4, p.9
16. J.McClendon: 'Why Baptists do not Baptize Infants' in Concilium IV No. 3 p.4
17. 'The Theology of Baptism' in Christian Baptism, ed. A.Gilmore (London 1959)
18. op. cit. p.307
19. op. cit. p.308
20. see above p.23, cf. Cyril: Cat. 3.10, 13.21
21. He refers to A.Benoit: Le Baptême Chrétien au Second Siècle 36ff 121ff, 148ff, 188ff.
22. Clark: op. cit. p.308-9
23. op. cit. p.309
24. Concilium Vol. 4 no. 3. However tantalising that statement may be it goes too far beyond our present belief to examine it further.
25. G.R.Beasley Murray: Baptism Today and Tomorrow (London 1966)
26. G.R.Beasley Murray: op. cit. p.83
27. op. cit. p.89
28. R.L.Child: A Conversation about Baptism (London 1963)
29. op. cit. p.13
30. op. cit. p.14
31. op. cit. p.63-4
32. op. cit. p.64
33. op. cit. p.64-5
34. See op. cit. p.72
35. See above n.17
36. B.S.Moss: (Ed): Crisis for Baptism (London 1965)
37. op. cit. p.9
38. Rev.A.Gilmore, S.Winward & N.Clark
39. op. cit. p.62
40. quote in op. cit. p.63
41. op. cit. p.63
42. op. cit. p.64
43. op. cit. p.73
44. op. cit. p.73
45. op. cit. p.74
46. op. cit. p.123
47. op. cit. p.124
48. op. cit. p.124
49. op. cit. p.125
50. op. cit. p.126-7
51. D. Bridge, D.Phyppers: The Water that Divides (Leicester 1977)
52. op. cit. p.21
53. op. cit. p.27
54. D.F.Neil: The Way of Christ (London 1973)
55. Matthew 28:18-20
56. op. cit. p.8
57. op. cit. p.9
58. I Corinthians 12:13
59. R.E.Q.White: Invitation to Baptism (London 1962)
60. op. cit. p.13
61. John 4:1-3
62. op. cit. p.15-16
63. op. cit. p.17
64. e.g. Acts 2:38; 22:16; Ephesians 5:25-27; Titus 3:5
65. op. cit. p.26
66. op. cit. p.41
67. op. cit. p.44
68. Romans 6:1-11
69. op. cit. p.48-49
70. op. cit. p.56
71. op. cit. p.64-5
72. Acts 8:14-17

73. Acts 19:1-7
74. op. cit. p.68
75. op. cit. p.75 quoting Matthew 3:1
76. S.F.Winward: Your Baptism (London 1969)
77. op. cit. p.17
78. Galatians 3:26-27
79. Romans 6:3-5
80. op. cit. p.19
81. op. cit. p.20
82. op. cit. p.20
83. op. cit. p.22
84. op. cit. p.22-3
85. op. cit. p.25
86. Matthew 28:16-20
87. op. cit. p.28
88. op. cit. p.30 cf. Tertullian's imagery in De Baptismo
89. op. cit. p.31
90. S.F.Winward: The N.T. Teaching on Baptism (London 1952)  
Although this publication date is before 1960, the booklet is still in regular use, and had reached a tenth impression by 1977.
91. op. cit. Preface
92. John 3:22; 4:1-2
93. op. cit. p.16-17
94. op. cit. p.22
95. op. cit. p.23
96. Acts 16:32
97. op. cit. p.63-64
98. EMBA: 'Church Membership' (Nottingham 1972.) A completely revised edition entitled 'To be a Christian' was produced in 1981.
99. op. cit. p.8
100. V.Jack: Believe and be Baptized (Bury St.Edmunds 1970)
101. op. cit. p.3
102. op. cit. p.12
103. op. cit. p.28
104. B.Gilbert: New Horizons (Lutterworth 1979)
105. op. cit. p.3-4. The movement aimed at a deeper level than simply stewardship hence the reference to money.
106. op. cit. p.16
107. op. cit. p.17
108. op. cit. p.17
109. op. cit. p.18
110. Psalms & Hymns Trust: Baptist Church Hymnal (Revised) (London 1933)
111. Psalms & Hymns Trust: Baptist Hymn Book (London 1962)
112. E.A.Payne & S.F.Winward: Order and Prayers for Church Worship (London 1960); A.Gilmore, E.Smalley & M.Walker: Praise God (London 1980)
113. E.A.Payne & S.F.Winward: op. cit. p.127
114. Matthew 3:13-17; Luke 3:21-22; John 3:5-8; Acts 2:38,41,42; Romans 6:3-4; 10:9-11; I Corinthians 12:12-13; Galatians 3:26-28 Colossians 2:12; I Timothy 6:12; I Peter 3:21-22
115. op. cit. p.130
116. op. cit. p.131
117. op. cit. p.131-2
118. op. cit. p.132
119. op. cit. p.133
120. Numbers 6:24-26
121. Baptismal sentences in the Baptist Hymn Book are Num.6:24-26; Revelation 5:13; 2:10
122. op. cit. p.135
123. op. cit. p.135
124. op. cit. p.135-6
125. I Peter 2:9; 4:10-11; Romans 12:11-12; Matthew 5:14a & 16; John 13:34-35
126. op. cit. p.137

127. op. cit. p.137
128. op. cit. p.138
129. This practice was adopted following my own baptism in 1960
130. See below - responses 17 & 18 to questions 5 & 9
131. S.F.Winward: Your Baptism. (London 1969) p.44
132. op. cit. p.44-45
133. cf. above notes 4 & 5
134. cf. above note 6
135. op. cit. p.45
136. op. cit. p.16
137. op. cit. p.46
138. op. cit. p.46
139. op. cit. p.46
140. op. cit. p.47-48
141. op. cit. p.48
142. op. cit. p.49
143. A.Gilmore, E.Smallley, M.Walker: Praise God (London 1980)
144. op. cit. p.137
145. op. cit. p.137
146. op. cit. p.138
147. op. cit. p.139
148. op. cit. p.139
149. op. cit. p.139
150. op. cit. p.139
151. op. cit. p.140
152. op. cit. p.140
153. See Appendix C q.8.
154. See Appendix C q.9.
155. Baptist Union Revised edition 1979. Although no author is acknowledged the original leaflet was produced by Rev.J.O.Barrett.
156. op. cit. p.2
157. op. cit. p.2
158. op. cit. p.3
159. op. cit. p.4
160. op. cit. p.4
161. See below Appendix B 'Baptismal Preparation Past Present and ....?'
162. See above n.54
163. Letter from Rev.D.F.Neil 15th May 1981
164. See below Appendix B 'Visitors - albatross or asset?'
165. D.Buckingham: Caring for New Christians (Ilkeston 1980)
166. op. cit. p.10
167. op. cit. p.10
168. op. cit. p.11
169. op. cit. p.10
170. op. cit. p.10
171. op. cit. p.10
172. Appendix B 'Baptismal Preparation Past Present and .....?' particularly n.14

## CHAPTER NINE

### A COMPARISON OF THE CATECHETICAL TEACHING ABOUT BAPTISM AND LITURGY OF BAPTISM IN CERTAIN OF THE ORTHODOX, CATHOLIC, AND BAPTIST CHURCHES, AND THE CHURCH OF SOUTH INDIA, 1960 - 1980.

The variations to our theme which we have considered have their roots in very different religious traditions, historical backgrounds and cultural environments and so in one sense it is all the more surprising that two Churches, historically divided by 1500 years, a group of individual churches forming a denomination founded on the appeal of two radical reformers to a new understanding of Scripture, and a Church founded this century from the ecumenical co-operation among missionary societies in South India should actually agree to anything. However, there are a number of areas of agreement which will be discovered as we compare the teaching of the denominations concerned regarding the meaning of Baptism. Later we shall be able to compare the variation with the theme, although as will no doubt be already evident we do not seem to be considering any modern-day Chrysostom-like oratory, but rather the more sober and carefully

measured catechesis and mystagogy of the printed word, which by its nature presupposes a higher than average degree of literacy on the part of catechumens who are used to visual rather than verbal modes of communication. Within the materials themselves, we include purely theological debate about the relationship between baptism and the community from the Church of South India; an attempt to encourage Orthodox Christians to rethink the meaning of baptism, and to rediscover its relevance for their lives; two very weighty and carefully written tomes containing 'clear and simple' presentations' in Cardinal Conway's view of one of them, 'of what the Catholic Church teaches and believes', the utterances contained in papers at conferences for the theologically aware; the simple, and not so simple, explanation of the faith in booklets aimed at candidates but more often used by the catechist as a basis for his verbal instruction; and the various rubrics and explanatory notes which are built into and around liturgy. With such a diversity of material, written for such a diverse group of readers with many and differing needs, any comparison is difficult to establish, but we still do our best to compare the material as fairly as possible.

The syllabuses for Instruction are probably one of the easier areas to compare. Dr. Ware tells me that the Instruction of Candidates in the Orthodox Church would be based upon A. Schmemmann's book 'Of Water and the Spirit', which is basically a mystagogical explanation of the Liturgy of preparation for Baptism, of Baptism itself, of the Sacrament of the Holy Spirit, and of the Entrance into the Kingdom. The booklet 'Basic Teaching for Catholic Religious Education' sets out the catechetical syllabus in the following terms:

- 1) Mystery of one God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit.
- 2) True Worship of God in a world that ignores Him.
- 3) Knowledge of God and the witness of Christian Love.
- 4) Jesus Christ, Son of God, the First born of all Creation, and Saviour
- 5) Creation, the beginning of the History of Man's Salvation
- 6) Jesus Christ the Centre of all God's Saving Works.
- 7) Jesus Christ, true man and true God in the Unity of the Divine Person

- 8) Jesus Christ, Saviour and Redeemer of the World
- 9) The Holy Spirit in the Church and in the Life of the Christian
- 10) The Sacraments, actions of Christ in the Church (the universal Sacrament.)
- 11) Religious Instruction on the Sacraments
- 12) The Eucharist, the Centre of all Sacramental Life
- 13) The Sacrament of Matrimony
- 14) The New Man in the Spirit
- 15) Human and Christian Freedom
- 16) The Sins of Man
- 17) The Moral Life of Christians
- 18) The Perfection of Christian Love
- 19) Specifics in the Teaching of Morality
- 20) The Church, People of God and Institution for Salvation
- 21) The Church as a Community
- 22) The Quest for Unity
- 23) The Church as the Institution for Salvation
- 24) Mary, Mother of God, Mother and Model of the Church
- 25) Final Reunion with God. (1)

and it is this syllabus that is closely followed in 'The Teaching of Christ'. 'A New Catechism' on the other hand took its syllabus from a different starting point, beginning with the mystery of man's existence:

Part One	The Mystery of Existence
Part Two	The Way to Christ A. The Way of the Nations B. The Way of Israel
Part Three	The Son of Man (a chronological account of the gospels)
Part Four	The Way of Christ (covering the growth and history of the Church, the Sacraments, Sin and Redemption, Faith, Hope, Love, Christian Prayer, Sunday, Words of Eternal Life, the Eucharist, Priestly People, Pastoral Priesthood, Church and State, Reverence for Life, Possessions on Earth, Helping the Needy, The Business of Living, the Quest for Truth, Failures of Christians, Forgiveness.)
Part Five	The Way to the End. (2)

A composite summary of the Baptists material developed from my research would include:

The work of Christ and man's response  
 Baptism  
 The Bible  
 Prayer  
 The Holy Spirit  
 Church Membership and Worship  
 Stewardship  
 Christian Service and Commitment  
 The Person of Christ  
 Witnessing  
 Belief in God  
 The Christian Heritage and the Baptist Family  
 Knowing God's will  
 Maturity and Growth  
 Temptation and evil  
 Suffering

Although there are a number of parallels between the syllabi, the Catholic syllabi are geared towards the candidate understanding of the Church and sacraments, whilst the Baptist composite syllabus is geared towards helping the candidate to understand the implications of his conversion experience, and thus seeks to emphasize the personal response of the candidate to Christ and His people.

Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist was the starting point for the explanation of baptism of a number of catechetical syllabi, and the authors of the New Catechism explain this ablutionary baptism as a preparation for the baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire of 'He who comes', and Jesus' submission to John's baptism transformed it to become a symbol both of the baptism of the Spirit which would be conferred on all future believers, and a sign of Jesus' readiness to share the common lot of man<sup>4</sup>. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance and forgiveness, and citing the liturgy of the Easter Vigil they explain Jesus' baptism by John as the completion of a dramatic sequence of water events, so that Jesus, sinless Himself, could lead his people from sin through the waters of baptism to a new covenant with the Father<sup>5</sup>. Neville Clark points out that Jesus' participation in John's baptism had profoundly altered at baptism, although as we shall see below, he feels that Jesus' truest baptism was His cross, as does the New Catechism<sup>6</sup>. Inherent in John's baptism as received by Jesus were forgiveness of sins, initiation into the Israel of God, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, but all these have been transformed, and are now controlled by the redemptive act of Calvary<sup>7</sup>. R.E.O.White linked the baptism of Jesus by John to Jesus' call to the disciples to follow him, describing Jesus' baptism as a supreme instance of his unhesitating obedience to every call of God, however it came. Jesus'

obedience enabled Him to publicly identify himself with both His generation and ours, a point very like that made by the New Catechism above<sup>8</sup>, and suggests that in Jesus' baptism four things happened to Jesus: acknowledgment, empowering, commissioning, and temptation, and in baptism candidates share in some measure in the experience which came to Christ there<sup>9</sup>, as a result candidates should come to baptism expecting some positive, spiritual and permanent effect from it. Stephen Winward refers to Jesus' baptism at the hands of John within the context of the descent of the Holy Spirit, and thus he concludes that the baptism of the disciple, like that of the Master, is with water and Spirit<sup>10</sup>. He also explains that Jesus' baptism in the Jordan was in obedience to the express will of God<sup>11</sup>. On the other hand, the theologians of the Church of South India, seeking to reduce the significance of baptism because they found it sociologically embarrassing, suggest that Jesus' recorded command to baptize came as an addition to the teaching of the Church, drawn either from the idea of John's baptism or from the mystery religions and was certainly not a dominical command<sup>12</sup>.

The sociological embarrassment came from the way in which baptism seems to separate candidates from their old community and caste, thus leaving them without a place in secular society following their baptism into a new life and a new birth. The New Catechism explains that the baptizand's entry to the Church is by a new birth, a new life which he received of water and the Holy Spirit, and thus he was given a share and a place in the new creation<sup>13</sup>. Similarly it explains that baptism is a symbol of the Resurrection, although this is not developed but rather stated as the natural development of the death of Christ<sup>14</sup>, whilst the 'Teaching of Christ' draws its teaching on baptism as a birth to newness of life from the liturgical readings for the Easter Vigil, and for Easter morning itself, reminding the candidates of the Pauline teaching from Romans 6:3-5 and Colossians 4:1-3.

In addition the Old Testament points forward to the new creation, by promising a new heart and a new spirit to men. Thus the authors earth their catecheses firmly to the liturgy, and reminds them that both water and words symbolize the new life to which the candidate is called<sup>15</sup>, and further that the risen life of Christ which the baptized shares also makes him a member of the community where his risen life is celebrated<sup>16</sup>. Alexander Schmemmann, like the New Catechism, seeing the resurrection of Christ as a result of his death and burial explained baptism as the beginning of the candidate's spiritual life, as he realized the reality of life in God, as experienced by Christ. David Neil suggests that baptism is the outward sign which demonstrates the new life to which the candidate comes in Christ<sup>17</sup>, and as a result of what Neville Clark describes as incorporation into Christ<sup>18</sup>, and once again this sees the resurrection as the end result of the death of Christ. This theme of incorporation into Christ through baptism is taken up by Stephen Winward who points out that it is only this unity with Christ through faith that makes it possible for the baptizand to share in the death and resurrection of Christ, and this oneness with Christ has revolutionary implications for the post-baptismal life of the candidate, placing him under an obligation to make this new life a reality in his daily living by saying 'no' to the old sinful life, and 'yes' to the new life in Christ<sup>19</sup>. The East Midland Baptist Association booklet explains the candidate's new life in Christ in terms of the symbolism of immersion<sup>20</sup>, and Victor Jack thinks in terms of Romans 6:3-5 once again as he explains baptism in terms of the candidate's identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ<sup>21</sup>.

As we have seen that Baptism as new life and resurrection is the obverse of the picture of Baptism as death and burial, this is the next area which we shall consider. The New Catechism begins with the story of Noah, as does 'The Teaching of Christ', seeing that in that

instance water was the means both of salvation and destruction<sup>22</sup>.

Moving on to Romans 6:3-5, both syllabi teach that Baptism brought a share in the death and burial of Christ<sup>23</sup>, although the Teaching of Christ developed this concept to teach that this involved the candidates in a lifelong sharing in the dying of Jesus<sup>24</sup>, and the New Catechism describes the death of the Christian as his truest Baptism<sup>25</sup>. However although the candidate is dead to sin in Christ, he is not freed from his inclination to sin, even by his baptism, but rather begins at baptism a struggle in which steadfastness is only made possible by the healing and quickening grace of the risen Jesus who through his death and victory in resurrection ensures victory to those who desire victory<sup>26</sup>.

This idea is developed by both Baptists and Orthodox. Neville Clark interprets Jesus' baptism as ultimately his cross, and points out that only through the redemptive death and resurrection of Jesus could baptism receive its full meaning<sup>27</sup>. More pragmatically R.E.O.White tells his candidates in the context of baptism into the death of Christ that something in them must die if the Christ-life is to survive and flourish<sup>28</sup>, and in this he is stating essentially the same point of view as Stephen Winward whom we quoted above<sup>29</sup>. Alexander Schmemmann spends some time on the idea of baptism as the death and resurrection of Christ, pleading for a rediscovery of this as the essential meaning of the sacrament, and he poses the question of how the candidate dies in the likeness of Christ's death. He begins to answer his own question by making the point that Christ's own death was a voluntary death<sup>30</sup>, and that man however has chosen spiritual death - separation from the giver of life - which Christ came to abolish. Thus in his baptismal death in the likeness of Christ, man chooses freely to do what Christ desires, and expresses a wish to be like Christ, thus becoming truly dead to the spiritually dead world around him, and sharing rather in that reality of life in God which Christ experienced<sup>31</sup>.

Allied to the concept of the Christian being baptized into

the likeness of the death of Christ, and thus being dead to sin, came the related symbolism of baptism as a means of cleansing from sin.

The New Catechism suggests that the flowing water signifies cleansing as well as birth, and states the baptism washes away the sins that a man has actually committed in his previous life, and conquers the roots of sin in a man's life although they are careful to point out that this conquest cannot be separated from man's whole life struggle<sup>32</sup>. Thus the meaning of baptism is that of forgiveness of sins, and it means a transformation of the life of the candidate to be united to the life of obedience of Christ<sup>33</sup>. So following baptism the candidate makes a new start in all purity, which the authors describe as the conquest of his life by light, and so strengthening the connection with the illuminatory aspect of baptism. The authors of the Teaching of Christ add the aspect of healing to that of forgiveness, stating that when an adult is baptized his sins are forgiven even as he receives the new life of grace; for divine grace, in virtue of Christ's passion and death, has a forgiving and healing effect<sup>34</sup>. The Baptists also pick up the symbol of water as a cleansing agent to suggest that forgiveness is the effect of baptism, and Neville Clark states this in his two theological contributions, although he has a certain amount of agreement with Alexander Schmemmann that there was an over-emphasis on the aspect of forgiveness and repentance at the expense of the emphasis on baptism as the participation in the death and the resurrection of Christ<sup>35</sup>. David Neil interprets this relationship of baptism to forgiveness into catechetical form to suggest that when baptism is seen as the outward expression of faith, the candidates can better understand the New Testament teaching that baptism results in the forgiveness of sins from Acts 2:38<sup>36</sup>. For R.E.O.White, although the root idea of baptism as purification was, he admits, an important part of Christian ~~thought~~, he describes baptism in terms of an expression of confession, repentance and pardon<sup>37</sup>. Stephen Winward explains to his readers that through their union with Christ the believers receive the

promised forgiveness of sin, of which the washing of the body with water in baptism is the outward and visible sign, even though forgiveness is the province of God alone<sup>38</sup>.

The Catholic authors move on from the concept of forgiveness to express the concept of the irrevocable nature of baptism, conferring a character upon the soul which can never be affected<sup>39</sup>, and they explain that even if a baptized Christian sins gravely, he can be reconciled to the Church by the sacrament of penance without a repetition of baptism<sup>40</sup>. R.E.O.White, whilst not holding a sacramental doctrine of penance, teaches the irrevocable nature of believer's baptism, which can never be undone, thus counselling the candidates of the overwhelming need for sincerity at the time of baptism<sup>41</sup>, a sentiment which has echoes in 'A New Catechism' where the authors suggest that the character of baptism does not exist where the will not to be baptized exists during the baptism<sup>42</sup>. The nearest the other authors come to describing a baptismal character is Victor Jack who describes baptism as the badge of discipleship<sup>43</sup>.

However the concept of forgiveness through baptism leads most Baptists on to speak of the relationship between baptism and faith, seeing faith and belief as the essential prerequisite of baptism and describing baptism as David Neil does in terms of the outward declaration of the candidate's repentance and faith in Christ. He stresses the link between faith and baptism, the inside and outside of the same action, and suggests that Baptism is the outward act that demonstrates the answer of God to the baptizand's response in repentance and faith, by making him at one with Christ<sup>44</sup>. Stephen Winward describes baptism in terms of a public confession of the candidate's personal faith in Christ<sup>45</sup>, and he explains the meaning of the simple confession in 'Jesus is Lord' in the Light of the New Testament, Creeds, and subsequent Confessions of Faith of the various branches of the

Christian Church. He stressed in his earlier booklet that hearing and believing in the act of conversion was always the essential pre-requisite of baptism, and suggests that personal faith in Christ was essential even in the case of the household of the Philippian Jailer<sup>46</sup>. R.E.O. White discusses this relationship between baptism and faith interpreting it basically in terms of the Christian's acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ, but extending it to include the candidate's faith that through Baptism he does share in the death and resurrection of Christ. He points out that the order in the New Testament was preaching and hearing the gospel, believing and being baptized<sup>47</sup>. The East Midland Baptist Association booklet suggests that one reason for the importance of baptism is its nature as a prompt expression of the candidate's response of faith in Jesus Christ<sup>48</sup>. The New Catechism takes the statement 'Faith comes by hearing' and develops the concept of faith that the candidate hears what Christ imparts from the Father through the word of the Church, and this is seen in the ceremony of the admission of catechumens as the foremost need of the candidate, recognising that the faith that is necessary for eternal life comes from God, and cannot be produced by the candidate himself<sup>49</sup>. Baptists would agree with Dr.G.R.Beasley Murray in his statement that conversion - defined by Stephen Winward above as hearing and believing - is a work of the Spirit<sup>50</sup>, which is saying something very similar to the statement made by the New Catechism, and that made by the Directorium Catechisticum Generale which defines faith as a 'gift of God which calls men to conversion'<sup>51</sup> aided by the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit moving the heart and turning it to God<sup>52</sup>. However, the Teaching of Christ suggests that the Holy Spirit begins to dwell in the soul at Baptism to implant in its faith, love and other rich gifts, to begin the process of the candidate becoming holy<sup>53</sup>, although this difference in emphasis is probably due at least in part to their selection of the rite of Baptism for Children as their basic rite for catechetical explanation, while the New Catechism based its teaching

on the previous rite for the Baptism of Adults.

Baptism is linked with the Holy Spirit, based upon the descent of the Holy Spirit at the baptism of Jesus, and this image is the thought behind the statement from the authors of the New Catechism that at Baptism the Holy Spirit enters the candidates, gives them life, and makes them children of the Father<sup>54</sup>. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the candidate is able to live in union with Christ, and to share in the new creation. However, the major sacrament of the Holy Spirit is Confirmation which strengthens the gift of the Holy Spirit bestowed in Baptism and lays especial emphasis upon it, and they argue for the re-establishment of the original timing of confirmation immediately after baptism<sup>55</sup>. The Teaching of Christ defines Baptism as being conferred by water and the Holy Spirit, and in confirmation the Christian receives a strengthening in the power of the Holy Spirit<sup>56</sup>, although they see confirmation as a sacrament of Christian maturity, and indicate a more traditional role, describing baptism as that of infants<sup>57</sup>, and confirmation only occasionally delayed beyond the age of seven until the days of early adolescence. Baptists have no separate sacrament of confirmation, but Neville Clark and Stephen Winward suggest that the Holy Spirit is given in baptism and possessed through it<sup>58</sup>. R.E.O.White states that when a believer sincerely makes his baptismal confession, the Spirit comes upon them in altogether new fulness and power, and abiding with him, lead, empower and sanctify him, and see him safe to glory<sup>59</sup>. He continues to question the practice of associating the laying on of hands with the coming of the Spirit within the baptismal rite, describing it as a gesture of solidarity among believers, and explaining that in Acts, the laying on of hands was used as an exceptional supplement to an inadequate baptism<sup>60</sup>. Stephen Winward suggests that the activity and gift of the Holy Spirit in baptism is related to Christ, to the Church, to our vocation, and to our response to Christ, and in baptism God anoints and seals the

baptizand as his own by the Holy Spirit<sup>61</sup>, but Mr. Winward interprets the laying on of hands as confirmation, and interprets conversion - baptism - confirmation as the act through the whole of which God imparts his Spirit<sup>62</sup>, and he suggests that when the three elements of the one act are separated it should only be by a very short interval of time.

Baptism marks the beginning of a relationship, not just with God but with other Christians, and this relationship is described as adoption, particularly by the Catholic syllabi. The New Catechism describes baptism's role in building new stones into the Church, and stresses that without distinction of race, class, or intelligence baptism causes the adoption of the baptized into the fellowship which seeks to be a servant along with Jesus<sup>63</sup>. The Teaching of Christ stresses the community aspect of baptism, following OICA and explain that Baptism makes the candidates sharers in God's own life and his own adopted children, quoting once again from the Rite of Baptism for Children<sup>64</sup>. In terms of their catechetical material, Baptist authors do not develop the idea of the baptized as an adopted son of God, although there is one reference to it in Stephen Winward's booklet where it is a relationship based upon the union of the candidate with Christ<sup>65</sup>, but there are several references both in catechises and theology to baptism in terms of the adoption of the baptized into the fellowship of the Church. Neville Clark cited initiation into the Church as one implication of Baptism in the normative New Testament period<sup>66</sup> and Stephen Winward ascribes to baptism the role of making members of Christ's Church<sup>67</sup>. David Neil cites the same Galatians 3:27 passage as The Teaching of Christ but interprets it to teach that through baptism the candidate is brought into the fellowship of Christ and is united with those who are Christ's disciples, thus he becomes not merely identified with the Church but committed to the life and work of the people of Christ<sup>68</sup>.

However, the root cause for the importance of Baptism and the reason for its sacramental nature for many Christians is the way it enables a candidate to share in the life of Christ<sup>69</sup> to identify with his life of service, humility and obedience, and although much of this material has already been considered above, the Baptist writers have tended to spell out this particular meaning of baptism. Neville Clark suggests that Baptism effects the initiation of the candidate into the life of the Trinity, and into the wholeness of redemption<sup>70</sup>. David Neil points out the baptism is a public declaration of the union of the baptized with Christ and that immersion in water in the name of Jesus is an acted parable of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, by which the candidate publicly declares he has become one with Christ in his death and resurrection<sup>71</sup>. R.E.O.White makes this point in similar terms, but emphasizes that being identified with Christ was dependent upon the candidates having a real and living relationship to Christ Himself<sup>72</sup>. Stephen Winward dwells on the unity which baptism effects between the candidate and Christ, a union effected by the candidate's imperative response of obedience to the command of Christ, and as a deliberate act of discipleship<sup>73</sup>. Also the candidate makes a pledge of allegiance to Christ as his response to God who through baptism unites him with Christ, cleanses him from sin, seals him with the Holy Spirit, and makes him a member of his Church<sup>74</sup>. The East Midland Baptist Association leaflet suggests that baptism is important because in it the candidate is following the example and command of Christ, and that in it he is both expressing and strengthening his commitment to Christ<sup>75</sup>. Victor Jack describes the main reason of baptism in terms of identification with Christ: Christ's identification with man at his baptism in the Jordan and at the cross, identification with Christ in terms of sharing his death, burial and resurrection, through baptism<sup>76</sup>. Dr.Schmemmann is suggesting a similar identification when, in writing of the candidate sharing in the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection, he suggests that the baptizand seeks to share

that reality of life in God which Christ experienced<sup>77</sup>.

Our comparison of the catechetical material has produced a fair amount of similar material, of similar themes treated with the different perspectives which comes from different backgrounds and different Church traditions. From the Baptists we have seen an evident emphasis on the individual's response to the work of Christ in his life, and this emphasis on occasions overshadows the Christian's commitment to the Church. The two Catholic catechisms differ because of the use of a different liturgy of baptism, and seem to put an emphasis on what the sacraments do for the baptized through the Church rather than on the faith expressed by the baptized in obedience to Christ and in response to the love of God. This seems to be a retrenchment from OICA's interpretation of the thinking of the Second Vatican Council. No doubt these same differences in emphasis will show themselves as we consider the liturgical and mystagogical material.

The Orthodox Office of Holy Baptism is a telescoped rite encompassing within one service the three originally separate liturgies of the reception of catechumens, the act of baptism, and the rite of confirmation and chrismation. The rite of reception of catechumens really is the heir of the service marking the election of catechumens to the proximate period for Lenten baptismal preparation, and it includes within it three liturgical exorcisms as well as the rite of renunciation and profession, and the recitation of the Symbol of the Faith which would have taken place during the Lenten preparation. Dr. Schmemmann's problems of mystagogy begin with the fact that he is attempting to explain a liturgy designed for adults for a church which sees infant baptism as the norm, and these problems were also acknowledged by Miss Hapgood in a number of her explanatory notes. Dr. Schmemmann uses the solution of explaining the liturgy in terms of the double rhythm of preparation and fulfilment, and suggests that

preparation for baptism is always essential, even in the case of an infant only a few days old.

The first prayer of this rite depicts the candidate fleeing from captivity in a world where he has been deluded into serving the devil, and seeking refuge and protection beneath the wings of Christ and the Church, protection which is symbolized by the Bishop's hand being laid upon the brow of the candidate. The prayer that<sup>follows</sup> asks that the name of the candidate be recorded in the Book of Life and united with the flock of Christ's inheritance<sup>78</sup>, and the candidate's true life is described to him in terms of praise and worship. The three exorcisms describe the effect of the devil in the lives of the candidates, and Dr. Schmemmann explains that evil for the Church is not merely the absence of good, but rather a real presence<sup>79</sup>. Realizing that evil is not to be explained, but faced and fought, the candidates begin to seek a means of being reunited with God through the exorcism<sup>80</sup>, and these exorcisms Dr. Schmemmann describes as 'a poem' in the Greek sense of a 'performative utterance', because they are professed in the name and power of Christ, who has destroyed the enemy power from within<sup>81</sup>. The result of the exorcism is that the candidates are liberated, restored and purified, and ready for the rite of renunciation and profession, which the other liturgies place closer to Baptism. The comparable Roman Rites are described both in A New Catechism for the earlier pre-Vatican II ordo, and in Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adulorum, for the rite revised at the behest of Vatican II. The rite described by A New Catechism begins by depicting the struggle between God and Satan in the candidate. The rite described as 'Election' takes place at the door of the Church when the candidate says the Pater Noster, his sponsors and the priest make the sign of the cross over him and with a sharp command, evil is bidden to depart. The candidate was then led into the Church where following a moment of quiet prayer of thanksgiving, he recited aloud the Apostles' Creed and the Our Father. A New Catechism explains the significance of this in terms of the public nature of the

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statement, the public naming of God as his Father, and the public affirmation of all that he has experienced in an inner process, and in the instruction given him in private, the statement being made before God and the community. This was followed by exorcism, and then the gesture of Jesus touching the ears of the deaf man with saliva, was repeated. To further the symbolism of the healing which Christ confers in the sacrament, the priest quotes the imperative from Mark 7:34; Ephphatha, and also touches the nostrils of the candidate as a sign that the candidate is to receive the good odour of Christ. The rite concludes with the anointing of the candidate with the oil of catechumens, a signifying their suppleness and strength for the combat<sup>82</sup>. The rite of Election in OICA begins with a more active role for the godparents, as, on the first Sunday in Lent, they are interrogated as to whether the candidates have been attentive to the proclamation of God's word, regular in prayer and worship and are living lives which bear testimony to their Christian commitment<sup>83</sup>. On the basis of the testimony of the sponsors, the whole congregation may be asked to indicate their concurrence. Then the candidates themselves are asked to reaffirm their intention to receive the sacraments of entry into the Church, and then their names are enrolled to receive the sacrament of Initiation at Easter. There is a strong stress on the continuing support of the sponsors, and of the whole community, and the Lenten period of purification and enlightenment is intended for the whole community as the Teaching of Christ points out<sup>84</sup>.

The spiritual and catechetical preparation of the elect is completed through the Scrutinies and Presentations which take place during that Lenten period. The Scrutinies have a two-fold purpose of revealing sins and weaknesses of the candidates so that they may be healed, and of highlighting the spiritual strengths of the candidates so that they may be strengthened<sup>85</sup>, and the elect are expected to progress in sincere self-appraisal and true penance, during this period. During this period the support of the sponsors and of the

whole community is assured to the candidates in prayer and in physical support from the sponsors. The Presentations, placed between the Scrutinies, are occasions when the Church entrusts the elect with the documents which are considered to be a summary of its faith and prayer for ancient time, to lead the candidates to enlightenment. The Creed is given back to the Church by the candidates at their Baptism, while the Lord's Prayer is said by the candidates publicly for the first time in their first Eucharist, when they say it together with the rest of the baptized. In this way the place of the community is emphasized in both presentations, the community as the place of faith and as the place of corporate prayer.

In the rite of the Church of South India, there is a similar service - the Office of making a catechumen, which takes place after the Lessons at a service of public worship. The candidate is presented by his sponsors to the presbyter who introduces the candidate to the congregation, laying stress upon the candidate's promise to undergo regular instruction. The initial prayer of the offices takes up the concepts of illumination and liberty, and lays stress on the need for sincerity on the part of the candidate. Then the candidate is interrogated concerning his desire for Christian teaching and Holy Baptism, his acceptance of Christ as Lord and Saviour, his willingness to place himself under guidance and instruction to be prepared for admission to the Church by baptism, his general renunciation of all that is contrary to the will of Christ, and his promise to be diligent in his prayer and attendance, and faithful in receiving instruction and in witnessing to others<sup>86</sup>. Following his affirmation of these points, the candidate is received as a catechumen and prayed for by the presbyter, but neither reception nor prayer takes up the final point in the promise of 'witnessing to others', evidence of the missionary situation of the Church, and a point not made in the other liturgies which we

have considered up to this point. In the fourth century and in the twentieth century material there is ample evidence of Christians being reminded of their responsibility to witness to Christ after Baptism, but there is no evidence of a reminder even less a promise from a candidate at this stage at the beginning of formal catechetical instruction. The questions as a whole stress the status of the catechumen as a Christian, asking not for faith as in OICA<sup>87</sup>, but for Christian teaching and to be made worthy of the Holy Initiation of Baptism. At this point they publicly acknowledge their faith in Christ for the first time, rather than at baptism. The same point of profession of faith is reached in the Orthodox Office during the prayers of the Reception of Catechumens when the Rite of Renunciation and Profession is taken separately from baptism, but as we have seen three rites have been telescoped into one Office in the Orthodox service, and so the time lapse between profession of faith and baptism is negligible.

The Baptists as we have seen do not incorporate any rite of election into their Baptismal procedure, although the candidate is prepared for baptism by a series of classes, and before he is able to be received into the membership of the local church, he is normally elected to membership at a business meeting of the Church following a satisfactory report of his faith in Christ, and of his sincere desire to play a full part in the life of the local church, given to the Church meeting by his sponsors.

Thus, taken as a whole, the various rites of election are the expression of a period when the candidate prepares spiritually for baptism, supported by both his sponsors and the whole worshipping community, through encouragement and prayer. The overall purpose of this preparation might be said to enable the candidate to appreciate as fully as possible the implications of baptism, given the limitations

which exist due to the stage of spiritual maturity which the candidate has reached. The Orthodox and Catholic rites do this by stressing the effect of sin and the influence of Satan in enslaving the lives of the candidates, the stress in the Church of South India is upon the candidate's willingness to receive instruction, and the Baptist Churches would lay the stress upon the evidence of the candidate's faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

The Orthodox Church, as we have said, put the rite of Renunciation and Profession in the earlier prayers rather than in the Baptismal Office, probably indicating that the Antiochene practice of this being made on Good Friday afternoon ultimately took precedence over the Jerusalem practice of the Renunciation and Profession immediately preceding baptism in the outer chamber of the Baptistry. In citing the teaching of the fourth century mystagogues, Dr. Schmemmann uses both Cyril and Chrysostom to explain the posture of the candidates at the Rite of Renunciation, drawing from Cyril the symbolism of facing the West as facing the region of darkness, from Chrysostom his condition of being unclad and unshod as a mark of his slavery, and his posture with uplifted hands symbolising his desire to be the slave of Christ. Miss Hapgood explained the uplifted hands as indicating the realm of the evil spirits of the air, although she gives no references to support this statement. The apotaxis is basically unchanged even though it dates from a time when to be a Christian was to opt for a non-conformist lifestyle, and serve as a sobering reminder of man's inability to serve two masters. The Renunciation of Satan is a forceful and contemptuous rejection of an entire world view now built upon pride and self affirmation, and this contempt for Satan is underscored by the command to breathe and spit upon him<sup>88</sup>. In marked contrast, the Profession of Faith in Christ is made by the candidate facing East, making a personal statement of his unconditional commitment to Christ, pledging obedience to the Lord of Life, and the profession

is in terms of the candidate uniting himself to Christ, stressing the voluntary nature of the profession, and taking up the imagery of Chrysostom, even though the Profession is threefold, and then confirmed with the same question put in the perfect tense. Then the symbol of faith is given back to the Church which gave it to the candidate, and the question, in the perfect tense, is repeated 'three times further', the candidate's assurance of faith in Christ, <sup>is confirmed</sup> and that his knowledge about Christ has become knowledge of Christ. These acts were sealed by the candidate bowing down before the Triune God as a symbol of reverence, love, and obedience, and the prayers and foregoing actions are summed up in a prayer for God to call the candidate to enlightenment, to grant the grace of Baptism, to put off the old man, and renew him to life everlasting, and to fill him with the power of the Holy Spirit in the unity of Christ'<sup>89</sup>.

For Catholic candidates, the Rites of Renunciation and Profession follow the blessing of the waters at the beginning of the celebration of the sacraments of initiation as part of the immediate preparation for that rite. The stress is put upon the candidates' free choice of personal faith and commitment to Christ. Much of the imagery of the tyrant Satan has gone, and rather has been transformed into the image of Satan as deluder and purveyor of empty promises, although he is described as 'Father of Sin and Prince of Darkness' in Formula C<sup>90</sup>. This is reminiscent of the first prayer in the Orthodox Service of Prayers at the Reception of the Catechumen in which it is prayed that the candidates be far removed from their former delusions<sup>91</sup>. In the sense that man has to admit that he has been fooled and deluded, this is probably an effective way of dealing with man's sin of pride, and achieve the same result as the Orthodox imagery, with a more contemporary image, drawing at the same time an implicit contrast with God who keeps the promise that he makes. The Rite of Renunciation may be followed by the anointing of the candidate with the oil of catechumens

to give strength to the candidate to aid his profession of faith in Christ. The rite of profession, however, in spite of the stress in the introduction on the personal faith of the candidate<sup>92</sup>, is a précised version of the Creed, with the candidate responding to each of the three sections. This might be said to be the profession of faith in the Church, rather than of personal faith in Christ, as is present in the Orthodox service, and was present in the fourth century material, where the candidate first states that he enters the service of Christ, and then returns to the Church the creed which he has received. This element of personal faith is evident in the Baptist Services. In the earliest of these, the questions of the candidates are posed in terms of their repentance towards God and their faith in Jesus Christ, and their allegiance to Christ and one Church<sup>93</sup>. Mr. Winward's service includes a question of repentance and renunciation of evil, a question posed to ascertain the candidate's confession of faith in the Triune God, and his discipleship of Christ worked out in the fellowship and the world<sup>94</sup>. This element of repentance is omitted in the Praise God service where the questions as above are an acknowledgement of Christ, and a promise of service, although this latter question adds the note of permanence and lifelong commitment<sup>95</sup>. The Church of South India, which as we saw above, expects a profession of faith in Christ as a condition of admission to the catechumenate<sup>96</sup>, has a form of renunciation which includes idolatry and the work of the devil, the pride and vanity of this world, and all the works of the flesh, and a profession of faith in which the candidate affirms not his personal faith, for this has already been done, but his faith in the Triune God, after which the Apostles' Creed is said or sung by the whole community, thus making the candidate aware of the support of the community, and that faith belongs to the whole community. Then the office puts this faith into words by clarifying it into the promises, to establish the candidate's desire for baptism, and his promise of

obedience to God's will throughout his life, adding for married couples the additional promise to continue together in love, and to nurture their children in the Christian faith<sup>97</sup>. Although personal faith in Christ cannot be separated from the faith of the Church which reveals Christ, the Rites and Statements of Renunciation and Profession seek to establish the permanent link of faith between Christ and the candidate within the limits of the cultural and ecclesiological expectation of the day and of the community. Idolatry, for example, is renounced in situations where this appears to be prevalent, and once again we see the differences in emphasis between the candidate's personal faith in Christ and the understanding of what the Church can do for the candidate through the sacrament, reflected in terms of the candidate's profession of faith in Christ or in the faith of Christ's Church.

Both the Orthodox and Catholics have a prayer for blessing the waters, and this plays an important part in the 'instant' mystagogy of the rite as the meaning of the baptismal action is explained through the liturgy. In the Church of South India Office this prayer is set in litany form and is optional. To some degree in this office and the Baptist material the same function of 'instant mystagogy' is served by a statement of the purpose, meaning, and effects of baptism, and this is particularly the case in Stephen Winward's baptismal prayer<sup>98</sup>. Dr. Schmemmann sets the Baptismal rite in context by describing the festal vestments of the priest, and the lights surrounding the Baptistry, both symbols of the joy of the occasion, a context which he has to describe for his readers because their particular rubric, the last vestige of the Paschal celebration of Baptism and the baptismal celebration of the Pascha, is more honoured in the breach than in the observance<sup>99</sup>. The deacon's prayer, also in litany form, contains some very strong echoes of the fourth century teaching, and also reveals the relationship of Baptism to the world, to matter, to life and all aspects

of life, and Dr. Schmemmann suggests three essential dimensions in the mystery of water to show its effectiveness into salvation, the cosmical dimension as the sacrament of the New Creation; the ecclesiological dimension as the sacrament of the Church; and eschatological as the sacrament of the Kingdom<sup>100</sup>. The priest then blesses the water in a prayer of solemn thanksgiving in which the water was signed with the cross, that the adverse powers might be crushed beneath its sign, and consecrated so that the effects of the water might be seen in the redemption, purification, sanctification, freedom, forgiveness, illumination, regeneration, renewal, adoption to sonship, and clothing in incorruption, of the candidate and the fountain of life for the candidate. Thus the water is seen to mean the recreation of matter in Christ<sup>101</sup>. Following its blessing the water is anointed so that it might bring not only life but life in all its fulness. The oil was exorcised, and restored to its true function, and then the candidates and congregation were reminded of the function of oil in the history of salvation, and give thanks to God for it. Then the whole body of the candidate is anointed to show that he is reshaped, restored, and reconciled to God and through God to the world, and prepared for combat with the Devil, just as the athletes were anointed before their combat<sup>102</sup>.

In the Catholic rite, the blessing of the font begins the paschal service, and this blessing centres the attention of the congregation upon the 'instant mystagogy' of the water. The water is blessed in a prayer which recalls to mind the wonderful works of God at the creation of the world, the cleansing effects of the flood, the rescue of the children of Israel from the Red Sea, the Baptism of Jesus by John, the water and the blood which flowed from the side of the crucified Christ, and the dominical command to baptize from Matthew 28:16-20. Then the prayer asks for grace and the candidates were taught, as they prayed, about the new life and cleansing which came through the death and resurrection of Christ and their share in it through baptism<sup>103</sup>.

In the Church of South India, the optional Litany gives thanks for the creation of water, the baptism of Jesus by John, and the descent of the Holy Spirit, and then prays a blessing upon the water to signify the washing away of sin, and the rebirth to eternal life of those who are baptized. It prays that they might be granted the Holy Spirit, and remain in fellowship with God's people, that they might be united to Christ, die to sin, and live into righteousness, that they might put off the old man and become a new creation in Christ, and that they might be led from darkness to light, and from death to everlasting life<sup>104</sup>. The closest the Baptists come to blessing the water is to say the same things about Baptism through the prefacing statement to the service. To bless the water would be alien to their tradition, and the emphasis is placed both on the faith of the recipient, and on the element of remembrance, an approach which is typical throughout Baptist sacramental theology. The statements however may be compared at this point. The Winward and Payne order begins with the statement of the nature of baptism as a sacrament with the effect of uniting the Christian with Christ, cleansing the soul from sin, sealing by the Holy Spirit, and joining the Christian into membership with the company of all Christ's faithful people. The statement then applies this to the individual believer, and defines baptism in terms of an act of obedience, a following of the example of Christ, a public confession of faith, and a pledge of allegiance to Christ<sup>105</sup>. While Stephen Winward's preface is briefer, based upon the Great Commission, and places the emphasis on the candidate's profession of repentance, confession of faith, and promise of allegiance, his prayer for the candidates set in the same liturgical position as the prayer from the Church of South India we looked at above, gives thanks to God for the created order and for his compassion over it, though not specifically for the water. It gives thanks for the death of Christ for the sins of mankind and for his

resurrection, and for the Holy Spirit who gives Christians a new birth and who is changing them into the likeness of Christ. It asks for the acceptance of the candidates, and for their death to sin and for a life of righteousness, united with Christ in His death and resurrection; for the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit, for their continuance in the fellowship of the faithful and elect people who make up the body of Christ; and that having put on Christ they may receive grace upon grace out of his fulness<sup>106</sup>. A comparison of the two prayers highlights a significant number of areas of similarity or even of identity. The Service offered in Praise God begins with an anamnesis of the benefits of believers' baptism and Church membership, viz., union with Christ through faith, thus sharing in his death and resurrection, the cleansing of the whole of the life and personality of the baptized; a marking of the reception of the Holy Spirit, the acknowledgment of his work in the past life of the candidate, and the reminder of his strengthening of the candidate for future endeavour. The act of baptism is an act of obedience, of confession of faith, and of association with the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church<sup>107</sup>.

The Baptismal act falls into two different types, depending upon the number of immersions or effusions of the candidate, the Orthodox and Catholic rubrics prescribe a threefold immersion/effusion into the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Church of South India and Baptist rubrics suggest a single immersion into the triune name, and immersion is the mode of baptism first cited in each of the four churches. The Baptismal formula however varies from the simple 'I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit' favoured by OICA, Stephen Winward and the Church of South India, through the passive voice 'The servant of God, N, is baptized, in the name of the Father, Amen. And of the Son, Amen. And of the Holy Spirit, Amen.', the phrasing pointing away from the human and towards the divine agent of baptism, Christ himself, to the two other Baptist

formulas where the formula in the active voice above is preceded by the phrase: 'On the profession of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ', in Winward and Payne and by the addition of the phrase 'Upon a profession of your faith and at your own request.....' in Praise God. This latter indicates once again the stress placed by Baptists on personal faith and commitment to Christ as the basic requirement for baptism. This stress on personal faith is noted from the context of the Orthodox service by Dr. Schmemmann, who reminds his readers that baptism involves a personal application of the gifts which Christ makes available. He further reminds them that the Church affirms each of the three immersions with an 'Amen' concluding with Psalm 32, affirming that once again, the congregation has seen and experienced the death and resurrection of Christ, God's mercy and forgiveness, and the recreation of the world and of man in that world.

Candidates in the Orthodox Church emerge from the baptismal pool to be vested with a white garment, described variously as a robe of righteousness and a robe of light. Once again the imagery is direct from the fourth century, and very reminiscent of the robe which Chrysostom described as a shining garment, a royal robe, a garment of immortality, and Dr. Schmemmann points out that it symbolizes the state of spiritual purity and righteousness which God intends for his people, as it symbolizes the new life which began at baptism<sup>108</sup>. Also they are given a lighted candle to hold, once again carrying the imagery of illumination over from the fourth century<sup>109</sup>. These same symbols are used by the Church of South India, when following their baptism, the candidates receive the Aaronic benediction, and the signation of the cross to mark their reception into the congregation of Christ's flock, and then are vested in a white garment described as the robe of righteousness and garment of salvation, and given a lighted lamp or taper to remind them of the Christian's duty to bring light to the

world<sup>110</sup>. The Lord's Prayer is then said by all present, and then prayer is offered indicating the continuous nature of salvation and the long and strenuous journey which the candidates were beginning. Then follows a formal charge to the congregation to support, encourage and to enable the candidates to prepare for confirmation, and then to receive the Lord's Supper. The congregation accept both responsibilities and candidates by responding aloud, and thus the role of the sponsors, scarcely referred to after the office of Making Catechumens, is transferred to the Church. The candidates are finally reminded of the implications of the baptism which they have undergone, it having made them children of light, and united them with Christ in his death and resurrection. Thus they are to reckon themselves dead to sin and no longer in bondage to it, and they are reminded that they need to bear witness to their new life in Christ in the world, once again reminding them that the Church is to be a witnessing community<sup>111</sup>.

The Catholic service of Baptism concludes with an optional service of Chrismation, if there is some reason for confirmation not following immediately, and then they too use the symbolism of vesting the candidates with a white garment and giving them a light to carry. The white garment in OICA symbolizes the candidate's clothing in Christ, and they are charged with bringing their garment unstained to the judgment seat of Christ. The garment is actually placed on the candidates by the sponsors, and it is the sponsors who light a candle from the paschal candle, and give it to the neophyte to remind him of his enlightenment by Christ, and of the flame of faith alive in his heart<sup>112</sup>. Then confirmation should follow as part of the same liturgical office. The theologians are still working out the implications of this requirement vis-a-vis the role of the bishop, although OICA<sup>113</sup> is quite plain that the presbyter who conferred baptism may confirm the candidates in the absence of the bishop, as can the parish priest of the candidates. It is explained to the neophytes that through their

new birth they have become members of Christ and his priestly people, and at confirmation they are to receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to strengthen the neophytes, making them more like Christ, enabling them to be witnesses to his suffering, death and resurrection, and strengthening them to be active members of the Church. Following a prayer for the benefits of the Holy Spirit to be granted to the neophytes, they are sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit by the signation of the cross with chrism on their foreheads and it is intended that the service should proceed immediately to the Eucharist<sup>114</sup>. The Orthodox service moves to its third office, that of Chrismation, beginning with a prayer in which God's help is invoked for the newly baptized to maintain his baptismal purity, and then the neophyte was signed with the cross in chrism on the forehead, eyes, nostrils, lips, ears, breast, hands and feet, with the purpose of enabling the neophyte to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit to rear and strengthen him in the spiritual life. Chrismation admits the neophyte to communion. Following chrismation, the priest, the sponsors, and the neophyte process around the font three times symbolizing that the neophyte has entered into an eternal union with Christ the Light of the World through baptism<sup>115</sup>. The service concludes now with the rites of the eighth days, earlier, as their name signifies, these took place following a week's mystagogical instruction one week after baptism, but now the time lapse has been disregarded. However, the Christian still has to return into the world and these rites signify the beginning of Christian life as mission and witnessing. The first rite is the Washing Off of Holy Chrism, as the external symbols of the rite can be removed, and only the inner appropriation of the gift of grace and of faith will sustain man in the real struggle in the world<sup>116</sup>. The White garment can also be removed, and the neophyte's hair was cut and offered to God as the first fruits were offered to God in the

## Old Testament.

Probably Baptists have returned most recently to the rite of laying on of hands following Baptism, and so Payne and Winward have to carefully explain both the rite and its significance in terms of its use in the New Testament, and they describe it as an act of acceptance and commissioning. It assures them of their strengthening and equipment for their vocation and ministry as priests and servants of Jesus Christ, and the explanation concludes with a very similar charge to the Church Members as that made in the Church of South India service<sup>117</sup>, to encourage, help, and build them up in the Lord. Following the reading of one or more Scripture sentences, prayer is offered asking that the neophytes be strengthened by the Holy Spirit, described in terms of Isaiah 11:2, as it is described in the Chrismation prayer in OICA<sup>118</sup>, and be equipped for their vocation, and their continued presence with the fellowship of the Church. The laying on of hands is performed by the Minister and two others, and this is followed by a welcome to the neophyte as a member of the local church and of the church universal<sup>119</sup>. Mr. Winward simplified his version of this rite, but adds the idea of laying on of hands as an act of blessing as well as of acceptance, and commissioning. He omits the Scripture passages, and puts the Aaronic blessing at this stage rather than immediately following baptism<sup>120</sup>. Praise God produces a further minor variant on the theme but basically of little significance.

Thus the essential common element in all the offices for the post-baptismal rites is one of the equipment of the neophyte for the task of witnessing to the gospel of Christ in word and deed. Approaching this point from their own standpoints, the offices arrive at a very similar expression of the basic task of the Christian. Throughout each of the offices of Baptism there have emerged a number of similarities about the basic rite of entry to the Christian Church,

regardless of the tradition or culture from which they emanate, and these similarities and variations help us to see the way in which the liturgies we have considered have emerged from their fourth century ancestors.

In comparing our third area of study, that of sponsorship, we find the field of comparison is considerably reduced, because the Church of South India does not refer to sponsors of godparents after the initial reception of catechumens, and after this, their role passes to the Church. The Orthodox Service is, as we have noted, now primarily intended for the initiation of infants, and the role of sponsor or godparent is seen in these terms. Greater maturity is expected of sponsors than simply having reached a notional age when they are considered able to answer for themselves, in that there is a minimum age limit for sponsors of fifteen and thirteen for male and female infants respectively<sup>121</sup>. The sponsor is seen as a mature believer who will be able to support the candidate throughout his spiritual life, and it is suggested that spiritual parenthood or sponsorship supercedes the claims of human parents<sup>122</sup>. Although sponsors have now purely liturgical functions, and Dr. Schmemmann suggests a number of methods to make this role a more realistic one, by involving the Church in the appointment and the after-care of the sponsors<sup>123</sup>, to ensure that they feel the Church is interested in the task which they are performing. He stresses that the sponsors exercise a Church function and this is taken up in the Baptist and Catholic Churches. For the Baptists the appointment of sponsors or visitors is normally made by the Church meeting upon the recommendation of the Deacon's Meeting, with the primary aim of satisfying themselves of the genuine nature of the candidate's faith in Christ and commitment to Christ and the Church so that they can recommend the candidate for membership in the local Church<sup>124</sup>. They

are intended to represent the fellowship, but can tend to see their responsibility only in terms of the Church rather than in terms of a joint responsibility to Church and candidate. Similarly there is a tendency to feel that their role is over when they have submitted their report to the Church meeting, rather than to see their task in terms of an ongoing responsibility for the pastoral care and support of the candidate and to ensure his incorporation into the Church and its work. This is suggested in a rather ineffectual way in the final paragraph of the explanation leaflet produced in the Baptist Union<sup>125</sup>.

Realisation of the spiritual resource of sponsors, visitors, godparents, disciplers or whatever, is slow in coming to the Baptists and many still regard visitors to candidates as a necessary evil to be endured rather than enjoyed. In a sense the Catholics have imported from far and wide upon their rediscovery of the value of the sponsor/godparent for adult catechumens, and their understanding of the role contains elements from all four areas, although its definition is still in a very fluid state, and even OICA is not sure what to call the sponsor/godparent<sup>126</sup>. The concept, however, is that the sponsor should know the candidate well and be the first mover in the process of conversation, and as such should accompany the candidate to the point of admission to the catechumenate and beyond, as the role in the Church of South India, to be a witness to the candidate's morals, faith and intention, what Father Dujarier calls a 'true spiritual fatherhood' using a fourth century expression<sup>127</sup>. The godparent is the title which OICA seems to prefer for the sponsor appointed by the Church to watch over the progress of the baptismal life of the new Christian, and this relationship being a sacramental one in theory cannot be dissolved<sup>128</sup>, as with the Orthodox concept of spiritual parenthood. Their task throughout the rites of initiation is a very active one, testifying to their proteges faith at the rite of election as their Baptist counterparts do at the equivalent juncture, given the difference in the rite of election, accompanying their candidate throughout the scrutinies and presentations,

to show loving care, example, and encouragement, accompanying the candidate to the Baptismal pool, encouraging him with a reassuring hand, vesting the candidate with the white garment, and giving the lighted candle, and accompanying at confirmation. Their role as fulfilling an ecclesial office is evident as their work is a matter for prayer at the Eucharist. They are expected too to ensure the candidate's integration into the community, and physically demonstrate the community's support for the completion of the conversion process in the lives of the elect<sup>129</sup>. The theory of such a role of pastoral support and concern is one which sounds fine, although it seems in practice to have a fairly limited area of application, but it is my contention that this area contains real potential, and this is a role which needs to be taken seriously as it was in the fourth century.

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## CHAPTER TEN

### CONCLUSION

Any comparison which is made between the fourth century material, delivered in the golden age of catechesis, and that of the last two complete decades of the twentieth century, can only be made subject to the differences which we have noted between the various church situations, cultural backgrounds, and ecclesiological understanding, and to the differences of personality and style of those who have produced the material. The fourth century material was delivered to be listened to by the catechumens and neophytes, whereas the twentieth century material, which we have been able to locate, is designed to be read or for reference purposes. The fourth century material has crystallized into a formal presentation based on the transcription of the materials, whilst the modern material is in process of transition from a gaseous to a fluid state, and so is difficult to analyse conclusively. So our final step will be to compare a number of catechetical themes, to observe the twentieth century variations in the liturgy from the fourth century, to compare the role of the sponsors in the context of the baptismal process, and

thus we shall highlight the tendency in the last two decades of this century to revert towards the 'golden age' of catechesis.

### 1) Six Major Catechetical Themes

A natural starting point for most catechetical material in relation to baptism is the narrative and implications of Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist. The theme from the fourth century was that Jesus submitted to the baptism of John, which was intended as a baptism of repentance for confessed sins, and in so doing gave dignity to that baptism. In his submission to that baptism, he identified himself with sinful man and demonstrates his obedience to God, thus he was enabled to conquer the 'dragon in the waters', Cyril's image of the dreadful power of sin and death and thus of chaos, and he gave his dignity to baptism itself. Although John's baptism was abrogated by the baptism instituted by Christ, because of the descent of the Spirit upon Christ, He would also descend upon the candidates at their baptism. The variations from this theme current in the twentieth century material are not particularly significant. Emphasis is still placed on the readiness and willingness of Jesus both to obey God and to share the common lot of man. Thus Jesus in his baptism of preparation for his ministry of obedience and love for man profoundly altered baptism, and by his participation in it, transformed it to become the symbol of the baptism of the Spirit. Hence Christian baptism is both a baptism of water and the Spirit.

In dealing with the theme of the Christian's baptism as a burial and resurrection, and closely related themes of death and based on the Pauline teaching in Romans 6:2-5, the Fathers described the Christian beginning his new life in Christ at baptism, a life in which he was dead to sin, but a life which it was the candidate's responsibility, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to

preserve in a clean and unsullied state. At baptism the Christian had become one person in place of another, and so a radical transformation was expected in the behaviour of the candidate. They saw baptism as a once for all sacrament, and did not all suggest the possibility of the renewal of the baptismal life by penance. The life begun at baptism was to be a symbol of the life which is to come at the resurrection of the dead, and so was to be a life of constant effort. However, it was a life lived at one with Christ, and even though the sacrament was an imitation of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, that which it accomplished was the creation of a bond of unity, between the candidate and Christ. Their twentieth century successors stress the candidate's unity and identification with Christ in baptism, the sacramental point at which the candidate outwardly receive new life by water and the Holy Spirit, and as they realize the reality of the life of God. This places upon them the obligation to make their new lives a reality by regularly and habitually following the way of Christ. However, the emphasis on the baptismal character has shifted ~~for~~ <sup>from</sup> the fourth century pattern of a once for all sacrament which could never be repeated or replaced if spoiled to the twentieth century variant that baptism can never be undone<sup>1</sup>; still baptism is seen as permanent and indelible, but the element of fear lest the soul be spoiled has been replaced by an emphasis on the forgiving nature and grace of God which should not be taken for granted. In baptism the candidate shares in the death and burial of Jesus, and thus is dead to sin, although life is still a daily struggle, because the natural inclination of the human being to sin remains. Baptism receives its full meaning in the death of Christ, and in the voluntary obedience with which he submitted to that death, and so the candidate in baptism demonstrates a desire to be at one with Christ, freely obeying the will of God, and baptism itself is the application of the truth that something in the candidate must die in the Christ life is to flourish. Dr.Schmemmann's

thesis that the emphasis shifts from baptism as the death and resurrection of Christ to baptism as the means of grace seems to be being reversed in terms of the emphasis which we find in the former aspect of baptism in this recent material.

The fourth century material considered the imagery as a means of cleansing from sin by allusion in the catechetical material, describing the baptistery as the bath of grace and the bath of regeneration which brought the remission of sins to the candidates, and by a closer description in some of the mystagogical material, depicting the flowing waters cleansing the candidate from sin, and drowning Satan as surely as Pharaoh was drowned in the Red Sea. The more recent material takes up the idea of flowing waters washing away sins and granting forgiveness, purity, and healing to the candidates, although some are aware of an over-emphasis on forgiveness and repentance at the expense of the idea of baptism as participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. Others would want to make the point that the cleansing waters of baptism are the outward sign of the repentance and pardon of the candidate.

The relationship between baptism and the faith of the candidate in the fourth century came across in the stress which was put on the need for the candidate to be sincere about their desire for baptism, and to have hearts genuinely enlightened by the Spirit. It was the communication of the Holy Spirit to the candidate which would produce a variety of gifts varying according to the fervour of faith and the intensity of his love for God, and so the candidate was encouraged to prepare for baptism by fostering both piety of soul and a good conscience. The faith of the candidate was plainly the gift of the grace of God, and the candidate before baptism had to affirm his faith in and commitment to Christ before he was baptised.

So faith - the work of grace - was necessary before the candidate was baptized. In much of the modern material there is a similar emphasis upon faith as the essential pre-requisite of baptism, but faith is always seen as the gift of God calling men to conversion which is the work of the Spirit. Through the Spirit at work in the life of the candidate, he is enabled to outwardly acknowledge the Lordship of Christ, and to declare his faith in Christ. The material based upon infant baptism, however, shows a difference in emphasis to delineate baptism as the time when the Holy Spirit begins to dwell in the soul, to implant in its faith, love and other rich gifts, rather than the expression of the commitment of the life of the candidate to Christ. Often the instrument which God uses to lead men to faith in Christ through the Spirit is the Church, and there is a relationship between the individual's faith in Christ and the faith of the Church expressed through the creeds and statements of faith which formed the basis of much of the catechetical syllabi which we have considered.

In the fourth century, the relationship between the Holy Spirit and baptism was described in terms of baptism bestowing the Holy Spirit upon the candidate as a guarantee of their Christian hope, to enlighten them spiritually, and to give them the power to overcome temptation. The candidate was sealed through the operation of the Holy Spirit, with the seal of belonging to Christ, which was also described as a spiritual circumcision, the mark of the new covenant which the candidate made with Christ. So the candidates were described as both temples and instruments of the Holy Spirit, indicating the presence of the Spirit in the lives of the baptized. The twentieth century catechists take the descent of the Spirit at the Baptism of Jesus as their basis for the link between the baptism of the candidate and the Holy Spirit, and they teach that baptism is the sacrament of water and the Spirit. This imparts to the

candidate the power to live in union with Christ, and at baptism, the candidate receives a new fulness of the Spirit. The Spirit is given in baptism and possessed through it, and is strengthened at confirmation, which is described in the Catholic material as the major sacrament of the Holy Spirit.

Linked with the Holy Spirit is the theme of baptism as a rite of spiritual adoption, as the fourth century Fathers explained that the adoption of the candidates as children of God was marked by the imposition of hands, and the candidates were reminded of the statement at <sup>the</sup> descent of the Spirit 'you are my beloved Son' which for them was rendered 'has now become my Son'. This adoptive sonship had implications for their relationships with other Christians, relating them to each other through Christ as brothers and members of Christ and of one another and making them heirs together of the promise of God. This relationship has been taken up more strongly in the Catholic syllabi which stress the element of baptism into a community. Baptism's role is described as building new stones into the Church, and as causing the adoption of the baptized into the servant Church, without distinction of race, class, or intelligence. Baptism effects the spiritual adoption of the candidate as a child of God by adoption, but the stress has moved away from the personal relationship to Christ towards the relationship of the candidate to his fellow Christians as a result of his relationship to Christ. This is expressed in terms of initiation into the Church, and membership of the Church, the emphasis being upon commitment to the life and work of the people of Christ.

Catechesis and mystagogy have merged since the Disciplina Arcani faded into disuse, which is thought to be no later than the early sixth century, and as we have seen, there only seems to have been a rigid observance of this in the Church of Jerusalem by the

fourth century<sup>2</sup>. This merging of material has meant that, on occasions above, material classified as *mystagogy* in our previous analysis has been considered under the catechetical themes. As we reach the modern material, it becomes impossible to differentiate between *mystagogy* and catechesis, and so as we progress to consider the liturgy of baptism we shall compare the fourth century liturgy drawn from the *mystagogical* material with the rubrics of the published services of the last two decades of this century.

## 2) Liturgy of Baptism

The baptismal process begins with the rite of election or enrolment for the proximate period of baptismal preparation in much of the material which has been our concern. In the fourth century this rite took place at the beginning of Lent when the catechumens intending to be baptized at Easter were presented by their sponsor to the bishop for their names to be enrolled, together with that of the sponsor, following the interrogation of the sponsor by the bishop regarding the moral standards and good intentions of the catechumen. Names were enrolled in the Church register, with the sponsor acting both as guide and guarantor, and then the candidate was admitted to the Lenten period of proximate preparation for baptism, and he was accompanied to the instruction and exorcisms by his sponsor. In preparation for full membership of the Church at baptism, the candidates were instructed in the Creed which they had to recite back to the bishop before baptism. In the Orthodox liturgy this process marks the beginning of the first of the rites which, telescoped together in temporal terms together form the Office of Holy Baptism, and is in the form of a service of prayers for the reception of catechumens. In prayer this recalls the enrolment of the candidates in the Book of Life, and is followed by three prayers of exorcism. In the earlier Catholic rite of election, the candidate moves from the door of the Church where he is signed with the cross by the priest

and sponsors, and evil is bidden sharply to depart from him by the priest. In the Church he recites the creed, summing up his private instruction and making public declaration of this, and of the fact that God was his Father. This is followed by exorcism, and the symbolism of healing which was conferred by the sacrament stressed by the Ephphatha, and then the candidate is anointed with the oil of catechumens. OICA on the other hand returns to the fourth century emphasis on the sponsor, and begins its rite of Election by an interrogation of the sponsor by the bishop, followed by the election of the candidate by the Church. After this the candidate reaffirms his intention to receive the sacraments of initiation at the paschal season. The anointing is replaced by a gesture of blessing from the bishop. The period between Election and Initiation is spent in the three Scrutinies and the two Presentations of the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, a formal practice suggested for fixed Sundays and Weekday Masses based upon the fourth century liturgy by a process of conscious reversion to that period. Throughout there is a stress on the support of the ecclesial community for the candidate, not least in that the whole community is exhorted by Sacrosanctum Concilium to spend each Lenten season in recalling their own baptism. In the Church of South India, it is at the office for making a Catechumen that the candidate must profess his personal faith in Christ and promise to be diligent in prayer and worship, faithful in receiving instruction and in witnessing to others. Following this profession and promise he is received as a Catechumen and gradually prepared for baptism. There is no specific time sequence for this process, but there is no equivalent rite of election, nor are sponsors greatly used. The Baptists do not include any rite of election within their worship structure, but each candidate desiring to join the local Church is elected to membership of that local Church by the regular meeting of members of that Church following classes and upon receipt by the Church of a satisfactory report from two members concerning the faith

of the candidate and his willingness to play a full part in the life of the local Church. The emphasis here is placed upon the personal faith and commitment of the candidate.

As they moved closer to Easter in the fourth century the rite of Renunciation and Profession took place, at which the candidate confronted Satan to renounce him, and pledged allegiance to Christ as Lord. The imagery of the rite, the gestures prescribed for the candidate, the posture he was to adopt, all were combined to give the candidate an experience of what was involved in the act of repentance and of faith. The mystagogy forcefully made them aware of the reality of evil, and the rite was concluded with anointing as a mark of belonging and of appointment to service. This rite has survived in each of the rites which we have considered. The Orthodox probably come closest to retaining its former emphasis of a contemptuous rejection of an entire world view based upon pride and man's self assertion to which man was in bondage although, even in this liturgy, the stress is placed upon the Profession of faith and the assurance which that profession brings to the candidate. In OICA the stress is placed upon the free choice of the candidate and his personal faith and commitment and much of the imagery of the tyrant Satan has been replaced by the image of Satan as deluder and purveyor of empty promises in the rite of Renunciation. The candidate may then be anointed to give him the strength to aid his profession of faith in Christ, but the rite of profession is a precisised version of the Creed, with little reference to the personal faith of the candidate apart from his faith emanating from the faith of the Church. The Baptists formulate the first question to the candidate in their service as a formal renunciation of evil and sin, and a profession of personal faith in Jesus Christ, although this formula is omitted in the most recent suggested version of the service. The liturgical position of the question points to the emphasis placed upon personal

faith and commitment of the candidate. In the Church of South India the rite of renunciation is followed by the profession of faith, which the candidate recites in the form of the creed, in company with the other members of the Church. This is followed by two or three promises which establish the candidate's desire for baptism into the faith of Christ, which he professed when admitted to the catechumenate, and establish the candidate's obedience to Christ. In the case of husband and wife, there is a third promise concerning their acceptance of the Christian standards of marriage and family life. The idea of evil is more explicitly spelt out in this service.

Following this rite, came the rite of Baptism itself, sometimes separated by about 36 hours in the fourth century. Candidates in the fourth century at this point removed their remaining garments, and received an anointing of the whole body. These two elements were explained to them in terms of laying aside the old life and putting on Christ, the anointing symbolizing also his healing power, his protection of the candidate, and the union of the candidate with Christ. Then followed the triple immersion/emersion of the candidates into the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and one of the ways in which this was explained was to remind the candidate of the three days Christ spent in the tomb between the crucifixion and resurrection. So it was a natural step, and the logical conclusion of the catechetical stress on baptism as a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, to explain coming out of the pool in terms of sharing in the Resurrection of Christ. This was linked with the possession by the candidate of the new life of Christ, and the Fathers made much of the way in which the baptismal font was both tomb and womb at one and the same time. By this century the symbolism of clothing and nakedness has been replaced by the need to observe decency and decorum<sup>3</sup>, the rite begins for the most part with the blessing of the waters, a prayer which corresponds

with the statement of the effects of baptism given by the Baptist liturgies, and this prayer for the Orthodox celebrates the recreation of matter in Christ, for the Catholics it celebrates the place of water in creation, and for the Church of South India, the litany emphasizes the washing away of sin and rebirth of the candidate. The Orthodox and Catholic Services practice triple immersion, the Church of South India and the Baptists a single immersion, although each uses the trinitarian formula. For the Orthodox Church this takes the form of a statement to the Church made in the passive voice, whilst for the other three, the candidate is addressed in the active voice. Personal faith, and the image of baptism as a means of participation in the death and resurrection of Christ are the areas stressed in this section of the various offices.

In the fourth century, upon his emergence from the baptismal font, the candidate was anointed with chrism, signifying the presence of the Holy Spirit, and the christlikeness of his new life, which was protected by chrismation to incorruptibility. The other rite which is mentioned in the material in connection with baptism is that of the vesting of the candidate with the baptismal robe, symbol of the union of the candidate with the risen Christ, and symbol of the joy to which by baptism he was admitted. Stress is laid upon the ongoing responsibility to keep the baptismal robe clean and radiant, so that, through the influence of the Christ-like life which it symbolises, others might be attracted to Christ. Frequently the twentieth century celebrations of baptism lack the symbolism of illumination that was so readily available as part of the paschal vision in the fourth century, so we find that frequently the image of light has been added to this part of the services. The white garment with which Orthodox baptizands are vested is explained to them in the Liturgy as the robe of light, and they are given a

lighted candle to hold, these being explained by imagery from the fourth century. Then follows their chrismation, sealing the body with the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and into this office are incorporated the rites of the eighth day, to which there appears to be scant reference in the fourth century material which we considered, and on its place, then, Dr. Schmemmann is vague<sup>4</sup>. These rites of the eighth day appear only in the orthodox material, and their significance is not replaced in the other services which we have considered. The Church of South India has in its office the same symbols and signation to mark the fact that the baptizand belongs to Christ, but as their initiation rite is non-Eucharistic, they place the act of joining with the community in saying the Lord's Prayer at this point, stressing the relationship of the candidate to his new community. Then both community and candidate are reminded of the implications of baptism, and particularly of the community's responsibility to support and encourage the candidate towards the next and final step of initiation, confirmation. In OICA, the chrismation of the candidate is optional, for situations in which confirmation is not to follow immediately, but the garment and candle are given. The intention of the rite for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Initiation is that confirmation should be part of the same rite, and arrangements are specified to cover the absence of the bishop as the minister of confirmation. The purpose of confirmation is to strengthen the candidate to make him more like Christ, to enable him to witness to the death and resurrection of Christ, and to assist them in becoming active members of the Church. The Baptist services refer to the acceptance of the baptizands into the membership of the Church by the laying on of hands, symbolizing his acceptance, commissioning, strengthening, and his equipment for the vocation and ministry to which God has called him. The services also include a similar charge to the other Church members as does the service from the Church of South India.

Thus the last twenty years have seen a re-emergence of baptism to its place with the witnessing community of the Church. The accepting community has grown in importance in the liturgy, as has the public acceptance of the Lordship of Christ by the candidate. Baptism has emerged from its place as a sacramental 'mystery' celebrated only in the presence of the faithful, and from its concealment behind the disinterest of the community in which it was seen as a private and discreet ceremony for two or three interested people, which Robert Hovda alludes to in 'Made, not Born'. <sup>5</sup> OICA is described by several of my correspondents as the contribution of the missionary Church to the older and more established churches, and those using the new liturgy seem to be discovering something of the power of the sacrament of baptism in the context of the missionary situation of the universal Church. This variation has been evident in each of the offices which we have considered and is perhaps the most significant reversion to the practice of the fourth century which has emerged from this study.

With this growth of importance of the local community, in the liturgical actions of baptism, has come a new recognition of the role of the sponsor in providing pastoral care to a candidate for initiation before, during and following his initiation into the Christian Church. In the fourth century, the responsibility and role of the sponsor was to present the candidate for enrolment into the catechumenate, and for the proximate period of baptismal preparation, and at that point to testify to Church of the character and worthiness for baptism of the candidate. He was described in terms of a guide to the city of God and expected to provide both pastoral care and personal instruction during the vital period before and after the baptism of the candidate. Although he was the guarantor of the candidate, he was not responsible for the candidate's future sins,

but he was responsible if the candidate should fall away, because of his neglect of his duty to the candidate. Within the liturgy as it was explained, his role was to accompany the candidate at his election to baptism, to accompany him when he recited the creed before the priest, to stand behind him as he made his act of renunciation and profession, and to cover his head with the orarium symbolizing his freedom at the end of the rite, and to receive the candidate to his new life from the baptismal waters. In the twentieth century we find a very fluid situation in which there is considerable diversity in the expression of the role of sponsor. In the Church of South India the sponsors present the candidate for the rite of reception to the catechumenate, and then their role passes to the Church. The candidate makes his own answers to the questions put to him, and on the basis of his own testimony is received into the catechumenate. At the close of the baptismal service, the liturgical charge to the Church makes it plain that the role of sponsor as encourager, instructor and friend is one assumed by the corporate membership of the local community. The Orthodox service, as we have seen now in use primarily for the baptism of infants, expects, at least during this century, a greater degree of maturity of the sponsor than simply being of an age of spiritual responsibility for his own sins. Thus we may imply that a sponsor is considered to be a mature Christian who can support the candidate throughout his spiritual life. He fulfils a Church function on behalf of the Church rather than a family function and the suggestion is being made that the Church should become more involved in the appointment, aftercare and support of the sponsor. The sponsor in the practice of the Baptist Church is appointed by the Church to testify to the genuine nature of the faith of the candidate, and to the commitment of the candidate to Christ and the Church. There is a suggestion of a pastoral after-care role although this is left at the point of a suggestion rather

than a requirement. OICA demonstrates particularly the fluid nature of the thinking of the Catholic Church about sponsorship recently, the title of sponsor and godparent being loosely attached to those who fulfil a variety of supportive roles in the spiritual experience of the candidate. As first mover in the conversion of the candidate, the sponsor accompanies the candidate through the catechumenate and at the rite of election is the witness before the Church of the morals, faith, and intention of the candidate. The godparent is the person appointed by the Church to watch over the baptismal life of the new Christian, and the godparent and the sponsor may well be one and the same. The role of the sponsor/godparent is described in terms of a sacramental relationship, sealed by the sponsor's actions in the rites of initiation, in which he testifies for the candidate at election, accompanies him during the Scrutinies and Presentations, demonstrating loving care, example, and encouragement on behalf of the Church he accompanies the candidate to the pool, encouraging him by a physical touch, and then he puts on the candidate his new robe, and gives him a lighted candle to hold. Thus his responsibility is to ensure the candidate's integration into the community, and to demonstrate to the candidate the support of the community for the completion of the conversion process.

Thus we have seen that the thread of the theme is present throughout the variations which we have considered. Sometimes in the twentieth century material this has been discerned only as a thread of a similar hue, whilst on other occasions it has been plain that there is an unbroken chain linking theme and variations. We have found that the theme itself was interpreted by the personalities and situations in which the lectures were given, and by the interplay between preacher and congregation. Each of the Fathers laid his own stress upon various areas of the baptismal teaching which they gave, and interpreted the liturgy of their particular Church to emphasize

those aspects which they considered important in their own situation. The Catholic Church has shown a tendency to canonize the theology and catechesis of baptism, and to interpret the reform of the liturgy in terms of a return to the theology of the ancient Church, but this is posing problems in re-establishing the adult rite as normative in communities long used to the baptism of infants. The Orthodox Church retains both the liturgy and the theology of the fourth century, regardless of the difference in age of the subjects of baptism, and the telescoping of nearly two months liturgical processes into a brief service taking place on one day. Theologians are striving to encourage a deeper understanding of baptism and its effects, but there does not seem to be any way of assessing the effects of their efforts upon the Church. The Church of South India had adapted the rites of initiation to fit its rather protracted format, and to accommodate the Christian into the Church from a culture based firmly upon the precepts and structures of another religion. The Baptist Churches shown an unconscious reversion to the fourth century because of a limited number of ways of expressing the truths of baptism to those undergoing catechetical and mystagogical training, but in considering samples of their material we have seen interesting differences in ecclesiology between Baptist and Catholic Churches.

Over the next twenty year period, to the end of the century it will be interesting to consider further developments in the variations upon the theme of the Baptism of the Christian Adult. During this future period, the fluidity of baptismal practice evidenced from the Catholic responses to my letter will no doubt progress towards the solid state of either disinterest, or of a changed emphasis on the life of the baptized believer with the community of the baptized. There seems to me little chance of any change in the Orthodox Service, and any changes in the practice of the Church of South India along the

direction suggested would have far-reaching implications for the whole concept of Christian Initiation. Baptists will probably continue to rigidly adhere to the principle of their independence, and no material produced in response to the review of the life of the denomination undertaken at the 1980 Assembly has yet come to light.

## REFERENCES

1. Baptists would agree with this, but for them the question of rebaptism occurs following infant baptism, which, with their emphasis on individual faith and commitment, many would feel was an act of blessing only, at least until the infant's personal faith was confirmed in the sacrament of confirmation.
2. John Chrysostom is cited in F.L.Cross: The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (Oxford 1957) p.405 as having referred to the Disciplina Arcana but he does not do so in these lectures, nor does he indicate any feeling of constraint from it in dealing with the subject of baptism.
3. See OICA 220 p.69. This is further illustrated by the practice for female Baptist candidates, the Baptismal robe is provided by the Church, worn immediately before and during the service, and then given back to the Church, either dripping wet, or one week later suitably washed and pressed, male candidates provide their own shirt and white or grey trousers.
4. Cardinal Daniélou, refers to the concept of the eighth day in The Bible and the Liturgy but in the context of the eschatology of the Cappadocian Fathers and of Augustine, and he does not refer to the rites of the eighth day per se. The earliest reference in Dr.Schmemmann's footnotes is to Symeon of Thessalonica (d.1429)
5. Murphy Center for Liturgical Research: Made, not Born (Notre Dame, Ind 1976): R.W.Hovda: 'Hope for the Future: A Summary' p.155

## A P P E N D I X A

### COMPARISON BETWEEN THE CATECHESSES AND THE MYSTAGOGICAL CATECHESIS OF CYRIL OF JERUSALEM

There are a number of points where there are parallels between the main body of Catechetical Teaching and Mystagogical Catecheses as we have recorded. There are not really enough areas of comparison to draw any firm conclusions, but this is largely due to the differences in purpose between the two sets of lectures and Cyril's firm intention to keep the description of the baptismal liturgy until after baptism.

In the Mystagogical Catecheses he pointed out that baptism translated the candidate in the spiritual paradise of God; and grafted him into the Holy Vine;

"When you renounce Satan, trampling underfoot every covenant with him, then you annul that ancient 'league with Hell' and God's paradise opens before you, that Eden, planted in the east, from which for his transgressions our first father was banished. Symbolic of this is your facing about from the west to the east, the place of light. It was at this point that you were told to say: 'I believe in the Father and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, and in one Baptism of repentance'. But these subjects have been treated at large, as God's grace allowed, in the previous discourses. (Probably summarizing Jerusalem Creed)" (1)

"'One planting' is apt, for since the true Vine was planted here, we, by partaking in the Baptism of His death, have become 'one planting' with Him." (2)

"Then, when stripped you were anointed with exorcised olive oil, from the top most hairs of your head to the soles of your feet, and became partakers of the good olive tree, (ἵης καλλιέλαιου ) Jesus Christ." (3)

In each situation Cyril is using an existing scriptural analogy but there is a similarity in his method of exegesis apparent from the passage compared here from the Catecheses.

"The paradise into which you are to be planted is not seen by the eye. You are being given a new name you did not possess. Instead of catechumen you will now be called a Believer. From now on, you are grafted upon the stock of the Spiritual olive, like a slip transplanted from the wild olive into the good olive tree, (καλλιέλαιον) (Romans 11:24) from sin to righteousness, from corruption to purity. You are to be made partaker of the holy vine (John 15:1,4,5,6). If you abide in the vine, you will grow as a faithful branch; if you will not abide, you will be consumed by fire. Let us then bear fruit worthily." (4)

Cyril reminded the candidates that baptism occasioned a passing away of the old life and the beginning of the new. Speaking in the context of the baptismal ceremony to the neophytes, he described them as 'renewed from oldness to newness'<sup>5</sup>. In the Catecheses he had exhorted the phōtizomenoi 'Die, then, to sin, and live to righteousness; from today be alive'<sup>6</sup>. He had described the new life thus in terms of a prize set before the candidates:

"Great is the prize set before you in Baptism; ransom for captives, remission of sins, death of sin, a new spiritual birth, a shining garment, a holy seal inviolable, a Heaven bound chariot, delights of Paradise, a passport to the kingdom, the grace of the adoption of sons." (7)

Later he taught those same candidates the application of Paul's words in Romans 6:5 in this way:

"For just as Jesus died, taking upon himself the sins of the whole world, that by slaying sin He might rise again in righteousness, so you, also, after entering and being as it were buried in the water, as He was in the rock, are raised up again to walk in newness of life." (8)

He developed this idea in the Mystagogical Catecheses when he reminded the neophytes:

"You made that saving confession, and then you dipped thrice under the water and thrice rose up again, therein mystically signifying Christ's three days burial." (9)

He developed this idea to point out to the candidates that theirs had been an instant transformation from old life to new life:

"In the same moment you were dying and being born, and that saving water was at once your grave and your mother." (10)

He told the Phōtizomenoi that they were not to think of the water as mere water but to:

"look for its saving power by the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, for without both you cannot be made perfect." (11)

In support of this he used Jesus' words to Nicodemus:

"No one can enter the Kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit." (12)

He stressed the necessity of baptismal regeneration and of both water and Spirit working together and used Peter's words to Cornelius to support this:

"And yet after the grace of the Spirit, Scripture says that Peter 'ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ', (Acts 10:48) that after the soul had been regenerated by faith, the body also by means of the water might share the grace." (13)

He saw the act of conversion, baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit as essentially one act though necessarily through the constraints of custom and practise these elements had to be separated in time.

In the Mystagogical Catecheses Cyril related the candidate's baptism to their fellowship in Christ's sufferings. Whilst the baptism of John was a baptism which, 'conferred only the remission of sins'<sup>14</sup> and some taught that Christian baptism was merely a form of adoption by God, Cyril told them:

"No, we know full well that Baptism not only washes away our sins and procures for us the gift of the Holy Spirit, but is also the antitype of the Passion of Christ." (15)

He then quoted Paul's words<sup>16</sup> regarding baptism as burial with Christ by baptism into death and explained:

"Perhaps this was directed against those who supposed that Baptism procures only the remission of sins and the adoption of sons and does not, beyond this, really make us imitatively partakers of the sufferings of Christ." (17)

He taught the phōtizomenoi in the Catecheses about the baptism of John<sup>18</sup> and stressed the need for repentance in their own baptism, but he reminded them that

"Jesus sanctified baptism when He himself was baptised." (19)

and that by His baptism they might become partakers with Him

(αὐτοῦ κοινωνοὶ γεγόμενοι)<sup>20</sup>. He had taught them

"For just as Jesus died, taking upon Himself the sins of the whole world, that by slaying sins He might rise again in righteousness, so you, also, after entering and being as it were buried in the water, as He was in the rock, are raised up again to walk in newness of life." (21)

Similarly the Christian in Baptism received his armour to do battle against his adversaries just as Christ had done following his baptism<sup>22</sup>.

Cyril further developed this concept in his exposition of the rite of Chrismation where he told the neophyte:

"For as Christ after his Baptism and the visitation of the Holy Spirit went forth and overthrew the adversary, so must you after holy Baptism and the mystical Chrism, clad in the armor of the Holy Spirit, stand firm against the forces of the Enemy and overthrow them, saying: 'I can do all things in the Christ who strengthens me'." (23)

Both these passages related from the supporting texts to the Christian's role as a witness and a preacher of the good news of Christ wherever and whenever opportunity arose, using the strength granted by the empowering of the Holy Ghost. Cyril began the lecture on Chrismation by reference to the descent of the Holy Ghost, first in the Baptism of Christ in the Jordan and then

in the anointing of the candidates. This was in complete agreement with his teaching in his earlier lectures where he had told his candidates that the Holy Ghost had come in order that 'the dignity ( $\alpha\lambda\epsilon\iota\omicron\varsigma$ ) of Him who was baptized was not hidden'<sup>24</sup>.

By and large the examination of some of the major points between the Mystagogical and Catechetical Instruction ascribed to Cyril shows simply that the author of the Mystagogical Catecheses, if not Cyril, was certainly in sympathy with the spirit of the Catechetical Instruction, and was probably speaking to those who had undergone a course of catechetical instruction based on the latter.

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2. Cat. Myst 2.7 (FLC 24; FaCh 64.167)
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listed this as the only explicit connection of this  
term with Christos although Clement of Alexandria  
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4. Cat. 1.4 (RR1.32; FaCh 61.93)
5. Cat. Myst 2.1 (FLC 18; FaCh 64.160)
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8. Cat. 3.12 (RR1.80; FaCh 61.116)
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A P P E N D I X B.

PUBLISHED ARTICLES

1.       The Role of the Godfather in the East in the Fourth Century:  
A communication read to the Eighth International Conference on Patristic Studies in September 1979, and published in E.A.Livingstone: Studia Patristica, Volume XVIII, (Oxford & New York, 1982) pp. 558-564.
  
2.       Baptismal Preparation - Past, Present, and ....?: An article published in The Fraternal, Volume 195, (April 1981) pp. 12-18. (The Fraternal is the journal of the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship.)
  
3.       Visitors - albatross or asset?: An article published in the Baptist Times, August 6, 1981 (London) p.9.

## The Role of the Godfather in the East in the Fourth Century

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**P**OSSIBLY we should begin by defining our area of reference, and pointing out that our evidence comes from a little further East than Sicily, namely Antioch and Mopsuestia, and that we are thinking of a different kind of brotherhood, namely that of the fellowship of the Christian Church in those places.

The role of Godfather or sponsor was no innovation for the Christians to whom John Chrysostom and Theodore of Mopsuestia lectured in the course of the preparation of candidates for baptism. Dr. Evans cited the earliest reference to the role of sponsor in his edition of *de Baptismo* but he commented that this referred to an established practice in the Early Church. Urging the deferment of the baptism of children, whilst admitting the difference in individual character, attitude, and development, Tertullian asked:

For what need is there, if there really is no need, for even their sponsors to be brought into peril, seeing they may possibly themselves fail of their promises by death, or be deceived by the subsequent development of an evil disposition.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Jeremias applied this awesome role to the missionary situation, pointing out the link between *parvuli* and *imupti* for whom Tertullian also commended a deferment of baptism on the grounds of too grave a responsibility resting upon the sponsor.<sup>2</sup> It seems plain from the evidence that from all who sought to join the Church by enrolling for prebaptismal instruction as opposed to the general catechetical instruction, it was required that a Church member be found to establish their good standing, sincerity and faith, to sponsor their application, and to guide them through the initial stages of their Christian discipleship.

In Antioch we have evidence from the Baptismal Instruction of John Chrysostom that there were two classes of catechumens, the first remotely preparing for baptism, and the second those enrolled for baptism at the coming Eastertide, whom Chrysostom referred to primarily as οἱ μέλλοντες υὑσταγωγεῖσθαι. The first class of catechumens

he called οὐ δυνάτου, and unlike the second class of catechumens they were not permitted to be instructed in the meaning of the sacred mysteries.<sup>3</sup> Chrysostom's own period of Catechetical instruction lasted about three years if we are to accept the view of C. Baur,<sup>4</sup> and this fits in with the pattern outlined in the *Apostolic Constitutions*:

Let him who is to be a catechumen be a catechumen for three years; but if anyone be diligent, earnest, and shows good will, let him be admitted: for it is not the length of time, but the kind of life, that is the criterion.<sup>5</sup>

It was during this three year period of Catechetical Instruction that the candidates were expected to demonstrate their good will and sincerity and were appointed a sponsor (ἀναδεχόμενος) to present them for enrolment for baptism.

Egeria describes the Jerusalem practice from the late fourth century in her diary, and describes the presentation of the candidates for questioning accompanied by 'their fathers' and 'their mothers', a description which Petre explained denoted the office of sponsor, an office often enough, but we may imply, not always, filled by the parent of the 'baptizand' when it was a case of the delayed baptism of the child of Christian parents. However, in the case of strangers she wrote:

But it is not too easy for a visitor to come to baptism if he has not witnesses who are acquainted with him.<sup>6</sup>

Petre described these visitors as 'slaves, orphans, abandoned babies and immigrants'. But we should compare Egeria's impression with the writing of Theodore below, which quite plainly indicated that the role of sponsor was fulfilled by a specially appointed person. Theodore describes the role of the sponsor in terms of a guide around the city and citizenship<sup>7</sup> which is the metaphorical venue of the Christian's new life:

This is the reason why, as if he were a stranger to the city and its citizenship, a specially appointed person, who is from the city in which he is going to be enrolled and who is well versed in its mode of life, conducts him to the registrar and testifies for him to the effect that he is worthy of the city and of its citizenship and that, as he is not versed in the life of the city or in the knowledge of how to behave in it, he himself would be willing to act as a guide to his inexperience.<sup>8</sup>

This leaves us to question the means of appointment of the specially appointed person. Was he or she appointed for each candidate, selected on the grounds of their ability to be of most help to the candidate, or were they appointed to a group of candidates? By whom were they appointed? For how long was it anticipated that their appointment should last? It seems from the context to have been an individual appointment, providing personal instruction and pastoral care during the vital period of the candidates' spiritual life before and after baptism. Their ministry was recognised by the Church as it was an important role to fulfil. Theodore continued:

This rite is performed for those who are baptised by the person called godfather, who, however, does not make himself responsible for them in connection with future sins, as each one of us answers for his own sins before God. He only bears witness to what the catechumen has done and to the fact that he has prepared himself in the past to be worthy of the city and of its citizenship. He is justly called a sponsor because by his words (the catechumen) is deemed worthy to receive baptism.<sup>9</sup>

This question of individual responsibility for future sin certainly indicates a different viewpoint from that expressed by Tertullian where the sponsor's responsibility is implied, and possibly causes Mingana to comment in his prefatory note:

There is no question in Theodore of the Children's Baptism; all the persons admitted to baptism were adults who had received a thorough education and instruction in the theological points explained by him in his present work *ad Baptisandos*.<sup>10</sup>

The fact that the basis for the evidence which the sponsor offers is the preparation of the candidate 'in the past' surely refers to this three year period of remote instruction as the proximate preparation was still to begin. It also implies a considerable knowledge of the candidate's past so that the sponsor can honestly accept the responsibility for his charge. Theodore then pointed out:

It is for this reason that as regards you also who draw nigh unto the gift of baptism, a duly appointed person inscribes your name in the Church book together with that of your godfather, who answers for you and becomes your guide in the city and the leader of your citizenship therein. This is done in order that you may know that you are, long before the time and while still on the earth, enrolled in heaven, and that your godfather who is in it is possessed of great diligence to teach you, who are a stranger and a newcomer to that great city, all the things that pertain to it and to its citizenship, so that you should be conversant with its life without any trouble and anxiety.<sup>11</sup>

So it is the sponsor who answers the questions of the registrar and on his testimony the candidate is enrolled for baptism. It gives a significant clue to the development of the role of the sponsor that when translating Theodore's lectures into Syriac, presumably soon after his death, the translators described the Godfather as a guarantor ('arrĕpā') rather than in terms of ἀνασχεόμενος.<sup>12</sup> From this fact we may presume the probability of the use of the Greek equivalent of 'arrĕpā' in the original lectures. The use of the different term for the sponsor in the lectures would add weight to the argument placing the lectures against the background of Mopsuestia during Theodore's episcopate. There also seem to have been variations in the Baptismal ceremony, and, we shall see below, he described both a specific role for the sponsors at Baptism, and a continuing role for them in the catechumen's development in the Christian role, as implied by such terms as 'leader of your citizenship' which is used here.

This concept of the candidate being baptised on the basis of the sponsor's

testimony was carried further by Chrysostom, who used the concept of οἱ ἀναδέχόμενοι as a surety for a financial loan as a metaphor for the task of the sponsor in spiritual matters:

If then those who go surety for others in a matter of money make themselves liable for the whole sum, those who go surety for others in matters of the Spirit and on an account which involves virtue should be much more alert.<sup>13</sup>

He went on to warn them of the seriousness with which they should undertake their responsibilities and of the penalties which they would incur should those whom they sponsored become careless:

Let them not think that what takes place is a trifling thing, but let them see clearly that they share in the credit if by their admonition they lead those entrusted to them to the path of virtue. Again, if those they sponsor become careless, the sponsors themselves will suffer great punishment. That is why it is customary to call the sponsors 'spiritual fathers', that they may learn by this very action how great an affection they must show to those they sponsor in the matter of spiritual instruction. If it is a noble thing to lead to a zeal for virtue those who are in no way related to us, much more should we fulfil this precept in the case of the one whom we receive as a spiritual son. You, the sponsors have learned that no slight danger hangs over your heads if you are remiss.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Wenger pointed out that his use of the terms 'spiritual fathers' and 'spiritual sons' was unique. In Byzantine Greek the term 'spiritual father' meant a director of souls, and, much later, a confessor, but there is no evidence here to suggest that this was merely Chrysostom's way of referring to the exorcists who played such an important part in the baptismal preparation. However, from the location of the passage between the explanation of the purpose and symbolism of the exorcism<sup>15</sup>, and of the declaration of the renunciation of Satan and adherence to Christ<sup>16</sup>, it could be that the sponsors played some part in this rite. He further pointed out that the verb ἀναδέχομαι here has its primary sense of to receive, the counterpart of the Latin *suscipere*, and it is by no means impossible that in the spirit of Chrysostom, the two senses of to receive (the baptismal waters) and of to guarantee in respect of virtue (εἰς τὸν τῆς ἀρετῆς λόγον ἀναδέχομαι) are present in the same word.<sup>17</sup>

But the job description of the sponsor was given in these terms by Chrysostom:

They ought to show their paternal love by encouraging, counselling, and correcting those for whom they go surety.<sup>18</sup>

This implies a personal and individual relationship with the candidates, and this seems to be a task which would have been equally necessary both before and after the candidate's baptism, even though Dr. T.M. Finn commented:

The sponsor's reception of the newly baptised as son clearly symbolised his obligation to see his 'son's' continuing formation in Christian virtue after baptism. Unfortunately Chrysostom is not explicit about his duties before baptism.<sup>19</sup>

However, this is not a postbaptismal address, but fits into the pre-baptismal section

of the instructions, and at this stage the candidate would be better described as 'newly enrolled' than 'newly baptised'. Chrysostom here was pointing out that the sponsor's responsibility after baptism is as serious as it is before the ceremony.

Theodore indicated a further role for the sponsor when the time came for the catechumen to recite the Creed to the priest and to promise to adhere to it.

You are brought by duly appointed persons to the priest, as it is before him that you have to make your engagements and promises to God. These deal with the faith and the Creed, which by a solemn asseveration you declare that you will keep steadfastly, and that you will not, like Adam, the father of our race, reject the cause of all good things, but that you will remain to the end in the doctrine of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit, while thinking of the same Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as one Divine nature which is eternal and cause of everything, and to the discipleship of which you have been admitted by faith. It is in their names that you receive the happiness of this enrolment which consists in the participation in heavenly benefits.<sup>20</sup>

But we must not think that this brought their responsibility to an end. A continuing relationship was very definitely in view in the Church at Mopsuestia.

For it is also to Theodore that we must look for further evidence of the sponsor's role in the act of baptism itself. He reported that following the chrismation of the candidate after his renunciation of Satan and adherence to Christ:

...your godfather, who is standing behind you, spreads an orarium of linen on the crown of your head, raises you, and makes you stand erect. By your rising from your genuflexion you show that you have cast away your ancient fall, that you have no more communion with earth and earthly things, that your adoration and prayer to God have been accepted, that you have received the stamp which is the sign of your election to the ineffable military service, that you have been called to heaven, and that you ought henceforth to direct your course to its life and citizenship while spurning all earthly things.<sup>21</sup>

The linen which he spreads on the crown of your head denotes the freedom to which you have been called. You were before standing bareheaded, as this is the habit of the exiles and the slaves, but after you have been signed he throws on your head linen, which is the emblem of the freedom to which you have been called. Freemen are in the habit of spreading linen on their heads, and it serves them as an adornment both in the house and in the market place.<sup>22</sup>

The linking of the sponsor by this action with the freedom the candidate has received through his own declaration of this renunciation of Satan and adherence to Christ forged an indelible link between the candidate and his sponsor, for it is the sponsor who on behalf of the Church raised the candidate to his new freedom.

That a similar role was exercised in the Western Church, although here it is more difficult to disentangle from infant baptism, is shown by St. Augustine's description of sponsors answering for children unable to answer for themselves in his letter to Boniface in 408.<sup>23</sup> In sixth century Spain, Martin of Braga mentions 'those who

receive from the font' and although T.C. Akeley used this description to argue for infant baptism and rejected the idea of sponsorship in the sixth century<sup>24</sup>, it is surely too much of a coincidence that Martin of Braga should have hit on the *terminus technicus* if he were not acquainted with the role of the sponsor.

So it seems that early in its development growing numbers caused the Church to undertake in a personal way the care of those enrolled for baptism and to forge personal links of fellowship among the membership of the Church for the purpose of 'encouragement, counselling and correction' of those new to the faith. Such a system was intended not only to enhance the fellowship and to ensure that no candidate for baptism remained a stranger, but also to encourage growth in grace and Christian experience. Such was the role of the Godfather in Antioch and Mopsuestia at the end of the fourth century. However one must ponder whether the risk of punishment and spiritual peril resulting from the failure of the candidate to keep his baptismal vows might not discourage many of today's godparents, particularly when they are selected on the basis of convention rather than on the grounds of their spiritual qualifications for their awesome task.

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#### REFERENCES

1. E. Evans (ed.), *De Baptismo* cviii.4 (London, 1964), p. 39.
2. For similar uses of the term 'sponsors' see Hippolytus, *Trad. Apost.* xx.2; *Apost. Const.* VIII.xxxii.2; *Stat. Apost.* xxxv; *Test. Dom.* ii, I.
3. See *Catechesis* III.4, A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus (ed.), *Varia graeca sacra* (St. Petersburg, 1908), p. 171.
4. See C. Baur, *John Chrysostom and his time I*, trans. M. Gonzaga (London, 1959), p. 81.
5. *Apost. Const.* VIII.xxxii.16, trans. J. Donaldson (Edinburgh, 1870), p. 246.
6. *Peregrinatio Aetheriae* xlv.4, trans. J. Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (London, 1971), p. 144.
7. *Philippians* 3:20.
8. *Ad Baptizandos I*, trans. A. Mingana, *Commentary of Theodore of Mopsuestia on the Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 25.
9. Mingana (trans.), *op. cit.*, p. 25.
10. See Mingana (trans.), *op. cit.*, p. xiii.
11. Mingana (trans.), *op. cit.*, p. 26.
12. I am grateful for advice on this point from Dr. R.J. Murray, S.J. in a letter of 3rd August 1979 in which he pointed out that the word used to describe the sponsor was 'arrābā' rather than the Syriac equivalent of ἀναδεχόμενος.
13. *Stavronikita* II.15, trans. P.W. Harkins, *St. John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions* (New York, 1963), p. 49.
14. *Ibid.*, *Stav.* II.16.
15. *Ibid.*, *Stav.* II.12-14.
16. *Ibid.*, *Stav.* II.17-21.
17. See A. Wenger (ed.), *Jean Chrysostome: Huit catéchèses baptismales inédites* (Paris, 1970), pp. 142-143, n. 3.
18. Harkins (trans.), *op. cit.*, *Stav.* II.15, p. 49.

19. T.M. Finn, *The Liturgy of Baptism in the Baptismal Instructions of St. John Chrysostom* (Washington, 1967), p. 57.
  20. Mingana (trans.), *op. cit.*, p. 33.
  21. Mingana (trans.), *op. cit.*, p. 47.
  22. Mingana (trans.), *op. cit.*, p. 47.
  23. See *Epistula* xviii 2-6.
  24. See T.C. Akeley, *Christian Initiation in Spain, c. 300 - 1100* (London, 1967), p. 46.
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## **BAPTISMAL PREPARATION - Past, Present And .....?**

By the time the Church was becoming respectable, and gaining in esteem from its imperial patronage following the conversion of Constantine, the rite of baptism was being preceded by a long period of preparation in the catechumenate. The purpose of this was that those who were baptised should understand the meaning and implications of the faith which the Church professed, which they would affirm immediately prior to baptism, and into which they would be admitted by their baptism. This normally occupied a three year period but as the Apostolic Constitutions pointed out:

*"Let him who is to be a catechumen be a catechumen for three years; but if anyone be diligent, earnest and shows good will let him be admitted: for it is not the length of time, but the kind of life, that is the criterion."*<sup>1</sup>

It was during this three year period of general catechetical instruction that the catechumens were expected to demonstrate their good will and sincerity, and were appointed a sponsor to present them for enrolment for baptism.

The role of the sponsor seems to have been five fold - a) to introduce the catechumen to the Church, thus beginning to vouch for the genuineness of his intent, b) to stand as spiritual surety for the catechumen, c) to show paternal love, and to exercise pastoral care, d) to attend the catechetical classes with the catechumen and supplement these with personal instruction, and e) to receive the catechumen to his new life following his renunciation of Satan and his adherence to Christ at baptism. In one of his lectures John Chrysostom addressed the sponsors; warning them of the seriousness of their responsibilities and of the penalties which they could incur both if they failed themselves or if their catechumen should subsequently fall away.

*"Let them not think that what takes place is a trifling thing, but let them see clearly that they share in the credit if by their admonition they lead those entrusted to them to the path of virtue. Again if those they sponsor become careless, the sponsors themselves will suffer great punishment. That is why it is customary to call the sponsors 'spiritual fathers', that they may learn by this very action how great an affection they must show to those they sponsor in the matter of spiritual instruction. If it is a noble thing to lead to a zeal for virtue those who are in no way related to us, much more should we fulfil this precept in the case of the one whom we receive as a spiritual son. You, the sponsors have learned that no slight danger hangs over your heads if you are remiss."*<sup>2</sup>

The threat of the danger to those who fail in their sponsorship presumably comes from the accepted interpretation by the fourth century Church of Jesus' words in Matthew 18:6-9.

The three year period of general catechetical instruction was followed by a period of intense baptismal preparation, normally during the Lenten period. In Jerusalem, an introductory lecture was given at the beginning of Lent, a course of eighteen lectures on the creed followed, probably in the early morning<sup>3</sup> and a series of five shorter lectures during Easter Week, following baptism, which explained the mysteries through which the newly-baptised passed. In Antioch there seem to have been three prebaptismal lectures given at ten day intervals preceding Holy Thursday when the third

lecture was given, the fourth took the form of a baptismal address, and then five lectures followed in Easter Week<sup>4</sup>, although John Chrysostom revealed details of the baptismal mysteries in his prebaptismal lectures, and devoted the subsequent lectures to aspects of Christian citizenship, especially on one day when it appears half of his potential congregation had gone to the races!<sup>5</sup> In Mopsuestia, a small city some twenty five miles from Antioch, we have a similar series of sixteen lectures, using the creed, the rites of baptism and communion, and the Lord's Prayer as the syllabus,<sup>6</sup> although all these seem to be given prior to baptism, and we have no evidence of extant postbaptismal lectures. It may be that as the original series survive only in Syriac translation, the translators did not consider the postbaptismal series of sufficient worth theologically, or it may be that they have quite simply not survived the ravages of time. The purpose of this credal instruction was so that the candidate might learn the basic tenets of the Christian faith and from the lectures understand the reasons behind the credal formula. There is evidence to suggest that the lectures were based on the Armenian Lectionary for the Lenten period, and as such became part of the normal worship pattern of the Christian community<sup>7</sup>. Towards the close of the prebaptismal period, each candidate had to publicly face the examination of the Bishop concerning his faith, and as part of that examination he would be called upon to recite the creed.

During the prebaptismal period, the catechumens were regularly exorcised, and frequently encouraged to renounce Satan and all his works. Indeed Cyril of Jerusalem saw this as a vital part of the catechetical procedure<sup>8</sup>. He compared exorcism to the trial of gold in the furnace by the goldsmith, and said:

"so also, exorcizers, infusing fear by the Holy Ghost, and setting the soul on fire in the crucible of the body, make the evil spirit flee, who is our enemy, and salvation and the hope of eternal life abide; and henceforth the soul, cleansed from its sins, hath salvation."<sup>9</sup>

Exorcism seems to have been a symbolic gesture, assuring the candidate of his cleansing from sin, and from the temptation to do evil that was wrought by his new life in Christ. Although alien to our tradition, it has remained in the Roman Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and is explained in 'A New Catechism' thus:

"Then the priest performs Jesus' paschal gesture<sup>10</sup>. He breathes upon the candidate, and orders the evil spirit to make way for the Holy Spirit.

This sort of 'exorcism' of the wicked spirit occurs frequently during the solemnities of baptism. The evil which threatens a man is told to go away, always addressed as a person - the devil. But the words envisage all evil, including the influence of the sins of others, the evil inclinations of the subject, and his previous errors as regards God.... the ceremony, which is starkly uncompromising throughout, (shows) nothing but light against darkness.

And well that is so, because the ceremony is a brief and vigorous re-statement of a vital hour. The struggle for life, the conversion of the candidate, is summed up with nuances, with a biblical succinctness and profundity. We see the temptations, the dilemmas, the darkness, the despair which have presented themselves and will be there again; and we see over against them each time God's peace and goodness and joy. In a word it is the expulsion of the evil spirit and the coming of the good."<sup>11</sup>

Immediately prior to the baptismal ceremony itself in the fourth century this dramatic presentation of Matthew 16:19 was given a very distinct place in the renunciation of evil and adherence to Christ (apotaxis and syntaxis) by the candidate, which we have maintained today in our first question to candidate:

"A..... Do you turn to God in Christ, repent of your sins and renounce evil?"<sup>12</sup>

In the Churches of Antioch and Mopsuestia, this was followed by the anointing of the candidate with oil symbolising his suppleness - from the anointing of the athletes<sup>13</sup> and strength for the combat with the devil which Christ would give.

Having looked at these three elements of the fourth century baptismal instruction, we move on to consider the question of the practice of baptismal instruction within the denomination today. To supplement my own impressions I would welcome the guidance of others as to their practice for I am conscious that we are not dealing with three geographically defined situations but potentially as many different approaches as there are ministers and churches. Such guidance from others will be of immense value as I seek to consider the Baptist pattern today in comparison to the fourth century practice during the next few months whilst I continue my Research. The criticism is often made of the American Baptist Churches that they are very good at making disciples and very bad at keeping them. The *Signs of Hope* report quotes a London report which highlights this problem:

"In London a few years ago it was shown that almost a quarter of those baptised did not subsequently become Church Members, and 43% of those erased who still lived in the neighbourhood of the Church had enjoyed less than six years of membership."<sup>14</sup>

These figures indicate that we are not exempt from the blame which attaches to our American colleagues and add weight to the very real doubt regarding the adequacy of our baptismal preparation and of our discipleship classes following baptism. In purely simplistic terms, Jesus' temptation came immediately after his baptism<sup>15</sup> and Stephen Winward reminds us of the link between baptism and temptation<sup>16</sup>, and this factor surely raises the question of whether we are justified in leaving the newly-baptised to fend for themselves without ensuring as much support for them as possible in terms of assurance, of support groups, and supportive relationships to see them through the time when they are extremely vulnerable.

In May 1980, Dr Russell wrote to all ministers, following the discussion of "Call to Commitment" at the Nottingham Assembly. Among other things, he asked for copies of courses of baptismal instruction given by ministers to candidates for baptism, for the use of the Strategy Committee in their discussions. To judge from reported responses to Dr Russell's request, many of us do not feel our particular practice of sufficient value to share with others, although sales of the EMBA Church Membership Booklet<sup>17</sup> and *The Way of Christ*<sup>18</sup> suggest that we are always ready to consider the schemes of others and see what we can glean from them.

My own practice is to base my discipleship classes on *The Way of Christ*, covering section 1 - 3 before baptism viz. What Christ did on the Cross, Our Response to Christ, and Baptism and 4 - 12 viz. The Bible, Prayer, The Holy Spirit, The Church, Knowing God's Will, Stewardship, Christian Service, The Baptist Family and A Life of Commitment, following baptism when the newly baptised Christian has some initial experiences on which to build and occasionally some misconceptions to be corrected. This is supported by the requirement: to read the booklet *The New Testament Teaching on*

*Baptism* as daily readings prior to baptism. The EMBA booklet would also make this approach possible as its nine sections deal with God, Christian Conversion, Baptism, Church Membership a) the need for commitment, b) responsibility to a community, Christian Beliefs, Growing to Maturity, Our Christian Heritage, and Our Baptist Family.

However, I am aware that neither of these admirable booklets give as thorough an approach to the Christian faith in doctrinal terms as was given in the fourth century. Their authors would argue, and quite rightly, that this was not their purpose in writing, but rather to provide a stimulus for discussion and further thought, which is fine if further thought and deeper discussion to the level of the candidate's ability takes place. As its answer to the problem of material *Signs of Hope*<sup>19</sup> suggests the use of the Christian Training Programme courses although once again the onus for using the material at the right depth remains on the candidate and the tutor.

Whilst I would be unhappy with a formal credal approach to catechetical instruction, I would sincerely hope that our practice could ensure that every candidate who is baptised is able to express his own faith in his own way, is able to fully understand the implications of baptism and church membership, and is equipped to develop his faith in today's world through his experiences in the world. This is not a process which we can hurry or force, but which will only come if the idea of continued development through a supportive group is plainly seen and accepted.

The area of baptismal sponsorship is one which has also had a fairly chequered history. I noticed the other day the illuminating comment from the 1890s that the Church at Derby Road, Nottingham decided that the practice of visiting candidates for baptism was no longer necessary, and was to be discontinued forthwith. In other situations, visiting is for the purpose of assessing a person's suitability for Church Membership alone whilst in yet other situations it is used quite explicitly to check up that the minister has adequately fulfilled the task of Baptismal preparation. If one turns for guidance to the booklet *Church Membership - Suggestions for Visitors to Candidates*<sup>20</sup>, we look in vain for any hint of a continuing relationship until the last paragraph. If this is to be seen as the 'official' view of the role of the sponsors or visitors the purpose of the visit is defined early on, in the paragraph 'Duty to the Church':

"What is the duty of the visitors as far as the Church is concerned? It is to satisfy themselves that the candidate is a sincere believer in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that he has given his life into His keeping and is devoted to His service."<sup>21</sup>

When the hint of a continuing supportive relationship does come, it is not suggested in a particularly convincing manner, nor at this point can such a relationship be seen to arise naturally in every case. However, let the booklet speak for itself:

"One thing remains to be done, and it is of vital importance. Let the visitors decide which of them is to try to keep in touch with the candidate in the days ahead, to be a friend to him, to stimulate his interest in the Church, to encourage him to take up or continue service in it, and so to build up that new life in Christ upon which he has entered."<sup>22</sup>

It is my feeling that all these approaches to the situation of sponsorship, expedient though they may be, fail to realise the maximum potential from the situation.

As soon as a person expresses any form of commitment, he should be linked with a mature Christian whose specific task is to share in his nurture in the Christian faith, and to begin a lasting relationship which goes on beyond baptism. Every effort should be made to make a personal link which will be of value to, and valued by, both candidate and sponsor - perhaps using hobbies, interests, family background, or even neighbourliness as criteria in choosing the mature Christian Sponsor. It should then be both sponsor and candidate who come seeking the candidate's baptism of the minister, and seeking the candidate's membership of the Church. The discipleship classes should be arranged in consultation with both candidates and sponsors, and the sponsors encouraged to attend the classes to share in the discussion and so that they may better support the candidate. The sponsor should also be actively involved in the Baptismal Service, either by leading the candidate to the baptismal waters, or preferably receiving him into his new life on their emergence from the baptistry. He should also be at his side as he is received into Church Membership. It is all too easy for our Churches to develop a small nucleus of six or eight 'good' visitors, and neglect the potential of many other members of the Church who could serve just as well. The result is that the six or eight become so overloaded with candidates whom they have sponsored, who are young in the faith, that they fail to be as supportive as they should, and the system deteriorates into a rubber stamping procedure which ends at Baptism.

For the fourth century newly-baptised Christian there was a real certainty of knowing his forgiveness and transition to a new life. In our reaction against absolution from sins being an exclusively priestly function<sup>23</sup>, have we not thrown out the candidate's forgiveness with the baptistry water? The anonymous booklet *Why be Baptised*<sup>24</sup> does not mention forgiveness, and only contains a passing reference to the new life which comes to those who have committed their lives to Christ. Stephen Winward does stress the aspect of forgiveness, mediated by Christ through the inward identification of the candidate with the death of Christ, and demonstrated in the outward and visible sign of baptism, and among his several illustrations he suggests the cleansing of Naaman:

"As Naaman was baptised in the Jordan to be cleansed from leprosy, so we are baptised into Christ to be cleansed from all sin — the sin of the human race of which we are part, and our own personal sin, both remembered and forgotten. The baptised are cleansed, made to belong to God, and accepted by God. "You have been through the purifying waters; you have been dedicated to God and justified through the name of the Lord Jesus and the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11)"<sup>25</sup>

Yet in reminding us how bright a jewel baptism is in the Baptist crown, Paul Beasley-Murray<sup>26</sup> fails to remind us that we are also assuring our candidates that they have renounced evil, and they are living as new creatures in Christ, and are truly forgiven men and women.

Similarly the whole concept of exorcism has a superstitious and ritualistic ring to it that appals many of us, but the binding of evil is part of the ministry of every Christian if we are going to take Matthew 16:19 with the same degree of enthusiasm as we take the preceding verse regarding the faith of Simon Peter. It did fulfil the purpose of assuring the candidate of his

forgiveness, and encouraging him to begin to live his new life confident that having confessed his sins to God, then 'He is faithful and just to forgive his sins' and these sins are completely washed away in baptism. It was Peter's only solution to the sin felt by his Pentecost congregation<sup>27</sup> and there are those who come to us as candidates for baptism, who are so guilt-ridden that they need the extra reassurance that a stress on forgiveness and the renunciation of evil can bring, especially within the context of the Service of Believer's Baptism. This service is a marvellous statement of the cleansing of the Christian from sin, the death and burial of the old self, and the emergence of the new man to a life in Christ. It was and is perhaps our most powerful visual aid of the events of the vital hour of conversion.

St Cyril of Jerusalem and his contemporaries were quick to use every aspect of the ceremony in their day to illustrate the various stages of Christian's newness of life in Christ. Perhaps we need to follow their example and make more of our baptismal preparation and of baptism itself.

R.F.G. Burnish

#### Author's Note

This article has been born of my research which covers the fourth century period and then the practice of the period 1960-1980 in three Church situations in which adults are baptised. Plainly the Baptist Churches in Britain are to be one such Church situation. As a result I would like to hear readers' views about their own practice, in relation to the areas mentioned above, and also in terms of current baptismal and catechetical practice.

#### Notes

- 1 Const. Apost. VIII. xxxii. 16. trans J. Donaldson: Edinburgh 1870 ANCL XVII p.495
- 2 John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instruction 11.16 trans. P.W. Harkins London 1963 ACW XXXI p.49
- 3 Peregr. Aeth. XLVI 3 trans. J. Wilkinson: Egeria's Travels. London 1971 p.144. See also Cyril of Jerusalem: Procathechesis, Catecheses 1.12. Washington 1969. FaCh 61
- 4 John Chrysostom: op. cit. p.12
- 5 John Chrysostom: op. cit. VI.1. p.93
- 6 Theodore of Mopsuestia: Commentary on the Nicene Creed. trans. A Mungana Cambridge, 1932. Wood St.5; Commentary on the Lord's Prayer and the Sacraments. trans. A. Mingana Cambridge 1933, Wood St.6.
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- 8 Cyril of Jerusalem. Procat. IX p.77
- 9 Cyril of Jerusalem: op. cit. IX trans. F.L. Cross London 1951 p.45
- 10 John XX.22
- 11 A New Catechism (Revd. Edn.) London 1970 p.242-3
- 12 S.F. Winward: Your Baptism, London 1969. p.45
- 13 cf. John Chrysostom: op. cit. II 23 p.52; XI 27 p.169
- 14 Signs of Hope 5.2.4. Baptist Union 1979 p.26
- 15 Mark I. 12-13
- 16 S.F. Winward: The New Testament Teaching on Baptism. Baptist Union 1952 p.8
- 17 A revised edition will shortly be available from the East Midland Baptist Association.
- 18 D.F. Neil: The Way of Christ. London 1973.
- 19 op. cit. p.26
- 20 J.O. Barrett: Church Membership: Suggestions for Visitors to Candidates. Baptist Union 1970
- 21 op. cit. p.1.
- 22 op. cit. p.5.
- 23 A related question is whether or not we ought to remind ourselves more in our worship of the assurance of forgiveness which is ours. In Churches and denominations whose clergy fulfil a distinctly priestly function, absolution is part of the weekly liturgy. But what reminders of their forgiveness do our people receive?
- 24 Why Be Baptised? Baptist Union 1969
- 25 S.F. Winward: "Your Baptism" Baptist Union 1969 pp.21-22
- 26 Baptist Times Vol.CXXV No. 6859 (23.10.80) P. Beasley-Murray: Make the Most of Baptism p.12.
- 27 Acts II 37-38

# Visitors — albatross or asset?

By RAYMOND BURNISH

THE first results of the census in April are beginning to trickle through for public edification, telling us of declining populations in the major cities.

It will be some three years before the full report of the census is available for those of us who want to take up the NIE suggestion of getting our copy of the figures to help us in evangelism in our area, but then what can you expect with a sample of 55,000,000?

## Sample

The East Midland Baptist Association ministers went to their annual conference the day after Census Day, hoping to get away from forms and questionnaires, to devote their minds to Christology and meditation, and they found — another questionnaire!

In common with most of the other ministers in the country attending conferences this year they were being asked about how they prepared their candidates for baptism, and church membership.

However, they were undaunted by this extra chore, and 330 ministers out of 528 answered their questionnaires.

From this somewhat smaller sample, I was able to produce my results by the end of May.

More than half the ministers give six or seven classes over a three month period before baptism, and nearly half follow these with two or three classes during the three months after baptism.

The syllabuses used indicated a marked preference for home-made material, although a number of these home-made syllabuses are based on the excellent material produced by the Baptist Union.

So far the answers indicate nothing particularly spectacular or unusual but when we come to consider baptismal sponsorship by church visitors then the analysis of the answers begins to reveal a hidden question, "Why do we appoint visitors anyway?"

One in eight ministers answered this question honestly — they did not have visitors to their candidates for baptism and church membership, but 285 still used visitors.

However, when asked what role the visitors played in preparation for baptism, 77 per cent answered "none".

Two out of every five ministers saw no role for the visitors either in preparation for church membership, one in three saw

no continuing role for the visitors after baptism, and half saw no place for the visitors in the baptismal service.

The positive responses pointed to the visitor's role in explaining the duties of membership to the candidate and reporting to the church meeting.

## Resource

Half the ministers expected some degree of pastoral concern and friendship after baptism, and two out of five encourage the visitors to assist the candidate in the service.

But it is those who see no role for the church visitors, and yet who are unable to dispose of them who worry me the most.

There is a danger in having a procedure for which there is no evident value, so that it merely becomes an albatross around the minister's neck, and he feels he is under his members' surveillance.

But more than this, church visitors are a readily available, yet untapped, resource who can assist the new Christian's growth in the faith.

In the fourth century, the role of the church visitor or sponsor was described as that of a spiritual guide to the Christian's new life and citizenship of heaven.

The sponsor was seen as a very special person by both the candidate and church, and performed a very important task.

I suppose, however, that as with any task in the Church, it is up to us to make of it what we will.

But can I suggest that even if your minister saw no reasons for visitors, that next time you are invited to visit a candidate for baptism and church membership, you see that opportunity as a great privilege to which God has called you through his church, and that you use it to develop a really lasting relationship with your candidate.

A P P E N D I X C.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM AND CHURCH  
MEMBERSHIP AND SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

TOTAL RESPONDENTS: 330

BAPTIST UNION AREA:

NW	NE	EM	WM	W	E	C	S	SE	M	SW
34	36	27	42	44	42	20	*	41	44	*

1. AGE:

21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61-70	70+	Missing
31	95	87	64	43	9	1

2. HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN THE MINISTRY?

1-10yrs	11-20yrs	21-30yrs	31-40yrs	40+yrs	Missing
114	93	77	32	13	1

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION

3. HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU MEET WITH CANDIDATES BEFORE THEIR BAPTISM?

1-4	5-6	7-10	10+	Varies	Missing
52	140	109	20	4	5

4. OVER WHAT PERIOD DO THESE MEETINGS TAKE PLACE ON AVERAGE?

1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	6 Months+	Other	Varies	Missing
47	206	40	1	26	4	6

5. WHAT SYLLABUS DO YOU USE?

D.F.Neil: <u>The Way of Christ</u>	17
B.U.Scotland: <u>Forward with Christ</u>	2
E.M.B.A: <u>Church Membership</u>	11
V.Jack: <u>Believe and be Baptized</u>	15
B.U.: Christian Training Programme	6
S.F.Winward: Booklets	20
B.U.: Leaflets	10
W.M.S.West: <u>Baptist Principles</u>	2
R.E.O.White: <u>Invitation to Baptism</u>	3
One Step Forward: Booklets	11
C.P.A.S: Booklets	1
B.F.B.S: <u>First Steps in Faith</u>	2
Campus Crusade for Christ	2
Navigators' Material	1
E.Halse: <u>Baptism and Church Membership</u>	2
Emmaus Bible School Course	1
D.Watson: <u>Live a new Life</u>	1
C.Roseweir: Unpublished Material	1
Insufficient Information	4
Methodist Church: <u>What is a Christian</u>	1
Varies	34
'My own' - syllabus outlined	87
'My own' - college based	1
'My own' - based on Apostles' Creed	4
'My own' - based on New Testament	15
'My own'	83
K.S.B.A: <u>Grow &amp; Go</u>	1
Continuing work of Church	1
None	8
Missing	8

6. WHAT IS YOUR METHOD OF INSTRUCTION, eg. ONE-TO-ONE, CLASS, HOUSEGROUP?

One-to-one	28
Class	165
Housegroup	29
Combination of one-to-one and class	66
Combination of three suggested	13
Combination of Class and Housegroup	10
Other	16
Missing	3

PREPARATION FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

7. DO YOU HOLD POST-BAPTISMAL CLASSES?

Never	1-2 Mtgs.	3-4 Mtgs.	4+ Mtgs.	Included in Baptismal Class	Missing
95	72	72	38	24	15

8. OVER WHAT PERIOD DO THESE MEETINGS TAKE PLACE?

1 month	3 months	6 months	6+ months	2 months	Other	Missing
55	78	35	17	4	11	130

9. WHAT SYLLABUS DO YOU USE FOR THESE MEETINGS?

D.F.Neil: <u>The Way of Christ</u>	12
L.R.Misselbrook: Suggested course	3
B.U.Scotland: <u>Forward with Christ</u>	1
B.U.Christian Training Programme	14
S.F.Winward: Booklets	6
W.M.S.West: <u>Baptist Principles</u>	1
One Step Forward: Material	1
C.P.A.S: Material	1
B.F.B.S: Material	1
Navigators' Material	4
Insufficient Information	7
Varies	15
'My own': syllabus specified	36
'My own': based on New Testament	4
'My own'	60
D.Pawson: <u>Truth to Tell</u>	1
K.S.B.A: <u>Grow &amp; Go</u>	1
B.U.: <u>Call to Commitment</u>	1
Pastoral Group	4
Pastoral Follow-up	4
Continuing work of Church	19
None	13
Missing	121

10. WHAT IS YOUR METHOD OF INSTRUCTION, e.g.ONE-TO-ONE, CLASS, HOUSEGROUP?

One-to-one	29
Class	96
Housegroup	33
Combination of one-to-one and class	21
Combination of three suggested	5
Combination of class and housegroup	4
Other	13
Missing	129

VISITORS TO CANDIDATES

11. ARE VISITORS TO CANDIDATES APPOINTED?

Yes	No	Missing
285	43	2

12. BY WHOM ARE THEY APPOINTED?

Minister	22	Minister & Deacons	20	All Three	5
Deacons	97	Deacons & Church	20	Other	3
Church	116	Minister & Church	2	Missing	45

13. AT WHAT STAGE ARE THEY APPOINTED?

Beginning of Classes	26	After Decision for Baptism	66
Middle of Course	44	Other	31
End of Classes	103	Missing	50
After Baptism	10		

14. WHAT ROLE DO THEY PLAY IN: (If none write none)

	Preparation for Baptism	Preparation for Membership	After Baptism	In Baptismal Service
None	201	105	91	128
Pastoral Concern	7	12	83	1
Report to Church Meeting	10	38	3	-
Friendship	4	8	49	5
Confirm Faith	11	12	1	1
Assist Candidate	1	-	-	112
Other	24	54	24	14
Explanation of Membership	-	39	-	-
Share Classes/ Teaching	3	2	5	69
Missing	69	60	74	

READINESS FOR BAPTISM

15. WHAT INDICATIONS OF READINESS FOR BAPTISM DO YOU LOOK FOR IN THE CANDIDATE, e.g. a) SIGNS OF REGENERATION b) PERSONAL FAITH c) SENSE OF UNDERSTANDING d) SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE e) DESIRE TO BE OF SERVICE TO CHRIST'S PEOPLE?

a+b+c+d+e	68	b+c	1
a+b+d+e	2	b+d+e	2
a+b+d	2	b+d	2
a+b+e	1	c+d+e	21
a+c+d+e	10	c+d	23
a+c+d	20	c+e	1
a+c+e	2	e	6
a+c	1	d+e	51
a+d+e	17	d	39
a+d	22	e	15
a+e	5	non-specific	18
b+c+d	1		

(ADDITIONAL QUESTION FOR EAST MIDLANDS AREA QUESTIONNAIRES ONLY: RESPONDENTS: 27)

16. IF YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION 5 AND/OR QUESTION 9 CONCERNING SYLLABUS WAS 'MY OWN' OR SOME SIMILAR PHRASE, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF YOU WOULD INDICATE BELOW WHETHER YOU WOULD DEAL WITH THE FOLLOWING THEMES AT ALL, AND IF SO WHETHER BEFORE OR AFTER BAPTISM.

	<u>Before Baptism</u>	<u>After Baptism</u>
Work of Christ and our response	20	2
Baptism	23	-
The Bible	15	9
Prayer	17	8
The Holy Spirit	18	7
The Church, Membership, and Worship	24	4
Knowing God's Will	9	7
Stewardship	15	13
Christian Service and Commitment	13	9
Maturity and Growth	4	11
The Devil, Evil, Temptation	10	7
Suffering	2	3
The Last Things, Life Everlasting	5	3
The Trinity	9	5
Witnessing	13	9
Belief in God	15	4
Person of Christ	15	3
Assurance	9	3
Christian Heritage, Baptist Family	17	8
Missing	2	2

\* These areas could not be circulated due to the fact that the Southern Area had only just been established and arrangements for its Ministers' Conference were not known and the South Wales Area has an Autumn Conference.

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