

THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH ACCORDING TO
ST. CYPRIAN AND ST. AMEROSE: A COMPARISON

by

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Because the mystery of Christ is revealed in the mystery of the Church, a study of Christian Theology necessitates an investigation of the Church. Moreover, since the writings of the Fathers of the Church stand as traditional and important witness to the message of the Church regarding who Jesus Christ is, and consequently what the Church is, studies have been focused upon the teachings of the Fathers in the area of their ecclesiologies.¹ Therefore, in an attempt to continue the probing of the mystery of the Church through the teachings of the Fathers, choice was made of a comparison of the works of St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose, delineating and examining the symbolic images used by each Father when teaching about the Church of Christ. The available texts of both have been studied; subsequently portions of texts from extant letters as well as major treatises yielded data pertinent to this comparison. After reflection upon the texts, it can be said that both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose considered the Ecclesia Christi as a visible, organic, vital community, united and living in and through Christ Jesus, mutually dependent on one another and causative in the grace life as truly cooperating with and in the redemptive work of Christ. The actions of the Christians seen as "crucial" are Baptism and Eucharistic participation. For both the visible organization hierarchized in structure is both an effect of Christ's causing and a cause of a Christian's being united to and

living in Christ. The view that both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose were dedicated Bishops who were confirmed in habits of practical wisdom, rather than those of speculative original theology² is adequately sustained from numerous scholarly works available.

Their Lives in Contrast

There are likenesses and differences in the personalities, orientations and thought patterns of these Latin Fathers which are of interest to this comparison: (1) both flourish within the period 200 A.D. and 400 A.D., a time close enough to the primitive period to be the expression of the Church forming and formulating, and yet distant enough from the Apostolic Age to show evidence of the development of theologizing amongst the early Churchmen; (2) both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose were Bishops, officially appointed to teach and to rule the Church; (3) both are of the Latin Church, and write their works in Latin; (4) both men were adult converts to Christianity and soon recognized as men capable of bearing offices of authority well; (5) Generally speaking, neither has been acknowledged as a master of speculative thought, but rather, have been lauded as Bishops of extraordinary practical genius. St. Cyprian was Pontiff of the Church in Carthage, having been elected to this office just two years after his conversion by Caecilius. The exact date and birth-place of St. Cyprian is not known but it is often held to have been between 200 and 210 A.D. in Carthage. His dedicated and often heroic work for the Church continued until his death by martyrdom during the persecution of Valerian near Carthage on September 14, 258 A.D.³

St. Ambrose was named Bishop of Milan while still a catechumen and consecrated December 7, 374 A.D., just eight days after Baptism. He was not a native of Milan; rather, he was born at Treves in 340 A.D., and was a successful lawyer; the effect of such formation is easily discernible in his writings. It was the eloquence of St. Ambrose which overwhelmed St. Augustine just before the latter's Baptism. In 397 A.D., St. Ambrose died, and his body rests in the Basilica of Milan. In 422 A.D., a cleric, Paulinus, wrote a vita of St. Ambrose at the suggestion of St. Augustine.⁴ (6) The source from which they draw is fundamentally Scripture. In addition, St. Cyprian took as his "Master" Tertullian, who had influenced profoundly the developing African Church until his death in 220 A.D.⁵ The evidence of St. Cyprian's reliance upon Tertullian is consistent in his jurisdictional decisions and his writings. It was the Greek Fathers whom St. Ambrose studied thoroughly; thus his thought was oriented and formed by Origen, Clement, and St. Basil. His favoring of the allegorical interpretations of these Alexandrines is in manifest evidence.⁶ (7) Both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose were in frequent contact with Rome; St. Ambrose as a defender of the supreme authority of the Pope against the Emperor, assisting at the Council of Aquileia in 381 A.D., and generally regarded as a defender of Orthodoxy in the West, while St. Cyprian, presiding over the African Synods (225 A.D. and 256 A.D.), found that the Bishop of Rome, Pope Stephen, rejected their opinion regarding the invalidity of heretical Baptism. St. Cyprian never recanted his views, but later was defended by St. Augustine and excused by him.⁷

WRITINGS OF ST. CYPRIAN

The writings of St. Cyprian are divided into two classifications, treatises and letters. (Although his gift of eloquence was consistently praised, an extant example of his preaching has not been identified.)

Among the former we include Ad Quirinum, Ad Donatum, De Habitu Virginitatis, De Lausis, De Unitate Catholicae Ecclesiae, De Dominica Oratione, Ad Demetrianum, De Mortalitate, De opere et eleemosynis, De bono patientiae, De zelo et levitate, Ad Fortunatum, and Quid idola dei non sint.⁸

Of the letters extant, there is record of eighty one, sixty-five of which are said to have been written by St. Cyprian, while the remaining sixteen were addressed by others to him. All of the letters were composed during his Episcopacy and have been sub-grouped in the following way:

(1) those which cannot be dated but all of which were probably written before the persecution of Decius. (Letters 1-4 and No. 63, the latter is a precious document confirming the traditional Catholic doctrine of the sacrificial character of the Eucharist);

(2) letters sent to Carthage (Nos. 5-7 and 10-19) while in exile in the first persecution of Decius;

(3) letters of Cyprian as the representative of the clergy of Carthage (Nos. 8, 9, 20-22, 27, 38, 30, 31, 35-37) to the clergy of Rome upon whom fell the responsibility of the government of the Church between the death of Fabian, and the succession of Cornelius (January, 250 A.D. to March, 251);

(4) letters sent to Carthage (Nos. 23-26, 29, 32, 33, 34, 38-43) during the last period of the Decian persecution in 250 and 251 A.D.;

(5) letters (Nos. 44-45) of the years 251 and 252 A.D. dealing with the troubles caused by the Schism of Novatian.⁹

The Writings of Ambrose

The works of St. Ambrose are more abundant than those of St. Cyprian, including four distinct classifications:

(1) Exegetical works which are the most numerous extant and concerned mainly with commentaries on the Old Testament, with the exception of the ten book commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke.¹⁰ The works on the Old Testament include the six books of the Hexameron, De Paradiso, De Cain et Abel, De Noe, De Abraham, De Issac et Anima, De Jacob et Vita Beata, De Joseph, De Patriarchis, De Helia et Ieiunio, De Nabuthe, De Tobia, De Interpellatione Job et David, Apologia Prophetarum David, Enarrationes in 12 Psalmis, (1, 35-40, 43, 45, 47, 48, 61), and a very expansive Expositio in Psalmum 118. (2) His moral and ascetical works include three books of the De Officiis Ministrorum, De Virginibus Ad Marcellinam Sororem, De Vitiis, De Virginitate, De Institutione Virginis, Exhortatio Virginitatis; (3) included as dogmatic works, De Fide Gratiarum, De Spiritu Sancto, De Incarnatione Dominice sacramento, De Mysteriis, De Poenitentia, and Expositio Fidei, (4) and finally, his extant letters numbering ninety-one.¹²

Not all of the works of either St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose were of equal value to this study. Rather selection has been made of a limited number of specific works in which are found the major texts

which reveal the structure of the teaching of each Father on the nature of the Church. In general, using the Pauline teaching, "One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism," both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose viewed the Church as a dynamic, unique, vital community of the people of God which lives by a power of life communicated by God through Christ to the Church in its members. For both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose there is but one living Church as there is but one Christ by whom the Church lives. Again for both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose he who is named to the office of Bishop clearly must participate in the communication of the power of life in the Church. It is he who visibly represents Christ and is joined to Christ and through whom his flock is joined to Christ. Although there has been an interesting controversy concerning the orthodoxy of St. Cyprian's position in regard to the primacy of Rome, it is not the intent of this treatise to develop this investigation further.¹³ Rather our position stated simply is that St. Cyprian saw the necessity for unity amongst the Bishops with one another and with the Bishop of Rome so that the various dioceses would be in union with the one God through the one Christ by one Faith and one Baptism. To rupture the unity of the Church was to cut oneself off from life; was adultery; was deceit.

Thus it is the thesis of this study, that in the concrete presentation of the nature of the Church in St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose is evidence of doctrines which continue in varying degrees of completeness the orientations of the Primitive Church, especially as expressed by St. Paul and St. Luke. The continuation of the major themes and

images used as symbolic of the Church clearly manifest St. Cyprian's orthodoxy, for example. However, careful study has not shown that St. Cyprian developed the major Pauline doctrine regarding how Christians are joined to the Body of Christ and somehow constitute this body as Christ is extended in time. St. Ambrose did however understand and promulgate "the body doctrine," although he did not contribute profoundly to doctrinal development.

Therefore, in the second chapter, the most important texts from the major works of St. Cyprian are quoted and analyzed with the point of special interest which is the image used and its context. The analysis of several crucial texts from St. ^{Ambrose} Augustine constitutes the major portion of Chapter Three. In Chapter IV, an attempt is made to explain the samenesses and differences of the two Fathers of the Church, for study reveals "samenesses," but much more abundantly "differences."

CHAPTER TWO

SAINT CYPRIAN

Since Saint Cyprian is reputed to be the most important figure of the Latin Church in the third century of African Christianity, his documented teachings are of obvious value. Moreover, it is the expressed opinion of P. Godet that in the writings of St. Cyprian, of whichever classification examined, can be found striking evidences that "the Church, the sacraments, Christian life are the only subjects of his meditations and theme of his eloquence."¹ Thus, those treatises in which significant texts are found will be analyzed first; a study of several texts from extant letters comprises the second portion of this chapter.

Treatises

In his treatise, On the Unity of the Catholic Church, St. Cyprian has written the earliest defense on the nature of the Church as she is one.² While it is true that this treatise has been studied widely, as mentioned previously, it has nonetheless continued to be a subject of controversy.³ Moreover, the exact nature of the circumstances which generated the writing of De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate have not been fully determined. Most probably, however, St. Cyprian composed it for presentation to the Synod of Carthage, meeting in May, 251 A.D. At this Synod, the schism of Novatian in Rome against Pope Cornelius and that of the African deacon, Felicissimus, against St. Cyprian himself, were condemned.⁴

The meaning of the De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate can better be grasped when studied in relation to the controversy which demanded that Cyprian write another short treatise, De Lapsis, which appeared a few months prior to the De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate.⁵ Both treatises deal with the effects of the persecution by the Roman Emperor, Decius. In De Lapsis, the holy Bishop of Carthage expresses joy at the end of these troubled times and praises the heroism of the martyrs and confessors who had remained faithful to Jesus Christ, while in the same work he reproves those who become "sacrificati" or "libellatici,"⁶ demanding long penances for all those who should have apostasized.⁷ Thus, to apostasize was to give up Jesus Christ, which is to give up eternal life and salvation because of cowardice and love of patrimony.⁸

In the De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate St. Cyprian is defending the rightful supremacy of the Bishop of Rome in his diocese, as well as the rightful supremacy of each Bishop in his respective diocese. Therefore, the Bishop of Carthage attacked the claims of the schismatic Novatian who had himself named Pope, after dispute with the validly elected Bishop of Rome, Cornelius. St. Cyprian had investigated the claims of Novatian and the election of Cornelius as Bishop of Rome, and found the latter to be the rightful successor of St. Peter. Thus, for Novatian to claim the identical See and identical authority was contradictory.⁹

The Mystery of Oneness: Cause and Effect

Behind St. Cyprian's firm, practical decision to support Cornelius is his profound grasp of and commitment to the Pauline expression of the revelation of the unity of Christians in Christ and the necessity to preserve this unity:

I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, exhort you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all humility and meekness, with patience bearing with one another in love, careful to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the Lord of peace: One body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all and throughout all, and in us all.¹⁰

This key Pauline text is a fruitful source and principle from which Cyprian's reasoning can move and to which he can always return when in need of clarification. Early in the De Ecclesiae Unitate Catholicae, St. Cyprian states clearly:

The enemy cajoles and deceives them; as the apostle says, he transforms himself into an angel of light, and promises his servants to act as the servants of Justice, to call the night day, and damnation salvation, to teach recklessness under the pretext of hope, disbelief under the color of the faith, antiChrist under the name of Christ, so that by lies that have all the appearances of truth, they undermine the truth with trickery. All of this has come about, dearest brethren, because men do not go back to the origin of (the Christian) realities, because they do not look for their source, nor keep to the teaching of their heavenly Master.¹¹

The origin of Christian realities is the one Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who is the one Son of the Father. Christ communicates his life to the one Christian Church which he founded upon the one Peter, and the one College of Apostles, through whom the authentic unique life

principle of the Church of Christ is transmitted and communicated to all Christians. If His flock will advert to their single origin and remain in communion with this original source, they will live by the life of Christ. If, on the contrary, anyone does not remain in harmony with the one Church, but resists and withstands her, it is impossible for this man to be in the Church of Christ.

If a man does not hold fast to this oneness of the Church, does he imagine that he still holds the faith? If he resists and withstands the Church has he still confidence that he is in the Church, when the blessed Apostle Paul gives us this very teaching and points to the mystery of oneness saying, 'One body and one Spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, One God.'¹²

The use in this text¹³ of the phrase "mystery of oneness" which represents the "mysterion" or "sacramentum" of Ephesians 5,32: "This is the great mystery - I mean in reference to Christ and to the Church," is significant. Just prior to this St. Paul has referred to one flesh of the two joined in marriage. The unity of the Church is the holy sign effected "mysteriously" in Christ with all who are joined and remain joined. The effected union is divinely caused yet visible, because a faithful Christian by Baptismal profession and permanent adherence to the faith of the Church in Christ manifests his union.

In the chapter following, St. Cyprian further delineates the effects of union with the Church of Christ:

Now this oneness we must hold to firmly and insist on- especially we who are Bishops and exercise authority in the Church - so as to demonstrate that the episcopal power is one and undivided too. Let none mislead the brethren with a lie, let none corrupt the true content of the faith by a faithless perversion of the truth.¹⁴

Although the Bishop of Carthage "named no names" in the De Ecclesiae Unitate Catholicae, it is readily apparent that he intended this rebuke, as well as the majority of the rebukes in this work, as clear condemnation of the heretics both in Carthage and in Rome. Any attempt to divide the authority of the Church is to aim at the perversion of the Christian life, and is a "corrupting of the content of the faith."

The line of succession of the duly elected and consecrated Bishops from the Apostles is clearly manifest for St. Cyprian and forms the visible life line in the Church.¹⁵ To deny this or in any way to cause disruption in the Christian Community by heresy, schism, or apostasy is to divide the Church by disease. The authority of the Bishops is a unity originating in the building of the Church upon Peter and the Apostles:

It is on one man that he builds the Church, and although he assigns a like power to all the apostles after his death, saying: 'as the Father hath sent me I also send you....Receive ye the Holy Spirit: If you forgive any man his sins, they shall be forgiven him; if you retain any man's they shall be retained.' Yet, in order that the oneness might be unmistakeable, He established by His own authority as source for that oneness, having its origin in one man alone. No doubt the other apostles were all that Peter was, endowed with equal dignity and power, but the start comes from him alone,¹⁶ in order to show that the Church of Christ is unique...

It is a matter of returning to the facts of Scripture, wherein episcopal organization and power are revealed; from these "facts" trace the path of any dispute or challenge. A disputant should be able to determine the rightful course by discovering who is the validly consecrated Bishop, i.e., authority, and cleaving to him, so that he may have life and truth. Furthermore, the holy Bishop of Carthage continues:

The authority of the Bishops forms a unity, of which each holds his part in its totality. And the Church forms a unity, however, for she spreads and multiplies by the progeny of her fecundity, just as the sun's rays are many, yet light is one, and a tree's branches are many, yet the strength deriving from its sturdy root is one....So too, Our Lord's church is radiant with light and pours her rays over the whole world; but is one and the same light which is spread everywhere, and the unity of her body suffers no division.¹⁷

The authority of the Episcopacy united stands as effect of Christ's unity with the original twelve Bishops, as well as a visible sign of the unity of all Christians in their Bishops. Thus it is necessary that all Bishops keep of one mind and heart. Moreover, the sign of an individual Christian's union with Christ is his union with the rightful Bishop. Thus, no matter how far the Church extends or how many persons become joined to Christ, the Church through the College of Bishops continues to extend the saving life of the One Christ. Thus, if a new Christian desired to ascertain if he were properly joined to Christ, he has but to return to his principle, i.e., to see if he is united with his Bishop in "one body and one spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, one God."

Further Effects of the Mystery of Oneness

Later in this treatise St. Cyprian asks the rhetorical question: "Does anyone think then this oneness which derives from the stability of God, and is welded together after the celestial pattern can be rendered in the Church and divided by the clash of discordant wills?"¹⁸ The Bishop of Carthage remains fixed in his position that any man who fails to keep united to the Church in the Bishop fails against the command of God; in fine, "He has lost his faith about the

Father and the Son; he has lost his life and his soul."¹⁹ No side-stepping inconsistency for St. Cyprian - to break union with your Bishop is to break union with the Triune God, and thus to cease the living of the Christian life and to lose salvation.

Perhaps a most fitting summary statement of St. Cyprian's consistent teaching regarding the fundamental principle of the living unity of the Church is the following:

God is one, and Christ is one, and His Church is one; one is the faith, and one the people cemented together by harmony unto the strong unity of a body. That unity cannot be split by any cleavage of its structure, nor cut up in fragments with its vitals torn apart. Nothing that is separated from the parent stock can ever live or breathe apart, all hope of its salvation is lost.²⁰

God as Father, Church as Mother

One of the most consistently used figures for the Church throughout Latin Patristic texts is that of "mater ecclesia." In the study completed by Joseph Plumpe one can see the evidence that the figure of "mater," is found in the writings of St. Irenaeus and of the confessors of Lyons and Vienne, as well as Tertullian, Clement, and Origen.²¹ In the writings of St. Cyprian, "the Church speaks to her subjects as mater or mater ecclesia more than thirty times."²² An important text is found in the De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, wherein St. Cyprian expresses the necessary condition for our relationship with God: "You cannot have God for your Father if you have not the Church for your Mother."²³ As will be shown later, this principle is developed in several letters by St. Cyprian. Earlier in the same treatise St. Cyprian combines the image of Church as

mother within a complex statement of the nature of the Church as like a living tree or a

spring supplying many streams: She spreads her branches in generous growth over all the earth, she extends her abundant streams ever further; yet one is the head spring, one the source, one the mother, who is prolific in the offspring, generation after generation: of her womb are we born, of her milk are we fed; of her spirit our souls draw their lifebreath.²⁴

Moreover, in the companion treatise, De Lapsis, when involved in a dramatic denunciation of certain apostacizing parents who caused their infants and young children to drink a toast to the Roman gods, St. Cyprian again refers to the Church under the figure of "Mother" as if the children were speaking:

It was not we who did anything nor of ourselves but that we left Our Lord's food, and drink, out of eagerness to defile ourselves with those unholy things; it was the wickedness of others which was our ruin - our parents murdered our souls, it was they who in our name denied the Church to be our Mother, and God to be our Father, so that small, and helpless and innocent, as we were of so wicked a crime, through their making up join them in their sins, we have become the victims of the unscrupulousness of others.²⁵

In the same treatise, but now in the context of glorifying those confreeres who underwent all persecutions faithfully and courageously, the Bishop of Carthage addresses them in the name of Mother Church:

With what joy in her breast does Mother Church receive you back from the fray. How blessed, how happy she is to open her gates for you to enter as, in closed ranks, you bear the vanquished foe.²⁶

In his historic encomium on the virtue of chastity, De Habitu Virginum,²⁷ St. Cyprian develops his teaching on the Church as Mother by stating that her maternity bears it choicest flowering in an abundant company

of virgins:

They (the virgins) are the flower of the tree that is the Church, the beauty and adornment of spiritual grace, the image of God reflecting the holiness of the Lord, the more illustrious part of Christ's flock. The glorious fruitfulness of Mother Church rejoices through them and then she flowers abundantly, and the more a bountiful virginity adds to its numbers, the greater is the joy of the Mother.²⁸

The five texts quoted above are clear evidences of St. Cyprian's consistent view of the Church as the life-giving instrument of God, a mediator between God and His people, without whom the Christian people are not born unto the Kingdom. On the other hand, the statement of and the general context in which these teachings appear reveal no explicit speculative theologizing. However, the continuance of tradition themes is verified.

Church as Spouse of Christ

Concomitant with the theme of Church as mother in Patristic teaching is the expression, "ecclesia Sponsa."²⁹ St. Cyprian is no exception, and in explicit formulation is found in De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate:

The Spouse of Christ cannot be defiled, she is inviolate and chaste. She knows one home alone, in all modesty she keeps faithfully to one only couch.³⁰

If then anyone commits schism or heresy and thus is no longer joined to the Church he commits adultery.

It is she who rescues us for God. She who seals for the kingdom the sons whom she has borne. Whoever breaks with the Church and enters an adulterous union, cuts himself off from the promises made to the Church; and he who has turned his back on the Church of Christ shall not come to the rewards of Christ: he is an alien, a worldling, an enemy.³¹

The Pauline orientation and flavor of St. Cyprian's thought is ever made evident. Also, there is no question of ambiguity about what St. Cyprian understands as constituting the traditional teaching of the Primitive Church regarding the nature of the Christian Community. There is, however, a persistent question which plagues the modern reader as to the depth of degree of insight and understanding he possessed. It is because of the lack of theological elaboration that Patristic scholars have insisted that while the Third Century Fathers "were morally bold and vigorous," (they were) still "intellectually timid or weak;" while Christianity was "victorious as a way of life, it was still philosophically deficient."³² Nonetheless, it is equally apparent that the concrete and dynamic description conveyed by the images of Mother, Spouse, and Virgin, following upon the development of the absolute principle of the Fatherhood of God, verifies that for the Bishop of Carthage the Church was not an organization like to any other: it was unique. Rather than a static group, it is a living organism (even though he does not develop the theology of the Body of Christ). Participation in divine life is communicated by God, Our Father, through the Church, our Mother, who is the Spouse of Christ, fructified in the begetting of many virgins who are its elect. The progeny of the Church includes all that she seals; i.e., confirms unto the Kingdom of God. She signs us with her sign:

It is she who rescues us for God; she who seals for the kingdom the sons whom she has borne.³³

Thus, St. Cyprian does not see the Church only as a law-making assembly, but truly the visible representative of Christ.

Other Traditional Figures

St. Cyprian sees in the undivided coat of Christ an image of the "holy mystery of oneness, which exists in Christ's union with his humanity:

The 'oneness' with which he was clothed came from 'the upper part,' that is from His Father in heaven and could in no way be divided by any who came to acquire it: it retained its well knit wholeness indivisibly. That man cannot possess the garment of Christ who rends and divides the Church of Christ....But because Christ's people cannot be divided, His coat woven compactly as it was throughout, is not divided by those who acquire it; indivisibly woven of a piece, compact, it shows that we who have put on Christ, form a people knit together in harmony. By the sacred symbolism of His garment was proclaimed the oneness of the Church.³⁴

The principle of unity of Christ with His sacred humanity (for which the seamless coat is a holy symbol) is the Father who originates the Son, to whose humanity we are joined. No matter what efforts are made by schismatics or heretics to divide the Church of Christ, it is impossible for them to do so, just as the unity of Christ with His sacred humanity cannot be severed. It is divinely caused. On the negative side, it is easily discernible that a man "cannot possess the garment," that is, be somehow united to Christ and at the same time attempt to rend and divide this garment, i.e., the Church. This "rending" of the garment of Christ may take the form of erroneous doctrine or disputing against the Shepherds of the flock.

Does anyone think that in any one place there can be more than one shepherd or more than one flock.³⁵

The Church, The Home of God with Christians

The Church stands as the one, only dwelling of God upon earth. To place oneself outside of this House of the Lord, i.e.,

outside of the causality of the Church, and attempt of oneself to construct a divine dwelling place is, of course, to labor foolishly and vainly. Moreover, it is only in the One House of the Lord that the Sacred Mysteries can be performed, which principle action, Eucharistic Sacrifice, joins all the Christians in the food of salvation. This food of salvation is Christ Himself as the Kingdom of God is Christ Himself.

Do you think that a man can hold his own or survive when he leaves the Church and sets up a new place and a separate home for himself....So too, the sacred meaning of the Pasch lies essentially in the fact, laid down in Exodus, that the Lamb - slain as a type of Christ - should be eaten in one single home.... The flesh of Christ and the Lord's a sacred body cannot be cast outside, nor have believers any other home, but the one Church....In God's House, in the Church of Christ, do those of one mind dwell, there they abide in concord and simplicity.³⁶

It is in Christ Jesus in the Eucharist that Christians dwell; it is in Him that the one Kingdom of God is realized daily, the kingdom, the abode who comes to us because God is our Father, the Church our Mother, and because we reign in Christ.

Indeed, most beloved brethren, even Christ Himself can be the Kingdom of God whom we daily desire to come, whose coming we wish to be quickly presented to us. For since He Himself is the Resurrection, the Kingdom of God can be understood as Himself, because in Him are we to reign.³⁷

However, if anyone separates himself off from the Eucharistic table, he cannot be saved, since he is apart from the cause of sanctification, the Body of Christ.

For Christ is the bread of life and the bread here is of all, but is ours. And as we say, "Our Father" because He is the Father of those who understand and believe, so too we say "Our Bread" because Christ is the bread of those of us who attain to His Body. Moreover, we ask that this Bread be given to us daily, lest we, who are in Christ and receive the Eucharist daily as food of salvation, with the intervention of some more grievous sin while we are shut off, and as non-communicants are kept from the heavenly bread, be separated from the Body of Christ as He Himself declares....Since then He says that 'if anyone eats of His bread he lives forever, as it is manifest that they live who attain to His body and receive the Eucharist by right of Communion, so on the other hand we must fear and pray lest anyone while he is cut off and separated from the body of Christ remain apart from salvation....and so we petition our bread, this is Christ, be given us daily so that we who abide and live in Christ may not withdraw from His Sanctification and Body.³⁸

Over and over again, the pattern of primitive traditional themes is woven by the holy Bishop into a tightly constructed statement of Christian existence, its cause, and effects. Again, true to His master, Tertullian, no speculative elaboration or scientific probing of the data of Christian belief is attempted. To this man of Roman faith, such intellectual reflections had come in Christ and was preserved visibly by the united efforts of the College of Bishops; truth and light were present and a breach with the Church in the visible vicars was a breach in Charity so disastrous that thereafter even martyrdom was unavailing for salvation.

May, though they should suffer death for the confession of the Name, the guilt of such men is not removed even by their blood; the grievous irremissable sin of schism is not purged even by martyrdom. No martyr can be he who is not in the Church. The Kingdom shall be closed to him who has deserted her who is destined to be its

queen....no one can claim the martyr's name who has broken off his love for the brethren....Those who have refused to be of one mind in the Church of Christ cannot therefore be abiding with God.³⁹

Whereas Christ Jesus has commanded faith, justice, and love in union, the schismatics destroy all possibility of their followers attaining to these. Since the schismatic priest is not in union with the Church he desecrates the Sacrament of unity and love - the Eucharist - whenever he approaches the altar of sacrifice.

But what unity is maintained, what love practiced, or even imagined by one who, mad with the frenzy of discord, splits the Church, destroys the Faith, disturbs the peace, casts Charity to the Winds, desecrates the Sacrament.⁴⁰

Clearly St. Cyprian realized that without the Sacrament of Eucharist there is no common bond of love joining the Christians in Christ. The holy Bishop, however, was not willing to grant that although Novatian and Felicissimus were in schism, they were validly ordained and thus had the power to offer.⁴¹ For to St. Cyprian, if they were not in union with their Bishop who is the visible Pontiff of Christ, it was impossible for them to possess the necessary powers, and their persistence would result in damnation:

Does a man think he is with Christ when he acts in opposition to the Bishops of Christ, when he cuts himself off from the society of His clergy and people?....An enemy of the altar, a rebel against the sacrifice of Christ; giving up faith for perfidy, religion for sacrilege, an unruly servant, an unfaithful son, and hostile brother, despising the bishops and deserting the priests of God, he presumes to set up a new altar, to raise unauthorized voices in rival liturgy, to profane the reality of the Divine Victim by pseudo sacrifices, forgetting that whoever opposes God's institutions is punished for his reckless insolence by divine retribution.⁴²

There is a strong consistency to St. Cyprian's position regarding Novatian and Felicissimus as he asserts with vigour:

This explains why certain people backed by their hot-headed associates seize authority for themselves without any divine sanction, making themselves into prelates regardless of the rules of appointment, and having no one to confer the Episcopate upon them, assume the title of Bishop on their own authority.⁴³

Felicissimus was only a deacon and thus did not possess the power of orders, while Novatus, although a priest, did not possess the fullness of the Sacrament of Orders.⁴⁴ Five priests are said to have joined with Felicissimus but St. Cyprian was adamant against the possibility of their possessing even the power to Baptize, since such power could be delegated by the Bishops only.

Whereas there can be but one Baptism, they think they can baptize; they have abandoned the fountain of life, yet promise the life and grace of the waters of salvation. It is not cleansing that men find there, but soiling; their sins are not washed away but only added to. That new birth does not bring forth sons unto God, but to the devil. Born of a lie, they cannot inherit what the truth promised; begotten by the faithless they are deprived of the graces of Faith. The reward for those in peace can never come to men who have broken the peace of the Lord by the frenzy of dissent.⁴⁵

It is precisely because of St. Cyprian's consistency in his argumentation that he came into conflict with Pope Stephen on the insistence of the African Synod that those Baptized by heretics must be rebaptized.⁴⁶ Although we cannot agree with St. Cyprian, we can see the logical structure of his thought-patterns, and his firm adherence to principles.

The Church as Ark of Noe

St. Cyprian also uses the traditional figure of the Ark of Noe for the Church, intending to state unequivocally and somewhat sarcastically,

If there was an escape for anyone who was outside the Ark of Noe, there is escape, too, for one who is found outside the Church.⁴⁷

Thus his fundamental principle, "outside the Church there is no salvation," is expressed here under the image of the Ark. St. Cyprian uses this figure again in his letters to teach the same principle.

It is evident from the texts presented that in his treatise the holy Bishop of Carthage has used traditional figures for the Church by which to teach traditional doctrine. However, on the questions of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome and the power to Baptize, St. Cyprian continues the tradition of the African Church as influenced by Tertullian. Whether St. Cyprian adverted to the fact on the question of re-baptism that his was a prudential decision rather than a doctrinal teaching is not at all proved or provable from his treatises.

"The Church" in the Letters of Saint Cyprian

Scholars have available for perusal some eighty-one letters of St. Cyprian, sixty-five of which have been established as written by St. Cyprian, while sixteen were addressed to him on questions of Church discipline. These letters have been studied in the past for the light which they cast upon the life and customs of that time.⁴⁸ Moreover, there have been careful efforts made to know St. Cyprian's teaching through his letters as well as his treatises.⁴⁹ In this

study it has been found that the doctrine in St. Cyprian's letters is consistent with, substantiates, and deepens the doctrine of the treatises. The figures used to represent the Church are continuations of the pattern discovered in the treatises. Therefore, the texts excerpted from the letters complements and completes the purpose of this section of the work, i.e., a clear delineation of the selected aspects of the "Ecclesiology" of St. Cyprian, against which to view the "Ecclesiology" of St. Ambrose, whose teachings make evident the doctrinal development as well as theological development that occurred within one hundred and fifty years in the Age of the Fathers.

The Sacrament of Oneness

The theme of the holy mystery of unity runs explicitly and implicitly through the letters as it did through the treatises of St. Cyprian. Several key texts from selected letters⁵⁰ will be quoted to illustrate the intrinsic importance of this principle to the holy Bishop of Carthage.

As mentioned in the section on the treatises, St. Cyprian insisted that a return to the original principle and tradition assured a faithful Christian of the truth and life. This injunction was repeated in his letter to Pompey concerning the controversy over heretics. St. Cyprian accuses Pope Stephen of not returning to the original principle of unity and of falling victim to the error of the heretics.

But what is that blindness of soul, what is that degradation of faith to refuse to recognize the unity which comes from God the Father and from the tradition of Jesus Christ, the Lord and our God. For if the Church is not with heretics, therefore, because it is one and cannot be divided, and if this Holy Spirit is not there because He is one and cannot be among profane persons, (4 and 5) utique et baptismum quod ad unam unitatem consistet esse apud haereticos non potest... And this it behooves the priests of God to do now if they would keep the divine precepts, that if in any respect the truth have wavered and vacillated, we should return to our origin and Lord, and to the evangelical and apostolic tradition; and thence may arise the ground of our action, whence has taken rise both our order and our origin. For it has been delivered to us that there is one God, and One Christ and one hope and one faith, and one Church and one Baptism ordained only in the one Church, from which unity whosoever will depart must need be found with heretics; and while he upholds them against the Church, he impugns the divine tradition. (10 and 11)⁵¹

In this text can be found a consistent argument, typical of Cyprianic mentality. Divine tradition demands union; without union on all levels there is no communion with God. Anyone not actually joined to the Bishop and the Church could not participate in the key actions of the Church. In this letter to Florentinus Pupianus, the holy Bishop of Carthage stated his now famous dictum of the reciprocal identity of the Bishop and the Church.

Peter speaks there (John 6, 67-69), on whom the Church was to be built, teaching and showing in the name of the Church, that although a rebellious and arrogant multitude of those who will not hear and obey may depart, yet the Church does not depart from Christ; and they are the Church who are a people united to the priest, and the flock which adheres to its pastor. Whence you ought to know that the Bishop is in the Church and the Church in the Bishop; and if anyone be not with the bishop, that he is not in the Church...⁵²

The most direct "definition" of the Church found in all St. Cyprian's writings is the people united to the priest (sacerdos), e.g., the Bishop, who is the vicar, i.e., the visible representative of Christ and therefore of Christ's People.⁵³ In a similar spirit he wrote to Pope Cornelius:

For as we have one Church, a mind united, and a concord undivided, what priest does not congratulate himself on the praises of his fellow-priest, as if on his own; or what brotherhood would not rejoice in the joy of its brethren...Among you the courage of the Bishop going before has been publicly proved, and the unitedness of the brotherhood following has been shown as with you there is one mind and one voice, the whole Roman Church has confessed.⁵⁴ (1)

In several other letters St. Cyprian insisted that the bond of Charity and harmony of wills and actions which existed - and must exist - among the Bishops was a sign of and a cause of the continuation of the sacrament of oneness in the Church.

And this they attested by their letters, and we all everywhere and entirely have judged the same thing. For there could not be among us a diverse feeling in whom there was one Spirit; and therefore it is manifest that he does not hold the truth of the Holy Spirit with the rest whom we observe to think differently.⁵⁵ (5)

St. Cyprian herein urged Pope Stephen to renounce the Schismatic, Marcianus, and officially assume the position of his predecessors, and thus openly to join with unified decision the Bishops of Africa.

Earlier in this letter he wrote:

For although we are many shepherds yet we feed one flock, and ought to collect and cherish all the sheep, which Christ by His blood and passion sought for.⁵⁶ (4)

One of the most succinct expressions of St. Cyprian of his teaching

regarding the foundation of and the continuation of the One Church/
upon the one College of Bishops:

Hence through the changes of times, and successions, the ordering of Bishops and the plan of the Church flows onwards; since the Church is founded upon the Bishops and every act of the Church is controlled by these same rulers. Since this, then, is founded upon the divine law, I marvel that some with daring temerity have chosen to write to me as if they wrote in the name of the Church, when the Church is established in the Bishop and the clergy and all who stand fast in the Faith.⁵⁷ (1)

In this letter St. Cyprian began by reaffirming the personal position of the Bishop and then by censuring those who though having "lapsed" from the Church, thought themselves reunited to the Church because of the efforts of Paulus, a Confessor. The holy Bishop in unequivocal language rejects their presumption, and reasserts the necessity of Episcopal pardon.

The Church as Spouse

In answer to a letter from Pope Cornelius (Letter 1) warning the Bishop of Carthage of the schism of Novatian, St. Cyprian recounted to Cornelius the efforts of the Novatians to influence him; and he continued by outlining the errors of Novatus. It is in this letter that can be read a highly significant use of the figure of the Church as Spouse:

....When I say, the blessed apostle says this, and with his sacred voice testifies to the unity of Christ with the Church, cleaving to one another with indivisible limbs, how can he be with Christ who is not with the Spouse of Christ and in his Church. Or, how does he assume to himself the charge of ruling or governing the Church who has spoiled and wronged the Church.⁵⁸
(12)

Thus it is an adulterous union for a Christian to be joined to a schismatic group and to be baptized by schismatics.

And now also when we had met together, bishops as well as of the Province of Africa, as of Numidia, to the number of seventy-one, we established this same by our judgment deciding that there is one Baptism which is appointed by the Catholic Church; and that by this those are not rebaptized, but baptized by us who at any time come from the adulterous and unsanctified water, to be washed and sanctified by the truth of the saving water.⁵⁹ (1)

In an allusion to the "Canticles of Canticles," the Bishop of Carthage repeats the figure of the Church as Spouse of Christ and fountain of living water:

The sacrament of unity which we see expressed also in the Canticles, in the Person of Christ, who says, 'a garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a fountain sealed, a well of living water, a garden with the fruit of apples.' But if His Church is a garden enclosed and a fountain sealed, how can he who is not in the Church enter into the same garden or drink at the same fountain....Therefore, dearest brother, having explored, and seen the truth; it is observed and held by us, that all who are converted from any heresy whatever to the Church must be baptized by the only and lawful baptism of the Church, with the exception of those who had previously been baptized by the Church, and so passed over to the heretics.⁶⁰ (11 and 15)

The Church as Noe's Ark and

Bishop as Pilot

Joining the figures of the ark of Noe and saving waters in a commentary upon the power of Baptizing as residing in those lawfully joined to their Bishop and the Church, in the letter to

Pospay referred to earlier, St. Cyprian wrote:

In how short and spiritual a summary has he (I Peter 3), 20-21) set forth the sacrament of unity. For as, in the Baptism of the world in which its ancient antiquity was purged away, he who was not in the Ark of Noe could not be saved by water, so neither can he appear saved by Baptism who has not been baptized in the Church which is established in the unity of the Lord according to the sacrament of the one Ark.⁶¹
(11)

If one removes himself from the ark of salvation, he cannot be saved; the waters of the "Baptism" of heretics are filled with destruction and adulterous contagion:

But if, not even the Baptism of public confession and blood can profit a heretic to salvation, because there is no salvation outside of the Church, how much less shall it be of advantage to him, if in a hiding place and a cave of robbers, stained with the contagion of adulterous waters, he has not only not put off his old sins but rather heaped up still newer and greater ones.⁶² (21)

Moreover, the Bishops stand as the Pilot of the ark, and so if anyone wishes shipwreck to the Church of Christ, he attacks the agent of unity, the one upon whom God has conferred the task of guiding the ark of salvation. To attempt to introduce another pilot or a substitute obviously causes chaos and is harmful to the Church as a whole and causes disintegration.

But he who is the adversary of Christ, and the foe of his Church, for this purpose persecutes with his malice the ruler of the Church, that when the pilot is removed, he may rage more atrociously, and more violently with a view to the Church's dispersion.⁶³
(6)

THE SACRED ACTION OF THE CHURCH RESERVED TO THE CHURCH

Since what a thing is determines what can be done by this thing or person it is apparent that what a Father of the Church saw as constituting the nature of the Church orientated his understanding and explanation of sacramental living. Much reference has already been made to his clear and consistent teaching regarding the act of Baptizing. The emphasis upon the necessary agency of those only who have been legitimately entrusted with the power, e.g., the Bishop or those named by him, was an opinion shared by Latin Church Fathers until Saint Augustine's De Baptismo. Tertullian, although faithful in this tradition, is quite explicit about the power of lay Christians to baptize. For, as Tertullian reasoned, "what is equally reserved can be equally given.... Baptism which is equally a divine institution can be administered by all."⁶¹ The usual minister of Baptism in the early Church, however, was the Bishop. Presbyters and deacons had the right to baptize only with the permission of the Bishop. St. Cyprian developed the principle further by applying it to conferring of confirmation. This ministration of the sacrament belonged to the Bishop, since it was so integrally involved with Baptism, how could anyone reason that a heretical presbyter or layman could administer Baptism, if he could not complete this action by laying hands upon the baptized and call down the Holy Spirit.

Wherefore in the name of the same Christ are not hands laid upon the baptized persons among them for the reception of the Holy Spirit? Why does not the same majesty of the same name avail in the imposition of hands, which they contend, availed in the sanctification of baptism. For if any one born out of the Church can become God's temple, why cannot the Holy Spirit also be poured out upon the Temple?so that one baptized without may begin indeed to put on Christ, but not to be able to receive the Holy Spirit, as if Christ could either be put on without the Spirit or the Spirit be separated from the Church... For water alone is not able to cleanse away sins, and to sanctify a man, unless he also have the Holy Spirit....or else there is no baptism where the Holy Spirit is not, because there cannot be Baptism without the Spirit.⁶⁵ (5)

There are not degrees of participation in the Sacrament of Orders essentially, but only by delegation from him who is the Sacerdos Magnus and has by office the power to complete the Baptismal action by conferring the sacrament of Confirmation. In connection with the administration of Baptism and Confirmation, it must be remembered that St. Cyprian taught that infants were to be baptized, and represented this view as that of the African Bishop united in Synod:

And therefore, dearest brother, this was our opinion in council, that by us no one ought to be hindered from Baptism, and from the Grace of God who is merciful, and kind and loving to all. Which, since it is to be observed and maintained in respect to all, we think is to be even more observed in respect to infants and newly-born persons, who on this account deserve more from our help, and from divine mercy, that immediately on the very beginning of their birth, lamenting and weeping, they do nothing else but entreat.⁶⁶

In this view he differs from Tertullian who contended that the Faith of the Catechumen must be tested, and this was impossible for infants.⁶⁷ Cyprian's insistence upon the adherence to scriptural tradition upon

this point as well as his position against that of the erroneous decision of the local Bishop is not a surprise because of the consistency of these positions with the doctrine already presented in this thesis. Even his difference with Tertullian is not altogether surprising since they differ on other fundamental principles, e.g., Tertullian's acceptance of the Montanist notion of the "Scriptural Church," which stands in opposition to the Church of the Bishops.⁶⁸

As also would be expected, the Eucharistic action was seen by St. Cyprian as the causing sign of unity in the Church. In the letter which he directed to Caecilius with the determined intention of rebuking those who changed the Eucharistic rite by excluding the use of wine, and using water only, St. Cyprian has incorporated a traditional, and yet peculiarly Cyprianic, expression of doctrine:

For because Christ bore us all, in that he also bore our sins, we see that in the water is understood the people, but in the wine is showed the blood of Christ. But when the water is mingled in the cup with wine the people are made one with Christ, and the Assembly of believers is associated and conjoined with Him on whom it believes....whence nothing can separate the Church - that is, the people established in the Church, faithfully and firmly persevering in that which they have believed from Christ, in such a way as to prevent their undivided love from always abiding and adhering... in which very sacrament our people are shown to be made one, so that, in like manner as many grains collected and ground, and mixed together into one mass make one bread; so in Christ who is the heavenly bread we may know that there is one body, with which our number is joined and united.⁶⁹

St. Cyprian's use of the Eucharist as the Holy Sign causing the union with Christ's body and his concrete explanation of the revelation is

an important key toward a deeper appreciation of the exactness of his thought. Inchoatively such insights as these are oriented to a fuller, more scientific grappling with an explanation of the facts of revelation. However, St. Cyprian's grapplings were directed outward - to the defense of and protection of the integrity of the assembly of the Faithful united in Christ, somehow vicariously present in him as Bishop. Whether it was lack of necessary leisure, or of speculative wonder, or of inspirational sources or of personal interest that prevented St. Cyprian from theologising more profoundly upon his principal teachings has not been discovered. By reflecting upon the relationships which the Bishop of Carthage saw between what the Church is, and what her proper actions are, the student of Patristics truly can hope to see what St. Cyprian saw so clearly.

The Church as Mother

The figure for the Church most frequently used in The Letters is that of "Mater ecclesia," and this analysis of key texts containing this figure is demanded.⁶⁸ Such analysis is not simply a quantitative report, but rather an attempt to discover with the appearance of this phrase the implications of its use.

In his letter to Pompey quoted above, after writing upon the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation, St. Cyprian expounds his teaching, i.e. that only Baptism of the Church can give the life of sanctification because only she is "Mater ecclesia."

But as the birth of Christians is in Baptism, while the generation and sanctification of Baptism are with the Spouse of the Christ alone, who is able spiritually to conceive and to bear sons to God, where and of whom, and to whom is he born, who is not a son of the Church, so as that he should have God as his Father before he has had the Church for his Mother.⁶⁹

Again it is the agency of the Church which is emphasized, so that without her life-giving generation no one can be joined to Christ. This life-giving power of generation, as already seen in several texts, resides in the Bishops properly, who in turn can communicate this power to non-episcopal Christians.

In a series of letters to Pope Cornelius regarding the status of and treatment to be given to the lapsed, St. Cyprian considered his sacred duty to advise the apostates that they have committed impiety against their Mother.

To whom we have once given this reply, nor shall we cease to command them to lay aside their pernicious dissensions and disputes, and to be aware that it is an impiety to forsake their Mother.⁷⁰

Cyprian to Cornelius, his brother, greetings. I have thought it necessary for you, dearest brother, to write a short letter to the confessors who are there with you, and seduced by the obstinacy and depravity of Novatian and Novatus have departed from the Church; in which letter, I must induce them, for the sake of our mutual affection to return to their Mother, that is to the Catholic Church.⁷¹

As a concluding text, it is well to consider the greetings addressed by St. Cyprian to the martyrs and confessors in Africa in which he congratulates them, and extols them for their constancy in the glorification of the Church by the endurance of continued suffering. Martyrdom is an action which truly manifests the life of the Church.

Cyprian to the martyrs and confessors in Christ Our Lord and in God the Father, everlasting salvation. I gladly rejoice and am thankful most brave and blessed brethren at hearing of your faith and virtue, wherein the Church our Mother glories....O blessed Church of ours which the honor of the divine condescension illuminates, which in our time the blood of martyrs renders glorious.⁷²

Summary

As this study has moved through the Treatises of St. Cyprian into his Letters the content of his teachings has formed a pattern, consistent with Scriptural Revelation as well as the teaching-preaching of the "first years" of the life of the Church. Again, the pattern signifies, with almost disquieting repetition, a simple yet rigorously coherent reasoning structure. For St. Cyprian the first principle from which all other principles and conclusions must be drawn is the fact that there is but one God who redeems men in the one Christ who is now existing in the one Church. The one Church because she is the one Church who has one Faith and one way of initiation. Furthermore, it is the one Church who nourishes and she alone has jurisdiction over her members and is causative of Sacramental living. "Holy mystery of oneness" continues unspoiled in the Church because of the directing power of the College of Bishops who are the "vicars" of Christ, i.e., visible presences of Christ. Practically speaking, therefore, if any Christian would want to be certain of his unity with Christ, he should be certain of his unity with the legitimate Bishop. If he is not in union with his Bishop how can he be then in union with Christ whose vicars the Bishops are.

It is undoubted that the persecutions of the Christians by the Romans were causal in the formation of and the mode of expression chosen for the teaching of St. Cyprian. It is apparent also that St. Cyprian was a "man of his times," involved, dedicated, resolute; his aim, the communication of life to and the building up of the Church of God "unto eternal life." The Triune God is the Father while the Church is ever "mother" in the theology of the Holy Bishop of Carthage. There is a necessary correlation for the Christian because without the Church as mother, God will not be "our Father". The Church, therefore, is a life-giving instrument to the children of God.

The traditional figure of Church as Spouse reveals that there is but one Spouse of Christ who is also virgin and is to remain virgin, not seeking union with any other. St. Cyprian, facing the spreading of schism and the defection of Christians cried out against this "adultery." Moreover no schismatical group can claim to be the Spouse of Christ because it did not arise from union with Christ, but rather from disunion. Those schismatics who persisted in their disunity attempted to rend the "seamless garment" of Christ, however this is an impossible task, because the unity of the Church with Christ is eternal, based as it is in the Incarnation. Thus, they who maliciously attempt to divide are to die ultimately. Only the Christians who are within the House of God will live unto eternal life. The sign of this future glory is the food of salvation, Christ Himself who in his Incarnation is the Kingdom of God. Anyone

who maliciously separated himself from the food of salvation consequently cannot be saved. Again the impact and urgency created by schism and apostasy caused the strong, emphatic outcry of the vicar of Christ.

The consistency of his reasoning from his primary principle as well as his sacred duty to defend the unity of the Church seemed to form part of the rationale from which St. Cyprian decided to deny the power of baptizing validly to any Apostate or Schismatic. It seems probable, too, that since St. Cyprian does not elaborate distinctions between "orders and jurisdiction," that perhaps he did not see two powers, but one. Whatever the real explanation here, it can be said reasonably that St. Cyprian made a decision of practical wisdom in the area of discipline: To preserve order, those baptized by schismatics would have to be re-baptized by those who rightfully represent Christ. There was need of protecting the truth, i.e., there is but one Church of Christ. Initiation into that Church should come by one who is officially a member. Schismatics are not officially members. Therefore they should not baptize. Therefore "re-baptism" is in order as a disciplinary measure. St. Cyprian, as already shown, went farther than this; he denied the power to Schismatics so that he was not demanding re-baptism but baptism. This error in St. Cyprian's judgment is to be pointed out and rejected, but yet seen as a common error of the Churchmen in North Africa at this period.

With the exception of this error and the avoidance of the "Papacy question," the overwhelming propriety of the texts studied present a traditional, concrete expression of the Church as the people of God joined in the one Ark, the only, who is the only Spouse of Christ, and yet is virgin - mother. The signs of this unitary life are the Sacraments, the one Body of Christ, the Eucharist, and the Bishop who is Christ's vicar.

CHAPTER THREE

SAINT AMBROSE AND THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

Part One: General Introduction

As the transition from the mentality of St. Cyprian to that of St. Ambrose must be made in this chapter, it seems proper to assert initially the necessity for a readjustment of familiar thought categories. The realization and exposition of the figures and the nature of the Church as found in St. Cyprian's writings will be continued in great measure in St. Ambrose, but also there is evident a transformation of and deeper insights into the signification of the traditional figures. Moreover, and of real importance, is the textual evidence verifying a development of the Pauline "body doctrine." There was little textual evidence from which to draw a "Cyprianic theology of the Body," but much is present in St. Ambrose. It is justified, too, to call attention to the plain facts that modern ecclesiological thought categories have not been biblically oriented as were the thought patterns of these Fathers; in fact, it was the expressed consensus of opinion among representatives of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Evangelical Free Churches in England that "the modern use of the words 'Church' and 'Churches' to mean

the different denominations or communions into which Christendom is now divided corresponds to nothing in the Bible. The New Testament Church did not consist of a number of separated bodies comparable to our 'Churches,' but was one single communion.¹

While on one hand it should be clear to Roman Catholics that there is only half-truth in this position, however, on the other hand it is significant that these respected clergymen recognize the confusion which surrounds modern understanding of this divine reality,² the Church, and are anxious to reorient and revise their own teachings by basing them on the thought categories of Holy Scripture. By this is meant that whether men recognize it or not, the reality of the Roman Catholic Church as the Church of the New Testament is a fact not requiring unanimous consensus. Then too, for the Anglicans, the Fathers of the Church and the early Councils provide a traditional and vital source for true doctrine.

Thus when attempting to understand any of the Fathers of the Church, serious effort must be made "to put on their mentality" or to readjust thought categories so that their true position will be grasped. Therefore, when studying St. Ambrose, reference must be made to his profound biblical orientation to both Old and New Testaments, his familiarity with the other Fathers of the Church, both Greek and Latin, his formation by and dependancy upon the speculative thought of Origen, as well as his use of the allegorical method of exegesis developed by the Alexandrine school under Clement and Origen's direction.

It is crucial to remember, too, that St. Ambrose was primarily a Bishop and a Pastor, charged with the vigorous flock of Milan from 374 A.D. to 397 A.D., a time in the history of the Roman Empire when the smoldering issues of Church and State were inflamed and the "bold, effective, and transparently honest"³ leadership of St. Ambrose was in

devoted and continual service of the Church of Christ. In general, the evaluation given by Largent of the emphasis in and literary characteristics of St. Ambrose's teachings seems representative of the opinions of the critics:

La tournure d'esprit d'Ambroise est toute Romaine; les questions morales et pratiques occupent de préférence l'évêque de Milan... Il suffit d'ordinaire à Ambrose de développer l'argument scripturaire et traditionnel.⁴

As mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis, St. Ambrose's works, more numerous than St. Cyprian's, have been grouped by Patristic scholars under four topical headings, which grouping is helpful. The order of study followed in this chapter, however, will be

- (1) a study of enlightening texts from major treatises;
- (2) analysis of certain letters of St. Ambrose in which he elaborates his doctrine of the Church;
- (3) a concentration upon The Commentary on St. Luke, with allusions to some Old Testament exegetical texts.

Before beginning the synthesis of the treatise doctrine, the principle of allegorical exegesis as well as typological interpretation should be recalled. St. Ambrose was not content often with the literal meaning of Scripture only; rather, he distinguished a threefold meaning in the Scriptural texts - "a literal or natural meaning, a moral meaning, and a mystical or spiritual meaning."⁵ He endeavored in his exegesis to distinguish these three senses of Scripture, faithful to the tradition of Philo, Origen, and Basil.

Typological interpretation also was operative in the exegesis of St. Ambrose as well as in his sacramental theology. By typological interpretation is understood "the theological analogy between the great moments of Sacred History."⁶ Actually, the study of the similitudes between the Old Testament and the New Testament is the traditional "way," going back to the Apostolic times. Primary typology, i.e., eschatological, applies not only to Christ but also to the Church, and her sacramental life. A prime treatise in which St. Ambrose uses typological approach is his De Mysteriis.⁷

Part Two: The Treatises

Of the thirteen extant treatises of St. Ambrose (combining both the doctrinal and moral categories) seven have provided textual evidence for exposition. These include the De Officiis, De Spiritu Sancto, De Virginibus, De Mysteriis, De Paenitentia, De Fide, and De Excessu Fratres Satyrus.⁸

The One Church

The theme and figure of the Holy Mystery of Oneness which oriented and dominated St. Cyprian's works was expressed also by St. Ambrose. The most profound expression of this mystery in St. Ambrose is in his exposition and development of the "Body Doctrine." In fact, it seems evident that the grasp of this doctrine gave the dimension and fundamental deepening to the thought and expression of the Bishop of Milan on the nature of the Church. Consistently the same themes and figures discovered in St. Cyprian occur in the works of St. Ambrose, but differently. These themes and figures were viewed in relation to

the whole revelation as found in the Body Doctrine.

In the treatise, De Officiis, St. Ambrose exhorted his ministers on their duties as the clergy. In Book Three of this work, he stressed the dependancy of the members upon one another because of the existence of the Church as one united Body:

We are born in such a way that limb combines with limb, and one works with the other, and all assist each other in mutual service. But if one fails in its duty, the rest are hindered. If, for instance, the hand tears out the eye, has it not hindered the use of its work?...But how much worse is it for the whole man to be drawn aside from its duty than for one of the members only! If the whole body is injured in one member, so also is the whole Community of the human race disturbed in one man. The nature of mankind is injured as also is the society of the holy Church, which rises into one united body, bound together in oneness of faith and love.⁹

Thus it is seen that St. Ambrose was keenly aware of the vital linking of all Christians in common unity in Christ by faith and love.

The calling and building up of the Church is in a special sense due to the operation of the Holy Spirit:

And not only in this place, but also elsewhere in the same book, the apostle Peter declared that the Church was built by the Holy Spirit...in which is to be considered that as Christ is the cornerstone who joined together both peoples into one, so too, the Holy Spirit made no distinction between the hearts of each people but united them.¹⁰

Actually it is the work of renewal by the Holy Spirit which transforms us from the state of rejection to the state of union, and vivifies us in being "the heirs of Christ, and joint-heirs with the angels."¹¹

Later in this same work St. Ambrose saw the Church as saying in the words of Canticle of Canticles:

In which is signified the appearance of Holy Church who says in the Song of Songs: 'I am black and comely O Daughters of Jerusalem; black through sin, comely through Grace; black by natural condition, comely through redemption, or certainly black with the dust of her labor so she is black while fighting is comely when she is crowned with the ornaments of Victory.¹²

Therefore, as the final line indicates, St. Ambrose saw the Church as yet laboring for her crown and ornaments which will be given her finally on the day of judgment. She is redeemed and yet being redeemed.

The unity of the Church is caused by the unity of the Trinity in its operations. Although each of the Persons acts personally, the action is unified. Having quoted I Corinthians 7, 8 and Acts 20, 8, St. Ambrose concluded:

There is, then, unity of authority, unity of appointment and unity of giving. For if you separate appointment and power, what cause was there (for maintaining) that those whom Christ appointed as Apostles, God the Father appointed, and the Holy Spirit appointed.¹³

The Novatian heresy which had its inception during the lifetime of St. Cyprian and Pope Cornelius, and against which heresy these great Pontiffs bent their united energies, reared its ugly head during the rule of St. Ambrose at Milan. In his work De Paenitentia, St. Ambrose refutes the errors of the Novatians, and in terms which are clearly reminiscent of St. Cyprian, Tertullian, and Pope Cornelius, in their firm, clear, and yet fatherly appeals to Schismatics:

For they alone wish to destroy the grace of Christ who rend assunder the members of the Church for which the Lord Jesus suffered, and the Holy Spirit was given us...Return then to the Church, those of you who have wickedly separated yourselves. For He promises forgiveness to all those who have been converted.¹⁴

St. Ambrose says, too, that membership in Christ was open to saint and to sinner, to some who were lowliest in rank, others of noblest position.

In the figure of the sinner, Mary, anointing the feet of Jesus, the holy Bishop of Milan interpreted the cleansing and sanctifying of the lowliest members:

Mary herself pours ointment on the feet of Jesus. Perchance for this reason on His feet, because one of the lowliest has been snatched from death, for we all are the Body of Christ, but others perchance are the more honorable members.¹⁵

One of the most poignant references to the Body Doctrine and the "holy sign of unity" may be read in Book One of St. Ambrose's manuscript, De Excessu Fratris Satyru, wherein is contained the substance of his first funeral oration on the burial of his brother. As, St. Ambrose related the story of his brother's conversion due to having possessed "in a napkin" the consecrated host and been sensibly aware of the protection of the "Heavenly Mystery," he stated that Satyrus first inquired of a schismatic Bishop, one Lucifer of Cagliari in Sardinia, who had withdrawn from communion with Rome:

For at that time Lucifer had withdrawn from our communion, and although he had been in exile from the Faith and had left inheritors of his own Faith, yet my brother did not think that there could be true Faith in schism. For though schismatics kept the Faith towards God, yet they kept it not towards the Church of God, certain of whose limbs they suffered as it were to be divided, and her members to be torn. For since Christ the Lord suffered for the Church and the Church in the Body of Christ, it does not seem that faith in Christ is shown by those by whom His passion is made of no effect and His Body divided.¹⁶

In this way, St. Ambrose showed that it was clear to his brother, as it should be clear to all, that to keep Faith and union with God, Faith

and union must be kept with the one, only Church which is His One Body transformed and living by the merits of His passion. To attempt to divide this unique Body of Christ is to attempt the impossible, actually, and results in the destruction of him who attempts the division.

The political life of the Roman Empire in which St. Ambrose was highly involved presented complicated problems. Their resolution necessitated clarification of the relationship between the Church and the state. In the section of this chapter devoted to the Letters of St. Ambrose, crucial clarifying conclusions will be analyzed. Actually, the most enlightening evidence is found in the Letters and in the Expositio on the Gospel of St. Luke, the latter to be discussed later also. However, in the treatises De Spiritu Sancto and De Fide, two texts are selected which reiterate the principle of the primacy of Peter. They show also why the Church is the holy mystery of oneness: In the De Spiritu Sancto St. Ambrose wrote

Nor was Paul inferior to Peter, though the latter was the foundation of the Church, and the former a wise builder, knowing how to make firm the footsteps of the nations who believed.¹⁷

While he exhorts in a similar vein in the De Fide:

To the same Apostle again when on a former occasion he said: 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God,' He made answer 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.' Could He not then strengthen the Faith of the man to whom acting upon His own authority, He gave the Kingdom, whom He called the Rock, thereby declaring him to be the foundation of the Church?¹⁸

The thorny question of Ambrose's nature teaching on the "primacy question" will be discussed later in this chapter. These texts are cited simply to substantiate and complete this presentation of the traditional and orthodox conception of St. Ambrose on the "holy mystery of oneness."

The Church: As Virgin, Spouse and Mother

The consistency of the image-theme of the Church as Virgin, Spouse and Mother throughout patristic thought is thought-provoking, and moreover, has caused the writing of major works on this theme.¹⁹ Saint Ambrose was no exception to this seeming rule, for he saw in the Church the virginal spouse of Christ, fruitful in her maternity. As a logical counterpart to this doctrine, Saint Ambrose beheld in Mary and the Church, parallel-"types." Thus, meditative reflection upon who Mary is, and comparative contrast with whom or what the Church is opened to the Bishop of Milan avenues to these authentic symbols.

In the treatise concerning virgins, the following text is found which includes in synthetic summary several pertinent elements of Saint Ambrose's teaching on this point:

So Holy Church ignorant of wedlock but fertile in bearing, is in chastity a Virgin, yet a mother in offspring. She, a virgin bears us her children not by a human father, but by the Spirit. She bears us not with pain, but with the rejoicing of angels. She, a virgin, feeds us not with the milk of the body, but with that of the Apostle wherewith he fed the tender age of the people who were still children. For what bride has more children than Holy Church, who is a virgin in her Sacraments and a Mother to her people, whose fertility even holy Scripture attests saying: 'for many more

are the children of the desolate than of her that hath a husband.' She has not a husband but she has a bridegroom, inasmuch as she, whether as the Church amongst nations, or as the soul in individuals, without any loss of modesty, she weds the Word of God as her eternal spouse, free from all injury, full of reason.²⁰

The espousal of the Church to Christ the Bridegroom as causative of her abundant yet virginal motherhood are facts of Christianity which permeated and transformed the orientations of such theologians as Saint Ambrose. Christ Jesus stands as the source of life to the children of the Church, His Bride. She is His only bride, and thus, to live from the Church's life is to live of, and from, and by Christ. Moreover, the dedication of the Church to her Bridegroom precludes her espousal to any other husband. The possibility of a linking between this revealed fact and Saint Ambrose's "political principles" emerges, which will be discussed later. For if the Church is betrothed to Christ only, she cannot be "husbanded" to any other power nor subject to any other power, even the illustrious Roman Emperor.

As St. Ambrose stressed in his treatise On the Christian

Faith:

Christ alone is the Bridegroom to whom the Church, His Bride, comes from the nations and gives herself in wedlock, aforetime poor and starving but now rich with Christ's harvest; gathering in the hidden bosom of her mind handfuls of the rich crop and gleanings of the Word, that she may nourish with fresh food her who is worn out, bereaved by the death of her son, and starving, even the Mother of the dead people, - leaving not the widow and destitute, whilst she seeks new children (72)...who indeed but Christ would dare to claim the Church as His Bride whom he alone and none other hath called from Lebanon... for Christ alone walks in the souls and makes His path in the minds of His saints which, as upon bases of gold and foundations of precious stones, the heavenly word has left his footprints impressed. (74)²¹

In the conclusion of Saint Ambrose, it can be seen that the bride and Bridegroom are in a relationship of fullness and type because Christ joins to Himself the Church in the mystery of the Incarnation.

Clearly we see, then, that both the man and the type point to the mystery of the Incarnation. (75)²²

Therefore, the cause of the Church's virginal yet maternal existence is the Incarnate Person of her Spouse, Jesus Christ.

The Church is the Kingdom

The theme so formative of the texture of Saint Matthew's Gospel, that of the Kingdom of God, should be expected in the writings of Saint Ambrose. Moreover, since he himself was so often and deeply involved in the relations between the Kingdom of Christ and the Roman Empire, there is a double basis for the assumption. Specific textual evidence is found in the same treatise quoted above wherein Saint Ambrose's position is unmistakable: the kingdom of Christ is the long awaited kingdom of the Father, entrance into which is due to the communication of the life of the Risen Christ. There can be only one kingdom as there is only one Godhead; this kingdom is the everlasting kingdom since by Christ's triumph over death we are not now destined to everlasting death.

Now learn that the kingdom of the Son is the very same kingdom of the Father...So far, indeed, is it one kingdom that the reward is one, the inheritor is one and the same, and so also the merit, and He who promises (the reward) (97)...What, indeed, do we understand by being in the kingdom of God, if not having escaped eternal death? But they who have escaped eternal death see the Son of Man coming into His Kingdom. (99)²³

Since Saint Ambrose's theology was "Trinity-centered," he realized that to say the Kingdom of the Son is to say the Kingdom of the Father because Christ and His Father are one. Moreover, where the Father and the Son reside, e.g., in the kingdom, there resides the Holy Spirit who dwells also with the Father and the Son:

See then, how there is fellowship through the Father and of the Son, and yet not a different fellowship, but one and the same. 'And that our fellowship be with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.' Observe, further, that Scripture speaks of our having one fellowship not only 'of' the Father and the Son, but also of the Holy Spirit. 'The Grace of Our Lord, Jesus Christ,' saith the Apostle 'and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.'²⁴

It is the Father who receives what the Son delivers, and it is the Kingdom which is delivered up. Who or what constitutes the Kingdom?

Saint Ambrose's statement is conclusive and self-explanatory:

Let the Son then deliver up His kingdom to the Father. The kingdom which He delivers up is not lost to Christ, but grows. We are the Kingdom, for it was said to us: 'The Kingdom of God is within you.' And we are the kingdom, first, of Christ, then of the Father; as it was written: 'No man cometh to the Father but by me.' When I am on the way, I am Christ's; when I have passed through I am the Father's; but, everywhere through Christ, and everywhere under Him.²⁵

Holy Actions of the Holy People of the Holy Kingdom

Thus, these people, this Kingdom is a Holy Thing in its very being, its new life in Jesus Christ. We are "made whole" by the action of Christ and nourished by that "living cup" of Eucharist. Therefore, the acts of a Christian should shine forth resplendent with the glory of the Grace-life. It is Baptismal action which regenerates the

Christian into a holy life. But, Baptismal action is threefold:

Therefore read the three witnesses in Baptism - the water, the blood, and the Spirit are one, for if you take away one of these, the Sacrament of Baptism does not exist. For what is water without the Cross of Christ? A common without any Sacramental effect. Nor again is there the Sacrament of Regeneration without water: 'for except a man be born again of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.' Now even the Catechumen believes in the Cross of the Lord Jesus, wherewith he, too, is signed; but unless he be baptized in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, he cannot receive remission of sins nor gain the gift of spiritual grace.²⁶

It is Christ Himself who ministers in the Sacraments, and thus the human merits of the priest should not be considered. Saint Ambrose is explicit upon this point as he stated positively:

Believe, then, that the Lord Jesus is present at the invocation of the priest, as he said: Where two or three are, there am I also. How much more where the Church is, and where His Mysteries are, does He vouchsafe to impart His presence.²⁷

In the Baptismal mystery, in the Church of Milan, was also found the reception of the "seal of the Spirit," and the confirming gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is accepted now as the general custom of the early Church. This "actio" involved each of the Persons of the Trinity in a relationship based in the distinct Person of Each.

And remember that you received the seal of the Spirit, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel, and strength, the spirit of knowledge and godliness, and the Spirit of holy fear, and preserved what you received. God the Father sealed you, Christ the Lord strengthened you and gave the earnest desire of the Spirit in your heart as you have learned in the lesson of the apostles.²⁸

Evidence for the presence of another practice of the early church's / Liturgy not found today in the liturgy of the West was administration of Penance. A rather enigmatic passage provides textual evidence as proof but raises a question on the relationship between original sin, personal sin, and concupiscence in the Theology of St. Ambrose. In the treatise On the Mysteries he wrote:

Peter was clean, but he must wash his feet for he had sin by succession from the first man when the serpent overthrew him and persuaded him to sin. His feet were therefore washed that hereditary sins might be done away, for our own sins are remitted through Baptism.²⁹

Thus St. Ambrose affirmed the teaching which is accepted as traditional, i.e., that personal sins "are removed" by Baptism as is original sin, but that the effects of original sin, i.e., "hereditary sins" are remitted by Penance. In an earlier treatise Concerning Repentance³⁰ St. Ambrose consistently and with gentle forcefulness repeated the perennial witness of the Church:

So then that which he says in this Epistle to the Hebrews that it is impossible for those who have fallen to be renewed unto repentance crucifying again the Son of God and putting Him to open shame, must be considered as having reference to Baptism, wherein we crucify the Son of God in ourselves, that the world may be by Him crucified for us, who triumph as it were, when we take to ourselves the likeness of His death, who put to open shame upon His cross principalities and powers, and triumphed over them, that in the likeness of His death we, too, might triumph over the principalities whose yoke we throw off. But Christ was crucified once, and died to sin once, and so there is but one, not several baptisms.³¹

We are baptized once because in that action we are redeemed by Christ and the act of redemption was accomplished in Christ dying but once,

and rising in the state of glory. It is not to be surmised, however, that St. Ambrose did not realize another aspect of the Christian truth, that redemption continues even unto now. On the contrary, St. Ambrose recognized all too profoundly, that the Church was in the stage of striving toward total fulfillment, that the Kingdom has come in Christ, but was not yet totally established and will not be until the Lord's final coming. The Christian is in the state of reintegration, and Penance is the means of reordering those aspects of human nature wounded by the transmission of Original Sin. In an eloquent address to Christ against the rigors and unChristian position of the Novatians, St. Ambrose pleaded:

Thy Church does not excuse herself from thy supper, Novatian makes excuse. Thy family says not, 'I am whole I need not a physician,' but it says, 'Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me and I shall be saved.' The likeness of the Church is that woman who went behind and touched the hem of Thy garment, saying within herself 'If I but touch His garment, I shall be whole.' So the Church confesses her wounds, but desires to be healed.³²

Partaking in the Banquet of the Lord is the Christian action, wherein Christ feeds His Church with these holy signs. In the living of the sacramental actions we "have obtained everything":

Christ then feeds His Church with these sacraments by means of which the substance of the soul is strengthened, and seeing the continual process of her grace, He rightly says to her:....A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed (55)...So then, having obtained everything let us know that we are born again, but let us not say, how are we born again... if, then, the Holy Spirit coming down upon the Virgin wrought the conception and effected the work of generation, surely we must not doubt, but that coming down upon the Font, or upon those who receive Baptism, He effects the reality of the new birth.³³

The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Peter

In the treatise On the Christian Faith, St. Ambrose clearly proclaimed his acceptance of Peter as having been given by Christ's own authority the kingdom of the Church. Commenting upon the text from the Gospel of St. Matthew, St. Ambrose affirmed that Peter was made the foundation of the Church by the divine power of Christ. The entire passage is quoted below because of its concrete expression and logical coherence within St. Ambrose's theology.

Moreover, that thou mayest know that it is after His Manhood that he entreats, and in virtue of this Godhead that he commands, it is written for Thee in the Gospel that He said to Peter: 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith not fail.' To the same apostle, again, when in a former occasion he said, 'Thou art Christ, the son of the living God,' he made answer: 'Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build my Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.' Could He not then strengthen the faith of the man to whom, acting on his own authority, He gave the keys, whom He called the Rock, thereby declaring him to be the foundation of the Church?³⁴

Moreover it is because Peter was given the kingdom and the power to remit all sins, those who would deny this power to the successor of St. Peter have no fellowship with Christ and His people in the kingdom:

What fellowship, then, have they with Thee who receive not the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, saying that they ought not to remit sins? And this confession is indeed rightly made by them, for they have not the succession of Peter, who hold not the chair of Peter, which they rend by wicked schism; and this, too, they do, wickedly denying that sins can be forgiven even in the Church whereas it was said to Peter: 'I will give unto you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven...'³⁵

Those heretics and schismatics who maliciously persisted in their errors, "acting out of the Spirit of Satan" will not be forgiven by

the Church since they have set themselves against the Church, against all in the Kingdom, and aim willingly to destroy the grace of Christ. Their sin constitutes an act of selfishness against all, and a rejection of Christ's own.

For they alone wish to destroy the grace of Christ who rend asunder the members of the Church for which the Lord Jesus suffered, and the Holy Spirit was given us.³⁶

The Body Doctrine

In his treatise On the Duties of the Clergy St. Ambrose manifested clearly and beautifully how permeated his whole theology is by his understanding of our unity in the Body of Christ. Our unity with Christ in His body is caused by the hypostatic union. The existence which we have in Christ's body is like unto the dependent existence of the members of our individual bodies upon one another.

If the whole body is injured in one member, so also is the whole community of the human race disturbed in one man. The nature of mankind is injured, as also, is the society of the Holy Church which rises one united body, bound together in oneness of faith and love.³⁷

Earlier in this treatise the holy Bishop of Milan expounded on the diversity in unity of the various members in the Body of Christ, commenting obviously on the Pauline doctrine in I Corinthians. This aspect of the teaching is developed also in the Treatise On the Holy Spirit, but now in the context of Trinitarian analysis. Using I Corinthians 12, 28 as textual evidence, St. Ambrose explained that the diversity of gifts and offices in the Church is directly caused not simply by Christ, but by each of the Divine Persons acting:

Let us now learn more expressly what we have touched upon above, that the Holy Spirit entrusts the same office as the Father and the Son, and appoints the same persons, since St. Paul says: 'take heed to yourselves and to all the flock in that which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to rule the Church of God. There is then unity of authority, unity of appointment, unity of giving...so that the same will and the same power does not arise from the affection of the will, but inheres in the substance of the Trinity.'³⁸

For a Christian to attempt to take advantage of another Christian's need for one's own advancement is to attempt "to spoil him whom Christ has put on." The gravity of sin is because it is a crime against the Body of Christ - the whole Body:

So we see how grave a matter it is to deprive another, with whom we ought rather to suffer, of anything, or to act unfairly or injuriously towards one to whom we ought to give a just share in our services.³⁹

When finally the Commentary on the Gospel of St. Luke is analyzed in the final pages of this chapter, the profound development of what is here treated only in promise will be shown in fact.

Part Three: The Letters

The vitality and totality of St. Ambrose's involvement in the life of the Church both in the East and the West was best attested to by his letters. Although he governed the Church of Milan for less than a quarter of a century (December 1, 373 - April 4, 397), the effects of his governing reached far into succeeding centuries and far beyond the territorial limits of his jurisdiction. St. Ambrose acted as metropolitan throughout all of northern Italy, "but the limits of his episcopal see never correspond to those of his activity," for actually

St. Ambrose was a "sort of super-metropolitan of Italo-Illyrian Bishoprics."⁴⁰

An examination of The Letters reveals that these can be - and have been - grouped according to the persons to whom they were addressed: (1) Emperors, (2) Bishops, (3) priests, (4) his sister, Marcellina, and (5) laymen.⁴¹ St. Ambrose's variety and extent of correspondence was very largely due to his position as metropolitan. It is of note, too, that as Bishop of Milan, St. Ambrose was the spiritual head of the residence-city of the Roman Emperor, and during the time of his episcopal ministry, St. Ambrose increased the importance and influence of his See far beyond earlier expectations. In the eastern part of the Roman Empire the long reign of Theodosius (370 A.D. - 375 A.D.) almost coincides with that of St. Ambrose; while in the western part of the Roman Empire during this same period several emperors and two usurpers had ascended to power. These historical events urged St. Ambrose immediately to become involved in political issues by office and temperament.⁴²

The theological content of his Letters is not lessened, however, because of his political activities; rather these activities entered causally into the formulating of his thought.

Of major concern is the prominence of the body doctrine in the letters. Throughout the letters of St. Ambrose it is quickly seen that the "Body Doctrine of Paul" permeated his "ecclesiastical orientation." With reverent ease and familiarity he enunciated and clarified for his diverse correspondents the implications of this sublime revelation. Obviously too, he anticipated a "prepared audience," not one in need of elementary introduction to the message of Paul. Because

of the pervading, unifying presence of this doctrine in the Letters, those themes which would remain intelligible when isolated in The Treatises, are so joined to this doctrine here that it is not wise to attempt dissection.

Of telling significance on this point is the letter to the layman, Irenaeus; the date of composition is unknown. From the salutation of the letter it is learned that Irenaeus had requested an exposition of St. Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians in order to clarify possible ambiguities. Following the structure of the Epistle, St. Ambrose asserts that we are joined in partnership to the flesh of Christ's body, and thus share in His life as communicated because of the Passion and Resurrection. As a necessary consequence to this partnership is our assurance of our own ascension since Christ is ascended. By His ministers here on earth Christ continues the establishing and fulfilling of all things and is bringing the entire world to its completion, so that all grow up unto Christ and rise up to Him as one body.

Then he (St. Paul) adds that not only has a way to Paradise been made anew for us through Christ, but also there has been won for us the honor of a throne in heaven through our partnership with the flesh of Christ's Body. You need no longer doubt the possibility of your ascension, knowing that your partnership with the flesh of Christ continues in the Kingdom of Heaven, knowing that through His blood reconciliation was made for all things, those on earth and in heaven [for He came down in order to fulfill all things], and by His Apostles, Prophets, and Priests establishing the whole world and drawing together the Gentiles. Now the purpose of our hope is the love of Him, that we may grow up to Him in all things, because He is the head of all things, and by the building up of love we all rise up to Him into one body, according to the measure of our work. 43

Our being joined to Christ is not our doing primarily but is primarily the action of the provident will of God who "from the beginning...predestined in Him through Jesus Christ to be the adopted sons of God, and He has ratified this predestination..."⁴⁴ How is this mystery ratified? By the joining of two in one flesh "which was foretold from the beginning, that 'a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh,' for it is a mystery of Christ and of the Church."⁴⁵

In one of his letters to his sister, Marcellina, in December, 388 A.D., St. Ambrose reiterates the "Body" doctrine within an explanation of man's relationship to God as a released debtor to a beneficent creditor; a debtor become creditor because of the mercy of Him who properly is creditor. St. Ambrose has demanded that as we are forgiven by God so, too, we must extend forgiveness to others:

We are all the one body of Christ, whose head is God, whose members we are; some perhaps are the eyes, like the prophets; others teeth like the apostles who passed the food of the Gospel teaching into our hearts... His hands are those who are seen carrying out good works. Those who bestow the strength of nourishment upon the poor are His belly. Some are His feet, and would that I were worthy to be His heel. He pours water on the feet of Christ who forgives the lowly their sins, and, in setting free the common man, he bathes the feet of Christ.⁴⁶

The holy mystery of oneness in diversity is authentically expressed in the letter quoted above which reveals the traditional and orthodox understanding of St. Ambrose of this great mystery. It becomes more and more evident that although not highly original and speculative, the teaching of St. Ambrose is much more profound and complete than that of St. Cyprian in whose writings not one selection such as the

above was found. However the thought of St. Cyprian is recalled as we read in St. Ambrose's letter to Irenaeus: "How can there be discord where there is one calling, one body, one spirit."⁴⁷ St. Cyprian directed this reproof to schismatics and heretics; St. Ambrose against the disunity caused by the separation of Jews from the body of the Redeemer.

In a letter to one of his priests of Milan, Horntianus, St. Ambrose presented his reflections upon the real connections between the Church and her Old Testament prefigurements, stressing the fact that the Church is one, though consisting of the fair and strong souls as well as weak souls. The Church obviously, then, is a being,⁴⁸ changing reality, not only generating the holy who swiftly move toward conformity "without stumbling", but also as mothering those who fall but also rise to reconversion. As St. Ambrose developed his explanation he moved back and forth, from Old Testament types to New Testament fulfillment, constructing as he moves an explanation of the life-giving redeeming force of these Old Testament actions. For example, he saw in the birth of Benjamin, Israel's giving birth to Paul "the last in the order of mystery."

He concluded that Israel "died and was buried there [Ephrata], that we dying and being buried with Christ, may rise in the Church. Hence, according to another interpretation Ephrata means "enriched" or "filled with fruits!"⁴⁹

In his letter to the Church at Vercelli in 396 A.D., St. Ambrose found it necessary to exhort the congregation to live lives befitting Christ; moreover, he reminded them of basic truths regarding

who Christ is, and then who the Church is in terms of a virginity maternally fruitful.

We ought to realize what praise of it [virginity] the Prophet, or rather Christ in the Prophet, has expressed in a short verse: 'My sister, my spouse, is a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up.' Christ says this to the Church which He wishes to be a virgin, without spot, without wrinkle... And no one can doubt that the Church is a virgin, which also in Corinthians, the Apostle Paul espoused to present as a chaste virgin to Christ... In the later Epistle [i.e., I Corinthians 7, 32-34] he becomes a godparent for Christ, because he is able to attest the virginity of the Church by the purity of its people.⁵⁰

Virginity is demanded of the Church, i.e., no espousal to any human spouse, no union, no substitution of anyone human as lord and spouse, but Christ Jesus Himself. If the Church is faithful to Christ she will bring forth a pure people because of Christ's life-giving action.

A most provocative description of the Church as chaste virgin-spouse is found in one of St. Ambrose's letters to Sabinus, a disciple who requested a further clarification of the Hexameron, and particularly the meaning of Paradise:

Moreover, Solomon, by inspiration, clearly declared that Paradise is within man. And because he expresses mysteries of the soul and the word, or of Christ and the Church, he says of the virgin soul, or of the Church which he desired to present a chaste virgin to Christ: 'My sister, my spouse, is a garden enclosed, a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up.' The word 'Paradise' in Greek is rendered garden in Latin. Susanna was in a paradise [orchard], as we read also in Latin. And Adam was in a paradise, which is also our reading... As here the virgin there, too, is the chaste wife. The chosen virgin holds her seal and enclosures, both in a paradise, so that in the shady bowers of virtues she may be shielded from the fevers of the body, and the passions of the flesh.⁵¹

St. Ambrose's use of allegorical interpretation is strikingly evident here, but also can be found his realization of the related, effective continuity of salvation history. Moreover his personal respect for the state of consecrated virginity within the Church was an ever-present influence in his exegesis and his exhortations.⁵²

Since the Church united by the holy mystery of oneness to Christ is His virginal, fruitful spouse, what actions befit her and her offspring? What are the holy actions of these holy people of the Holy God?

Christian people now have no need of the light pain of circumcision; they bear with them the death of the Lord, in their every act they engrave on their forehead contempt of death, knowing that without the cross of the Lord they cannot be saved. Who could use a needle in battle while armed with stronger weapons?⁵³

The Christian people are a redeemed people; a people restored by the cross of Christ. They are a "marked" people, i.e., dedicated, set aside unto the kingdom of God. It is the Christian "whole man" who is redeemed by the baptism of "spirit and water." The Christian, in a sense, is "two men in one, and of them it is said: 'even though our outward man is decaying by reason of his desires for wrong doing, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.'"⁵⁴ How is this man who is somehow "twofold" to live? Does this inner man effect a new life in the outward man?

Therefore, just as there are two men, so is there a twofold life; one of the inward, the other of the outward man. Indeed many actions of the inward man reach to the outward one, in the same way as the purity of the inward man passes over into bodily chastity. One who is free from the adultery of the heart is free from bodily adultery...so there

is a circumcision of the inward man, for the circumcised man has put away, like foreskin, the allurements of all his flesh, that he may be in the spirit not in the flesh, and by the spirit may mortify the deeds of his body.⁵⁵

Thus it is, according to St. Ambrose, following in the tradition of St. Paul, that the holy action of baptism generates the life of the spirit within man, and it further ordains man in his spirit to a transformation of his outward expressions or actions.

The sacrament of Baptism is linked to the sacrament of Penance in the holy life of the Church, as a recleansing is related to the first cleansing:

And how could he wash his conscience if he had not received the water of Christ. But the Church has this water and the Church has tears, the waters of Baptism, the tears of Penance.⁵⁶

Why can the Church weep tears of Penance? Because she believes in Christ, due to her Baptism. Without the water of Baptism, faith isn't possible, nor are the tears of repentance.

Faith which weeps over former sins bemoans of sinning anew. Therefore, Simon the Pharisee who had no water, had of course no tears. How could he have tears if he did not do penance, for not believing in Christ, he had no tears. If he had had them, he would have bathed his eyes so that he could see Christ, whom he did not see although he was at table with Him. If he had seen Him, surely he would never have doubted His power.⁵⁷

Thus baptismal action renewed and revitalized by Penance enables the Christian to gaze on Christ, and since having been restored by His power, the faithful Christian should never doubt the healing powers of Christ, and of His Church.

The synagogue has no kiss, but the Church has, for she waited and loved and said: Let Him kiss me with the kiss of His mouth. She wished with His kiss to quench gradually the burning of the longing for the Lord's coming; she wished to satisfy her thirst with this boon.⁵⁸

In another letter to Bishop Constantius written in 379 A.D. the holy Bishop describes the Church, as well as the role of the Bishop in the Church using the traditional "ark of salvation" theme.

You have entered upon the office of Bishop, and sitting at the helm of the Church, you are piloting the ship in the face of waves. Take firm hold of the rudder of faith so that the heavy storms of this world cannot disturb you... Therefore, not without cause does the Church of the Lord built upon the rock of the Apostles remain unmoved amid the many storms of this world...⁵⁹

The Church in her Bishops endures the struggles of this world because she "drinks from Christ and partakes of the Spirit of God."⁶⁰ In a letter to the newly ordained Bishop Vigilus, St. Ambrose expounded further in the duties of the Bishop to the Body of Christ:

Realize first of all, that you have been entrusted with the Church of the Lord, and therefore you must prevent any scandal from intruding and causing her body to become common by contamination with heathens. For this reason scripture says to you 'Do not marry any Chanaanit woman but go into Mesopotamia, for she waters the minds of the faithful with the great streams of wisdom and justice, pouring on them grace of holy baptism typified by the Red Sea and washing away sin.'⁶¹

In the letter of St. Ambrose to Irenaeus, quoted earlier, which is undated, the Bishop of Milan reminded this worthy layman that by the life of grace we are "brought to life in Christ" and, because we are the possession of God by divine action we "sit in heaven in the Lord Jesus Himself."⁶² Again it can be seen that the

realization of the real union of Christians in Christ made intelligible the doctrine of Heaven, so that St. Ambrose concluded with the clarity of faith echoing the scriptural tradition, "...but in the flesh of Christ, through fellowship in the same nature, the flesh of the whole human race has been honored."⁶³ Moreover, we are so honored "not of ourselves, but in Christ who alone sits at the right hand of God, the Son of Man..."⁶⁴ Consequently, the redemption has effected a removal of all dissensions and barriers which had prevented union of heaven and earth, and opened to all "an approach to the Father in one Spirit. Now, then, can there be discord where there is one calling, one body, one spirit?"⁶⁵ Continuing in the same letter there is a traditional development of the "body doctrine" of the Epistle to the Ephesians.

In this I think we are to understand not only the union in faith and in the Spirit of holy men, but of all believers, of all the heavenly spiritual hosts and powers, that by a certain concord of powers and ministers the one body of all the spirits of an intelligent nature may cling to Christ their head, being so united to the framework of the building that there seems to be no trace even of the point where the several members are joined together.⁶⁶

Again in the text quoted above there is no indication of an original explanation of the union of Christians in Christ; rather there is the continuation of the Pauline doctrine; however with manifest conclusiveness and personal, vivid realization on St. Ambrose's part. While it is true that nowhere in the Letters was there found, nor probably could there be found any theological explanation in terms of quasi-physical union: as discussed by St. Thomas and is probed today, yet

it seems evident that St. Ambrose did understand St. Paul as announcing a real union, a real identity of the Christian with Christ. Moreover, it is evident that St. Ambrose realized that the Christian was intrinsically reordered by the redemptive acts of Christ through the Church, and lived in some mysterious way by the life of Christ communicated through the Church.

Because the Christian lives now by a new principle of life, every Christian is at all times within the Church, and not above it, nor outside it unless he is dead by schism or heresy. Even one so mighty politically as the Emperor of Rome cannot claim exemption from this order. In the famous letter to the Emperor Valentinian II in February, 386, St. Ambrose rhetorically asked: "O most clement Emperor, when have you heard the laity judge a bishop in a matter of faith... in a matter, I say, of faith, Bishops usually judge Christian Emperors; not emperors, bishops."⁶⁷ St. Ambrose chides the Emperor, because Valentinian attempted to sit in judgment on Church matters but was not himself yet baptized. What was at stake in this dispute was the demand of Auxentius, the Arian Bishop of Milan, that the imperial law drafted by Justinian and himself regarding "liberty of public worship" be respected; Valentinian had approved this decree as an edict, although its formulator was Auxentius himself. The masses of the people of Milan refused to obey the edict, and Ambrose continued to retain control of all the Churches. The government ordered him to appear at a privy council or leave Milan. Ambrose in union with a council of Italian Bishops refused both alternatives holding that the civil government could not rule in matters of faith and ecclesiastical discipline. Moreover St.

Ambrose insisted in this same letter that any judgment to be passed should be passed by the congregation in the Basilica after hearing both sides of the case argued. "Let them (the judges named by Auxentius) listen to the people, not so that each may sit in judgment, but that each have proof of his disposition and choose whom he will follow."⁶⁸

As would be expected there is a variety of opinion by authors upon the position of Ambrose against the Milanese Arians in general, especially the Empress Justina and Bishop Auxentius.⁶⁹ However, only is it relevant to this thesis that St. Ambrose saw the end of the life of the Church and its authorities as transcending time and political society in matters of its proper jurisdiction, "faith and ecclesiastical discipline."

The cause and sign of the communication of eternal life of Christ is the Eucharistic Body of the Lord.

On receiving these [the redemptive mysteries] you will marvel that man has been given so transcendent a gift, and you will know that even the manna which we so wonder at...did not have such grace or power to work our salvation...but one who tastes this sacrament will never die.⁷⁰

The pattern of thought revealed in this study of the Letters coincides with and substantiates that revealed in the analysis of the Treatises. Authentic, orthodox Christian realism permeated the theology of St. Ambrose on the nature of the Church. The scriptural themes stressing the holy mystery of unity - especially the Pauline kerygma - are the "matter" of St. Ambrose's expressions. Over and over again whether in speculative assertion or in case of a practical judgment it is clear that the holy bishop returns to the data: it is because we are one in Christ, joined by Him to His flesh that our life is trans-

formed, our powers elevated, our actions become outward expressions of the present Christian.

Part Four: Exegetical Writings

Quantitatively the greater part of St. Ambrose's writings were his exegetical works. As mentioned earlier, these include the Hexaemeron which was composed from nine homilies, in connection with St. Basil's work of the same name, as well as fifteen shorter commentaries on various Old Testament books.⁷¹ Actually, however, the most extensive of the scriptural works is the Commentary on St. Luke's Gospel. It is from this commentary that we have drawn the major portion of our conclusions for this section. However, the Old Testament Commentaries do contain "ecclesiastical doctrine" and therefore will substantiate and deepen the "Lukan" Doctrine.

That work, which is fully titled the Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam is judged to be a "mixed work" consisting both of written treatises and sermons preached in Church.⁷² St. Ambrose himself "gathered the fragments" into one work; the date of this final composing has been established as between 388 or 389 A.D. and Easter, 392.⁷³ Regarding possible sources there is wide agreement among Patristic scholars that in this work as in his other exegetical works he drew heavily from Origen. In fact, it seems more than a matter of coincidence that the only New Testament exposition of St. Ambrose is indebted to the Homilies on St. Luke by Origen.

The pattern of themes by now so evidently continues in the Expositio. Since the Treatises and the Letters provide ample evidence that our union with God is our vital union with Christ in His Body, it should be expected that such an orientation dominates and directs

this work. Thus the "holy mystery of oneness" was taught within a commentary on the baptism scene described by Luke, 3, 21, ff. St. Ambrose parallels the union between Adam and Eve with the union of Christ and His members, rooting the relationship in Eve having come forth from Adam and being bound to Adam as two in one flesh. Christ is the new Adam, and is the source of the life of the Church. This union is so intimate that we are flesh of His flesh, and bone of His bone - in fact, without this union there is no life and no existence.

*Haec saeculi vite costa Christi est, haec costa secundi est Adam, primus enim Adam in animam viventem novissimus Adam in spiritum vivificantem, novissimus Adam Christus est, costa Christi vita, ecclesiae est. Nos ergo membra sumus corporis eius, de carne eius et de ossibus eius.*⁷⁴

Continuing in his commentary on the passage, St. Ambrose developed his exposition, stating that the holy union causes the Church to be a fruitful mother, the mystic Eve.

As Eve was the fruitful mother of the human race, so the Church is the mother of all who live by Christ:

*Haec est Eva, mater omnium viventium ad enim intellegas viventium cum mortuis quaeris, intellegis eos mortuos esse qui sine Christo sunt, qui participes vitae non sunt, hoc est enim Christi non esse participes, quia Christus est vita. Mater ergo viventium ecclesia est, quam aedificavit deus ipso summo angulari lapide Christo Iesu, in quo omnis structura conjaginata crescit in templum.*⁷⁵

The concluding remark above shows the unity of St. Ambrose's doctrine on the Church, since he moved from the fact that the Church is alive unto Christ, the Mother of a living progeny, constructed of living stones built upon Christ.

As the Church is the new Eve, Christ is the new Adam, born of woman, the helpmate of Adam and so truly of Christ, not because

Christ "needed" help, but because we seek and desire to come to (pervenire) the grave of Christ through the Church. Therefore, as Eve was created to be the mother of a living race, so too, the Church exists to give the grace, i.e., the life of Christ to her children:

Veniat ergo Deus, aedificat mulierem, illam quidem adiutricem Adae, hanc vero Christi, non quia Christus adiumentum requirit, sed quia nos quaerimus et desideramus ad Christi gratiam per ecclesiam pervenire. Et nunc aedificatur et nunc formatur et nunc mulier figuratur et nunc creatur...ecce mulier omnium mater, ecce domus spiritalis, ecce civitas, quae vivit in aeternum, quia mori nescit.⁷⁶

Because Christians are so joined to Christ as to form one body in some mysterious way, they will participate in His glorious mode of reigning. The Church, which is now Christ's Kingdom on earth, the earthly city, the earthly Jerusalem, is to be Christ's kingdom in eternity, holy, immaculate, and glorious. Joining the two figures of "City of God" and "body of Christ", St. Ambrose insisted that as Christ has ascended so, too, will the Church, His bodily kingdom ascend. This truth the holy Bishop claimed on the authority of Paul.

Ipsa est enim civitas Jerusalem quae hanc videtur in terris, sed rapietur super Heliam - Helias enim unus fuit - transferetur super Enoch, cuius mors non invenitur; ille enim raptus est, ne malitia mutaret cor eius, haec autem diligitur a Christo quasi gloriosa, sancta, immaculata sine ruga. Et quanta melius totum corpus assumitur quam adsumptus est! Haec enim est spes ecclesiae, rapietur profecto, adsumetur, transferetur ad caelum. Ecce curru ignis raptus Helias est rapitur ecclesia non mihi credis? Crede vel Paulo, in quo Christus loquutus est.⁷⁷

Earlier in this second book of the Exposition, when commenting upon the Lukan account of Christ's presentation in the temple (2,22 ff.)

St. Ambrose described the Church as a holy people of God born of a virgin Mother, the Church.

Sed ille sanctus, per quem figuram futuri mysterii pia legis divinae praescriptu signabant, eo quod solus sanctae ecclesiae virginis ad generandos populos dei immaculatae fecundatatis aperiret genitale secretum.⁷⁸

How is the virgin, the Church, made to be maternally fruitful? In his commentary on the Annunciation Scene (Luke 1, 28 ff.) St. Ambrose explained that Mary is here a type of the Church, which also is immaculate though a true spouse. We Christians are conceived in the Church by the power of the Holy Spirit. We are born of her without violating her virginal nature. All members of the Church are joined by grace in this single unity which is the Church, which joining is completed by the action of a temporal priesthood.

Bene desponsata, sed virgo, quia est ecclesiae typus, quae est immaculata, sed nupta. Concepit nos virgo de spiritu, parit nos virgo sine gemitu. Et ideo fortasse sancta Maria alia nupta, ab alio repleta, quia et singulae ecclesiae spiritu quidem replentur et gratia, iunguntur tamen ad temporalis speciem sacerdotes.⁷⁹

In Book VIII of the Expositio St. Ambrose used Luke 16: 16 ff. wherein Christ answered the objections of the Pharisees, and propounds the law governing marriage. According to his manner of exegesis however, St. Ambrose saw in the text an allegorical application of Christ and the Church.

Et ideo mystice Salomon dixit a deo praeparabitur viro uxor. Vir, Christus, uxor ecclesia est, caritate uxor, integritate virgo...adulteri sunt omnes qui adulterare cupiunt fidei et sapientiae veritatem.⁸⁰

The Christian is prepared for and raised to his union with Christ by the action of the Spirit of God. To pin oneself to another sect or

group of philosophers, or to renounce Christianity for luxuries, is adultery and a sin against who is our true spouse.

The spouse of Christ is holy, made of members. "Ex duobus igitur constat ecclesia, ut aut peccare nescias aut peccare desistas paenitentia enim delictum abolet, sapientia cauet, hoc in mysterio."⁸¹ Earlier, in the First Book of the Expositio St. Ambrose, commenting upon Luke 1:5 ff. emphatically stated that the Church is a holy assembly but made holy by Christ's Church. Without this gift of God it is impossible to be raised from sin.⁸²

The Church is one though made up of many, those called from the East and the West to be fed the food of life by Christ unto the kingdom of heaven. When commenting upon Luke, 9, 16 ff. St. Ambrose concluded: "non piget ergo aestimare quod quattuor milia ex quattuor mundi collecta partibus, in quibus ecclesia figuratur, majoris gratiae cibum sumant iuxta quod Scriptum est. Quia venient ab oriente et occidente et a septentrione et austro et recumbent cum Abraham et Isaac et Jacob in regno coelorum."⁸³ To the same point expounding on the third day of creation, St. Ambrose compared the congregating together "of the waters from every valley" to the congregating of the people of God from every valley to form a spiritual congregation, one people. "Out of heretics and gentiles has the Church become filled."⁸⁴

It is Christ Jesus who causes the union of these varieties of peoples to become one people since he joins them to Himself and to one another. Christ can do this because He Himself is all and in all.

Quis tantus esset dux, qui posset masculum et feminam, Iudaeum et Graecum, barbarum et Scytham, serum et liberum uno regere ductu nisi solus qui est omnia et in omnibus Christus?⁸⁵

Moreover, this unity is so intimate and personal that no member suffers alone; consistent with the Pauline Theology which formed Luke's thought is the emphasis upon vicarious suffering in Luke 7, 14 ff. St. Ambrose explained the raising of the son of the widow of Naim in terms of the doctrine of vicarious suffering:

Nos ergo viscera ecclesiae sumus, quoniam membra sumus corporis eius, de carne eius et de ossibus eius. Doleat igitur pia mater adsistat et turba, non solum turba, sed etiam multa compatiatur bonae parenti.⁸⁶

At an early point in the Expositio a climactic teaching is significant in his explanations. One of the passages from St. Ambrose's works is his explanation of the place of Peter in the Church. Within his commentary on St. Luke 9, 22 ff. St. Ambrose wrote:

Petra est Christus - bibebant enim de Spirituali sequenti petri, petra autem erat Christus - etiam discipulo suo huius vocabuli gratiam non negavit, ut et ipse sit Petrus, quod de petra habeat soliditatem constantiae, fidei firmitatem...si petri fueris, in ecclesia eris, quia ecclesia supra petram est...⁸⁷

Almost at the end of his commentary St. Ambrose describes St. Peter in his position as vicar as an enduring sign of the love of Christ for the Church.

Is enim interrogatur, de quo dubitatur, sed dominus non dubitat, qui interrogabit non ut disceret, set ut deceret quem elevandus in caelum amoris sui nobis velut vicarium relinquebat.⁸⁸

Summary

The above text also provides a fitting climax to this presentation of the teachings of St. Ambrose, on the nature of the "ecclesia."

The holy and heroic Bishop of Milan in his exegetical works continued to present the Church as he had done in his Treatises and Letters. The pattern of themes discovered and organized in the three sections of this chapter is an evident one. St. Ambrose's doctrine is clearly scriptural especially Pauline in orientation. It is also evident that his thought has been influenced and formed by the insight of Origen - but to its perfection, not its privation. The Church of Christ is His body extended in time in which Christ rules as head to return all to the Father in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gives life and grace to the body of Christ in time and place as He gave life to the body of Christ in Mary. Mary, as maternal spouse and virgin-mother is a figure of the Church who is Christ's virgin spouse, fruitful in her progeny yet eternal in her virginity. In the communications of life to His members Christ is causing the recreation of all, and as Eve was the mother of all creation, the Church, "the mystic" Eve is the mother of the new creation. The new creation is the new city of God, the new Jerusalem, to which flock those called by Christ regardless of sex, nation, or condition. The baptismal action of the Church joins her members to Christ baptized by John, the great precursor. The people of God are fed by Christ and of Christ, and so constitute even here, heaven and the glory of God.

St. Ambrose at no point in the Letters or the Treatises departed from his teaching so concrete, so vibrant with the announcement of the Person, Christ. The temptation to be more abstract could have overcome the holy Bishop of Milan more probably in these works than in the exegetical, but he does not succumb. In fact in the Letters it was noted that sacramental actions were to be holy because they were

the actions of a holy ecclesia. Sin on the contrary, is an adulterous action, a defilement of a holy person who lives by the life of a holy spouse who is ever faithful to her. The Bishop, and in a special way the Bishop of Rome, is charged with the cause of religion; therefore even the Emperor must be obedient to the Bishop in ecclesiastical matters. As a Bishop, St. Ambrose knew well the hazards which impeded the Christian's way, but there is ever the dominating tone of the hope which is in Christ. His exhortations to living the Christian faith are based in the fact of our vital union in Christ. To Mary we can look as exemplar; she who in herself parallels the nature of the Church. As true signs, does Mary point to the Church and orient its intelligibility, and the Church, in turn, reveals to her children the meaning of Mary.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

In chapter two and three each Bishop has been studied primarily for what he himself said on the nature of the Church. In this final chapter in terms of a "vis-a-vis" presentation, several general conclusions will be formulated. These general conclusions also are relevant to a deeper understanding of the historical development of that study now catalogued as "ecclesiology," as it developed during the early centuries of the life of the Church. One who studies the writings of these Fathers of the Church must not seek answers in these works to questions not asked by these Bishops themselves. Furthermore no answer to "new" questions should be contrived or pieced together from the textual quotations.

It has been emphasized throughout the analyses of the writings of St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose that traditional scriptural themes and figures recur frequently and familiarly. The holy Bishops then are in accord with the style and content of various early Church Fathers and writers as is clear from their dependance upon their "masters." Thus it can be said that St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose both were effected by Tradition as it developed and conversely contributed to the development of Tradition. However, it must be noted here that no direct, causal linkage of the thought and writings of St. Cyprian upon that of St. Ambrose has been discovered.

Since both Saints Cyprian and Ambrose were dedicated Fathers of flocks primarily, their commitment to the practical dimensions of

Church life and teachings is clearly manifest. Such commitment in no way necessitates that a love of speculative theology be forsaken, but it is true that these two Bishops were not involved to any profound degree in the speculative theologizing of their respective eras. On this point is great dependency of St. Cyprian upon the thought categories, formulation of questions, and literary expressions of Tertullian. Since Tertullian was not one of the more profound and original early speculative thinkers, such characteristics should not be anticipated in his devoted disciple. While it is true that St. Ambrose, on the other hand, drew from several sources of the Alexandrine School, none the less, he, too, remained primarily a man of practical and administrative genius, transmitting the techniques of the great Alexandrines.

As mentioned before, the Scriptural Orientation of both Pastors is discernible quickly. However, as has been shown also, the exegetical works of St. Ambrose are his lengthiest, while St. Cyprian is credited with none. Thus the scriptural formation of St. Ambrose should be more precise and developed than St. Cyprian because St. Ambrose concentrated more talents and energies upon the data of Revelation and thus in turn his understanding of the nature of the Church and its powers should be more complete and authentic.

Further reflection upon the pastoral concern of both Bishops suggests a partial reason for the concrete, lucid style used by them. Writing for congregations in need of special instruction and exhortation during periods of serious schism and heresy, these Bishops spoke and wrote in a direct manner, filled with the spirit of paternal care for

the good of the families over whom they had been placed. This was their sacred duty for which they were accountable to Jesus Christ, in whose Name they spoke, and whose grace life they communicated to the people of God. The texts selected in both chapters which explained the role of the Pastor, illustrated that Saints Cyprian and Ambrose saw their office as a divine election from which their power and authority flowed. They, in response, labored unceasingly and uncompromisingly for the building up of the Church of Christ Jesus. Thus their writings are filled with terms signifying the reality of Christ in the people of God, and of the people of God in Christ.

The most fundamental datum of revelation for both is the "holy mystery of oneness." In the historical context of St. Cyprian this truth had to be defended against the Novatian schism - no matter what the personal cost to himself, "even unto death." As he exhorted against this heresy his understanding of this mystery matured. The qualifying effects of these peculiar historical circumstances did enter into his statement of the question concerning the nature of the Church as well as the conclusion he reached. Since the question was raised in the defense of the established local church community against the attacks of newly formed schismatic churches, the answer was directed to his congregation and to the schismatics, especially the rival "Bishops" in terms of this situation. Writing with vigour and the precision of an informed Christian Faith St. Cyprian focused his theology of the Church on the role of the Bishop. This emphasis upon the necessity

of union with the Bishops for union with Christ is consistent with the witness of St. Irenaeus and earlier Latin writers. Since the Bishop is the "vicar" of Christ, it is necessary to be joined to him to be joined in the "holy mystery of oneness" to Christ. There is but one Church of Christ as there is but one Christ, "one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all." The Pauline fabric of St. Cyprian's teaching is ever apparent. There are frequent allusions to the Pauline Epistles throughout.

It has been shown from the texts of St. Ambrose that he, too, formulated his inquiries amidst the very complex historical milieu in which he was so actively involved. As one of the most important figures in the formation of Christian Europe as well as a key contributor to that complex termed "Christian medieval culture," St. Ambrose reflected, discoursed, and wrote upon the nature of the Church in terms of the insights and problems of the Fourth Century, A.D. The devastating Arian heresy was the target of many learned arguments. The politically influential Arian heretics, such as Empress Justina, were his active enemies anxious to replace him with an Arian Bishop. Thus defense of the role of the Bishop and the nature of the Church were intrinsically and historically linked for St. Ambrose as texts in Chapter three illustrated. From the time of St. Cyprian to that of St. Ambrose the jurisdictional structure of the Church in the West as well as its intellectual life had developed. Thus there is clarity and depth in St. Ambrose's explanation of the position of the Emperor as a Christian dependent upon his Bishop when there was question involving ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Moreover it was also seen that the theology of the

relation of Episcopacy to Papacy was better defined, preserving the primacy of the Bishop of Rome and at the same time defending the authoritative position of each Bishop in his respective diocese. St. Ambrose also insisted upon the wider range of influence of the metropolitan over other dioceses. Neither the relation of the Christian Emperor to his Bishop nor the authority of the metropolitan were faced by St. Cyprian because these problems simply did not exist as yet. In the life time of the Bishop of Carthage Christians were able to secure toleration only at spasmodic intervals, dependent upon the whim and will of the particular Roman Emperor in power.

In both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose the complex figure "virgin, spouse, mother" as predicable of the Church is ever present. As the texts of St. Cyprian have revealed, the Church is simultaneously the only spouse of Christ who must ever remain a virgin, and yet is the only mother of the faithful, exclusively empowered to communicate the life of God Who is Father to all her offspring. The union of the Church with Christ is real and personal, therefore. Furthermore, textual study of St. Cyprian has revealed no demonstrations regarding the nature or kind of the causality involved. These were not questions raised by the Bishop of Carthage. In the writings of St. Ambrose the figure of "virgin, spouse, mother" has a more profound significance because the Bishop of Milan explicitly related Mary and the Church as types. As Mary was the virginal yet maternal spouse of the Holy Spirit, so, too, the Church is the virginal yet fruitful spouse of Christ. The action of the Holy Spirit as cause of the life of the

Church was specifically developed by St. Ambrose; for as the Holy Spirit gave life to the Body of Christ in Mary, so, too, does the Spirit give life to the Body of Christ extended in time and place. The evidence of doctrinal development and synthesizing in St. Ambrose are manifold, as this particular figure shows. St. Ambrose understood these characteristics of the Church of Christ within the framework of the causality of the Redemptive Incarnation. Moreover St. Ambrose's theology is consciously Trinitarian centered, and such perspective enabled the Bishop of Milan to see and express relations amongst parts which St. Cyprian did not express.

The Church understood as the Kingdom of God is in both writers. But, again, there is a higher synthesis and intelligibility in the teachings of St. Ambrose. For example, as shown in chapter three, the doctrine of "Heaven" in St. Ambrose's writings was seen as intrinsically linked to our presence in the risen Christ, and the recreation of all the universe in Christ. Furthermore, the Church as the "mystic Eve" is the mother of this new creation. The causal relationship is thus stressed and concretely expressed.

Both Saints recognized the Church as the new city of God, as the new Jerusalem, the great ark of salvation. In regard to the last mentioned figure, St. Cyprian utilized this truth to formulate his expression denying salvation to those outside of the Church. "Those outside of the Church" are those schismatics and apostates who maliciously left the protecting confines of the great "Ark." What

would have been St. Cyprian's mature teaching regarding the question of the salvation of the non-evangelized has not been discovered nor even conjectured in this study. St. Ambrose continued the use of the figure of the Ark. Moreover both Bishops realized very personally that the Ark with them as pilots continued to face perilous waters. Yet they realized that since they visibly re-presented Christ, he communicated to them the power to guide the Church with certitude to her destiny, if they in turn remained in contact with Him. The theology of the Episcopacy gained concreteness by its relation to the ark-pilot theme as expressed by both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose. However, even in the time of St. Ambrose there does not seem to be well defined distinctions between "jurisdiction" and "orders," although St. Ambrose does not deny to the Arians the power of baptizing.

Frequently in this study the deep personal concern of both Bishops for the sacramental life of their people has been noted. Obviously their position as pastors would demand this concern. However, deeper, more dogmatically oriented reasons have emerged also. Texts have revealed that St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose grasped well the revelation of a new life to be lived by new men. This new life originates in the life-giving waters of Baptism and nourished by "the Bread of Life." St. Cyprian, as was shown, was adamant against even the possibility of valid Baptism by heretics. In this reasoning such a possibility was a contradiction to the unity of the life of the Church: if this individual is not in real union with the Bishop who communicates Christ, there can be no Christ-life in this individual, and consequently

he has no power to transmit to others what he does not possess himself. In both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose clear expression is given to their understanding of the sacraments as the life-giving actions of the holy people of God. However there is a more complete "sacramental theology" in the writings of St. Ambrose than in those of St. Cyprian. As mentioned in chapter three, St. Ambrose's treatise On the Mysteries is an example of an organized presentation of sacramental theology. It has been noted, too, that St. Cyprian emphasized but two holy actions, Baptism and Eucharist. Undoubtedly the historical controversies centering around the schismatic were partially responsible for his limited explanations. The confrontation with heresy has been consistently an effective and qualifying catalytic agent in the development of dogma. Perhaps, too, the unitary perspective towards the sacramental actions, common to the early Church, would have included by implication then, what we now have found necessary to distinguish and explain more fully.

By this point in the conclusion it is apparent that the nature teachings of St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose reflect an authentic realism, based on an orthodox commitment to the truth of Christ. Both St. Cyprian and St. Ambrose emphasized persons and personal relationships. Christianity for them is a faithful commitment to God in Christ by means of the visible structure of the Church. This "visible structure" was not an impersonal, "spiritual" reality; rather, it is the flock of Christ under the visible direction of the Bishop, redeemed and redeeming in Christ. The kingdom has not been totally achieved, but it has

borne its first fruits in Christ Jesus. Their certitude was the certitude of Faith in the Person of Christ Jesus.

A unity and coherence in thought and expression in both Fathers has been discovered and textually verified. The structure of St. Cyprian's thought, less sophisticated and developed than St. Ambrose's, is none the less closely knit and consistent; his conclusions are forceful and convincing. Moreover it is evident that the Bishop of Carthage was a master-teacher, clarifying, structuring, patterning the thought-life of his flock. As the Fathers of their families in their respective dioceses they must proclaim to their congregations the dignity of being Christians and what actions befit the Christian worthy of his calling.

In the writings of St. Ambrose there is consistent emphasis upon the Pauline expression of the "Body doctrine." There is no such emphasis in St. Cyprian, as mentioned earlier, even though he does insist upon the reality and intimacy of the union of Christ with Christians. Forcefully and explicitly St. Ambrose explained in many places the holy Church as "a society which rises into one united body, bound together in faith and love." The calling into being of this body and its building up is due in a special way to the action of the Holy Spirit. It is clearly concluded then that St. Ambrose participated in the fruits of a maturing Theology of the Trinity as well as of the Incarnation and Redemption. Thus it can be said that St. Ambrose saw in a unitary perspective, the mystery of the Church in the mystery of Christ, and the mystery of Christ in the mystery of the

Trinity. Consequently it may be said, also, that the Bishop of Milan had reached more sublime heights - or profound depths of the mystery of the Church - than did the Bishop of Carthage.

Both Saints are part of the living tradition of the early Church, incorporating into their thought the teachings of their revered "masters," and transmitting these traditions to the ages which followed. Scientific theology was not the "way" of St. Cyprian; original speculative theology was not a contribution of St. Ambrose. The great Christian metaphysicians who have written since the time of St. Ambrose have enriched and expanded the intellectual life of the Church which began in the works of the Fathers. However the "personalist approach" so sought after today in theological endeavor can be influenced and enhanced by frequent returns to the writings of the Fathers. A re-ordering of perspective can be attained by the careful, objective attempt "to see what they say" as the Church of Christ: the people of God united in one Christ and thus also to the Father and the Spirit. Our life is a communication from Christ, and makes us new men who are to live here according to a mode of behavior which will be fitting to Christ. Perils and hazards are ever around us, but our hope and peace is our union with the visible Church, especially with the Bishops.

NOTES

Chapter One

- ¹Cf. Berthold Altaner, Patrology. (Freiburg: Herder and Herder, 1960); Johannes Quasten, Patrology, 2 Vols., (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1950).
- ²Cochrane, Charles, Christianity and Classical Culture. (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 231.
- ³The first Vita of St. Cyprian is credited to his deacon, Pontius, which actually is a panegyric and highly laudatory. (Early Christian Biographies, ed. Roy Deferrari, New York: [Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1952], pp. 5-24). St. Cyprian describes his conversion in his treatise, To Donatus, the earliest of his works (ca. 246 A.D.), written to a Christian friend describing the transforming effects of divine grace in his conversion. (St. Cyprian's Treatises, The Fathers of the Church, Roy J. Deferrari, ed., [New York: The Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958], pp. 7-16.) Also J.H. Fichter, Cyprian, Defender of the Faith, (St. Louis, 1942). Also Edward W. Benson, Cyprian: His Life - His Times, (London: Macmillan and Company, 1897).
- ⁴Paulinus, The Life of St. Ambrose, (Early Christian Biographies, op. cit., pp. 33-66;) also Frederick Thomas Dudden, The Life and Times of St. Ambrose (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1935).
- ⁵P. Godet, "Saint Cyprian," Dictionnaire De Theologie Catholique, Vol. 3, (15 Vols.; Paris: Letouzey et Ane, 1908), Col. 2459-2470.
- ⁶Note on allegorical interpretation: it was due to the influence of Clement and Origen that the Alexandrine School interpreted the Scripture according to the allegorical method of exegesis which had been used by the Greek philosophers. The Alexandrine school was convinced that to interpret scripture "literally" or in a historico-grammatical way as was done at Antioch would yield interpretations contrary to Faith and unworthy of God; hence, they sought the deeper "mysterious" meaning. Not only St. Ambrose but St. Augustine and many medieval Theologians used the "allegorical method" of exegesis.
- ⁷Cf. St. Augustine, De Baptismo. It is in his anti-Donatist writings that St. Augustine presents his doctrine on the Church.

- ⁸ The Fathers of the Church: St. Cyprian Treatises, ed. Roy J. Deferrari. (New York: The Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), Vol. 36. For all treatise texts except the De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate and the De lapsis, this is the edition used.
- ⁹ The edition from which the letters will be quoted is the English translation of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. 5: (Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Novatian), ed. Roberts and Donaldson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911). The Latin text of the Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum: St. Thasci Caecili Cypriani, Opera Omnia, Vol. III part II has been used for comparisons with Latin texts and an immediate source for numbering. However the groupings indicated are taken from the introductory remarks of R.J. Deferrari in his translation of The Treatises (p. xi), (see footnote 8.)
- ¹⁰ The editions providing texts from the Old Testament are the following:
- (1) The Fathers of the Church: St. Ambrose, Hexameron, Paradise, and Cain and Abel, tr. John J. Savage, (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1961).
 - (2) De Helia et Ieiunio, tr. Sister M. Joseph Aloysius Buck, B.V.M., (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 1929).
 - (3) The edition providing New Testament texts is Corpus Christianorum: Sancti Ambrosii Mediolanensis Opera, Part IV, Expositio Evangelii Secundum Lucam et Fragmenta in Esalam (Turnholt: Brepols), 1957.
- ¹¹ The edition used for texts of St. Ambrose Dogmatic and Ascetical works is the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (Second Series), St. Ambrose: Select Works and Letters, (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1896), Vol. X.
- ¹² The edition which provides the texts of St. Ambrose's letters is The Fathers of the Church: St. Ambrose Letters, tr. Sister Mary Melchior Beyenka, O.P. (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1954).
- ¹³ Cf. Maurice Bevenot, S.J., St. Cyprian, The Unity of the Catholic Church, Ancient Christian Writers, (Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1957), Vol. 25. The Critical notes of M. Bevenot to the Introduction of his careful translation and annotations contain a summary of the controversy and recent literature on the "Primacy question" (pp. 73-77).

NOTES

Chapter Two

- ¹Godet, P. "Saint Cyprien," Dictionnaire De Théologie Catholique, Vol. 3, loc. cit., (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1908), Col. 2459-2470.
- ²St. Cyprian, The Unity of the Catholic Church, tr. Maurice Bevenot, S.J., op. cit. It is this translation from which all texts of this treatise will be quoted. See also introduction, pp. 5-11.
- ³The establishment of the critical text for The Unity of the Catholic Church has been a matter of scholarly effort and dispute for several generations, but it is now the considered opinion of many textual critics that the text translated by M. Bevenot is authentic. Cf. the summary listings of studies of Cyprianic texts in J. Quasten, Patrology, Vol. 2, pp. 344-346; pp. 352-353.
- ⁴It has been held in the past that the treatise was written before the revolt of Novatian in Rome, and was extended to denounce the schism of Felicissimus as a rupture in the life of the Church in Carthage. Cf. J. Chapman, "Les interpolations dans le traité de S. Cyprien sur l'unité de l'Eglise" in Revue Benedictine (1902), pp. 240-54. For defense of the opposite view, i.e., that Novatian had already made attempts to secure recognition in Carthage when St. Cyprian wrote his treatise and delivered it there, see M. Bevenot, op. cit., pp. 5-6; also his notes showing textual evidence in Letters 44, 54, 46, 47, 49, 51, 52, 53, and 54.
- ⁵Saint Cyprian, The Lapsed. Ancient Christian Writers, Vol. 25, ed. M. Bevenot loc. cit., pp. 13-42. For further text listings, see B. Altaner, op. cit., pp. 198-199; also J. Quasten, op. cit., p. 349.
- ⁶Early in the third century, A.D., the Roman Emperor Severus had decreed the prohibition of Baptism and his persecution of Christians reached Africa. His prohibition, however, was neither lasting nor long, but did succeed in disorganizing the catechetical school of Alexandria which was becoming celebrated. Its head was St. Clement and it numbered among its best known pupils, Origen. A more severe and disastrous persecution began under

the Emperor Decius, who succeeded Philip the Arab in 249 A.D. Since Decius was determined to restore the pagan customs, his edict really aimed at the destruction of Christianity. It compelled all the inhabitants of the Empire who were suspected of being Christians to make an act of adherence to pagan worship. A certificate called a "libellus" was given as proof of adherence. If the defendant refused he was killed. However, a "via media" was introduced by the magistrate; by offering a bribe to these judges the Christians could obtain a certificate without sacrificing. Thus, this group began to be called "libellatici," while those who actually succumbed and offered sacrifice were "sacrificati." When the persecution subsided these "libellatici" and "sacrificati" raised serious and delicate problems for the Episcopal Synod at Carthage as well as elsewhere. Paradoxically, many Confessors of the faith supported the "libellati's" restoration without severe penance. St. Cyprian and the Bishops of Africa stood firm in their demands that penance, as designated by the Bishops, be fulfilled. A schism led by Novatus resulted. There was an opposite schism fomenting in Rome under the priest Novatian, who refused pardon to the penitents. These two extremes, Novatus and Novatian, laxity and rigorism, stood against Pope Cornelius at Rome and Cyprian at Carthage. It is due to these events that St. Cyprian composed his two treatises, De Lapsis and De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate. [Of. Jacques Zeiller, Christian Beginnings, tr. F.J. Hepburne Scott (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1960), pp. 95-103.]

⁷ St. Cyprian, De Lapsis, op. cit., c. 29-32, pp. 36-39.

⁸ Ibid., c. 10-12: "There is, alas, no sound or serious excuse for so great a crime. A man has only to leave the country and sacrifice his property. Since man is born to die, who is there who must not eventually leave his country and give up his inheritance? It is Christ who must not be left; it is giving up one's salvation and one's eternal home that must be feared..." pp. 20-23.

⁹ St. Cyprian, The Unity of the Catholic Church, c. 4, pp. 46-47. It is remarked by M. Bevenot in his introductory notes that St. Cyprian extended this treatise as defense of the papacy as understood then, not as we understand it, "but as a defense of the rightful Bishop there." (Notes, p. 6).

¹⁰ Ephesians, 4:1-7. All scriptural references are quoted from the New American Catholic Edition of the Holy Bible, (New York: Benziger Brothers, Inc., 1952).

- ¹¹ St. Cyprian, *De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate*, loc. cit., c. 3, pp. 45-46.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, c. 4, p. 47.
- ¹³ M. Revenot remarked in the notes to chapter 4, p. 105 that the text which begins "Seeing that the blessed Apostle Paul" and the rest of this text (down to the words "perversion of the truth") corresponds to nothing in the first edition, and thus is obviously a later addition. He reasoned that there would be no valid reason for deleting this section and so he concluded that the text is an insertion later to substantiate the position of the Bishop in his diocese.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, c. 5, p. 47.
- ¹⁵ A recent rephrasing and revival of this view of the Episcopal unity and Apostolic succession appeared in *The Ecumenist*, December, 1962 (Vol. 1, No. 2), in an article by Gregory Baum, O.S.B.: "...according to Joseph Kleutgen and Clemens Schrader and Sheeben, total fullness of supreme power exists in a two-fold subject in the body of Bishops united to the Pope alone.... This doctrine shows clearly that the episcopacy belongs to the Divine structure of the Church. Just as the Bishops cannot be without the Pope, who is the head of the College, so the Pope cannot be without the Bishops.... The Bishops of the Catholic Church are heirs of the twelve. A Bishop is in Apostolic succession not because his line of descent goes back to one particular Apostle, but because he is a member of the Episcopal College, which is heir as a body to the Apostolic College. It is the task of the Catholic Church to show that the doctrine of papal supremacy leaves intact the ancient doctrine that the Church is a family of episcopal Churches governed by the College of Bishops...." pp. 22-23.
- ¹⁶ St. Cyprian, *De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate*, 2nd edition, c. 4, pp. 46-47. As can be seen in the text translated by M. Revenot, there are two editions of Chapter 4, both of which are shown in this translation. The notes discussing the validity of both editions can be found on pp. 103-106, Nos. 25-37.

¹⁷Ibid., c. 5, pp. 47-48.

¹⁸Ibid., c. 6, p. 49.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid., c. 23, p. 65.

²¹Joseph Plumps, Mater Ecclesiae: An Inquiry Into the Concept of the Church as Mother in Early Christianity (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1943).

²²Ibid., p. 81.

²³De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 6, pp. 48-49.

²⁴Ibid., c. 5, p. 48. It is of note that Father Sebastian Tromp, S.J., includes this text in his work De Spiritu Sancto Anima Corporis Mystici: Testimonia Selecta e Patribus Latinis (Romae: Gregorianum, 1932), pp. 11-12. However, in his work, Father Tromp is tracing the antiquity of the doctrine that the Holy Spirit is the principle of life to the body of Christ. While we can see the textual evidence, yet there does not appear any developed teaching by St. Cyprian upon the fundamental insight regarding the Pauline Body doctrine.

²⁵St. Cyprian, De Lapsis, tr. M. Bevenot, S.J., op. cit., Vol. 25, c. 9, p. 20.

²⁶Ibid., c. 2, p. 14. This text has been studied also in light of St. Cyprian's teaching on Christian Martyrdom, cf. E. L. Husel, C.M.M., The Concept of Martyrdom of St. Cyprian (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1946).

²⁷St. Cyprian, De Habitu Virginum, tr. Sister Angela Elizabeth Keenan, S.N.D. (The Fathers of the Church, New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), Vol. 38, pp. 31-52.

²⁸Ibid., p. 33.

- 29 Of interest on the patristic use of "Ecclesia sponsa" as correlatively joined with mater and virgo is the article of Sebastian Tromp, S.J., "Ecclesia Sponsa, Virgo, Mater" (Gregorianum, 1937), pp. 3-29.
- 30 De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 6, p. 48.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Cochrane, op. cit., p. 231.
- 33 De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 6, p. 48.
- 34 Ibid., c. 7, pp. 49-50.
- 35 Ibid., c. 8, p. 50.
- 36 Ibid., c. 8, p. 51.
- 37 St. Cyprian, De Dominica Oratione, tr. Raymond J. Deferrari (The Fathers of the Church, New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), Vol. 36, c. 13, p. 138. The purpose, circumstance, and tone of the De Dominica Oratione are contrary opposites to the De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, since the former is concerned with an explanation of the content of the Lord's Prayer and is directed to Catechumens and includes summary explanations of the effects of Baptism and Eucharist. As Mr. Deferrari notes, this treatise is similar to Tertullian's work on prayer (De Oratione, written A.D. 190-200). If this work of Tertullian is compared with Origen's work, De Oratione, the predominance of the practical over the speculative in the thought of Tertullian is very evident, while Origen's treatise is classed as "the oldest scientific discussion of Christian prayer in existence," (J. Quasten, op. cit., p. 66), and reveals the depth and warmth of Origen's religious life.
- 38 Ibid., c. 18, p. 143.
- 39 De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 14, pp. 56-57.
- 40 Ibid., c. 15, p. 58.

- ^{h1} Cf. Early Latin Theology, ed. S.R. Greenslade (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956), Vol. 5, pp. 113-119. In this work the editor showed that the distinction between orders and jurisdiction was not previously delineated by the Fathers of the Latin Church in the third century, A.D. Since St. Cyprian had not concluded to such a distinction, his thought is better understood by modern readers when viewed from the principles from which he did reason.
- ^{h2} De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 17, p. 60.
- ^{h3} Ibid., c. 10, p. 53.
- ^{h4} Cf. Joseph Urtasun, What Is a Bishop, tr. P.J. Hepburne-Scott (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1962), pp. 20-21. The question of whether the Episcopacy was really a sacrament was debated in the Western Church but not in the Eastern Church. St. Jerome and the Roman Ambrosiaster refuted the claims of deacons to superiority over ordinary priests, and thus began a development of the Theology of the Episcopacy. Since St. Cyprian is earlier than Jerome and gives no indication of distinguishing degrees or order from jurisdiction, in all probability, he subscribed to Tertullian's teaching that the Bishop was "summus sacerdos." In Christian antiquity it was he who celebrated the eucharistic sacrifice surrounded by his presbyters. He taught with the authority which comes to him from the Apostles: he imports to his fellow workers the power to baptize, to absolve, to administer the other sacraments.
- ^{h5} De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 11, pp. 53-54.
- ^{h6} It was the position of Tertullian in the De Baptismo that the Baptism by heretics was invalid. For Tertullian as for Cyprian there is but one regeneration or "new birth," that of the Church. (Cf. J. Quasten, op. cit., p. 297.) The African Bishops met for three Synods upon this question (between 255 A.D. and 256). Cyprian was the president of these meetings, all held at Carthage. These synodical decisions were reaffirmations of the decree of the African and Numidian Bishops at the Synod of 200 A.D. (p. 343).
- ^{h7} De Ecclesiae Catholicae Unitate, c. 6, p. 49.

⁴⁸ Cf. D.D. Sullivan, The Life in North Africa, as Revealed in the Works of Saint Cyprian (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University, 1933).

⁴⁹ Cf. A D'Ales, La Théologie de Saint Cyprien (Paris: Beauchesne, 1922). This work is considered the classic evaluation of St. Cyprian's Theology.

⁵⁰ The texts will be quoted from English translation of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. V.: Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Novatian. However since these editors have followed the numbering of The Letters as in Migne while every other source used the Oxford edition numbering, our numbering will follow the Oxford, but indicate parenthetically the Ante-Nicene numbering.

⁵¹ Letter 74, (#73, Ante-Nicene ed.) St. Cyprian is in opposition to the position of Pope Stephen which held that if heretics baptized traditionally there was no need for re-baptism when these converts were being received into the Church. St. Cyprian insists the contrary opposite since the ministers of Baptism were not in union with the Church in their lawful Bishop and thus did not have the power to communicate the Baptism of regeneration.

⁵² Letter 66 (#68, Ante-Nicene ed.). This letter was directed to Bishop Florentius Pupianus who had believed calumniators of St. Cyprian.

⁵³ "et illi sunt ecclesia plebs sacerdoti adunata et pastori suo grex adhaerens. Unde scire debes episcopum in ecclesia esse et ecclesiam in episcopo et si qui cum episcopi non sit in ecclesia non esse..." C.S.E.L., p. 733. "Sacerdos" stood primarily for "Bishop" in the writing of the Fathers of the third and fourth century. "Ministri" included the rest of the clergy. (M. Bevenot, De lapsis, Notes to Chapter 6-7, #20, p. 80) St. Irenaeus also described the Church in like terms.

⁵⁴ Letter 60 (#56, Ante-Nicene ed.). This letter was directed to Pope Cornelius congratulating him and his people on their courageous facing of potential martyrdom, in which courageous example the whole Church is glorified.

- ⁵⁵Letter 68 (#66, Ante-Nicene ed.). St. Cyprian wrote to Pope Stephen in this letter urging that the Bishop of Rome openly excommunicate Marcianus of Arles who had joined himself with Novatian in schism. In the passage quoted, St. Cyprian refers Stephen to the decisions of Cornelius and Lucius before him.
- ⁵⁶Ibid.
- ⁵⁷Letter 33 (#26, Ante-Nicene edition).
- ⁵⁸Letter 52 (#48, Ante-Nicene edition).
- ⁵⁹Letter 73 (#72, Ante-Nicene edition). This letter, composed 256 A.D., was written to Jubasianus and synthesizes St. Cyprian's position regarding the necessity of baptizing heretic-converts. The crux of the argument rests on the premise that heretics not in union with the Church cannot baptize; thus their "converts" have not really been baptized at all. Thus it is not a question of re-baptism but of baptism for the first time.
- ⁶⁰Letter 74 (#73, Ante-Nicene edition). Another significant text is found earlier in this letter, paragraph 6.
- ⁶¹Ibid.
- ⁶²Letter 73 (#72, Ante-Nicene edition).
- ⁶³Letter 59 (#54, Ante-Nicene edition). In 252 A.D. St. Cyprian wrote to Pope Cornelius concerning the heretics Felissinus and Fortunatus and the calumnies and erroneous doctrines which they advanced. This letter is a defense of the authority of the Bishop in his diocese, rather than papal authority.
- ⁶⁴J. Quasten, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 279. Dr. Quasten has incorporated selected texts from Tertullian in his account of the former's treatise, De Baptismo; Tertullian, too, denied the validity of the heretic's baptism.
- ⁶⁵Letter 74 (#73, Ante-Nicene edition).

- ⁶⁶ Letter 64 (#58, Ante-Nicene edition). This letter was written after the treatise De lapsis (251 A.D.) and after Letter 57 (Ante-Nicene edition #53), which letter had been addressed to Pope Cornelius announcing the decision of the African Synod concerning granting peace to those who had apostatized.
- ⁶⁷ Quasten, op. cit., p. 280. Text quoted in full from De Baptismo, c. 18, in which Tertullian stated the opposite view.
- ⁶⁸ Cf. ibid., p. 331. Text of Tertullian's De Pudicitia, 21, 17 is quoted; which text concludes with the statement: "But (it will be) the Church of the Spirit, by means of the spiritual man, not the Church which consists of a number of Bishops."
- ⁶⁹ Letter 63 (Ante-Nicene edition #62, A.D. 253).
- ⁷⁰ Cf. Joseph Flumpe, op. cit. In this study of Dr. Flumpe are listed all of the references to this figure. Only certain texts have been selected for inclusion here.
- ⁷¹ Letter 74 (#73, Ante-Nicene edition).
- ⁷² Letter 44 (#50, Ante-Nicene edition, A.D. 251).
- ⁷³ Letter 47 (#42, Ante-Nicene edition, A.D. 251).
- ⁷⁴ Letter 10 (#13, Ante-Nicene edition, A.D. 250). Cf. Hummel, op. cit., in which St. Cyprian's teachings regarding martyrdom are synthesized and analyzed.

NOTES

Chapter Three, Part I.

- ¹ Cf. Bernard Leeming, S.J., The Church and the Churches. (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1960), p. 278. In Appendix I, Father Leeming has quoted a lengthy text, from which this quotation has been drawn. He also presents the variances that Roman Catholics and the Orthodox would have with the position stated.
- ² Cf. Henri De Lubac, S.J., Catholicism (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1958). In his chapter, "The Church," pp. 17-34, Father de Lubac synthesizes his grasp of the Church, using several sources, among which the Fathers are prominent. On our point is his remark: "We do not attribute to the Church what belongs to God alone, we do not adore her. We do not believe in the Church in the same sense as we believe in God for the Church herself believes in God, and she is 'the Church of God.'" (p. 29).
- ³ Cochrane, op. cit., p. 373. Earlier (p. 346-347), M. Cochrane has described St. Ambrose as "a man who by virtue of his noble personal qualities, his position of eminence in the hierarchy, and his unique relations with various representatives of secular authority, may properly be regarded the leading contemporary exponent of ecclesiastical statesmanship."
- ⁴ H. Laurent, "Saint Ambroise," Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, Vol. I, Col. 943.
- ⁵ Frederick H. Dudden, The Life and Times of St. Ambrose, Vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935), pp. 457-459. This author summarizes and illustrates instances of St. Ambrose's use of allegorical interpretation. Dr. Dudden cites there the text from In Psalm 36, Ennar. 1, 2: "All divine Scripture is either natural or mystical or moral." It was St. Ambrose's position that all three meanings can be found in varying degrees in each book of Scripture: "Tria sunt enim quae Philosophi mundi istius praecellentissima putaverunt, triplex scilicet esse sapientiam quod aut naturalis sit moralis aut rationalis. Haec tria jam et in veteri testamento potius advertere." (Exposito Evangelii Secundum Lucam, Prologue 2. (The Prologue 1-4 is in its entirety to this point.)

- ⁶ J. Danielou, The Bible and the Liturgy (Notre Dame, Indiana: Notre Dame Press, 1956), p. 6.
- ⁷ Ibid., pp. 7-13. In these pages Father Danielou discusses and illustrates Biblical typology and its widespread use in the Church, and a specific work of it, i.e., sacramental typology. He also illustrates its use in St. Ambrose.
- ⁸ All English translation of texts selected from these seven treatises are taken from The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Second Series, Vol. X.
- ⁹ St. Ambrose, De Officiis, loc. cit. Book III, c. 19. This work is the first comprehensive work on Christian Ethics and was modeled on the Ciceronian work of the same title. Written after 386 A.D. it was addressed to the clergy of the Milan Church.
- ¹⁰ St. Ambrose, De Spiritu Sancto, Book II, 110. This work in three books is a sequel to De Fide and was written long after 381 A.D. The entire work is a complex example of St. Ambrose's use of the allegorical and typological methods.
- ¹¹ Ibid., Book II, 208.
- ¹² Ibid., Book II, 112.
- ¹³ Ibid., Book II, 153. The work, De Spiritu Sancto, together with its complement, De Fide, was for a long time considered to be a tractate, De Trinitate, and is named so. Truly in it is contained trinitarian explanations which must have been a meditative source for St. Augustine in his preparation of the De Trinitate. (Cf. Introductory notes to text in Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers edition, p. 92.)
- ¹⁴ St. Ambrose, De Paenitentia, Book II, 24-26, p. 348.
- ¹⁵ Ibid., Book II, No. 62, p. 353.
- ¹⁶ St. Ambrose, De Excessu Fratris Satyri, Book I, 47. In this treatise is contained the two funeral orations given by St. Ambrose on the death of his well-beloved in 379. They were given one week apart, the first (listed as Book I), was given at

the funeral, and the second, on the resurrection, one week later. (Of. Introduction, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers edition, p. 159)

- 17 St. Ambrose, De Spiritu Sancto, loc. cit., Book II, 158, p. 135.
- 18 St. Ambrose, De Fide, Book V, 57, p. 269.
- 19 Hugo Rahner, Our Lady and the Church, trans. S. Dullaugh (New York: Pantheon Books, 1961).
- 20 St. Ambrose, Concerning Virgins, Book I, c. 6, paragraph 31, p. 368.
- 21 St. Ambrose, On the Christian Faith, Book III, Nos. 72 and 72, p. 253.
- 22 Ibid., Book III, paragraph 75.
- 23 Ibid., Book III, paragraph 97 and 99. It is well to recall that this treatise was written by St. Ambrose for the Emperor Gratian as a synthesis of the teachings regarding Christ's divinity. Gratian was to encounter shortly in the eastern part of the Empire strong opposition from Arians, and prudently requested that this treatise be written. Thus the focus of the major portion of the treatise is on Christ as Divine Person.
- 24 Ibid., Book IV, paragraph 152, 153.
- 25 Ibid., Book V, paragraph 146 and 149. Books IV and V of the treatise On Christian Faith are very informative in regard to St. Ambrose's teaching and the Body doctrine.
- 26 On the Mysteries, c. IV, paragraph 20. As St. Ambrose himself stated at the beginning of this treatise, we had long spoken on the living of the holy life, but "the season now warns us to speak of the mysteries, and to set forth the purport of the sacraments, which if we had thought it well to teach before Baptism to those who were not yet initiated we should be considered rather to have betrayed than to have portrayed the mysteries." (paragraph 2).
- 27 Ibid., c. 5, paragraph 27.

- ²⁸ Ibid., chapter VII, paragraph 42.
- ²⁹ Ibid., c. VI, paragraph 32.
- ³⁰ Concerning Repentance, a treatise in two books dated 381 A.D. which was composed by the Bishop of Milan against the Novatian heresy which was reviving in the Western Church. The Novatians of the fourth century deny the possibility of repentance and absolution to those Christians who had fallen into grievous sin. Re-baptism was a frequent demand of the Novatians. Against this error St. Ambrose urged the traditional, scriptural testimony of the Church, also, the absolute incompatibility between the Baptismal action as Christ's justifying action, and any possibility of the necessity for Christ to act twice in this regard.
- ³¹ Ibid., Book II, c. 2, paragraph 10.
- ³² Ibid., Book I, c. 7, paragraph 31.
- ³³ On the Mysteries, c. 9, paragraph 55 and 59.
- ³⁴ On the Christian Faith, Book IV, c. 5, paragraph 57.
- ³⁵ Concerning Repentance, Book I, c. 7, paragraph 32 and 33.
- ³⁶ Ibid., Book 2, c. IV, paragraph 24.
- ³⁷ Duties of the Clergy, Book III, c. 3, paragraph 19. Writing out of his profound love and esteem for the priestly ministry, St. Ambrose composed this treatise sometime around 391 A.D. In structure it is modeled on Cicero's De Officiis, and in it can be seen the familiarity with and understanding of the venerated Stoic which was part of St. Ambrose's philosophical training.
- ³⁸ Of the Holy Spirit, Book II, c. 13, paragraph 151-153. In a treatise composed of three books written in 381, St. Ambrose has composed a tract on the Trinity which came under severe attack by St. Jerome in the next century as being filled with plagiarisms from Greek sources, such as St. Didymus. St. Jerome was filled with a special anger because St. Ambrose translated his plagiarisms poorly. This accusation by St. Jerome was attacked by Rufinus in his Apology.

- ³⁹ On the Duties of the Clergy, Book III, c. 3, paragraph 19.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. St. Ambrose, Letters, trans. Sister Mary Melchior, O.P. Introduction, p. ix.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., p. v.
- ⁴² Ibid., p. ix. It is the opinion of Sister Mary Melchior, O.P., that "the letters written by Saint Ambrose to Gratian, to Valentinian, and to Theodosius, and the synodal letters to the three conjointly have the sustained dignity which characterized his style when addressing the highest ranking civil rulers of his day. But with all his deference to authority he pursued a relentless logic in championing the rights of God and the Church, using Scripture to illustrate the truth of God's sovereignty in matters human and divine."
- ⁴³ Letter 85 [76], pp. 475-480. The numbering of the letters which is being followed is that assigned by the translator. She, in turn, followed the classification of R. Palanque, "Essai Chronologie Ambrosienne," Saint Ambroise et l'empire romain, (Paris: 1933), pp. 488-556. The number given in parentheses is that of the Benedictine editors of the Latin edition. It is the Benedictine numbering which is used in all the secondary sources consulted. Therefore it is included in the footnoting in this thesis.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 475.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 476.
- ⁴⁶ Letter 62 [Ep. 41], p. 389.
- ⁴⁷ Letter 85 [Ep. 76], p. 478.
- ⁴⁸ Letter 45 [Ep. 70], p. 231. It is thought that this letter was written around 387 A.D.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 235.
- ⁵⁰ Letter 59 [Ep. 63], pp. 333-334. The Church at Vercelli at this time was without a rightful Bishop and some had appealed to Ambrose; others resented Ambrose's "interference." Whereas, once Vercelli was a see to which other districts looked for

religious service, now Vercelli was alone without a Bishop. The continuance of this situation caused, according to Ambrose, their own disunity: "Since dissensions exist among you, how can we make any decision, how can you make a choice, how can anyone agree to accept among dissenters the task which he could hardly endure among those who are united."

⁵¹Letter 25 [Ep. 45], pp. 130-131. It is believed that this letter was written Spring, 387. There are six letters extant addressed to Sabinus.

⁵²Cf. Letter 44 [Ep. 42], pp. 225-230. In a synodal letter directed to "Brother Pope Siricius" St. Ambrose and his fellow Bishops wrote in 389 A.D. at the Synod of Milan a concise, but clear defense of the state of virginity against Jovinian, the heretic.

⁵³Letter 16 [Ep. 72], p. 74. In a letter to Bishop Constantius which is undated, the Bishop of Milan discussed the question of the relationship of circumcision under the Old Law and the New Dispensation.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 97.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Letter 62 [Ep. 41], pp. 390-391. In this letter to his sister, Marcellina, the Bishop of Milan repeats his censure of the Emperor, Theodosius, who had ordered the rebuilding of the Jewish synagogue in Callinicum which had been burned by Christians during religious riots. St. Ambrose convinced the Emperor that since the Church of Christ is His Body, and replaces the synagogue, then the Emperor should not sanction the rebuilding of a synagogue.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Letter 15 [Ep. 2], pp. 76-77. Constantius was a fellow Bishop, newly elected.

⁶⁰Ibid. cf. Commentary on the Fortieth Psalm wherein St. Ambrose insisted that the kingdom of God is the Kingdom of Peter.

- ⁶¹ Letter 35 [Ep. 19], pp. 174-175, dated 385 A.D.
- ⁶² Letter 85 [Ep. 76], p. 477.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 478.
- ⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 479-480.
- ⁶⁷ Letter 9 [Ep. 21], pp. 52-53.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid.
- ⁶⁹ Cf. Homes Dudden, St. Ambrose His Life and Times, Vol. 1, pp. 281-290.
- ⁷⁰ Letter 66 [Ep. 79], p. 402.
- ⁷¹ These exegetical works include treatises On Paradise, On Cain and Abel, On Noe, Two books on Abraham, On Isaac and the Soul, On Jacob and the Happy Life, On Joseph, On the Patriarchs, On Eating and Drinking, On Nabuthe, On Tobias, On the Interpellations, Job et David, Apology for the Prophet David, and Commentary on 12 Psalms and a single work commenting on Psalm 118.
- ⁷² Dudden, op. cit., p. 692. The C.S.E.L. text mentioned in footnote c. 1, n. 10.
- ⁷³ Ibid., p. 694. The scholarly work of J.-H. Palomque mentioned earlier, provided the necessary information for H. Dudden.
- ⁷⁴ St. Ambrose, Expositio Evangelii Secundum Lucam, II, 86, pp. 20-25.

- 75 Ibid., II, 85A-86C, cf. also H. De Lubac, S.J., Catholicism (New York: Sheed and Ward, Inc., 1958), p. 253. Father DeLubac considers this text important.
- 76 Ibid., II, 87F-88A.
- 77 Ibid., II, 88A-88B.
- 78 Ibid., II, 57 C-D.
- 79 Ibid., II, 7 C-D.
- 80 Ibid., VIII, 9 C-D.
- 81 Ibid., VII, 96 D-E.
- 82 Ibid., I, 17 F.
- 83 Expositio Evangelii Lucan, V, 83, E-F.
- 84 Hexameron, Book III, 3.
- 85 Expositio Evangelii Lucan, III, 9 F.
- 86 Ibid., V, 92 B-C.
- 87 Ibid., VI, 98 B-C.
- 88 Ibid., X, 175 C-D.

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