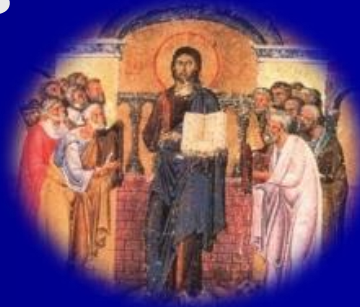


Fall 2022 Adult Study: The Early Christians

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Los Angeles, California

Session 5: The Church –
The Community and Authority

16 Nov 2022



Ekklesia

- Those who are called out
 - But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:9)
- One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic
- NOT an Institution

Bride of Christ

- I feel a divine jealousy for you, for I betrothed you to Christ to present you as a pure bride to her one husband. (2 Corinthians 11:2)

Bride of Christ

- Then the disciples of John came to him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?" And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come, when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast. (Matthew 9:14-15)
- See also Ephesians 5.20-33

The New Israel

- Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion; for lo, I come and I will dwell in the midst of you, says the LORD. And many nations shall join themselves to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people; and I will dwell in the midst of you, and you shall know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you.
(Zechariah 2:10-11)

The New Israel

- "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel." (Luke 2.29-32)

The Communion of Saints

- Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. (Hebrews 12:1)
- The Church Militant and the Church Triumphant

The Rock on Which Christ Built the Church

- If I am delayed, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is **the church of the living God, the pillar and bulwark of the truth.** (1 Tim. 3.15)
- Peter's Confession (Matthew 16.13-20)

Peter's Confession

- Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."
- He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- **And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.**
- And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against her. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
- Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Central point of the chiasmus

Peter's Confession

- "You are Peter" – Petros
- "On this rock" – petra
- The central point: Peter's confession is true in that God Himself has testified to it. The whole of the Church is based on this God-given confession.

The Body of Christ

- 1 Cor. 12.4-28
- Eph. 3.8-12
- "For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?" **But we have the mind of Christ.** (1 Cor. 2:16)
- Acts 15.1-29 – "Conciliarity"

1Co 12:4-28 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; (5) and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; (6) and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. (7) To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (8) To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, (9) to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, (10) to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. (11) All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one

individually as he wills. (12) For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. (13) For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. (14) For the body does not consist of one member but of many. (15) If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. (16) And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. (17) If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? (18) But as it is, God arranged the organs in the body, each one of them, as he chose. (19) If all were a single organ, where would the body be? (20) As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. (21) The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." (22) On the contrary, the parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable, (23) and those parts of the body which we think less honorable we invest with the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, (24) which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior part, (25) that there may be no discord in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. (26) If one member suffers, all

suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. (27) **Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.** (28) And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, then healers, helpers, administrators, speakers in various kinds of tongues.

Eph 3:8-12 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, (9) and to make all men see what is the plan of **the mystery hidden for ages** in God who created all things; (10) **that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known** to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places. (11) This was according to the eternal purpose which he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, (12) in whom we have boldness and confidence of access through our faith in him.

The Council in Jerusalem – “Conciliarity”

Act 15:1-29 But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." (2) And when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question. (3) So,

being sent on their way by the church, they passed through both Phoenicia and Samaria, reporting the conversion of the Gentiles, and they gave great joy to all the brethren. (4)

When they came to Jerusalem, **they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders**, and they declared all that God had done with them. (5) But some believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees rose up, and said, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to charge them to keep the law of Moses." (6) The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter. (7) And after there had been much debate, Peter rose and said to them, "Brethren, you know that in the early days God made choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe. (8) And God who knows the heart bore witness to them, giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us; (9) and he made no distinction between us and them, but cleansed their hearts by faith. (10) Now therefore why do you make trial of God by putting a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? (11) But we believe that we shall be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will." (12) And all the assembly kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles. (13)

After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brethren, listen to me. (14) Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. (15) And with this **the words of the prophets agree, as it is written, (16) 'After this I will return, and I will rebuild the dwelling of David, which has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up, (17) that the rest of men may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles** who are called by my name, (18) says the Lord, who has made these things known from of old.' (19) Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, (20) but should write to them to abstain from the pollutions of idols and from unchastity and from what is strangled and from blood. (21) For from early generations Moses has had in every city those who preach him, for he is read every sabbath in the synagogues."

(22) **Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church,** to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, (23) with the following letter: "The brethren, both the apostles and the elders, to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting. (24) Since we have heard that some persons from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, (25) it has

seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, (26) men who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. (27) We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. (28) For **it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us** to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: (29) that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from unchastity. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."

Building vs. People

- John 2.16-22
- John 4.19-26

Joh 2:16-22 And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; you shall not make my Father's house a house of trade." (17) His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for thy house will consume me." (18) The Jews then said to him, "What sign have you to show us for doing this?" (19) Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (20) The Jews then said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?" (21) **But he spoke of the temple of his body.** (22) When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

Joh 4:19-26 The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. (20) Our fathers worshiped on this mountain; and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." (21) Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. (22) You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. (23) But the hour is coming, and now is, when **the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth**, for such the Father seeks to worship him. (24) God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (25) The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ); when he comes, he will show us all things." (26) Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

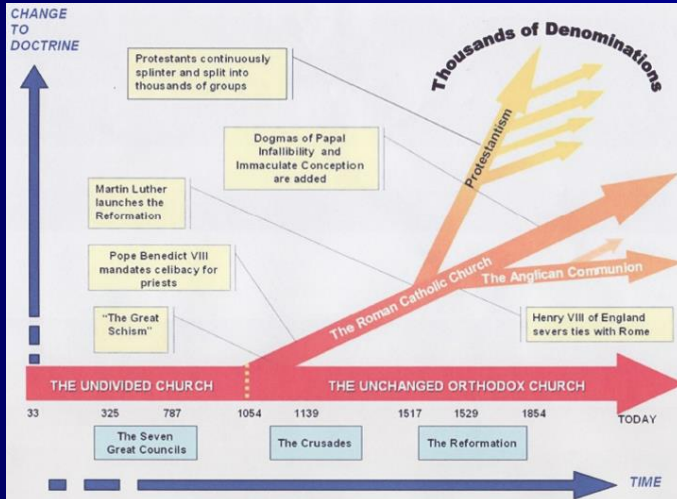
Excerpts from *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (Didache)*

- 9:4 As this broken bread was once scattered on the mountains, and after it had been brought together became one, so may thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth unto thy kingdom; for thine is the glory, and the power, through Jesus Christ, for ever.

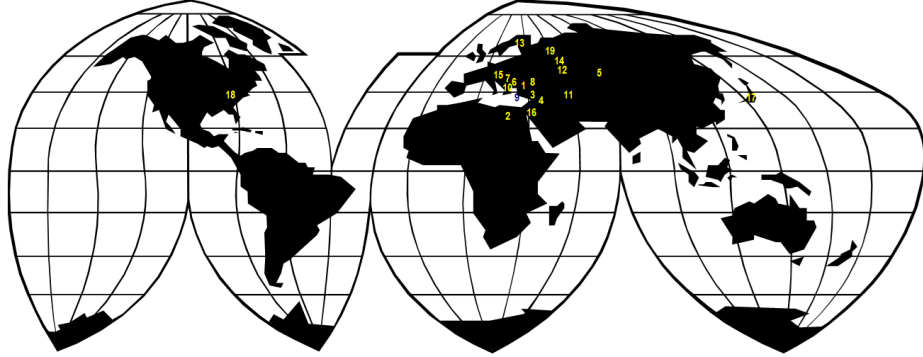
Excerpts from *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles (Didache)*

- 10:5 Remember, Lord, thy Church, to redeem it from every evil, and to perfect it in thy love, and gather it together from the four winds, even that which has been sanctified for thy kingdom which thou hast prepared for it; for thine is the kingdom and the glory for ever.

A Timeline of Church History



Autocephalous and Autonomous Orthodox Churches



- 1 Constantinople
- 2 Alexandria/All Africa
- 3 Antioch/All the East
- 4 Jerusalem
- 5 Moscow/Russia
- 6 Pec/Serbia
- 7 Bucharest/Romania
- 8 Sofia/Bulgaria

- 9 New Justiniana/Cyprus
- 10 Athens/Greece
- 11 Tiflis/Georgia
- 12 Prague/Czechoslovakia
- 13 Karelia/Finland
- 14 Warsaw/Poland
- 15 Tirana/Albania
- 16 Sinai

- 17 Tokyo/Japan
- 18 Washington, DC/America (OCA)
- 19 Tallinn/Estonia

Additional Reading

- "Authority and Unity" by Serge S. Verhovskoy
- "The Ecclesiology of St. Ignatius of Antioch," by John S. Romanides

Authority and Unity by Serge S. Verhovskoy

Unity is of the essence of Christianity. We are not Christians if we live by ourselves. If a Christian community considers itself as independent and separated from the Church, is it not a sect? An independent parish is merely a secular corporation with religious purposes rather than a real parish.

What is the difference between them? A corporation is organized by a group of men in accordance with a statute which they make for themselves with the approval of civil authority. Consequently, the whole

life of a corporation is ruled by the will of the majority of its members and the statute established by the same majority. If they recognize the authority of the Church, or its teaching and laws, they do so only in so far as they desire.

Some "independent parishes" pretend that they cannot accept the Statute of the Church because they are bound by their own statutes. This pretend is utterly hypocritical because every religious corporation can change its statutes so as to bring them into harmony with the Canons of the Church. If they do not want to do this, they only prove their bad will. Christians who openly and consciously recognize only part of the authority and teachings of the Church, while rejecting the rest, are clearly heretics or at least schismatic.

Those who do not recognize the guidance of the Clergy, or who arbitrarily limit it to the celebration of the services and personal relations with laymen are openly rebellious against the Church. If the members of these religious corporations are afraid of being deprived by the Clergy of their property or legitimate rights, they are wrong.

We stress that Orthodox Canon law energetically protects the laity from all possible abuses by the

Clergy. Separatist tendencies among the laity, and even in the priesthood, were already known in the early Church, and many Canons threatened them with excommunication.

The true parish must have a consciousness of being an organic part of the Church, to be the Church as it exists in a given locality. A truly Orthodox community will never oppose its diocese or the rest of the Church. It will freely and gladly accept the authority of the Church and Orthodox tradition in its entirety. Among other things, it will accept the guidance of the clergy. A truly Orthodox parish will not be pervaded by the spirit of indifference and selfishness, but will wholeheartedly participate in the life of the Church and support it.

We must fight wrong ambitions and secular spirit in certain sections of the laity, but we must also rejoice in and encourage all expression by the laity of their desire to work for the Church and to take responsibility for its life.

Every parish and each of us, as individual Christians, must strive to help in the realization of the plans adopted by our Church and to support them financially by regular donations. The poverty of our Church is astonishing. On the average, each

income to the Church per year. Is this simply lack of generosity, indifference or mistrust? Whatever the reason may be, it is shameful to spend less for Church than for entertainment? because, certainly, all of us spend much more than one percent a year for vacations, eating out, movies, and other such entertainments.

Unity and order are badly needed in our Church. Every layman, priest and bishop, every parish and diocese, must have a clear consciousness that they are living members of the whole Orthodox Church and they must do their best to make Orthodoxy in this land united, spiritually strong and influential. Every layman, priest, and bishop, every parish and diocese must realize that all of them have their own rights, duties, and responsibilities, but that these rights are determined and limited by the Church.

The highest value belongs to the Church in its unity, then to the dioceses, then to the parishes and finally to each Christian individually. The highest authority belongs to the episcopate, then to the priesthood and finally to the laity. If the laity considers itself to be on a higher level than the Clergy and if the parishes separate themselves from their dioceses and consider themselves higher than the Church, we are then no longer in the

sectarian society. The laity are not deprived of their rights. They have the widest possibilities of being active in the Church, in its administration, educational and welfare endeavors, in its social work and finances; they can be active members of their parish and diocesan assemblies... They are deprived of but one right: to act against the Hierarchy...

The vitality of our Church is great. The possibilities are almost unlimited. There is no reason to be pessimistic. The only conditions for the continuous growth of our Church are a good will and an absolute faithfulness to our Orthodox Catholic Faith.

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The Ecclesiology of St. Ignatius of Antioch

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(<http://www.romanity.org>)

The key to understanding the ecclesiology of St. Ignatius is clearly his presuppositions concerning salvation. As will be indicated, the Church as the body of Christ exists, according to St. Ignatius, for the sole purpose of salvation in Christ. Thus his ecclesiology without at least a general examination of his soteriology would be incomprehensible.

In the extant writings of St. Ignatius one cannot find any systematic exposition of soteriology. This is quite natural since he is writing to baptized Christians primarily concerning internal Church unity and order, against certain heretics, and also concerning his impending martyrdom. Nevertheless, in order that the soteriological basis of St. Ignatius' doctrine of the visible manifestation of the Church be understood, this paper shall deal with: 1) salvation (from corruption) and ethics, 2) the appropriation of salvation in Christ and the mystical conception of the Church, 3) the Church and the Eucharist, 4) the Church or the Community, 5) the clergy, 6) relative observations concerning the origin and basis of the episcopate, 7) the basis for the equality of bishops, and 8) concluding remarks.

1) Salvation (from corruption) and Ethics.

St. Ignatius writes that "the virginity of Mary and her offspring, as well as the death of the Lord, seized (elaven) the prince of this world: three thunderous mysteries

wrought in the silence of God... Henceforth all things were in a state of tumult because He meditated the abolition of death." (Ign. Eph. 19) The abolition of death is non other than the seizure of Satan and was accomplished by these three mysteries. Satan here is closely related to death. By means of death and corruption the devil rules a captive humanity. (Heb 2:14-15.) "The sting of death is sin." (I Cor. 15:56.) "Sin reigned in death." (Rom. 5:21.) Because of the tyrant death man is unable to live according to his original destiny of selfless love. He now has the instinct of self-preservation firmly rooted within him from birth. Because he lives constantly under the fear of death he continuously seeks bodily and psychological security, and thus becomes individualistically inclined and utilitarian in attitude. Sin is the failure of man to live according to his original destiny of selfless love which seeks not its own and this failure is rooted in the disease of death. Because death in the hands of Satan is the cause of sin, the kingdom of the devil and sin is destroyed by the "abolition of death." (Ign. Eph. 19.)

For Ignatius death and corruption is an abnormal condition which God came to destroy by the incarnation of His Son. The cosmology of St. Ignatius is neither monophysite or monothelite. Besides the will of God and the good, there exist now the temporary kingdom of Satan, who rules by death and corruption, and man oppressed by the devil but at the same time supported by God and free, at least

according to will, to follow the one or the other. The world and God has each his own character - the world death, and God life. (Ign. Mag. 5.) Nevertheless, the material world is neither evil, nor the product of the fall. It exists now under the power of corruption (Rom. 8:20-22), but in Christ is being cleansed. Our Lord was "born and baptized that by His passion He might purify the water." (Ign. Eph. 18.) Life and immortality are not proper to man, but to God. "For were He to regard us according to our works we should cease to be." (Ign. Mag. 10.) God Himself was manifested in the flesh "for the renewal of eternal life." (Ign. Eph. 19.) Christ is the source of life (Ign. Eph. 3; Mag. 1; Smyr. 4) and "breathes immortality into the Church" (Ign. Eph. 17) "apart from whom we do not possess the true life." (Ign. Tral. 9.)

In the epistles of St. Ignatius the idea of natural immortality as a proper element of man's soul is completely absent. Both those before and after Christ have the death and resurrection of Christ as their source of life. Christ raised the prophets (Ign. Mag. 9) who "were saved through union with Jesus Christ." (Ign. Phil. 5.) He "the High Priest .. to whom the Holy of Holies has been committed ... is the door of the Father by which enter in Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the prophets, and the apostles, and the Church." (Ign. Phil. 9.) For the athletes of God "the prize is incorruption and eternal life." (Ign. Pol. 2.) "The gospel is the ornament of incorruption." (Ign. Phil. 9.) The Church

has now peace by the flesh and blood and passion of Jesus Christ. (Ign. Tral. salutation.) The death of Christ "seized" the devil (Ign. Eph. 19) and as such is the source by which life was renewed (Ign. Mag. 9) that "by believing in His death you may escape from death." (Ign. Tral. 2.) "The passion of Christ ... is our resurrection." (Ign. Smyr. 5.) Those who ignore the death and the fleshly resurrection of Christ "have been denied by Him, being the advocates of death rather than of the truth." (Ign. Smyr. 5.) He who does not confess him a "bearer of flesh ... has in fact altogether denied Him, being a bearer of death." (Ibid.) "... if they believe not in the blood of Christ, then to them there is judgment." (Ibid. 6.) "Those, therefore, who speak against this gift of God, in the midst of their disputes, incur death." (Ibid. 7.)

St. Ignatius emphatically and persistently points out the absolute necessity of faith in the real historical facts of the incarnation of God from the Virgin and of the death and fleshly resurrection of the God-man. (Tral. 2,9,10; Phil. 8,9; Smyr. 1,2,3,4,7.) "I desire to guard you... that you fall not upon the hooks of vain doctrine, but that you attain to full assurance in regard to the birth, and passion, and resurrection which took place in the time of the government of Pontius Pilate.: (Mag. 11.) Faith in the flesh and spirit (Smyr. 3) of Christ is the very basis of the whole structure of New Testament and ancient Christian ethics. The life of selfless love and the successful struggle against

the powers of death and the devil are impossible without communion with the real life-giving and resurrected flesh of the Lord. "Consider those who are of a different opinion with respect to the grace of Christ which has come unto us, how opposed they are to the will of God. They have no regard for love, etc..." (Ibid. 6.) Most probably St. Ignatius is here referring to heretics with dualistic doctrines who ignore the true nature of material creation and by consequence the real meaning of death and corruption. It is possible to suppose that Ignatius is here exaggerating the inadequate ethics of the heretics he has in mind. Such a judgment is especially tempting when one realizes the fact that some of the heretics attacked by Ignatius admired and respected the Orthodox, even as happens today. "For what does any one profit me if he commends me but blasphemes my Lord, not confessing that He is possessed of flesh?" (Ibid. 5.) Such a value judgment, however, concerning such possible exaggeration can be made only when one uses as criteria ethical theories foreign to the basis of Ignatius' thought. The ethical criteria of St. Ignatius cannot be judged according to theories of natural moral law which conceive of man's quest for security and happiness as normal. It is quite obvious that Ignatius unites the possibility of a Christian ethic not to natural utilitarian principles of happiness, but solely to the resurrected flesh of Christ. This relationship of Christian ethics to the physical death and resurrection of Christ must be comprehended for an adequate understanding of the

presuppositions of Ignatian ecclesiology.

Satan rules parasitically in creation and man by death. (Rom. 8:20-22; Heb. 2:14.) The children of God "through fear of death were all their lifetime guilty of bondage." (Heb. 2:15.) Because the rule of Satan consisted in the physical and material reality of death and corruption, the destruction of Satan could be brought about only by a real resurrection of the flesh - not by the escape of the soul from creation to some other supposed reality. By the indwelling of the life-giving flesh of Christ the faithful are liberated from slavery to the devil and by prayer, fasting, and corporate selfless love are enabled to overcome the consequences of death, viz. sin, by the grace of God in Christ and the Holy Spirit. "...the believing have in love the character of God the Father by Jesus Christ, by whom, if we are not in readiness to die into His passion, His life is not in us." (Mag. 5.) Both the ontological reality and the ethical meaning of the incarnation, death and resurrection of Christ, are necessarily united and inseparable. The denial of the one leads to the rejection of the other. If the ontological and material power of "him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14) has not been destroyed in the death and resurrection of Christ, then sin is still reigning. "If Christ be not raised ... you are yet in your sins." (I Cor. 15:17.) The struggle of Christians against sin and for salvation through selfless love would be useless and senseless. "Let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die."

(Ibid. 15:32.) Besides the ethical implications of Christ's not having risen, there would be no hope of life after death. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." (Ibid. 15:18-19.) Therefore those who deny the real birth, death and resurrection of the incarnated Word of God are "advocates of death" and "bearers of death" and "their names" are "unbelief." (Smyr. 5.)

Christian ethics, therefore, for St. Ignatius is not a mere matter of preserving imagined innate moral laws of a supposed natural world for the attainment of personal happiness, whether immanent or transcendent. What is considered a natural quest for security and happiness is really a life according to the dictates of death, or the flesh dominated by death, constantly seeking bodily and psychological security of existence and worth. "... let no one look upon his neighbor after the flesh, but do you continually love each other in Jesus Christ." (Mag. 6.) Love in Christ differs sharply from the "kata sarka" eudaimonistic and utilitarian love of so-called natural humanity. Christian love "seeks not its own." (Rom. 14,7:15, 1-3; I Cor. 13,5:5, 15:10, 24, 29-11, 1:12, 25-26:13, 1ff: II Cor. 5,14-15; Gal. 5, 13:6, 1; Eph. 4,2; I Thes. 5,11.) "...exhort my brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ, that they love their wives, even as the Lord the Church." (Ign. Pol. 5.) This love is such that Christ "pleased not

himself" (Rom. 15:3) but "He died for all, that they who live should no longer live for themselves." (II Cor. 5:15.) For this reason a Christian wedding which has as its motive selfless love in Christ "is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Eph. 5:32.) That is, it is a great mystery for Christians only, not because those outside the Church are not married, but because a Christian wedding takes place in another dimension. Therefore, "it becomes both men and women who marry, to form their union with the approval of the bishop, that their marriage be according to God, and not after their own lust." (Ign. Pol. 5.)

Because of the character of the principle of sin, perfection in this age is attained to not fully but in part according to the quality of the war carried against the powers of the devil. Good works are not part of a business agreement between God and man whereby God is obligated to reward external and utilitarian acts of charity. Rather good works are the product of the double struggle waged against the devil and for non-utilitarian selfless love for God and the neighbor. Therefore communion of divine life through the human nature of Christ is not enough for salvation. The mystical (sacramental) life is not a magical guarantee of eternal life. Christians must also wage an intense war against Satan. " ... if we endure all the assaults of the prince of this world and escape them we shall attain to (or enjoy) God." (Mag. 1)

It is only when one perceives the inseparable bond which exists in the Bible and ancient Church between the destructive powers of death, corruption and disease, and the person of Satan that he can comprehend the attitude of the first Christians toward death and martyrdom. "... they touched Him and believed, being supported by both His flesh and spirit. For this cause also they despised death, for they were found above death." (Smyr. 3.) He who fears death and is thereby a slave to its consequences is incapable of living according to Christ "by whom, if we are not in readiness to die into His passion, His life is not in us." (Mag. 5.) The canons of the Church are quite severe for those who would reject Christ because of fear. The rejection of Christ for fear of death was considered as a fall into the hands of the devil. Thus the persistent desire of St. Ignatius not to be hindered in his impending martyrdom was not the product of eschatological enthusiasm or psychopathic disturbances, but clearly the consequence of the realization of the inseparable relationship existing between death and Satan, who, with man as his co-worker, is himself the cause of ethical and physical evil. Condemned to death according to law already dead, it was impossible for St. Ignatius to seek to avoid martyrdom. This would have meant slavery to Satan. "The prince of this world would fain carry me away (or capture me), and corrupt my disposition (or opinion) toward God. Let none of you, therefore, who are in Rome help him." (Ign. Rom.

7.)St. Ignatius was not a psychopath. On the contrary he had a keen understanding of biblical demonology (II Cor. 2:11) which not only dominated his own approach to faith and practice, but also regulated the whole theology of the ancient Church concerning martyrdom. "Pray for me that I may attain ... If I shall suffer you have wished well to me; but if I am rejected you have hated me." (Ign. Rom. 8.) "... let cutting off of members; let shatterings of the whole body; and let all the evil torments of the devil come upon me: only let me attain to Jesus Christ." (Ibid. 5.)

2) The appropriation of salvation in Christ and the mystical conception of the Church.

By the victory of Christ over death and Satan he who believes in the flesh of Christ is restored to the communion of the life and love of God in union with his neighbors and loves "nothing but God only." (Ign. Eph. 9, 11; Mag. 1.) "It is therefore befitting that you should in every way glorify Jesus Christ, who had glorified you, that by a unanimous obedience you may be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same opinion, and may all speak the same thing concerning the same thing." (Ign. Eph. 2.) For St. Ignatius the primary characteristic of Christians is their corporate and selfless spirit of love and their complete unanimity of faith. (Ign. Eph. 20; Tral. 12; Phil. sal.; Pol. 6.) Faith and love for each other is one identical reality, as well as the beginning and the end of life in Christ. (Ign.

Eph. 14.) Unity with each other in love is "a type and evidence (of teaching) of immortality." (Mag. 6.) "All these things together are good if you believe with love." (Ign. Phil. 9.) Faith is to "be gathered together (synaxis) unto God." (Mag. 10. Therefore in your concord and harmonious love Jesus Christ is sung." (Ign. Eph. 4.) Only in such a harmony of love can we know that we are partakers of God. (Ibid.) Therefore salvation and sanctification can be accomplished only by a unity of love with each other in the life of Christ. (Ign. Eph. 2.)

For Ignatius man does not have life of himself. Only God is self-life (autozoe). Man lives by participation. Because man is held captive in death by the devil his communion with God is of a distorted nature and ends in the grave. The act of restoration of permanent and normal communion between God and man can be accomplished only by a real resurrection of man by God Himself. (Ezek. 37:12ff.) "Who alone hath immortality." (I Tim. 6:16.) This immortality of God, however, is not to be separated in its bestowal upon creation, from God's energy of love. Therefore, "the drink of God, namely His Blood, ... is incorruptible love and eternal life." (Ign. Rom. 7.) The love of God is not a relationship (to pros ti) dominated by ulterior motivations. If God were within the realm of happiness and so dominated thereby, then all His relationships, if such could really exist, would be necessary. The life of God the Father, however, who by

essence generates the Son and projects the Spirit, is personal and selfless love, which by grace and in complete freedom through the Son and in the Spirit creates ex nihilo, sustains, saves, and sanctifies creation, not by created means, but by His own uncreated energy. Salvation is not a mere restoration of proper relations between God and man. On the contrary man is saved by being restored to life which is given to created beings only by God. Saving grace, therefore, is the very uncreated life-giving energy of God which vivifies and justifies man by defeating the devil. The flesh of Christ is the source of life and justification not as flesh per se, but because it is the flesh of God. It is for this reason that St. Ignatius can say, "I desire the drink of God, namely His Blood." (Ign. Rom. 7; also Eph. 1.)

Moralistic doctrines of atonement whereby man is already in possession of an immortal soul, so that salvation is a matter of changing the disposition of God toward man, and man toward God, by balancing the business interest of each, are completely missing from the thought of Ignatius. Atonement is not a simple adjustment and rearrangement of divine and human psychologies. Neither is it an intellectual problem of identifying human concepts with the immutable prototypes of God's essence which all together comprise truth. It is not the proper relationship of two immortalities, that of God and man, that is at stake, but rather the restoration of a lost immortality now bound to

death, and as a consequence morally corrupted. It is only by participation in the divine life and love of God in Christ through corporate love of neighbors that one may attain to immortality, be justified, and avoid death. (Ign. Eph. 20; Rom. 7; Smyr. 7.) It is exactly for this reason that those who live in Christ with selfless love for each other are "stones in the temple of the Father, prepared for the building of God the Father, and drawn up on high by the instrument of Jesus Christ, which is the cross, making use of the Holy Spirit as a rope... You, therefore, as well as your fellow-travellers, are God-bearers, temple-bearers, Christ-bearers, bearers of holiness, adorned in all respects with the commandments of Jesus Christ." (Ign. Eph. 9; also 15; Mag. 12; Phil. 7.) Christians do everything together "in the Son, and in the Father, and in the Spirit." (Mag. 13.)

St. Ignatius' mystical conception of the Church as the body of Christ is not a result of personal enthusiasm for a mystical union with God as happens with certain philosophical types who individualistically seek ever more clear visions of eternal truths contained in the essence of the one by the soul's transcending or penetrating material phenomena and uniting with reality. The mysticism of Ignatius has nothing to do with philosophical or natural mysticism which operates according to the presupposition that reality consists in overcoming the material so that two natural immortalities, the soul and God, may again become one. For Ignatius this world is itself reality because it was

created by God to be reality and proof of this is the resurrection of Christ in history for the salvation of history and time, not from history and time. In sharp contrast to his spiritualistic adversaries, Ignatius presents a mysticism completely Christocentric and indeed Sarkocentric - only the flesh and blood of the resurrected God-man are the source of life and resurrection of all men of all ages. (Ign. Eph. 1, 7, ,19, 20; Mag. 6, 8; Smyr. 1, 3; Pol. 3; Mag. 9; Phil. 5,9.) The human nature of God is none other than salvation itself - namely 1) the restoration of immortality to those who partake corporately in selfless love, 2) the justification of man by the destruction of death and man's accuser and captor, the devil, and 3) the granting of the power to defeat the devil by struggling to attain to selfless love for God and neighbor through the flesh of Christ. The Christocentric and flesh-centered mysticism of Ignatius is not a simple luxury of the more enthusiastically inclined, but on the contrary an absolute necessity for salvation, and constitutes the very basis of his ecclesiology, which is indeed that of the New Testament and ancient Church.

3) The Church and the Eucharist.

Man is saved by communion of divine life through the human nature of Christ by love of neighbor, but "where there is division and wrath, God does not dwell." (Ign. Phil.

8.) "He who does not love his brother remains in death... And this is His commandment, That we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He commanded us. And he that keeps His commandments dwells in Him and He in him. And hereby we know That He abides in us by the Spirit which He has given us." (I John 3:23-24.) Therefore, "avoid all divisions as the beginning of evils." (Ign. Smyr. 7.) "Do not err, my brethren. If any man follows him that makes a schism in the Church, he shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Ign. Phil. 3.)

Participation of the love of God in union with each other, which is indeed communion of divine life, can be weakened and even destroyed by man's inattention to the ways of Satan. "Flee therefore the wicked devices and snares of the prince of the world. lest at any time being oppressed by his will, you grow weak in your love." (Ign. Phil. 6.) "Be not anointed with the bad odour of the teaching of the prince of this world; do not let him lead you away captive from the life which is set before you." (Ign. Eph. 17.) "For there are many wolves (heretics who pluck the weak from the Church) that appear worthy of credit, who, by means of a pernicious pleasure, carry captive those that are running towards God; but in your unity they shall have no place." (Ign. Phil. 2.) Because of unity with each other in the love of Christ Satan cannot prevail since love is the blood of Christ and eternal life by which the devil is

destroyed. "Take heed, then, often to come together to give thanks to God and show forth His praise. For when you assemble frequently in the same place (epi to auto), the powers of Satan are destroyed and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the unity of your faith." (Ign. Eph. 13.) "Let no man deceive himself: if any one be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God... He, therefore, that does not assemble in the same place (epi to auto), has already manifested his pride and condemned himself." (Ign. Eph. 5.) "He that is within the altar is pure, but he that is without is not pure." (Ign. Tral. 7.)

The visible Church (both visible and invisible Church constitute one continuous reality for Ignatius), then, is composed of those baptized faithful who conduct an intense war against Satan and the consequences of his power rooted in death by their unity of love with each other in the life-giving human nature of Christ, and manifest this unity and love in the corporate Eucharist in which their very life and salvation is rooted. In other words, the Church has two aspects, one positive - love, unity, and communion of immortality with each other and with the saints in Christ, and one negative - the war against the Satan and his powers already defeated in the flesh of Christ by those living in Christ beyond death awaiting the general (or second) resurrection - the final and complete victory of God over Satan. Christology is the positive aspect of the Church, but is conditioned by biblical demonology, which

is the key negative factor which determines both Christology and Ecclesiology, both of which are incomprehensible without an adequate understanding of the work and methods of Satan. "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (I John 3:8.)

From this twofold aspect of the Church it is quite obvious that baptism is not a magical guarantee against the possibility of becoming once again a slave to the devil and thus being excluded from the body of Christ. (I Cor. 5:1-13; II Thes. 3:6-14; II Tim. 3:5; Rom. 11:21; "me toinyn tharromen hoti gegonamen hapax tou somatos." St. John Chrysostom, 3rd Homily on Ephesians, 4.) Selfless love, the sine quo non of salvation (I Cor. 13:1 ff.), is not something which can be acquired by a mere intellectual decision, or by a sentimental disposition to an idea of good in general, or by a psychological conviction that one has become the object of irresistible grace and so predestined. On the contrary, true non-utilitarian and selfless love is formed in the faithful by the power of the death and resurrection of Christ through an intense effort at self denial by spiritual exercise and by unconditional war against Satan. On this side of death the body of Christ is the Church of the Passover continuously crossing the Red Sea opposite those of Pharo (the devil) by participation in the death and resurrection of the Lord epi to auto. At each Eucharist the chosen people, the New Zion, gather together

triumphantly on the banks of the Red Sea opposite those of Pharo and glorify God for the salvation already granted and simultaneously await the final victory. On the difficult and dangerous road to the Land of Promise, from Sunday to Sunday, and from day to day, one may fall into the hands of Satan and be cut off from the body of Christ. At each gathering "epi to auto" by means of each Eucharist, the body of Christ, the Church this side of death, is in the process of formation - the Word made flesh is being formed in the faithful by the Holy Spirit (I John 3:23-24), and thus the Church, although already the body of Christ, is continuously becoming what she is.

4) The Church or the Community.

Since for Ignatius the Eucharist is the formative and manifest center of corporate love unto immortality, and at the same time the weapon which insures the continues defeat of the devil, it is quite clear that the corporate liturgy is the very pivotal point of faith in action, the participation of which is the only sure sign of continuous communion with God and neighbor unto salvation. This unity of selfless love in Christ with each other and the saints is an end in itself - not a means to another end. The existence of any other utilitarian and eudaimonistic motive other than unconditional selfless love for God and neighbor in Christ

simply means slavery to the powers of Satan. "... love nothing except God." (Ign. Eph. 9, 11; Mag. 1.)

In the Eucharistic life of selfless love is thus understood as an end in itself and the only condition for continual membership in the Church, it follows that the relationship of one community to another cannot be one of inferiority or superiority. Nor can one community be considered a part to another community because the fullness of Christ is to be found in the Eucharist which itself is the highest and only possible center and consummation of the life of unity and love. " ...whether Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." (Ign. Smyr. 8.) Besides, the devil is not destroyed by an abstract idea of unity and love. He can be defeated only locally by the unity of faith and love of real people living together their life in Christ. An abstract federation of communities whereby each body is a member of a more general body reduces the Eucharist to a secondary position and makes possible the heretical idea that there is a membership in the body of Christ higher and more profound than the corporate life of local love for real people and thus the whole meaning of the incarnation of God and the destruction of the Satan in a certain place and at a certain time in history is destroyed. Each individual becomes a member of the body of Christ spiritually and physically at a special time and in a certain place in the presence of those to whom he is about to be joined. Those who share in one bread are one body. (I Cor. 10:17.) This

sharing in one bread cannot happen in general, but only locally. There, are, however, many liturgical centers each breaking one bread, but together totaling many breads. Nevertheless there are not many bodies of Christ, but one. Therefore each community having the fullness of Eucharistic life is related to other communities not by a common participation in something greater than the local life in the Eucharist, but by an identity of existence in Christ. "...wherever Jesus Christ is there is the Catholic Church." (Ign. Smyr. 8.)

5) The Clergy.

The three orders of the clergy "have been appointed according to the mind of Jesus Christ, which (clergy) He has established in security, after His own will, and by His Holy Spirit." (Ign. Phil. sal.; also Eph. 3:6; Phil. 4.) Since the Holy Eucharist is "the medicine of immortality," it follows that unity with those who have been entrusted with the proper liturgy of and teaching concerning the mysteries is an absolutely necessary condition for salvation. Thus "be united to your bishop and to those that preside over you as a type and teaching of immortality." (Ign. Mag. 6.) All things pertaining to the Church must be done corporately with the bishop, presbyters, and deacons (Mag. 4, 6, 7; Pol. 6) because the life of unity *epi to auto* is centered in them.

(Ign. Eph. 2, 4, 5; Tral. 7; Phil. sal; Pol. 6.) Unity in the bishop is an image of the Church's unity with Christ and of Christ with the Father. (Ign. Eph. 5; Mag. 2, 13; Tral, 7; Phil. 2, 3; Smyr. 8, 9.) Subjugation to the bishop is an icon of subjugation to God, Christ, and each other. (Ign. Eph. 5, 20; Mag. 2, 13; Phil. 7.)

According to the thought of Ignatius there exists an inseparable relationship between the bishop and the Eucharist. Unity with the bishop and unity with each other in the one bread within the altar is precisely one identical reality. There is one flesh of the Lord, one cup, one altar, as there is one bishop. "Take heed, then, to have but one Eucharist. For there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one cup unto unity of His blood, one altar, as there is one bishop, along with the presbytery, and deacons, my fellow-servants, so that whatever you do, you may do it according to God." (Ign. Phil. 4; also to be interpreted in the light of this passage: Eph. 20; Mag. 7; Tral. 7; Phil. sal.) The liturgy is a distinctive characteristic of the office of the bishop under whose personal surveillance all mysteries must be performed. "Let no man do anything connected with the Church without the bishop. Let that be deemed a firm Eucharist which is under the bishop, or one to whom he has entrusted it." (Smyr. 8.) Only in case of necessity could the Eucharist be administered under the surveillance of a presbyter. This is clearly indicated by the fact that, "It is not lawful without the bishop either to

baptize or to celebrate an agape." (Ibid.) Such a claim that even the agape cannot be held without the bishop would be incomprehensible and extremely fantastic if it were not presupposed that in the thought and experience of St. Ignatius each liturgical center necessitated the existence of a bishop—that the relationship of one bishop to each liturgical center was an inseparable reality.

For a further clarification of the essential relationship of the office of one bishop to one Eucharistic center, St. Ignatius offers up the fact that the local unity of Christians in Christ *epi to auto* is clearly and visibly imaged by unity in the person, or office, of the bishop. Unity in the bishop is a living image of unity in Christ. "It is manifest, therefore, that we should look upon the bishop even as we would upon the Lord Himself." (Ign. Eph. 6.) "... take heed to do all things in the harmony of God with the bishop presiding in the place of God." (Mag. 6) " For when you are subject to the bishop as to Jesus Christ you appear to me to live not after the manner of men but according to Jesus Christ... " (Tral. 2.) "... let all reverence ... the bishop as Jesus Christ." (Ibid. 3.) "Wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." (Smyr. 8.) It is obvious beyond any doubt that St. Ignatius is here borrowing the concept of the bishop as the image of Christ from the liturgical practise of the Church. He never refers to the presbyters as icons of Christ or in the place of God as he no doubt would have had they been in communities without bishops the regular and proper

administrators of the mysteries and the center of local life in Christ epi to auto. On the contrary he always refers to them corporately in the plural as "presbyters" or "presbytery" in the place of the apostles (Mag. 6; Tral. 2, 3; Phil. 5; Smyr. 8.) and as a "council of God." (Tral. 3.) It would have been complete nonsense for Ignatius to compare the presence of the Catholic Church in Christ with the presence of the multitude in the bishop (Smyr. 8) if each local community did not possess a bishop. Is it possible that Ignatius believed that Christ is not present in all His glory in the Eucharist administered under a presbyter? This is hardly the case since he insists that "wherever Jesus Christ is there is the Catholic Church." (Smyr. 8.)

According to Ignatius the faithful are not saved through the bishop as an individual as such as having some sort of magical power. The Church as the very body of Christ has God Himself operating salvation in Christ by His Spirit in the corporate mysteries. Herein lies the whole theology of the "epiclesis" whereby the community is continuously vivified and justified by the Spirit in the life of love by the flesh of Christ, whereby the devil is continuously judged a false accuser and destroyed, and whereby the world is constantly reprovved of sin because of lack of such faith as would lead it to the community of salvation living by corporate love in Christ. (John 16:7-11.) The saving grace of God is His own uncreated energy because only He Who

has the power to create ex nihilo can vivify and thereby justify man by slaying the devil. Thus the bishop is the sine quo non of salvation, not as an individual as such, being some sort of magical means between God and man, but as the necessary center of corporate life in Christ epi to auto, to whom, together with the presbytery and diaconate, has been entrusted the faithful and correct administration of and teaching concerning the corporate mysteries. When St. Ignatius says of the bishop, presbytery, and diaconate, that "apart from them there is no Church" (Tral. 3), he clearly means that "apart from them there is no local community."

Within the framework of the above-mentioned presuppositions the reasons are apparent why Ignatius can most emphatically claim "he who does anything without the knowledge of the bishop worships the devil." (Smyr. 9.) "Flee, therefore, those evil offshoots which produce death-bearing fruit whereof if any one tastes he instantly dies." (Tral. 11.) The altar and the bishop are inseparable. He who is not subject to the bishop is outside of the altar. He who is outside of the altar is not subject to the bishop. "Let no man deceive himself: if any one be not within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two possesses such power, how much more that of the bishop and the whole Church! He, therefore, that does not assemble with the Church has already manifested his pride and condemned himself... Let us be careful, then, not to set ourselves in opposition to the bishop in order that we may

be subject to God." (Ign. Eph. 5.) "...one flesh, ...one cup, ...one altar, as there is one bishop..." (Ign. Phil. 4.)

As the center of unity in the mystagogical life the bishop is an absolute necessity for salvation. But his ministry is not something independent of the ministry of the faithful. The bishop obtains "the ministry which belongs to the community (or people - ten diakonian ten eis to koinon anakousan), not of himself, neither by men, nor through vainglory, but the love of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." (Ign. Phil. 1.) The representatives of one community to another are not appointed by the bishop, but elected by a council. "It is fitting, O most blessed in God Polycarp, to assemble a council most befitting of God and elect someone whom you greatly love ..." (Pol. 7.)

6) Relative observations concerning the origin and basis of the episcopate.

The idea that the bishop is now what the apostles once were is completely missing from the epistles of Ignatius. Peculiarly enough it is the presbyters who are always compared to the apostles. One finds in the thought of Ignatius a distinction between apostles and bishops. The apostles could command in a general manner, while the jurisdiction of a bishop is limited to one community.

"Shall I, when permitted to write on this point, reach such a height of self-esteem, that though being a condemned man, I should issue commands to you as if I were an apostle?" (Tral. 3: or according to the longer version, "I do not issue orders like an apostle.") "I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles; I am but a condemned man; they were free, while I am even until now a servant." (Ign. Rom. 4.) It is quite evident that Ignatius is here giving expression to the mentality and attitude of an age still living in the shadow of the great apostles not long dead, which are did not dare compare the office of a bishop with that of an apostle. For Ignatius the bishop is the liturgical center of a local group of faithful who gather together in love *epi to auto*. An apostle was one who traveled everywhere establishing Churches. St. Paul writes, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." (I Cor. 1:17.) St. Ignatius writes, "It is not lawful without the bishop either to baptize or the celebrate an agape." (Smyr. 8.) The origin of the episcopate cannot be understood when one compares bishops with apostles and tries to prove that they differ only in name. On the contrary, the source and basis for the episcopate is to be found in the liturgical practise of the Church and in the doctrine of the Church as defined in this same liturgical life and conditioned by the biblical doctrines of Christology and demonology. Only when one grasps the meaning of corporate communion of immortality and love through Christ *epi to auto* as the only condition for salvation, can

one understand the life and doctrine of the primitive Church.

Because all the faithful communicated at every Eucharist, and since it was necessary to maintain the various orders of catechumens and penitents, it is quite obvious that the presbytery and diaconate were absolutely necessary as concelebrants of the bishop and as a council to help in regulating the penitents, in preparing the catechumens, and in general ruling the community and teaching. What distinguishes the clergy from the rest of the community is not any individual power to administer the mysteries as intermediates between God and man. The whole community is the body of Christ in which God Himself operates salvation in the corporate mysteries. The special distinction of the clergy lay rather in its responsibility to keep the communicating members of the body of Christ from the pollution of the devil by properly regulating the entrance into the Church of new members through baptism by continuously preserving the life of the body by keeping beyond its limits the evil spirit of division and individualistic and ulterior motivations. The clergy are not over the local body, but themselves members of the local body who are given the special charisma of being the center of unity and the regulating force which protects and increases (Eph. 4, 11-13) the life of corporate love in Christ. To Polycarp Ignatius writes, "Maintain your position with all care ... preserve the unity than which

nothing is better." (Pol. 1.)

7) The basis for equality of bishops.

The origin of the patristic insistence on the equality of all bishops (e. g. St. Cyprian, *Sententiae Episcoporum*, op. 1) can be understood only in terms of the presuppositions 1) that the corporate eucharistic life locally manifested is an end in itself, 2) that individual communities are related to each other by their identity of existence in Christ, 3) that the fullness of Christ dwells in the faithful who gather together in the life of Christ *epi to auto*, and 4) that the episcopate is an inseparable part of this local life *epi to auto*. The order of the episcopate was not something that existed in itself, or itself, and over or apart from the local Church. It was definitely within the Church, and since the visible Church could be defined only in terms of the body of Christ locally manifested in its mystagogical life, the episcopate was definitely of local character. The existence of bishops in the smallest and remotest villages of the empire cannot be explained otherwise than in terms of the necessity to have a bishop and council of presbyters within and responsible for the life of each eucharistic center. Therefore bishops were equal because communities were equal. One local manifestation of the body of Christ could not be more body of Christ or less than another. Likewise

the living image of Christ (the bishop) could not be more image or less image than another image because Christ, whose image the bishops are, is identically One and Equal with Himself.

Communities without bishops appeared for the first time in large cities where the overgrown Christian population could not be accommodated any longer in one liturgical center. Whereas in the city of Alexandria the various liturgical centers at first had each a bishop (P. Trembelas, *Taxeis Cheirothesion kai Cheirotonion*, Athens 1949, p. 26-29, n.), in Rome not only were presbyters appointed to the different liturgical centers, but were originally not given permission to administer the Eucharist. Rather a portion of the already consecrated elements was sent from the bishop's liturgy to the faithful gathered together at the lesser centers. When finally the presbyters did receive permission to celebrate the liturgy, the bishop of Rome continued to send a portion of the consecrated elements from his own liturgy to be put into the chalices of the lesser eucharistic centers. This practise continued in Rome until the 14th century and did not completely disappear until 1870. (Dom G. Dix, *op. cit.* p. 21.) Thus the Churches in Rome very early lost the meaning of the Eucharist as an end in itself and vividly introduced the idea that the office of the bishop is rather something in itself and that somehow the elements consecrated at the bishop's liturgy were somewhat superior to those consecrated at the liturgy

of presbyters.

Most probably because of the initial refusal of the original city communities to install bishops in the newly-founded communities of the same city, it became normal in cities to have local Churches with presbyters celebrating the liturgy. When this became a normative practise in the big cities, the bishop of the city became much more authoritative than the village bishop who was still the bishop of one community. This, plus the fact that the bishop of the city was very influentially situated, obviously introduced the idea that he was somehow more important than the village bishop. Gradually the village bishop was deprived of some of his most important functions and subjected to the surveillance of the city bishop. "... even though they may have received episcopal ordination (cheirothesian) ... let them dare not ordain neither presbyters nor deacons without the city bishop to whom he and his village is subject." (Canon 10 of Antioch; Chrysostomos Papadopoulos, *Peri Chorepiscopon*, Athens 1935, p. 8-10). In the Church of North Africa of the late 4th century one could still find small village communities with a bishop and only one presbyter. (Canon 55 of Carthage, H. Alibizatos, *The Holy Canons*, Athens 1949, p. 254.) Progressively, however, St. Ignatius' conception of the bishop in terms of the local eucharistic life as an end in itself is either mitigated or completely forgotten, and the episcopate conforms to the political structure of the empire. Because the city

Churches had become accustomed to the existence of communities with presbyters celebrating the mysteries, it is obvious that the village bishop, having already been deprived of his rights to ordain his own presbyters and deacons, was in reality of no more importance than a presbyter of a city Church. Thus the city bishops could see no reason why the village Churches should have a bishop at all since the city communities were functioning quite well with presbyters. Therefore, "one must not establish bishops in the town and villages, but travelers: those, however, already established must do nothing without the opinion of the bishop in the city." (Canon 57 of Laodicia.) Very characteristic of the new mentality is the 6th canon of the Council of Sardica: "It is forbidden to simply establish a bishop in some town, or small hamlet, where only one presbyter suffices. For it is not necessary to establish bishops there, that the name and authority of the bishop may not be cheapened."

8) Concluding Remarks.

The ecclesiology of St. Ignatius rests exclusively and harmoniously upon the biblical teaching concerning salvation and its appropriation. The resurrected flesh and blood of God (Ign. Rom. 7; Eph. 1) is the only source of immortality, of unity with each other in Christ, and of

power to struggle for selfless love and simultaneously defeat the devil. Salvation is not magical. God Himself saves those who gather together in the life of selfless love with their clergy epi to auto. The visible Church is composed of those only who continuously share in the corporate eucharistic life. This life of selfless love for God and neighbor is an end in itself. Good works are not, therefore, performed for utilitarian motivations as part of a divine-human business, but rather are expressions of the struggle for selfless love, as well as a most effective weapon against Satan. God has no need of man's acts of charity. It is man who needs good works, prayer and fasting as a spiritual exercise for selfless love and as an effective means of remaining attentive and spiritually alert against the attacks of Satan. Justification by faith alone is a non-biblical myth (Eph. 6:11-17) of sentimental magic based on the false presupposition that salvation is primarily and essentially a matter of divine internal psychology. Beyond the life of unity centered in the corporate Eucharist as an end in itself there is no Church and only God can know if there is any salvation. Where the Church is not locally manifested and being formed by God epi to auto there is the rest humanity being carried to and fro by the prince of this world. "I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me." (John 17:9)

As all other things pertaining to the Church, the clergy also exists for the sole purpose of preserving and increasing the

life of unity and love epi to auto in the flesh and blood of Christ. "Maintain your position with all care ... preserve the unity, than which nothing is better." (Pol. 1.) The authority of the clergy is founded exclusively upon the mysteries of unity in Christ and not at all upon any imagined personal power of magic. The clergy as such cannot save. Only the resurrected flesh of Christ saves when received in unity and selfless love for each other epi to auto. Even within the corporate life of the mysteries it is Christ and not the Church that saves. The Church locally manifested is herself being saved by the Father Who continuously sends His Spirit to form the body of Christ gathered epi to auto. (epiclesis, John 16:7-11; I John 3:23.)

In the Constantinopolitan Synods of 1341 and 1351 (John Karmiris, *The Dogmatic and Symbolic Monuments of the Orthodox Catholic Church*, Athens 1952, vol. 1, p. 294ff.) the Orthodox Church vigorously condemned all magical understandings of salvation which might conceive of the saving grace or energy of God as something created, stored quantitatively within a so-called bank of grace, and distributed quantitatively through sacramental acts and indulgences, by proclaiming the biblical and patristic teaching that God Himself saves men directly by His own uncreated energy. The very basis of all Orthodox doctrine concerning Trinity, Christology, Ecclesiology, and Soteriology is the fact that God creates, sustains, and saves creation by created means, but by His Own life-giving

energy. Only God can be the source and subject of His uncreated energies. The divine energies are neither the essence of God (God is not *actus purus*), for this would mean that God acts by essence and not by will (pantheism), nor hypostatic (individual entities), for this would either reduce God to a mere platonic conglomeration of ideas, or to a neo-platonic source of emanating creatures, thereby confusing the Son and the Spirit with such creatures. (A good example of such views concerning divine energies may be found in the teachings of the heretics attacked by St. Irenaeus.) The divine energies are not creatures, but precisely the creating, life-giving, justifying, uncreated energy of God. Therefore grace cannot be manipulated and distributed by man who can only partake of this uncreated light of God in the corporate life of selfless love in the flesh of Christ locally manifested and formed by God Himself in real people *epi to auto*. This fact is extremely clear in the thought of St. Ignatius and is repeated by the whole patristic tradition of the East, and is especially re-emphasized by the anti-scholastic polemics of the 14th century.

The position of modern Orthodox theology, therefore, concerning ecclesiology cannot be dogmatically different from that of St. Ignatius. Unfortunately, however, the traditional doctrine of salvation and its appropriation has been in recent centuries much obscured by the invasion of many Western and especially Latin presuppositions used

dishonestly in a convenient way both to combat Protestantism and to justify nationalism which is another form of papism in so far as the limits of the Church are extended beyond the corporate mysteries to something else. Whereas in the 14th century Nicholas Cabasilas could say that "the Church is indicated in the mysteries" (Migne, P. G. t. 150, col. 452), many modern Orthodox think of the Church as something peculiar to their national character and identify her boundaries with those of the nation, and thereby the Church is reduced to some sort of national institution. Because in their conception the Church is of a wider range than the corporate life within the mysteries as an end in itself and more or less identical with the national character, it has become quite common to uncritically accept some form of the individualistic magical interpretations of Holy Orders common to the Roman and Anglican Churches. Since holy order, and especially that of the episcopate, are conceived of as something loosely connected to or almost detached from the corporate life of love *epi to auto*, it is only natural that the priesthood be interpreted as in itself having individual powers apart from the laity. Such an attitude has been further intensified by the heretical idea that all baptized Christians are members of the body of Christ even though they are hardly go to Church to communicate and have not the slightest desire to struggle for selfless love and fight the devil *epi to auto* as they solemnly swore in baptism.

In this day and age of Ecumenical discussions concerning Christian unity, when one sees heterodox seeking truth and admitting the theological sins of their fathers, Orthodoxy must make her contribution. She will never be able to do this, however, if she does not first drop her cultural, political, and national pretensions by keeping to her struggle against Satan *epi to auto*. Both Christian unity and dogmatic truth can come only by a profound understanding of who the devil is, what his methods are, and how he is destroyed by God in Christ by the Holy Spirit *epi to auto*. All dogma is implied in eucharistic experience, which in turn is the test of all heresy. "... our opinion is in accordance with the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn establishes our opinion." (Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, bk. IV, xviii, 5.) Heretical teachings concerning Trinity, Christology, Sin, Grace, Mysteries (sacraments), Ecclesiology, and even Mariology, etc., are indeed heresies because they overthrow the soteriological presuppositions of eucharistic life and thereby distort the meaning of the corporate life of love *epi to auto* in the resurrected flesh of Christ. The life-giving resurrected flesh of God is the anchor of faith and selfless love and is given to the faithful *epi to auto* by the Spirit of the Father. At each eucharistic gathering God gives us His uncreated life-giving energy to partake through the flesh of Christ and thus reveals Truth by His Holy Spirit. "For when He, the Spirit of Truth, comes, He will guide you into all truth ... for He shall receive of what is mine (most probably to be interpreted as

reference to His life-giving flesh) and disclose it unto you." (John 16:12-16.) Dogmatic truth is an ever-present and existential reality fully manifested by the Holy Spirit at every eucharistic gathering. The infallibility of the Church, expressed in Ecumenical Councils and elsewhere, is rooted in the very life of love *epi to auto*. Infallibility is a moral experience and so cannot be separated from the life of selfless love in the mysteries. Only God is infallible, and this the body of Christ shares directly and existentially in the corporate mysteries of unity wherein the very powers of falsehood and division are destroyed by God Himself Who by His Spirit forms His Son in those who believe in love. "For when you assemble frequently in the same place (*epi to auto*) the powers of Satan are destroyed and the destruction at which he aims is prevented by the unity of your faith." (Ign. Eph. 13.)

END

The so-called physical or psychosomatic magical doctrine of salvation misunderstood by Western theology in general. See my article "Original Sin According to St. Paul" *St. Vladimir's Quarterly*, New York 1955, Vol. IV, No. 1-2.

Augustine's acceptance of a utilitarian interpretation of love for neighbor is forced upon him because of his acceptance of the pagan principle of happiness as man's goal. Love of neighbor is a means to attaining happiness, not part of a struggle for selfless love. *De Doctrina*

Christiana, I, 20. The acceptance of such an interpretation of human destiny underlies Harnack's silly observations of the fact that in spite of baptism and participation in salvation in this life the voraugustinische Christians experienced not happiness in this life, as if this were what they striving for, because they had not that feeling of being the object of irresistible grace. Their frominigkeit war ein Schwanken zwischen Furcht und Hoffnung. Dogmengeschichte, Tuebingen, 1931, p. 293ff.

Canons 10, 11, 12 of First Ecumenical Council; 62 of the H. Apostles; Can. 1, 2, 3, etc., of Angyra; Canons 1, etc., of Peter of Alexandria. Enumeration system followed in this paper are those of H. Alibizatos, The Holy Canons, Athens, 1949.

Canon 11, Peter of Alexandria

It is exactly for this reason that the Thomists must limit real relations to the Trinity, for otherwise creation and God would be consubstantial. Because God is supposedly completely happy within Himself and is Actus Purus His actions toward the world cannot be uncreated. Therefore sanctifying grace must be of a created nature and the love of God for the world expressed not directly but through this created means, e.g. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, pt. 1, q. 43, art. 3. Thus the love of God for creation cannot be an immediate uncreated energy. This would entail pantheism. Therefore God can love the world only in the sense that He loves from all eternity the prototypes of creation which are of His essence. (Ibid. pt. 1, q. 20, art. 2,

obj. 2, reply 2.)

The basic presupposition of Chalcedonian Christology, "to aproslepton atherapeuton," which understands salvation as a destruction of Satan and death by the restoration of immortality to the world through the flesh of Christ, is foreign to the moralistic and juridical Western doctrines of atonement. It is interesting to note the tendency amongst some Protestants to conclude that Nestorius was not really a Nestorian. This is quite natural since both have a moralistic understanding of salvation

For a discussion of the term "dikaiosis" or "dikaiosyne" as God's vindicating the right, redressing wrong, and delivering men from the power of evil, see C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, London, 1932, p. 9-13.

The basic biblical presuppositions of the ancient Church that God does not create, sustain, and save by created means, rejected by Arians, Macedonians, and Nestorians, have been overthrown by the Roman doctrine that grace is created. Council of Vienna; Council of Trent, Sess. VI, Canon 11.

Compare this corporate understanding of Ignatius with Harnack's praise of Augustine. "Vor allem ... er hielt jeder Seele ihre Herrlichkeit und ihre Verantwortlichkeit vor, Gott und die Seele, die Seele und ihr Gott. Er fuchrte die religion aus der Gemelnde und kultusform in die Herzen als Gabe und Aufgabe hinein." Augustine retrograted, although not completely, back to theories of individualistic happiness, etc., common to all natural religions in one way

or another. It is for this reason that Harnack, who himself sought to find universal religion through and above any particular one, could say that, "Augustine hat in der religion die religion entdeckt." (op. cit. p. 292-293.)

First resurrection is that of Christ shared by the prophets, etc., who lived before Christ and in baptism and the mysteries by those after Christ and uninterrupted by death for those who are to share in the final victory.

The meaning of the Church as a continuous becoming through the corporate Eucharist *epi to auto*, is clearly manifested in the fact that even though the ancient Christians communicated daily at home from the reserved elements, it was considered an absolute necessity for them to be present at every corporate Sunday Eucharist even during times of intense persecution. Dom G. Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy*, Glasgow 1949, p. 141-155. Absence from the Eucharistic gathering because of fear was considered as proof that one had once again become a slave to the devil. This can be the only explanation of the ancient Church's practise of excommunicating even during persecutions those who abstained from the corporate life in the mysteries.

Compare St. Athanasius, Migne, P. G. t. 25, col. 260

Very interesting in this respect is a statement made by Polycarp about the presbyter Valens and his wife, "but call them back as suffering and straying members that you may save your whole body." *Epistle of Polycarp*, ch. XI.

The word *ecclesia* for Ignatius means a local community. Eph. sal., 5, 8; Mag. 1, 14, 15; Tral. sal., 3, 12, 13; Rom. sal., 9; Phil. sal., 10; Smyr. sal., 11; Pol. sal., 7, 8. the term "Catholic Church" has the same meaning as the term "to *katholikon*" used to designate the Church building of Orthodox monastic communities. In monastic usage it means the place of gathering where the faith according to all (*kath'* holous) is expressed and maintained in liturgical worship and communion. For Ignatius "Katholike *ecclesia*" designates the people themselves, that is, "the Church, or community according to all." In this term the identity of communities living in Christ is presupposed, as will become clearer in discussing the position of the bishop in the thought of St. Ignatius.

"Entha gar he kephale, ekei to soma; oudeni gar meso dieigetao he kephale to soma: ei gar dieirgeto, ouk an eie soma, ouk an eie kephale." St. J. Chrysostom, Migne, P. G., t. 62, col. 31.

Orthodox presbyters today are according to their function what the chorepiscopl were once they had been deprived of the right to ordain. In contrast to Western practise this is the only difference existing between bishops and presbyters in the East, viz: presbyters cannot ordain.

That man is justified by God in the eyes of God and not delivered from captivity to the devil who could be no more than the punishing agent. If Western theologians would rid themselves of their monothelite cosmologies and their happiness complexes maybe they would understand the

moral and ethical implications of the biblical and patristic doctrines of salvation from corruption and the devil, and cease putting forth the accusation that Eastern theology ignores the so-called moral problem of divine justice, wrath, etc. In reality it is the West that has forgotten the meaning attached to Satan and death by the biblical witness, and has made God's justice and happiness psychology in the image of fallen man by attributing to His essence moral attributes of corrupted human imagination.

According to Eastern patristic tradition the energies or activities of God are not of the immutable divine essence. The justice of God is His own saving energy operated and revealed fully in Christ. This is very clearly emphasized by the Palamite Councils of the 14th century. It is interesting to note that C. H. Dodd makes such a distinction in his interpretation of the term justice as used by Paul, *op. cit.* p. 9-10. The acceptance of the term justice according to its Greek usage, however, as a moral attribute of God's essence, accepted by Western theologies since Augustine, is rejected by the Greek Fathers who although Greek are biblical (Hebrew) in thought. See e. g. St. Basil, epistle 149, to Eustathius Chief Physician, ed. R. J. Deferrari, London 1930, p. 64-66.

Unlike the Slavic Churches the Greek Churches are not grouped according to national boundaries. Greek-speaking This is not to be interpreted as a disapproval of clerical participation in struggles for freedom.

Recommended Reading

- *The Holy Bible*
- Georges S. Florovsky, *Creation and Redemption*
- John Meyendorff, *Byzantine Theology*
- Constantinou, Eugenia. *Thinking Orthodox: Understanding and Acquiring the Orthodox Christian Mind*. Chesterton, Indiana: Ancient Faith Ministries, 2020.