

A COMMENTARY ON THE APOSTLE PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

According to the Homilies of St. John Chrysostom and other Fathers of the Church

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Glossary and Bibliography

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Glossary

apostolic succession: the power and authority passed on, in an unbroken chain, from Christ to the Apostles, to each succeeding Bishop of the Church through the ages, via the laying on of hands. The Apostles were the archetypes of Bishops (see Acts 1:20).

asceticism: The willing struggle through life to grow spiritually, in the image of Christ, to show love and faith and to prepare for eternal life in God's Kingdom, where holiness is required.

Bishop: From the Greek "episcopos," meaning overseer. A Bishop is the highest rank of the Christian priesthood, the shepherd of the flock of a particular diocese and spiritual father of the priests in that jurisdiction. Only a Bishop can ordain deacons and priests, with the power and authority received through Apostolic Succession. The terms Metropolitan, Archbishop and Patriarch are administrative titles held by Bishops elected to those offices of broader administrative rights and authority within the Church.

Chrismation: A Sacrament of the Church through which a person is anointed with Holy Myron (Chrism) and receives the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Decalogue: The Ten Commandments, also called the natural law, given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai for the instruction of His people.

Divine Liturgy: The word liturgy (Gr: leitourgia) means "work of the people." The Divine Liturgy, then, means the divine work of the people: the worship of God. This service has its roots in the Mystical Supper, which took place on the evening before Christ's Crucifixion: He broke bread saying: "Take eat, this is My Body," and passed wine saying: "Drink from...this My Blood" (Mt 26:26-28). From that day on, Christians have gathered regularly to receive His Body and Blood, read Scripture, pray, and sing hymns of praise and thanksgiving. This evolved into the Divine Liturgy of today.

economia: "...a timely and logically defensible deviation from a canonically established rule for the sake of bringing salvation either within or outside the Church."¹

Eucharist: From the Greek "eucharistia": thanksgiving. This term refers to Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of our Lord. As Christ gave thanks to God before offering His Body and His Blood to the Apostles, this word symbolizes thanksgiving for the salvation offered by our Savior through His Crucifixion and Resurrection and for the opportunity to continually renew our union with Him through this Sacrament.

Fathers of the Church: Important ecclesiastical writers of the past whose authority on matters of belief is "widely and indisputably accepted" and who are distinguished by "orthodoxy of belief, holiness of life, the approval of the Church, and antiquity."² While the age of the Fathers never really ends, for purposes of this work, the term is used generally for important Christian writers and teachers from the end of the first century to the end of the eighth. There is particular reverence, within this realm, for writers of the fourth century, especially Basil the Great, Gregory of Nazianzus, and John Chrysostom. No individual writer or teacher is considered infallible, but the faithful can be guided by the writings of the Fathers where they agree and speak with the Church as a whole.

free will: The gift from God to man and woman as part of being created in His image, the possession of which allows the choice to become like Him. Thus this gift grants freedom to choose one's own thoughts and actions and between good and evil. God has foreknowledge, so knows how what we will choose, but does not determine that choice. The most important choice to be made in life is whether or not we want to be part of His Kingdom.

grace: Divine power from God, a bit of His energies, given for purposes of sanctification.

Logos: Our Lord Jesus Christ (see Word of God).

Melchizedek: The mysterious eternal priest who appears suddenly to Abraham in Gen 14:18-20. Melchizedek was not a part of the Hebrew priesthood established with Moses' brother Aaron to offer sacrifices to God for the sins of His people, which was temporary. The Aaronic priesthood came to an end when Christ, the Lamb of God, the last living sacrifice, was crucified. With no known beginning and no known end, Melchizedek points to the eternal priesthood of Christ (Psalm 110:4), which ordained priests of the Orthodox Church carry on.

Mysteries: Vehicles through which God gives of Himself, His grace/energies. (See Sacraments.)

Orthodox Church: The historical Body (of Christ) established by Jesus to carry on His work, unchanged and undiluted since the Apostles, through apostolic succession. This universal Church became known as "Orthodox" in time, to distinguish it from those groups which had adopted "unorthodox" teachings and practices.

Paraclete: The Greek word meaning "Holy Spirit."

Priest: From the Greek "presbyter," meaning elder. A clergyman of the Church, ordained to carry on the eternal priesthood of Christ, after the order of Melchizedek (see word above, and Gen 14:18, Ps 110:4, Heb 5: 5-10, 7:11-28).

Prosphora (offering): The loaf of bread baked according to certain specifications in a prayerful manner and brought to Church as an offering. From this offering a portion is consecrated during the Divine Liturgy, becomes the Body of Christ, and is offered to the faithful along with consecrated wine, the Blood of Christ.

repentance: (Gr: metanoia). The sorrow one feels at having acted or reacted against the will of God. True repentance includes effort to change, so as not to repeat the offense.

Sacraments: more properly called Mysteries (Gr: Mysteria), they are outer symbols of inner grace received from God. Generally considered seven in number: Baptism, Chrismation (Confirmation), Eucharist, Repentance (Confession), Holy Orders, Holy Matrimony, and Unction (anointing of the sick). Some early Fathers of the Church mention only two, Baptism and Eucharist, but the other five were gradually recognized through the life of the Church. Some maintain that while these seven were clearly accorded the authority of Sacraments, there are other "actions in the Church which also possess a sacramental character, and which are conveniently termed sacramentals."³ In this category are the blessing of water at Epiphany, the service for the burial of the dead, blessing of homes, etc.

Second Coming of Christ: The return of Jesus Christ to earth as Judge. This event, the timing of which

no man knows, will mark the end of the world as we know it and the fulfillment of God's promises. The dead will rise with transfigured bodies, and everyone will live eternally, the life s/he has chosen and for which s/he has prepared.

Theosis: The spiritual process of deification, growing in union with God, through God's grace and man's willing efforts.

Theotokos: The title, meaning "God-bearer." Given to Mary, who bore in her womb, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the second person of the Holy Trinity (God, the Son).

Way, the: Those who were Christ's followers in the first days of the Church were said to be in "the Way" (to the Kingdom) (Jn 14:6).

word of God: Holy Scripture.

Word of God: The Son, Logos of God (Jn 1:1-4), who became man to make it possible for man to return to union with God.

¹ Patrinos, p.131.

² *ibid*, 172.

³ Ware. *The Orthodox Church*, p.276.

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