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JOHN CHRYSOSTOM'S UNDERSTANDING OF THE EUCHARIST
IN ITS RELATION TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

T H E S I S

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P R E F A C E

The task of furnishing an account of Chrysostom's understanding of the Eucharist in its relation to the christian life, was more easily accepted than carried out. In undertaking this task I felt sure that enough literature on the subject would be available to permit writing the thesis without difficulty. Such optimism was without foundation. A glance at the early church revealed that apart from occasional comments the historical literature consulted dealing with the church, its laws, doctrines and liturgies, was practically unproductive. They were either so brief or so technical to be totally futile. Consequently most of the conversation has been between Chrysostom and myself with Chrysostom doing most of the talking.

The conversation has included a number of other church fathers, both Eastern and Western, but their contributions are limited to statements of agreement or disagreement with Chrysostom. I have not developed their theologies, but only introduced their thoughts to indicate Chrysostom's theological standing in its historical and theological context.

All translations of Chrysostom's work come from the Library of the Fathers, except where otherwise stated. Where the word 'altered' has been added, the reference is to the translation.

I would like to thank Daphne Muller for revealing the obvious to me, viz. that the body of Christ also consist of women and that my language should express it. Finding terms such as personhood and humankind rather cumbersome I have chosen to use the term Man,

the capital indicating the inclusion of men and women, instead.

I would like to express my grateful appreciation to Prof. John N. Suggit for his patience and valuable suggestions, without which the work would have been a great deal poorer.

Also to my mother, Mrs. M.C. van Dyk, a big word of thanks for her diligent and meticulous typing, retyping and proof reading.

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ABBREVIATIONS

- MONIF. THE MONIFAUCON SERIES OF CHRYSOSTOM'S
CATECHETICAL HOMILIES.
- PG J.P. MIGNE; PATROLOGIA GRAECA
- PK THE PAPADOPOULOS KERAMEUS SERIES OF
CHRYSOSTOM'S CATECHETICAL HOMILIES.
- PL J.P. MIGNE; PATROLOGIA LATINA
- STAV THE STAVRONIKITA SERIES OF CHRYSOSTOM'S
CATECHETICAL HOMILIES.
-

A B S T R A C T

The aim of this thesis is to reveal the intimate relationship between John Chrysostom's Eucharistic theology and the christian life, and that at the Eucharist Man's true being is demonstrated.

It investigates Chrysostom's exegetical and oratorical method in order to ascertain how he approached a text and how he delivered his understanding of it. He is a representative of the Antiochene School of Exegesis and his fame as a preacher was a result not so much of his oratorical construction, but of the underlying spiritual unity within the oration. The purpose of all his preaching and exegesis was to evoke a moral response from his hearers.

In the consecration of the elements, Chrysostom displayed a remarkable openness to the varying traditions. He saw reciting the words of institution and invoking the Spirit as effecting consecration. Not only this, but also the moral life of the congregation played its part in effecting consecration. Once the elements had been consecrated, Christ was sacrificed, symbolically and literally, not again but in memory (ἀνάμνησις) of the Passion, which thereby becomes a present reality.

In Chrysostom's understanding of the real presence he displays yet again an openness to the traditions. Christ is both present symbolically through the elements and literally through the transformation of the elements. The real presence demanded of the communicant a high degree of morality.

To approach the Table on which Christ lay demanded a life of virtue, not only from the individual communicant but from the whole community. Those who partook of the Feast worthily received their true identity, viz. Christ. Those who partook unworthily imitated Judas and shared his fate.

The community had to approach the Table in unity. At the Table, however, the community received its unity from Christ, the community became the body of Christ. Through participation and becoming the body of Christ, the community was united with the Godhead. Schism, therefore, was a very serious sin for it tore the body of Christ apart.

For Chrysostom, Christ was also present in and intimately united with the poor. The church had to be able to be aware of Christ's presence in the poor and be responsible toward Him. In giving to the poor, the communicant acknowledged what he/she had received at the Table and also received his/her salvation from Christ through the poor.

The whole Eucharistic feast not only fed the christian with spiritual food, but called the communicant away from gross materialism to a life-giving dependance on God. It called the communicant to give to others as he/she had received from Christ.

INTRODUCTION

Chrysostom was born about 347 AD at Antioch, where he acquired fame as a student and speaker in the school of the pagan rhetorician, Libanius. He was baptized in 370 AD and abandoned the world to take up the study of the scriptures as both monk and hermit, but the rigours of his ascetic behaviour undermined his health and forced his return to Antioch. On his return in 381 AD, he was ordained deacon by Meletius, Bishop of Antioch, and served in this capacity until 386 AD when he was ordained priest by Bishop Flavius. As priest, his outstanding career as an exegete, preacher and moralist began.

In 397 AD he was elevated to the patriarchate of Constantinople and was immediately brought into a mire of intrigue, both political and ecclesiastical. Always standing firm on principle, but often lacking the prudence of the worldly-wise, Chrysostom did much to alleviate the plight of the downtrodden masses, to reform the clergy and to make enemies in high places. Among the ecclesiastical hierarchy, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, was his sworn enemy. At court the empress Eudoxia dedicated herself to bring about his downfall. Theophilus's longstanding resentment towards him exploded when Chrysostom offered hospitality to the monks of Nitria, whom Theophilus had excommunicated. In 403 AD Theophilus summoned an illegal synod, the Synod of the Oak, packed it with his own Egyptian bishops and demanded that Chrysostom appear before it. Chrysostom refused to appear and was deposed from his see in absentia on trumped-up charges. Theophilus pressed for his exile and Eudoxia agreed.

Chrysostom was immediately recalled from exile when the people of Constantinople threatened to riot. Chrysostom soon demonstrated his lack of worldly wisdom when he criticized Eudoxia, allegedly calling her a Jezebel. He was subsequently sent into exile again for the last time in 404 AD.

In a desperate bid to have himself reinstated, Chrysostom appealed to Rome, and Innocent I, with the co-operation of Honorius, the Western emperor, ordered that a new Synod be held. The papal envoys, however, on arrival at Constantinople, were thrown into prison, with the result that the Synod never convened and Innocent broke off communion with Constantinople. The rift was not healed until after Chrysostom's death, when his name was restored to honour by being included in the Diptychs.

Even in exile, Chrysostom maintained contact with his flock through correspondence and over 200 letters have come down to us. Friends also visited him at his first place of exile, Cucusus in Armenia. He was deprived of this consolation when he was ordered to move to the remote place of Pityus, six hundred sea miles across the Black Sea from Constantinople, but the trip into exile had to be made over land across three mountain ranges and numerous rivers. The ageing Chrysostom did not survive the rigours of the marches of his military escort and three years after leaving Constantinople, he died on 14 September 407 AD. In the chapel of the martyr, Saint Basilus, the last words to come from the 'golden mouth' were: 'Glory to God from whom all blessings come.'

Chrysostom's theology has a constant practical outworking. He refuses to let it remain only in the realm of abstract ideas, but constantly expounds the theological dogma and then immediately seeks ways in which the dogma should influence the moral life of the christian. For him all of God's actions demanded a response from Man. God has acted, therefore Man must respond accordingly. This is particularly true in his treatment of the holy Eucharist. Here the doctrines of the consecration of the elements, the real presence, the sacrifice of Christ, and unity in Christ have a profound influence on the lives of the communicants; for Christ has given himself to nourish, sustain and unite the communicants, also to call them by example to give themselves to each other, and particularly to the poor. All the actions of the communicants should be motivated by the action of God, God has given Christ to the church, the church receives Him at the Eucharist, the church is called to share Him with the world. By receiving Christ and sharing Him with others, Chrysostom believes Man becomes truly human. This is the goal of the Eucharist, to bring Man into being one with Christ. This is what Chrysostom continually tried to make Man see.

I. EXEGETICAL AND ORATORICAL METHOD.

John of Constantinople was given the nickname Chrusostomos, meaning "golden-mouth", in the seventh century which was universally accepted in the eighth century. It has now become a surname. In a sense the name has its ill effects as well as good, for it has stereotyped John of Constantinople as a preacher, often at the expense of his exegetical reputation. For the man with the "golden-mouth" was also gifted with a keen eye to fathom the depths of Scripture. Jaraslov Pelikan was correct in commenting that 'Chrysostom's homilies deserve a place alongside those of Augustine and Luther.' (1967:28-29). Thomas Aquinas was quoted as claiming that 'he would exchange the city of Paris for Chrysostom's commentary on Matthew'. (Quinn 1962:140).

What influences played important roles in the development of Chrysostom's exegesis? The earliest influence on Chrysostom's thought was his mother, Anthusa. She was widowed soon after his birth and spared no effort to train John in the Christian faith. Anthusa was to Chrysostom what Monica was to St. Augustine, although Chrysostom, unlike Augustine, had a religious disposition from his youth.

The "golden-mouth" received formal instruction from Libanius, who was the chief rhetorician and sophist of the day. Under the careful eye of Libanius, Chrysostom learnt and perfected the art of rhetoric. To the Greeks the quality of a speech was not determined by the content, but by the manner in which it was spoken. Chrysostomus Baur states: "To be able to make a good speech was much more important in the fourth century among the speech-happy Greeks than the whole sum of their hard-earned intellectual training." (1959:10). For Chrysostom, however, the 'preaching is not meant for just amusement'. (Hom in Act XXIII; PG 60:179). His preaching was aimed primarily at

replacing the hearer's vice with virtue. Although Chrysostom was well schooled in the art of rhetoric, he was not an orator in the vein of Demosthenes, Cicero and Bourdaloue. Their speeches were well constructed theses that worked towards an ultimate goal. Chrysostom's sermons do not demonstrate this type of structural unity. They consist of a number of more or less completed parts with the flimsiest bonds between the parts. Sometimes his treatment of a point is extremely sketchy, sometimes his repetitions become tedious; sometimes he announces a topic and then proceeds to abandon it for some other. Yet his sermons, though lacking in structural unity, always have an intellectual and spiritual unity. There is never a digression, never a detail which swerves away from the ultimate goal; that of changing a moral standing of his hearers and confirming their faith. His excellent preaching, however, did not always have the desired effect. He would often complain that the congregation never paid attention to the content. 'Well', he said, 'I know that I say these things in vain, yet I will not cease to say them'. (Hom in 1 Cor XXVII; PG 61:232; Hom in I Cor XXXVI; PG 61:314). Yet not always was the congregation's attention poor. 'On the subject of attention in hearkening, it is superfluous to exhort you any more, so quickly have you shown by your actions the effects of my advice.' (Hom in Joh III; PG 59:37). It was through the training of Libanius that Chrysostom's ability was developed to the extent that he became one of the most accomplished orators of his day. Sozomen tells us: 'When Libanius was approaching death, his friends asked him whom he would prefer to have as his successor, he answered: "John, if the Christians had not stolen him".' (HE 8,2; PG 6:1513).

While Libanius taught John rhetoric, the monks south of Antioch,

taught him the true philosophy. In one of the latest of his letters, he alludes to a young student of Theology entrusted to his care as 'practising the true philosophy.' (Epist. LXVII; PG 52:646). Philosophy, for Chrysostom, consists in disregard of worldly things, in love of mankind, and giving alms. This true philosophy was acquired through meditation on the scriptures. While a monk, Chrysostom committed large portions of Scripture to memory, which accounts for his sometimes rather free quotation from Scripture.

From the influence of his mother and from his years as a monk, Chrysostom received two invaluable contributions as an interpreter of Scripture: love for the Bible and familiarity with every part of it. Through his knowledge of Scripture, Chrysostom received his theological training, particularly from St. Paul. He developed an intimate relationship with the writings of Paul and encouraged others to share in this relationship.

As I keep hearing the Epistles of the blessed Paul read, ..., gladly do I enjoy the spiritual trumpet, and get roused and warmed with desire at recognising the voice so dear to me, and seem to imagine him all but present to my sight, and behold him conversing with me. But I grieve and am pained, that all people do not know this man, as much as they ought to know him; but some are so far ignorant of him, as not even to know for certainty the number of his epistles. (Hom in Rom I; PG 60: 391; altered.)

'Indeed' states Mersch, 'John was impressed by the Apostle's vigorous inculcation of his truth. He remarks how Paul is always on the alert for the strongest and most decisive expressions, how he shrinks from

no formula, even though it may make his audience shudder, and how his constant thought is to show that Christians have all things in common with the Saviour.' (1938:324). Chrysostom was so impressed with Paul's insistence that he could not refrain from imitating him. A good example is to be found in his treatment of Galatians 3:28.

What an insatiable soul! He has just said, 'You have all become sons of God by faith.' But he does not stop at this, he wishes to say more, to express more clearly the intimacy of our union with Christ. Even after he has said, 'you have put on Christ,' he is not satisfied with the phrase; he explains it, and in doing so describes a closer union still: 'You are all one person in Christ Jesus.' All of you have but one form, one likeness, which is Christ's. Could one find a more astounding declaration? (In Gal comment, cap 3; PG 61:656; Mersch 1938:325).

Chrysostom, as seen above, has appropriated Paul's thought and style. Through his method of progressive repetition, he manages to home in on the truth and drive it to its ultimate conclusion. This is characteristic of Chrysostom as it is characteristic of all effective eloquence.

J.H. McIndoe has claimed that the chief merit of Chrysostom was that he did not turn from the simple sense of Scripture to the use of allegory. (1965:23). The primary reason for Chrysostom's method of exegesis was the instruction of Diodore, who supervised his study at the monastery. Diodore was the founder of the Antiochene school of exegesis, although not its initiator. It is generally agreed that Eustathius, Bishop of Antioch and predecessor of Meletius, was the initiator of the school. It is more likely, however, that it was Lucian of Antioch. Lucian was known for his exegetical skill,

particularly his passion for a literal interpretation of the text and his aversion to high flown exegesis. Eustathius was more than likely influenced by him. Be that as it may, Diodore took the principle from Eustathius and he and his two pupils (Chrysostom and Theodorus) carried it out more fully and systematically. The School of Antioch's chief distinction lay not so much in its tenets, as in its mode of interpreting Scripture, which was opposed to the mystical or allegorical method adopted by the earlier Fathers, and recommended by the high authority of Origen.

Allegory and typology were the two major methods in which Scripture was approached during the Fourth Century. In allegorical exegesis, Scripture was treated as a symbol, or allegory, of spiritual truths. The literal, historical sense, if it was regarded at all, played a very limited role, and the aim of the exegete was to elicit a moral or spiritual meaning which each passage, indeed each phrase and every word, was presumed to contain. A classical example is found in Augustine's treatment of the parable of the Good Samaritan. (Quaest. Evang; 2:19; PL 35:1327; Kelly 1977:70). According to Augustine the traveller represents Adam, Jerusalem the heavenly city from which he fell, Jericho stands for his resulting mortality, the thieves for the devil and his angels, the priest and the Levite for the failing ministrations of the Old Covenant, the Samaritan is Christ and the Inn is the church.

Godfrey Ashby has noted that different approaches to Scripture were determined by different understandings of Christ. 'A school of thought', he states, 'which was prepared to fight for the one nature in Christ, in which man was rescued and almost forcibly divinised is

going to be prepared to accept Scripture as having been expressly written in order to be jerked out of its context and given a spiritual meaning that has escaped from the trammels of its ordinary obvious meaning.' (1977 : 21). This was generally the Alexandrian approach.

Antioch, on the other hand, stressed the humanity of Christ. The theologians of Antioch thoroughly and realistically acknowledged the human life and experience of the Incarnate Lord. They also realised the theological significance of Christ's human soul. Antioch was basically responsible for bringing back the historical Jesus. With this stress on the humanity of Christ, Antioch naturally reacted vigorously against the allegorisms of Alexandria. Its chief theologians concerned in this were Diodore of Tarsus (c330-390), and Theodoret (c393-c460), the chief protagonist being Diodore. Socrates writes of his hermeneutical method saying that he wrote many treatises in which he limited his exposition to the literal sense of Scripture, without attempting to explain that which was mystical.' (Socr. VI:3). It is not said that he 'denied', but 'shrank from their mysterious significations.' (Socr. VI:3). For this school 'the true key to the deeper spiritual message where this was not already fully explicit, as in genuine prophecy, was what they called insight (*θεωρία*). By this they meant the power of perceiving, in addition to the historical facts set out in the text, a spiritual reality to which they were designed to point For *θεωρία* to operate they considered it necessary

- (a) that the literal sense of the sacred narrative should not be abolished,

- (b) that there should be a real correspondence between the historical fact and the further spiritual object discerned, and
- (c) that these two objects should be apprehended together, though of course in different ways. (Kelly 1977 : 76).

Adhering to the literal meaning definitely did not mean remaining on a superficial level. Chrysostom points out that one had to dig deep to discover the meaning of Scripture. (De Mut Nom II; PG 51; 125-6). The emphasis on the literal meaning of Scripture was to safeguard the text from being torn out of context. Although Chrysostom, like the other Fathers, saw Christ in many of the Old Testament texts, he never lost sight of the fact that a text spoke from a definite context. Stephens notes that 'one of his principles is that sound doctrine could not be extracted from holy Scripture, but by a careful comparison of many passages not isolated from their context. Allegorical interpretations were by no means to be rejected, but to be used with caution; men too often made the mistake of dictating what Scripture should mean instead of submitting to be taught by it : they introduced a meaning instead of eliciting it.' (1883:423).

In his excitement Chrysostom falls into the error, less common in him than in other patristic interpreters, of seeing direct references to the Messiah and the Messianic Kingdom, to the total exclusion of any other meaning. For instance, such passages as, 'Their sound is gone out into all lands', he sees exclusively as the prediction of the propagation of the Christian gospel. In other passages he is misled by his ignorance of Hebrew, and a too literal adherence to the Septuagint translation. In the passage, 'I will make them officers in peace and your overseers (ἐπισκοποι) in righteousness.' (Isaiah 60 : 17).

Thine 'extractors' being rendered in the Septuagint bishops or overseers, he extracts from this word a direct reference to the Christian priesthood.

The Antiochenes were not bound strictly to a literal interpretation, but were cautious when it came to speculation. 'We do not forbid', Diodore writes, 'the higher interpretation and theoria, for the historical narrative does not exclude it, but is on the contrary the basis and substructure of loftier insights We must, however, be on our guard against letting the theoria do away with the historical basis, for the result will not be theoria but allegory.' (Kelly 1977:76f).

The practical illustrations of the Antiochene method are to be found in the sermons of John Chrysostom. He makes extensive use of typology. In his sermons taken from the Gospels of Matthew and John, for example, Chrysostom used typology at least thirteen times, five times in John and eight times in Matthew ⁽¹⁾. In one sermon, after explaining that "Joshua" and "Jesus" were the same names, he represents Joshua as a type of Jesus: 'Thus he is called Jesus, who, after Moses, brought the people into the land of promise. Have you seen the type? Behold the truth that led into the land of promise, this into heaven ... ; that, after Moses was dead, this after the law had ceased, that as a leader, this as a king.' (Hom in Matt II; PG 57 :26). John's attitude toward typology is demonstrated in his paraphrasing of John 8:32. He states: 'You shall know the truth, that is, shall know Me, for I am the truth. All the Jewish matters were types, but you shall know the truth from me, and it shall make you free from your sins.' (Hom in Joh VIII; LIV PG 59:297). All

that had gone before Christ were shadows of the truth, they were only types of the real. In Christ the truth was added to all the types. Everything had to be re-interpreted in the light of Christ. Thus Chrysostom says: 'There was a sanctification, and there is a sanctification: there was a baptism, and there is a baptism: there was a sacrifice, and there is a sacrifice; ... and so too there was a grace, and there is a grace. But the words in the first case are used as types, in the second as realities, preserving the sameness of sound, though not of sense.' (In Joh Hom XIV; PG 59:93). 'Therefore, I say, where the type is, there he puts the truth.' (In Matt Hom LXXXII; PG 58:738).

Chrysostom's use of typology is particularly evident when he refers to the Eucharist. All the feasts of the Jews, particularly the passover, are now superseded by the Christian feast. If the sacrifice of the Jewish lamb was powerful, even more now is Jesus who is the truth. In his "Baptismal Instructions" he points out how the truth replaces the shadow.

Do you wish to know the power inherent in this blood? Let us go back to what prefigured it, to the ancient stories in Egypt. God was about to bring the tenth plague on the Egyptians. He wished to destroy the first-born of the Egyptians, because the Egyptians were keeping captive his first-born people. What did he do to prevent the Jews from being struck down together with the Egyptians, since they were both in the same place? Learn the power of the type, that you may learn the strength of the truth. If the type had such strength in the Hebrew's temple and in the midst of Egypt when it was smeared on the doorposts, the truth has far more strength. (STAV 3:13, Harkins 1963:60).

Chrysostom continues and argues that the blood of the passover lamb has power only because it prefigures Christ. 'Can the blood of an irrational animal save Man who has reason? "Yes", he (Moses) says. "Not because it's blood, but because it pre-figures the Master's blood".' (STAV III 14 : Harkins 1963:60). It is Jesus who for Chrysostom gives meaning to the rituals of the past, who comes and gives them greater depth. Apart from the Master, Man still runs in the shadows.

Chrysostom generally steers clear of allegorical interpretations. Commenting on Ps 149 he says: 'There are some who understand the words of Ps 149 - "Let them make music to God with drum and harp" - in a spiritual sense. For them the drum means bodily mortification, the harp means meditation on heavenly things. But I think the words simply mean that God takes account of our human condition and allows us to use those instruments when we joyfully sing praises to His glory.' (Exposit in Psalm 149; PG 55:494; Atwater 1959:175). On certain occasions, however, he seemed to get bogged down in allegory. The most significant reference to allegory comes in the homily regarding Matthew's version of the healing of the Gadarene demoniac. When he came to explain the transfer of the demons into the swine (Mt 8:30-32), he told his congregation that they could interpret the event by allegory if they wished. Chrysostom conceded: 'For the history indeed is this, but we are to know assuredly, that the swinish sort of men are especially liable to the operations of the demons. And as long as they are men that suffer such things, they are often able yet to prevail; but if they become altogether swine, they are not only possessed, but are also cast down the precipice.' (Hom in Matt XXVIII; PG 57:355). Here is a clear example of the fact that even

Chrysostom, whom Pelikan called 'an enemy of overly imaginative allegorization', (1967, 16) could fall into the area of allegorical speculation.

It must be noted that although it is valid and necessary to distinguish between different schools of patristic exegesis, notably the Alexandrian with its bias toward allegory, and the Antiochene with its passion for literalism, it should not be pressed to the extreme that one overlooks the underlying unity. At the deeper level of typology, they were united in believing that what Origen called (Hom. in Ierem 10.4; PG 13:362) 'the Jewish mystery (or dispensation) in its entirety' was, as it were, a rehearsal of the Christian mystery. (Kelly 1977, 72). Both schools borrowed from each other yet maintained their distances and distinctions. It is also dangerous to speak of the School of Antioch as already, i.e. in the fourth century, having established a systematic Christology and a definite method of exegesis. This was only to come in the fifth century. It is in the fourth century that the Antiochene Christology and exegetical method began to take shape. Until the fifth century so-called Antiochene Christology existed side by side with Alexandrian Christology in Antioch. This is most probably why Chrysostom's Christology does not fall into the typical (i.e. fifth century) Antiochene mould.

Chrysostom is noted for his outspoken nature. He never beat around the bush but went straight to the problem. This character trait was to cost him his life when he criticised Eudoxia and allegedly called her a Jezebel. This was his attitude towards problems in the New Testament as well, clearly evident in his treatment of the discrepancies in the four gospels. He never ignored the differences

but faced them squarely in his sermons. Indeed, he believed that discordance was an indication of the truth of the gospels:

'For if they had agreed in all things exactly even to time, and place, and to the very words, none of our enemies would have believed, but that they had met together and had written what they wrote by some human compact' (Hom in Matt III; PG 57:16). In facing the discrepancies, Chrysostom never got stuck in the miry bog of detail but homed in on to the greater truth.

Chrysostom never managed to solve all the difficult passages in the Bible. When he came to Matthew 16:28, he faced a problem too large to tackle. He could have used Origen's interpretation, but did not. In fact, he rejected all interpretations and completely ignored the passage. He immediately continued on to the story of the transfiguration. (Hom in Matt. LVI; PG 58:549).

While he was a deacon (c381-c386) Chrysostom saw the relationship between Scripture, worship and Christian charity. The duty of the deacons was to take care of the holy table and its furniture, to administer the cup to the laity but not to the priests nor the bishop, and occasionally read the Gospel. Their particular duty, however, within the service was to call the attention of the people to every new movement of the liturgy. They proclaimed or bid prayer, they announced each part of the service as it unfolded. For example in the Liturgy of St. Mark after the deacon has called the people to prayer, he introduces the topic (πρὸς ἐξήρασις ὑπὲρ τοῦ βασιλείου) after which the people responded with Κύριε ἑλέησον and the priest prays for the subject introduced. The deacon would also announce the readings

and call the congregation to stand (Ἐτάθητε ἀκούσωμεν τοῦ ἁγίου εὐαγγελίου). Together with this went the duty of caring for the sick, the poor and those who had been bereaved. It is most probably while a deacon that Chrysostom developed his great passion for the poor and the suffering. In the splendour of the city of Antioch, there was great poverty. In worship and Scripture the believers are called to unity, yet the rich dominated the poor. Chrysostom saw the need to spread the love that one received in worship with the brethren, and especially with the poor.

The reading of Scripture was not just to provide a basis for a sermon. It called people to hear and to obey the will of God with good works (Si esurierit inimicus; PG 51:179). Christians prayed for God to open their hearts, ears and eyes so that they could see the will of God and obey it. (Orat II; PG 63:923-4).

While priest and archbishop, Chrysostom would employ his eloquence and biblical expertise to call the faithful and unfaithful to greater virtue. His sermons are extremely practical, always showing how the great truths of the faith related to the Christian life.

So when Chrysostom speaks of the love of God, he does not speak of it as a mighty doctrine of the Church which must be held in tension with other great doctrines such as the wrath of God, the oneness of God, the trinity of the Godhead, and so forth. He speaks of it essentially in practical, fundamental terms. He speaks of it, not as something which is asserted by the Church, and which, because of this, men are compelled to believe. He speaks of it rather as something which is known as a result of experience: "Men are utterly wicked and sinful, and yet God has deemed to send His beloved Son into the world to die on a cross

in order that men might be made worthy of eternal fellowship with him - is not this the greatest love that is possible to show?". This is the approach of Chrysostom, and with him this always leads to exhortation to live according to God's holy law: If this is the extent of God's love for us, are we not bound to respond? The love of Jesus leaves us no alternative. (Ottosson 1965, 316).

II. UNDERSTANDING OF MAN

For Chrysostom people are by no means in the state that they are called to be. For him the human race is struggling in mud instead of soaring above like the eagles. This is because people are too concerned with temporal matters and ignore matters of eternal significance. 'For the terrible thing and that which subverts all good is this, that while we are fearful about trifles, we care not for important matters.' (Hom in Joh LXXII; PG 59:394). Being 'fearful about trifles' is as a result of believing that this temporal life is eternal. For Chrysostom humanity can only be redeemed and brought into the fullness of life once people realise that they have to face death. Salvation could only begin once people realised that they are mere mortals. 'My (Jesus) word to you is, "not only is it hurtful to thee, and destructive, to hinder Me and to be displeased at My Passion, but it will be impossible for you even to be saved, unless you yourself too be continually prepared for death".' (Hom in Matt. IV; PG 58:542; altered). It was against this self-sufficient arrogance of people that Chrysostom struggled. He continually attempted to show people that there was a great deal more to life than the present. Palladius quotes him as saying: 'This present life is a journey; its joys and its sorrows are always passing on. What we see before us is a bazaar. We finish our buying and selling and move elsewhere.' (Meyer 1985; 53). By fixing one's eyes on the future hope rather than on immediate temporal gain, did a person appropriate God's salvation. To Chrysostom's disappointment, however, people were not willing to take their eyes off the temporal. He subsequently in a desperate bid to show people their mortality said: 'Consider, when you sleep, of what worth are you. Is not even a little beast able to destroy you?'. (Hom in II Thes. I; PG 62:472; altered). The realisation that man was to move elsewhere, was the beginning of

salvation, without it man remained in the mud of self-sufficiency.

For the person who wallowed in self-sufficient arrogance is less than human. This person had lost that quality that made him/her human, viz. his/her dependence on God. Chrysostom reflects the Greek view of man as λογικός i.e. sharing in the λόγος, which for the Christian is Christ Himself. This is aptly demonstrated in his christology which is governed entirely by his defence against the Arian denial of Christ's soul. His chief christological concern is 'the transcendence and the consequent immutability of the divine essence' of Christ. (Grillmeier 1975 : 419). Even when he is stressing the humanity of our Lord against the Manicheans and the docetists his emphasis lies on the divinity of Christ. 'Our doctrine is this, namely that God has prepared for Himself a holy temple (ναὸν ἁγίον) through which He has transported the life of Heaven into our life' (In diem natal 6; PG 49:359. Hay 1959 : 304). Chrysostom is not interested in the humanity of Christ. While acknowledging the human soul of Christ he does very little to give it any theological significance. The human soul of Christ is overshadowed by the presence of the λόγος. This is particularly true of his human knowledge. Because the λόγος dwelt in Christ, there was no need for knowledge to be mediated to Christ's human spirit by human sense experience. 'Nowhere in his writings does Chrysostom give any indication that Christ possessed a distinct human knowledge.' (Hay 1959:305). This is also true of Christ's will. The λόγος decides for Christ. 'The decision to accept the redemptive suffering stems from the divine will of the Logos. In the writings of Chrysostom, no human act of Christ's will is involved here - as in the Alexandrian Athanasius! This

interpretation of Christ's spiritual activity seems to have come easily for him. Knowing and willing are indeed spiritual acts for which there seemed to be an adequate principle in the spiritual Logos.¹ (Grillmeier 1975:419).

This domination of the human spirit of Christ by the Logos made an interpretation of the feelings and purely physical experiences of Jesus' human nature very difficult. Chrysostom wished to acknowledge the reality of the ἐκονομία i.e. the incarnation, however much he stressed the divinity of Christ. Unfortunately he does not succeed very well in reconciling his two aims.

I have never left the assumed humanity unharmonized with the divine operation (οὐδαμῶς τὴν ἀναληφθεῖσαν ἀνθρωπότητα τῆς θείας ἐνεργείας ἑμικτεν ἀπελέλοιπα),
(acting) now as man, now as God, both indicating the nature, and bringing faith to the economy; teaching that the humbler things are to be referred to the humanity, and the nobler to the divinity, and by this unequal mixture of actions, interpreting the unequal union of the natures (διὰ τῆς ἁνιόσου ταύτης τῶν ἔργων κρῆσεως τὴν ἁνιόσου τῶν φύσεων ἑνωσῶν ἐμνηνέουσιν)
and by (my) power over sufferings, declaring that my own sufferings are voluntary; as God I curbed nature, supporting a fast for forty days, but afterwards, as man, I was hungry and tired; as God, I calmed the raging sea, as man I was tempted by the devil; as God, I expelled devils, as man I am about to suffer for men."
(In quatrid. Lazarum 1; PG 50:642-3; Hay 1959:310).

Even though Christ acts as man, his actions are controlled by the Divine Person in such a way that they bring faith to the economy without overshadowing the divine nature. The human actions of Christ

are limited to the sub-rational sphere. Thus in this picture of Christ the purely spiritual divine activity of the Logos and the sub-rational activity of the emotions and the senses are set in opposition to each other. This is illustrated in Chrysostom's treatment of Christ's prayer in Gethsemane:

Consequently, in saying, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," and, "Not as I will, but as you will." He indicates nothing else than that He is truly clothed with flesh which fears death; for to fear death, and to hesitate and to have horror of it, is a property of this (i.e. the flesh). Sometimes, therefore, He leaves it destitute and deprived of His own operation ($\gamma\epsilon\mu\iota\eta\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \delta\iota\kappa\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma\ \epsilon\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\lambda\gamma\iota\alpha\varsigma$) in order that, having shown its weakness,

He might bring faith to its nature; sometimes He hides this same weakness in order that you may learn that He is not a mere man Therefore He varies and mingles both words and actions, that no pretext may be given to the disease and madness of Paul of Samosata, nor of Marcion nor of Manes: therefore He predicts what is to be, as God, and again He trembles (before death) as man. (In eos qui ... 6 ; PG 48 : 766 : Hay 1959:310).

As Christ depended on and was controlled by the $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ so too now the Christian is to rely on and be controlled by Christ. This depending on the divine is that element which makes a person truly human. Those who turn a deaf ear to the call of God become less than the dumb beasts that roam the fields.

Let us therefore take heed that it not be said of us, that our ears are those of a deaf adder. For tell me, in what does a

hearer of this kind differ from a beast? and how could he be otherwise than more irrational than any irrational animal, who does not attend when God is speaking? And if to be well pleasing to God is really to be a man, what else but a beast can he be who will not even hear how he may succeed in this?... For to serve the belly, to be possessed by the desire of riches, to be given to anger, to bite, to kick, become not men, but beasts. Nay, even the beasts have each, as one may say, one single passion, and that by nature. But man, when he has cast away the dominion of reason, and torn himself from the commonwealth of God's devising, gives himself up to all the passions, is no longer merely a beast, but a kind of many formed motley monster; nor has he even the excuse from nature, for all his wickedness proceeds from deliberate choice and determination." (Hom in Joh II; PG 59:35)

For Chrysostom people only behave rationally when they hear and obey the call of God. Those who ignore the call are irrational for they do not follow the *λογος* of God.

The factor that distinguishes Man from animals is not only Man's ability to reason. The practice of virtue (the response to God's call) is that which makes a person human. Only once a person becomes a virtuous and responsible agent does he/she become a true human being. By dominating and being cruel a person loses his/her humanity. 'As then a stone cannot yield oil, so neither can cruelty produce humanity.' (Hom in Joh III; PG 59:91) By exercising virtue a person becomes human, he/she becomes a holy being, an angel. 'Knowing then that without virtue we are inferior to the very irrational animals,

let us exercise ourselves therein, that we may become men, yea rather angels, and that we may enjoy the promised blessings, through the grace and lovingkindness of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Hom in Col III; PG 62 : 321). The practice of virtue is vitally important because there is a great deal more to a person than flesh and blood. Chrysostom states that a person is 'not simply one who has the hands and feet of a man, nor only one who is rational, but one who is confident in the practice of piety and virtue.' (Montf. 2 : 5; Harkins 1963 : 174). Without charity a person's reasoning ability is of no avail, it drags him/her further away from God and humanity. 'Knowledge puffs up, but charity edifies: so that without charity, it lifts men up to absolute arrogance.' (Hom in I Cor XX; PG 61:161; altered). It is this arrogance that Chrysostom found particularly in the rich.

'There is but one kind of place that is shameful, I mean the possession of great wealth, and that is shameful indeed. It brings the man the reputation of cruelty, effeminacy, lazy arrogance, vainglory and brutality.' (An address on Vainglory and the Right Way for Parents to Bring Up Their Children, Laistner 1951 : 93). In Antioch as well as Constantinople, Chrysostom had the opportunity to observe the manner of the rich. Antioch was the second residential city of the Roman empire for many years. It stood not far behind ancient Rome in its splendour and brilliance. Whoever had money could buy freely at the shops and bazaars. Gold, silver and jewels, precious carpets and silks, ivory inlaid beds and tables, oriental wines, wild game and choice food of every kind. It was a place where the weak would live in absolute poverty and the strong souls might be great or very unfortunate.' (Baur 1959 : 37-8). Josephus (BJ 3.2.4.) without any scruple, makes it the third city for greatness,

pleasure and plenty, in the whole Roman world intending, I suppose, by the other two Rome and Alexandria. Chrysostom spoke of the extravagance of the rich in a manner that displayed its stupidity. 'If it were in their power, I verily believe that some men would have the ground they walk on, the walls of their houses, and perhaps even the sky and the air, made of gold.' (Hom in Col VII; PG 62:).

His anger with the wealthy sprang from his realisation that the fullness of life came only from the living God and not from temporal treasures. They who fixed their eyes on the dull shine of wealth were blind to the splendour of God's abundant promises. 'He (Paul) also wishes to instruct us never to cling to the visible things, but to believe and trust only those things promised by God.' (Stav. VIII:14; Harkins 1963:125) Those who were wealthy in material goods and lacked the love of God could not lead fulfilled lives. Though his belly be full and their possessions many, their souls waste away within them and their wealth can do nothing to alleviate their agony. 'For all things in us the soul is chief, this prosperity is nothing to you.' (Hom in Matt LV, PG 58:544)

The evil thing about wealth, for Chrysostom, was that it often arose out of someone else's misfortune. The wealthy often remained rich at the expense of the poor. 'That you may wear a single ruby, countless poor are starved and crushed. What defense will you find against this charge?' (Montf. 2 : 41; Harkins 1963:185). The Lord called a person to simplicity of life and not to the oppression of others in order to ornament his/her appearance. A person was called to 'philosophy' and wealth was more often a hindrance than a help. 'In the matter of piety, poverty serves us better than wealth, and work

better than idleness, especially since wealth becomes an obstacle even for those who do not devote themselves to it.' (Montf. 2 : 39; Harkins 1963 : 84). The true adornment is virtue. (Mont. 2 : 44 - 45; Harkins 1963: 186 - 7).

The real problem was not being wealthy but being a slave to wealth. Wealth was a gift and the wealthy were called to be responsible stewards of that wealth. 'You received gold, not to bind your body with it, but to help and feed the poor.' (Montf. 2 : 48; Harkins 1963 : 188)). It is in giving that one receives. Why store riches on earth?, rather in the security of heaven. 'Do you wish to possess pearls and never to lay aside this wealth? Then strip off your adornment and put it into Christ's hands through the hands of His poor.' (Montf. 2 : 46; Harkins 1963 : 187). The poor are not necessarily only those who lack materially.

For Chrysostom there are two types of poor. Firstly and most obviously are those who lack materially. These people are the ones who demanded the most of Chrysostom's attention. The second type are those who are materially blessed yet refuse to share their wealth. For it is in giving that a person receives. He/she who refuses to give does not receive and so remains poor within themselves. They remain starving and naked in the sight of God. 'What then can be more hard-hearted than if we, after such promises, cannot make up our minds to lend to Him? Yes, it is for this that we go before Him destitute and naked and poor, not having the things committed to our charge, because we do not deposit them with Him who keeps them more exactly than any. And for this we shall be most severely punished.' (Hom in Rom VII; PG 60 : 451)

Chrysostom was appalled at the insensitivity of the rich toward the poor. While the rich live luxuriously, the poor live in extreme

poverty. The rich continue to spend on superfluities, while the poor remain hungry. 'And your dog is well attended to, while men, or rather Christ, for the sake of the hound, goes hungry He that was made in the image of God stands in unseemly plight and is straitened with extreme hunger. What can be worse than such plight, through your inhumanity, but the faces of the mules that draw your wife glisten with gold in abundance, as do the skins and woods that compose that canopy.' (Hom in Rom. XI; PG 60:492) What he pleaded for was that the rich would become more sensitive to his/her neighbour's need. He did not expect the rich to sell everything and give it all to the poor. 'I do not debar you from your enjoyment of wealth. No, but from covetousness and rapacity. I do not oblige you to empty out all your coffers. No, but to give some small matter according to your means to them that lack, your superfluities to their need and not even this is unrewarded.' (Hom in, Acts XXIII; PG 60)

Charity was not limited to the handing out of money. It involved the whole person and not only his/her material assets.

But alms may be done not only with money, but by acts. For example, one may kindly stand by a person (to succour and defend him), one may reach to him a helping hand: the service rendered by acts has often done more good even than money. (He continues showing that believers are responsible for one another).

For example, do you see one possessed by love of money? Pity the man. Is he in danger of suffocation? Quench his fire. 'What if he will not be persuaded?' Do your part, and be not remiss. Have you seen him in bonds? For wealth is indeed bonds. Go to him, visit him, console him, try to release him of his bonds. Have you seen him naked and a stranger? - for he is indeed naked, and a stranger to heaven. Bring him to your own inn, clothe him with the garment of virtue, give him the city which is in heaven.' (Hom in Act XXV; PG 60:196; altered).

This mutual responsibility arises from Christians living in community with one another. Through the effect of baptism, the Christian is brought into an intimate relationship with his/her fellow believer. 'For baptism renders a man a brother, and the partaking of the divine mysteries.' (Hom in Matt. LXXIX; PG 58:718) The brotherhood that exists exists only because the people have been baptized into the body of Christ. W. Elert states that both 'the common bond of the ethos of an organised congregation, by which the church separates itself from its unholy surroundings, and specifically also its brotherhood rests on the fact that its $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ is a baptismal fellowship.' (1966 : 78). The $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of baptism rests on the fact that the believers are baptized into the body of Christ. It is in Him that they have their union and fellowship. The $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of baptism as a result cannot be separated from the $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of the Eucharist. Elert states: 'The koinonia of baptism is undoubtedly bound up with the koinonia of the Eucharist. Koinonia as used by Paul in I Corinthians 10:1 includes the fellowship of those who partake together. As here the participants are bound to one another not by what they do with one another but by the common partaking of the body of Christ, so also the koinonia of Baptism rests on their being "baptised into the body of Christ."' (1966:78). Because of this unity between the $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of baptism and the $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of the Eucharist, the believer is brought to the table of our Lord immediately after baptism. They come to the table with joy for they have been freed from their sin and accepted into the $\kappa\omicron\iota\nu\omega\nu\acute{\iota}\alpha$ of Christ. Chrysostom states:

What follows suffices to show us from what those who have been judged worthy of this mystic rite have been set free, and what they have gained. As soon as they come forth from those sacred

waters, all who are present embrace them, greet them, kiss them, rejoice with them and congratulate them, because those who were heretofore slaves and captives have suddenly become free men and sons and have been invited to the royal table. For straightway after they come up from the waters, they are led to the awesome table heavy laden with countless favours, where they taste of the Master's body and blood, and become a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Since they have put on Christ Himself, wherever they go they are like angels on earth, rivalling the brilliance of the rays of the sun. (Stav 2:27; Harkins 1963:53).

Because baptism was such a joyous and liberating experience, Chrysostom spoke against the practice of delaying baptism until death came knocking at the door. Baptism was not merely a qualification to enter into heaven. It was the beginning of a person's walk with the Lord, the beginning of the process of becoming human, of bearing the fruits of the Spirit.

Let us rid ourselves of this disgrace (baptism just before death); let us live as Christ has enjoined. He gave us baptism not that we should receive and depart, but that we should show the fruits of it in our after life. How can we say to him who is departing and broken down, Bear fruit? Have you not heard that "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace?" How comes it that the very contrary takes place here? For the wife stands there mourning when she ought to rejoice; the children weeping, when they ought to be glad together; the sick man himself lies there in darkness, and surrounded by noise and tumult, when he ought to be keeping high festival; full of exceeding despondency at the thought of leaving His children orphans, his wife a widow,

his house desolate. Is this a state in which to draw near unto mysteries? Is this a state in which to approach the sacred table? Are such scenes to be tolerated? Should the Emperor send letters and release the prisoners in the gaols, there is a joy and gladness: God sends down the Holy Ghost from Heaven to remit not arrears in money, but a whole mass of sins, and do you all bewail and lament? Why, how grossly unsuitable is this!" (Hom in Act 1,8; PG 60:25-26; altered)

Those who undergo baptism just before death do not appreciate the full implications of the act, they merely do it to still their fear of the unknown. Chrysostom did not want the rite of baptism to degenerate into being a mere panacea. It was a joyful entry into a new life in the Spirit. It was a decision made to begin to live in Christ, to live according to the will of God. The decision to accept baptism meant that one accepted the responsibility it brought with it.

It was this fear of accepting the responsibility that baptism brought that caused many to delay baptism until just before death. Once a person was baptized, he/she became a responsible agent accountable to God and to Man. Reckless living could no longer be tolerated for one was now responsible to others, one was now a member of the body of Christ. The christian's life had now to be worthy of the gift he/she had received. 'Listen, you who this day in the course of the night were enrolled as citizens in the heavenly Jerusalem, show yourselves worthy guardians of His great gifts, that you may win for yourselves even a richer grace. For a soul that is grateful for gifts already received, invites the Master to honour it.' (In Sancto Pasch, PG 52 : 771).

This grateful living begins within the community of Christ. Here the believer forgets about himself and looks continually to his neighbour's good. 'He (Jesus) teaches, moreover, to make our prayer, on behalf of our brothers also. For he says not 'my father, who is in heaven'; but 'our Father'. offering up His supplications for the body in common and nowhere looking to His own, but everywhere to his neighbour's good.' (Hom in Matt XIX; PG 57:278; altered). The survival of the community depends on mutual love. The believers must be aware that they do not live only for themselves, but for each other. This is shown particularly in the believer's readiness to forgive those that do injury to him/her. For it is this readiness to forgive that makes the believer more like God.

And nothing makes us so like God, as being ready to forgive the wicked and the wrongdoers; even as indeed He had taught before when He spoke of making the sun to shine on the evil and the bad For this same cause again in every one of the clauses He commends us to make our prayers common, saying, Our Father, and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and give us the bread, and forgive us our debts; everywhere commanding us to use this plural word, that we may not retain so much as a vestige of anger against our neighbour. (Hom in Matt XIX: PG 57:283; altered).

By being baptized into the body of Christ believers are united to each other. Within the community the believers dwell in Christ and in each other so an injury to one is an injury to the other. If a believer puts a brother/sister to shame, not only is he/she and the community injured, but chiefly the guilty believer injures himself/herself. Chrysostom emphasises the injury the believer does to himself/herself

and when he/she injures another saying: 'If you perceive that it is a member of Christ that you are slandering, that you are eating up your own flesh, that you are making judgement set for you more bitter.'

(Hom in Rom VIII; PG 60:465; altered). In the body of Christ all are equal for all have been redeemed by the grace of God. No-one deserves better treatment than another, the members of the body are interdependant.

Why do you put your brother to shame? For he is a member of you, so you also of him. For he (Paul) has stated two things that might take down their haughty spirit; one that we are members one of another, not the small of the great only, but also the great of the small; and another, that we are all one body. Or rather that there are three points, since he shows that the gift was also one. Therefore be not high-minded. For it was given to you of God, you did not take it, nor find it even. (Hom in Rom XXI; PG 60:601; altered).

All that the believer has is given to him/her by God. He has nothing apart from the grace of God. Chrysostom, however, never failed to remind his hearers that the grace of God did not free them from their moral responsibility. The Christian had to lead a life of virtue. 'Not courage then only is wanted, nor wisdom, but this virtue also, humility, I mean and simplicity' (Hom in Matt LVIII; PG 58:573). Moral responsibility was by no means an easy task especially in a society that turned a blind eye to or even openly accepted, evil practices. 'But now this above all is a worthy subject for many tears, that because the bad are many, bad things are not even esteemed as a disgrace.' (Hom in Matt LXXXI; PG 58:735) Chrysostom had to continually reveal to his hearers the vices of society that

reduced them to beings less than beasts. W. Stephens states that Chrysostom was 'ever labouring with indefatigable industry and earnestness to lift Christians above the frivolity and vices of the rest of the population.' (1883; 92).

The frivolity and vice of the population posed a threat to the community because vice was the true enemy of Man. To follow the desires of the flesh would lead Man further away from God and his/her humanity. As vice is the enemy so virtue is the true friend.

And from many things it is evident, how vice is at enmity with us, and virtue friendly toward us. And if you will, let us consider this first, from one of the opposites, i.e. fornication. Fornication makes men subject to reproach, poor, objects of ridicule, despicable to all, treating them as an enemy does. Often it has involved men in disease and danger; many men have perished or been wounded, by reason of their mistresses; but if fornication produces these things, even more does adultery. But does almsgiving so? By no means. It brings good order and gives him leisure to engage in necessary work, thus almsgiving does not let us go, nor lead us away from our necessary work, but even renders the soul more wise. For nothing is more foolish than a mistress.' (Hom in Phil XIV; PG 62:285; altered)

Vice destroys the soul sending it into utter confusion and despair where virtue brings order and hope. Without virtue the soul stands naked but with virtue the soul is clothed in Christ. (cf Hom in Act XXVII; PG 60:196).

While a person was to be a responsible agent, he/she could not earn his/her salvation, he/she was dependant on the grace of God. Man is

saved through the grace of God. Yet without his/her life of virtue, he/she would remain in his/her sickly state. Grace and virtue went hand in hand. Chrysostom illustrates this point with a comparison between Judas and Peter.

Hence we learn a great doctrine, that a man's willingness is not sufficient, unless anyone receive the succour from above; and that again we shall receive nothing by the succour from above, if there be not a willingness. And both these things Judas and Peter show; for the one though he had received much help, was profited nothing, because he was not willing, neither contributed his part; but this one, though he was ready in mind, because he received no assistance, fell. For indeed of these two things is virtue's web woven." (Hom in Matt LXXXII; PG 58:742, altered.)

For Chrysostom people could not survive in a state of self-sufficiency gaping at superficialities, but only in the community of Christ could they find forgiveness and life. Only in receiving the grace of God and sharing that love could they become truly human.

III. CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS

In the early church and even in the fourth and fifth centuries, little effort was made to work out a systematic sacramental theology. This is particularly true of the Eucharist. The rite of baptism received its fair share of theological attention. The early Church, because of its missionary situation, concentrated on the sacrament of conversion, the mystery of rebirth to eternal life. Little theological attention was paid to the Eucharist in the pre-Nicene period and references to the Eucharist, though frequent, are relatively scattered, unsystematic and allusive. There is nothing that corresponds to Tertullian's treatment on Baptism, and it is only in the fourth century that we find detailed information on what the catechumens were taught concerning the Eucharist. G.W. Lampe suggests a reason:

The chief reason for paucity of theological expositions of the Eucharist in the early period, and the reason why the Christian writers' occasional allusions to it are difficult to analyse systematically, is that the Eucharist stands at the heart of the early church's faith and life; it embodies, and proclaims in a single rite, the entire richness of the gospel; and for this very reason it does not lend itself to a precise definition or the clear-cut theories about presence, sacrifice, consecration, and the relation of the sacramental act and of the visible elements to the reality which they signify. (1968 : 34-35).

It must not be assumed, however, that thought about the sacraments was entirely lacking in a systematic form. It was in this period that the seed of ideas began to germinate from which the tree of sacramental theology would bud in medieval doctrine.

In this period it is taken as axiomatic that in the administration of the sacraments, God or Jesus Christ is the principal agent, the priest

being merely His instrument. Chrysostom states that:

God's gifts are not such to be the result of any virtue of the priests; they are wholly the work of grace. The priest's function is simply to open his mouth, and it is God who accomplishes what is done, ... The eucharistic oblation remains the same, whether Paul or Peter offers it. The oblation which Christ gave to His disciples is identical with the one now offered by the priests. The latter is no whit inferior to the former, for it is not men who consecrate it, but He who consecrated the original oblation. (Hom in II Tim II, 4; PG 62:613)

In baptism (as well) it is not the priest who baptizes, but it is God who covers the believer "with His invisible power". (Hom in Matt I, 3; PG 58:507). This is demonstrated in the Eucharist where it is God who consecrates. One cannot rely on sinful man to change the gifts to the body of Christ, if one did then the recipient would suffer loss. The priest's virtue does not add to the sacrament nor does his vice detract from the sacrament for it is God who acts. Chrysostom states:

But as it is, God chooses to work even with unworthy persons, and in no respect is the grace of baptism damaged by the conduct of the priest, else would the receiver suffer loss. Accordingly, though such things happen rarely, still, it must be owned, they do happen. Now the things I say, lest anyone of the bystanders, busying himself about the life of the priest, should be offended concerning the things solemnized. For man introduces nothing into the things which are set before us, but the whole is a work of the power of God, and He it is who initiates you into the mysteries. (Hom in I Cor VIII, 1; PG 61:69; altered)

The priest is also the one through whom the believer was given access to heavenly things. It is through the labour of the priest that the faithful begin to see the light of the dawning kingdom. The priest is the one who has the key to admit people into the palace of God.

He who loves Christ whatever the priest may be, will love him, because through him he has obtained the awful Mysteries. Tell me, if wishing to see a palace resplendent with much gold, and radiant with the brightness of precious stones, you could find him who had the key, and he being called upon immediately opened it, and admitted you within, would you not have preferred him above all men? Would you not have loved him as dearly as your eyes? Would you not have kissed him? This man has opened heaven to you, and you do not kiss him, nor pay him court. If you have a wife, do you not love him above all, who procured her for you? So if you love Christ, if you love the kingdom of heaven, acknowledge through whom you obtained it. (Hom in 1 Thes. X; PG 62 456).

Although the priest officiates at the feast he is no greater than the other participants. Chrysostom emphasises this point showing that the priest shares in the same Lamb, that he is a fellow brother in Christ. When Chrysostom states that he partakes of the same Lamb, he is more than likely referring to the eucharistic bread. At the time of Chrysostom, the technical term for the eucharistic bread was 'Lamb'. The eucharistic loaf was a round leavened cake, five by two inches, stamped with a square (two inches), itself divided by a cross into four squares in which are severally inscribed IC, XC, NI, KA

(Ἰησοῦς Χριστός Νικῶν). (Brightman 1896:511). It was formally called εὐλογία and was given by the communicants themselves

as an oblation. Once the square was detached from the bread and placed on the paten, it was called ὁ ἁμνός . In the prothesis of St. Chrysostom's liturgy, the Lamb is symbolically sacrificed.

And the Priest: "Blessed is our God, always, now, and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen."

Then he takes in his left hand the Prospora, and in his right hand the Holy Lance; and the deacon having said, "Let us beseech the Lord", he signs with it three times over the seal of the Prospora, saying each time: "In memory of our Lord, and God, and Saviour Jesus Christ."

And he immediately thrusts the Lance into the right side of the seal, and says as he cuts: "As a sheep he was led to the slaughter". (Ὁς προβατὸν ἐπὶ σάβυρα ἤχθη)

And into the left: "And as a spotless lamb (ἁμνὸς ἁμνῶν) dumb before his shearer, so he opens not his mouth."

And into the upper part of the seal: "In his lowliness his judgement was taken away."

And into the lower: "And his generation who shall declare?" And the Deacon, looking reverently upon this rite, says at each piercing: "Let us beseech the Lord", holding his Orarion in his hand.

After these things, he says: "Take up, Master." And the Priest, thrusting the holy Lance sideways into the right side of the Prospora, takes up the holy Bread, saying: "Because his life is taken away from the earth."

And laying it inverted upon the holy Diskos, the Deacon having said: "Sacrifice, Master," he sacrifices it in the form of a cross, saying: "The Lamb of God is sacrificed (Ὁσθαὶ ὁ ἁμνός τῷ ἑσθῆ)

who takes away the sins of the world, for the life and salvation of the world." (Brightman 1896:356 : 25 - 357:15).

Partaking of the same Lamb means both partaking of the same eucharistic loaf and of the same Christ. Christ is sacrificed equally for the laity and for the priest.

I do not partake of the holy Table with greater abundance, and you with less, but both equally participate of the same. And if I take it first, it is no great privilege, since even among children, the elder extends his hand first to the feast, but nevertheless no superior advantage is gained thereby. But with us all things are equal. The saving life that sustains our souls is given with equal honour to both. I do not indeed partake of one Lamb and you of another, but we all partake of the same We are alike brethren of Christ, we have all things in common. (Hom in II Thes IV; PG 62:492; altered)

In this sense the priest is no different from the laity. He is a fellow believer who shares in the same Life of the Church.

Yet in another sense he is called apart from the laity. He carries a great responsibility. He is accountable in a greater way for he is the leader, it is he who invokes the Spirit. The priest's grandeur appears when he calls the Holy Spirit and perfects the sacrifice. Without doubt Chrysostom means that the priest at the moment of the epiclesis renders the sacrifice perfect or accomplished by calling down the Spirit. A further manifestation of the priest's dignity is the fact that he *συνεχόμενος* touches 'the common Lord of the universe.' (Sac VI; 4; PG 48:681). The priest continuously touches the body in the administration of the sacrament. It is this

administering of the gifts which distinguishes the priest from the laity who passively receive the bread, albeit on their hands.

Chrysostom warns the priest:

But when he invokes even the Holy Spirit and performs the sacrifice that inspires the greatest awe and continuously touches the common Lord of the universe, where, tell me, shall we rank him? What degree of purity shall we require from him, and what measure of piety? For consider how the hands must be which administer these substances, of what quality the tongue that utters those words, how the soul that has received such a Spirit should be more powerful and holier than anyone else. Even angels surround the priest at that moment and the whole order of heavenly powers shout and the space around the altar is crowded (with them) in honour of him who lies upon it. (Sac VI, 4; PG 48:681).

In Eastern orthodox liturgies, the epiclesis forms the climax of the service. But according to Chrysostom, the distribution of the gifts at communion is an activity which requires even greater sanctity and purity than the anaphoral intercessions. The mention of both the epiclesis and the distribution of the gifts forms the climax. The epiclesis and the distribution have in common the fact that at their performance angels surround the priest. This presence shows that they are even loftier than the anaphoral intercessions, when the angels are not present (Pavard 1983:307). It is when one considers the awesome holiness of the sacrament that one realises that the person who administers needs to take account of his/her own holiness.

It was because Chrysostom was so aware of the responsibilities of the

priest that he was so harsh in his reforms at Constantinople. How could those who 'constantly touched the body' of Christ be constantly touching their 'spiritual sisters?' How could those who administered the body and blood of Christ to the poor only associate with the rich? For Chrysostom the awful sacrifice called the priest and laity to holiness, to a life of virtue. He could not tolerate the hypocrisy within the Church and nor could the hypocrisy in the church tolerate him.

In this period much thought was given to the efficient cause linking the spiritual gift with the outward, perceptible sign. For Cyril of Jerusalem once the Trinity has been invoked (ἑπικληθῆσιν), the water of baptism possesses sanctifying power, for it is now not mere water, but water united with the Holy Spirit who acts in and through it (Cat 3,3 f; PG 33:428). So too Gregory Nazianzen (Or. 39,17; PG 45 : 99)) bases the efficacy of baptism on the Spirit, and Basil declares that "if baptismal waters have any grace, they derive it, not from their own nature, but from the presence of the Holy Spirit." (De spir. sanct. 35; PG 32 : 129)

As regards the Eucharist, the eucharistic prayer had previously been conceived as effecting the consecration, but attempts were now made to define the causal efficacy more precisely. One widespread practice was that consecratory power lay in the repetition by the priest, standing in the Lord's place, of the words used by Christ at the Last Supper. This was the predominant practice of the West with Ambrose as its most noteworthy exponent. (De Myst. 50, 52, 54; PL 16:405-407; de sacram. 4; 14-23; PL 16:439-444)). (Kelly 1977:426)

Chrysostom states that the priest, acting in Christ's stead, repeats the sentence, "This is my body", and its effect is to transform the elements on the altar. (De prod. Judae Hom 1,6; PG 49:380). For Chrysostom it is Christ who speaks these words through his priest. The words have the consecrating power only because it is Christ who says it at every altar.

The oblation", he says, "is the same, whoever offers it is the same which Christ gave to his disciples and which now priests make For just as the words which God spoke are the same which the priest now speaks, so the oblation is the same And therefore this is the body of Christ, as that; indeed, whoever thinks that this is less than that, he does not know that also Christ is now present and Works. (Hom in II Tim. 11,4; PG 62:612).

In another place he says: 'The work before us is not of human power. He who did it then at that meal, this one accomplishes it now' (Hom in Matt LXXXII, 5; PG 58:744). But nowhere is he so explicit about the activity of Christ in the Eucharist as in the Homily on the Betrayal of Judas: 'For it is not men who makes the oblations become the body and blood of Christ, but this one, the Christ crucified for us. Supplying the outward appearances, the priest stands upright, proclaiming those words 'This is my body', he says. This word refashions the oblations. (de prod. Judae. Hom 2; PG 49, 380).

At the same time we see the emergence of the theory, already adumbrated in the Didascalia (6, 22, 2 Funk, 1, 376), that the transformation of the elements is the work of the Holy Spirit. Cyril of Jerusalem, for example, envisages a liturgy in which 'we entreat

God ... to send forth the Holy Spirit upon the offerings that He may make the bread of the body of Christ and the wine the blood of Christ; for whatsoever comes into contact with the Holy Spirit is hallowed and changed.' (Cat. 23, 7; PG 33:113). Chrysostom too attributes the role of consecrating to the Spirit. It is Christ and the Spirit that consecrate. As Elijah called down fire from heaven so the priest calls down the Spirit to consecrate the offering.

Imagine in your mind's eye Elijah and the vast crowd standing around him and the sacrifice lying upon the stone altar. All the rest are still, hushed in deep silence, the prophet alone is praying. Suddenly fire falls from the skies on the offering. It is marvellous; it is charged with bewilderment. Turn, then, from that scene to our present rites, and you will see not only marvellous things, but things that transcend all terror. The priest stands bringing down, not fire, but the Holy Spirit. And he offers prayer at length, not that a fire may be kindled above and destroy the offering, but that grace may fall on the sacrifice through that prayer, and kindle the souls of all, making them appear brighter than silver refined in the fire. (sac, III, 4; PG 48:642; cf Hom in Eph 3; PG 62:30; de Poenitentia Hom 9; PG 49:345).

'For that flesh of the Lord through God the Word is bread (Jn 6:51), so this bread also, through the Spirit descending upon it, becomes heavenly bread (Hom in Joh XLV.2; PG 59:253: cf Hom in 1 Cor. XXIV, 8; PG 61:204). The consecration is performed by both Christ and the Holy Spirit. Theodore of Mopsuestia combines the two conceptions well, stating that 'when the priest declares them (i.e. the bread and wine) to be Christ's body and blood, he clearly reveals that they have become such by the descent of the Holy Spirit.' (Hom. Cat. 16, 12; PG

66:1569). Throughout the consecration it is God who acts. As in penance, when the Church's minister absolves sinners with the power of the keys bestowed by Christ, it is really God Himself who acts. 'These two ideas, that the grace contained in sacraments is God's gift and has nothing to do with the priest as such, and that its production is tied to a divinely prescribed formula rehearsed by the minister, go a long way towards the so-called ex opere operato doctrine of sacraments, i.e. that they are signs which actually and automatically realize the grace they signify.' (Kelly 1977, 427).

Chrysostom realised the significance and extreme holiness of the Eucharist. It called Man to be still in the presence of the Lord and His Spirit. 'What are you doing, Oh Man? When the priest stands before the table, stretching his hands toward heaven, calling on the Holy Spirit to be present, and to touch the oblations, there is a great stillness, a great silence. When the Spirit gives the grace, when He descends, when He touches the oblations, when you see the lamb slain and prepared, then do you bring in as well a noise or disorder, or contentiousness, or railing?' (De coemet. appel. 3; PG 49:397-8). The invocation is not only the duty of the priest. The community plays a vital role in calling on the Holy Spirit. The ever practical Chrysostom states: 'And as the priest stands (at the altar) calling on the Holy Spirit, so do you also call on the Spirit: not by speech but by deeds.' (Hom in II Cor. XX,3; PG 61:540). The invocation is not divorced from the life of the community. Their whole life is a call on the Spirit to come down and to fill their lives. Through their life of virtue they called on the Spirit to sanctify the elements.

From the writings of Chrysostom one cannot conclude that he moved from an earlier exclusive attribution of the sanctification of the elements to Christ to a later exclusive attribution of the sanctification to the Holy Spirit. In the heat of the controversy over the divinity of the Spirit, Chrysostom, like many others, confessed the equality of the Spirit with Father and Son by stressing the sanctifying activity of the Spirit in the Eucharist. It is also important to note that the pre-Nicene theology of the incarnation as a rule regarded it, not as we do, as the effect of a conception by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, but as a conception by the λόγος (second Person of the Trinity) of the Virgin Mary. The eternal Word of God Himself, the creative 'coming down to us' as Athanasius said, 'formed for Himself the Body from the Virgin'. (de Incarnatione 18; PG 25:128). In the second century it was assumed that it was the second Person of the Trinity that was the 'Power of the Most High' which overshadowed Mary (Lk 1: 35). This understanding was accepted and used by the anti-Arian stalwarts Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose and Gregory of Nazianzus.

Gregory Dix points out that the 'Spirit = Word' terminology is like the 'Spirit = Presence' idea in Christian usage, a survival of the New Testament conception of the 'presence' of the heavenly Christ as the 'quickening Spirit' in His members on earth. (Dix 1964:276). It is important, particularly for our purposes, to note that the usage of such language was still prevalent in the fourth century. St. Ambrose does not hesitate to say to catechumens about the sacrament, 'The Body of Christ is the Body of "Divine Spirit", for the Spirit is Christ' (de Myst. 58; PL 16:409). Chrysostom can quite easily therefore attribute the effect of consecration to the work of the Spirit or to

Christ. In his time there was not yet a clear demarcation between the function of each Person.

E.S. Kilmartin states that there are 'no solid grounds for the assumption that Chrysostom departed from a balanced approach to the twofold mission of Christ and the Spirit in the time of the Church. Moreover, since he understands that there exists a correspondence between the sanctification of the elements of the Eucharist and the incarnation, it is reasonable to suppose that he would ascribe the transformation of the elements both to an act of Christ, who as Logos took flesh, and to the Holy Spirit, who also had an active role in the incarnation.' (1984; 232). On the Eucharistic table the incarnated Lord is present. 'This table fulfils the place of "the manger". For even here is placed the Lord's body, not indeed "wrapped in swaddling clothes", as then, but on all sides clothed about with the Holy Spirit.' (In beato Philogono, Hom. 6,4; PG 48 : 753 : cf Hom in 1 Cor. XXIV, 8; PG 61:204). As Christ was one with the Spirit, so the elements are one with the Spirit and the living Christ lies on the table, Christ is present.

IV. THE REAL PRESENCE

'Eucharistic teaching, it should be understood at the outset, was in general unquestioningly realist, i.e. the consecrated bread and wine were taken to be, and were treated and designated as, the Saviour's body and blood.' (Kelly 1977:440). Among the theologians the identity of the elements was interpreted in two exclusive ways. Firstly, the elements were seen as symbols, but not in the sense that they only represented the body and blood. They were symbols that participated in that which they represented yet also stressed the distinction between the visible elements and the reality they represented. Secondly, however, a new and powerful tendency was to explain the identity in terms of an actual change or conversion in the bread and wine.

In the former interpretation the Eucharist was seen as a visible outworking of an invisible grace. Theodore of Mopsuestia expresses this understanding when he says that 'every sacrament is an indication, by means of signs and symbols, of invisible and ineffable realities.' (Hom cat. 12,2; PG 66:1573). Serapion, while referring to the elements as the 'body and blood', speaks of 'offering this bread' and 'a likeness (ἑμείωσις) of the body of the only begotten', and 'offering the cup' as 'a likeness (ἑμείωσις) of the blood.' (Euchol 13, 12-14 (Funk, II, 174)). Eustathius of Antioch, commenting on Proverbs 9 : 5, says that 'by bread and wine he (i.e. the author) refers prophetically to the antitypes of Christ's bodily members.' (Frg. 2; PG 18 : 685). Even the forerunner of the conversion theory, Cyril of Jerusalem, is careful to state that the elements remain bread and wine to sensible perception, and calls them 'the antitype' of Christ's body and blood: 'the body is given to you in the figure (τύπος) of bread, and the blood is given to you in

the figure of wine.' (Cat. 22,3; PG 33:1100). This understanding was still prevalent in the late fifth century. Pseudo-Dionysius stated that 'the sensible rites (τὰ ἀλοθῆτα ἐφ' αὐτῶν) are representations of intelligible things, and conduct and guide us to them.' (De eccl. hierarch. 2,3,2; PG 3:397).

The symbol had to be understood in a spiritual sense through the eyes of faith. If one took them literally, then one misunderstood the sacrament. John Chrysostom supported the symbolic understanding of the identity of the elements. Commenting on John 6:63 he states: 'His meaning is, "You must hear spiritually what relates to Me, for he who hears carnally is not profited, nor gathers any advantage." It was carnal to question how He came down from heaven, to deem that he was the son of Joseph, to ask, "How can he give us His flesh to eat?". All this was carnal, when they ought to have understood the matter in a mystical and spiritual sense.' (Hom in Joh XLVII, 2; PG 59:265 cf Hom in Matt LXXXII, 4; PG 58:742-743)

Seeing the Eucharist in symbolic terms was very easy for Eastern theologians as the entire service was (and to a large extent still is) a holy drama taking place in heaven and on earth. In the drama it was not only the sacrifice of Christ that was represented, but the whole Christ event. The drama begins in heaven and shows the Son of God coming to earth, being baptized, crucified and then rising again. The sanctuary symbolises heaven and the nave earth. The entrances represent Christ's humanity in laying aside His heavenly privileges to come to earth. Bishop Frere expresses the symbolism in Eastern Orthodox worship as follows:

The entry of the Gospel brought in with great procession and preceded with lights, shows the coming of the Saviour into the world: the Book is regarded as presenting the presence of the incarnate Lord. The trisagion (sanctus) of the congregation corresponds to the Gloria in excelsis of the angels; the response to the prophecies of the Old Testament; the Epistles with the Apostolic witness. The Alleluia gives the attestation of David; and the reading of the Gospel is the climax of the first cycle. In the second, the Lord is symbolised by the gifts of bread and wine. The Holy Table is the sepulchre of Christ; the linen corporal is the cloth enwrapping His body. The veil of the paten is the kerchief surrounding His head. The larger veil or Aer, covering both with chalice and paten, is the stone with which St. Joseph closed the sepulchre. The Great Entrance is the way of the Cross; the laying of the paten and the chalice on the altar is the burial. The consecration corresponds to the Resurrection (Davies 1946:27).

The West too saw the sacraments in a similar light. St. Ambrose similarly distinguished the external ritual from the unseen grace or presence. So in baptism as the water cleanses the body, so the Spirit cleanses the soul (Expos cv. Luc. 2, 79; PL 15:1581) in the Eucharist what is perceived after the consecration is only a sign of the real presence (De Myst. 50, 52, 54; PL 16:405-407; de sacram. 4, 14-16; PL 16:439 - 441). Augustine emphasises this contrast as well. He writes: 'The sacrament itself is one thing, and the power of the sacrament another.' (Tract in ev Joh. 26, 11; PL 35:1611). In one of his sermons he writes: 'So they are called sacraments because one thing is seen in them, another understood. What is seen has a

bodily appearance, but what is understood has spiritual fruit.'
(Serm. 272; PL 38:1246).

Yet almost everywhere the symbolic understanding of the elements was giving way to the popular and vividly materialistic theory of the bread and wine being converted into the actual body and blood of Christ. A good example is furnished by a fragment attributed to Athanasius:

You will see the Levites bringing loaves and a cup of wine and placing them on the table. So long as the prayers and invocations have not yet been made, it is mere bread and a mere cup. But when the great and wondrous prayers have been recited, then the bread becomes the body and the cup the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ When the great prayers and holy supplications are sent up, the word descends on the bread and the cup, and it becomes His body." (Frg. ex ser. ad baptiz; PG 26:1325).

Chrysostom, while admitting that the spiritual gift can only be apprehended by the eyes of faith, exploits the materialist implications of the conversion theory to the full. For him the elements have undergone a change, describing them as being refashioned (μεταμορφωθέντων) or transformed (μετεσκευασθέντων). (De Prod. Judae 1, 6; PG 49:380). Many of those holding conversionist views rejected the symbol theory. Theodore of Mopsuesta presented their argument when he said: 'He did not say, "This is a symbol of my body", and "This is a symbol of my blood", but, "This is my body and blood", thereby instructing us not to look to the nature of the oblations, for that has been changed by the eucharistic prayer into flesh and blood.'
(Hom in Matt. XXVI, 26; PG 66:716).

The conversionist theory was open to exploitation, particularly among the monophysites. Some of the monophysites concluded that the bread and wine were changed into different substances after the epiclesis just as Christ's body was changed after his ascension. Theodoret led the reaction against this. He stated that after consecration the oblations 'remain in their former substance, appearance and form, visible and tangible as before.' (eran. 2, PG 83:168). Theodoret, however, often used realistic language of the sacrament. He was confronted with the problem of what the consecration effected. His explanation was that, while a change (*μεταβολή*) certainly took place, it did not consist in the transformation of the substance of bread and wine into that of Christ's body and blood, but rather being made vehicles of divine grace. (eran 1; PG 82:53-6) (Kelly 1977: 440-449).

The explanation of this almost crudely 'realistic' language lies in two things. First, account has to be taken of the clear understanding then general in the Greek-speaking church of the word *ἀνάμνησις*. The word was understood as meaning a 're-calling' or 're-presenting' of a thing in such a way that it is not so much regarded as being 'absent'. This is a sense which the Latin memoria and its cognates do not adequately translate. Chrysostom expresses this understanding when he says: 'We offer even now that which was then offered, which cannot be exhausted. This is done for an *ἀνάμνησις* of that which was then done, for "Do this" said He "For the *ἀνάμνησις* of Me." We do not offer a different sacrifice like the high priest of old, but we ever offer the same. Or rather we offer the *ἀνάμνησις* of the sacrifice.' (Hom in Heb XVII, 3; PG 63:131; altered).

It must be noted that in the fourth century much of the language was traditional. The Eucharist was referred to as the "bloodless sacrifice" celebrated by means of the "symbols of Christ's body and blood in commemoration of His death'. (Ap. Const. 6, 34, 5 (Funk, 1, 361; cf Did 14:3). In Cyril of Jerusalem we find an elaborate statement regarding the sacrament. While using the traditional language ('the spiritual sacrifice' and 'the unbloody sacrifice') he also describes the Eucharist as 'the holy and most awful sacrifice' and 'the sacrifice of propitiation.' (Cat. 23, 8-10; PG 33:1116-1117; cf Chrysostom Sac 6,4; PG 48:641). For Chrysostom Christ is sacrificed at the table. In the liturgy of Chrysostom this is aptly demonstrated. The celebrants in their *ἱεραρχίας* of the sacrifice of Christ re-enact the drama (cf p.34) even to the extent of piercing the side of the bread.

And laying it (the bread) inverted on the holy Diskos having said, "Sacrifice, Master", (*Θύσον δέσποτα*), he (the priest) sacrifices it in the form of a cross, saying:

"The Lamb of God is sacrificed (*θύεται*), who takes away the sin of the world, for the life and salvation of the world." And he turns the other side upwards, which has the cross; and the Deacon having said, 'Pierce, Master', he pierces it on the right side with the Lance, immediately under the name I.S. saying: 'One of the soldiers with a lance pierced his side, and immediately there came forth blood and water: and he who saw has borne witness, and his witness is true.' (Brightman 1896:357 : 15 - 20).

Chrysostom emphasises the fact that Christ is literally sacrificed at the table. Speaking of how the love of God calls one from idols he says: 'But here he establishes a more august and more magnificent

liturgy; the very sacrifice is charged, and instead of immolating animals, he bids us sacrifice Himself. (Hom in I Cor, XXIV; PG 61: 200). Although it is Christ who is sacrificed Chrysostom is quick to say that it is not a re-crucifixion of Christ but a memorial of the crucifixion of Christ. Christ is not slain again but the community in doing the rite, shares in that one great sacrifice. For Chrysostom a paradox exists at the Eucharist. The risen Lord is present in His flesh, which is slain by the priest and eaten by the community. At the same time, however, the risen Lord is not slain again for He died once for all, a victor over death.

Gregory Dix states that the second, and perhaps the chief explanation lies in the universal concentration of pre-Nicene ideas concerning the Eucharist upon the whole rite of the Eucharist as a single action, rather than upon the matter of the sacrament in itself, as modern Westerns tend to do. Dix in this lengthy quotation illustrates the contrast between pre-Nicene teaching and Western teaching:

In much Western teaching ... there is an exact reversal of the whole primitive approach to the question. We (in the West) are inclined to say that because of consecration the bread and wine become in some sense the Body and Blood of Christ, therefore what the Church does with them in the Eucharist must be in some sense what He did with them, namely an offering. And our doctrine about the reality of the offering will be found to vary in its "realism" or "symbolism" precisely in accordance with the "realism" or "symbolism" of our doctrine of the Presence by consecration. We make the sacrifice depend on the sacrament. But the primitive church approached the matter from the opposite direction. They said that because the Eucharist is essentially

an action and the church in doing that action is simply Christ's Body performing His will, the Eucharistic action is necessarily His action of sacrifice, and what is offered must be what He offered. The consequences of His action are what He declared they would be: "This is My Body" and "This is My Blood". They made the sacrament depend on the sacrifice. (Dix 1964:246-7).

For Chrysostom whenever the church did the action 'for the Body of Christ', Christ was present in a very real sense. Those who partake at the table partake of the very body of the sacrificed and risen Lamb. 'Further, since our discourse is concerning this body, as many of us as partake of that body and taste of that blood, consider that we are partaking of that which is in no wise different from that Body, nor separate, as regards participation; that we taste of that Body that sits above, that is adored by angels, that is next to the Power that is incorruptible.' (Hom in Eph. III; PG 62:26; altered)

The Lord did not just leave a rite behind. Nor did He only leave bread and wine. The risen Lord left His very body. Chrysostom compares the ascended Lord's gift to His disciples to the gift Elijah left for his disciple.

What then if I show you that all among us, who are initiated, have received something far greater than he did? For Elijah left a mantle to his disciple, but the Son of God ascending left to us his own flesh! Elijah indeed, casting off his mantle, went up; but Christ left it behind for ourselves; and yet ascended retaining it! (de Stat Hom II, 9; PG 49:46).

It is the very body of Christ that lies on the table, not 'mere' symbols. Comparing the Eucharistic feast to Jewish rites, Chrysostom

emphasises this point.

I would have shown you the holy of holies and all therein - a vessel holding not manna but the body of the Master, the bread of heaven. I would have shown you not a wooden chest holding the stone tablets of the law, but one holding the blameless and holy flesh of the Lawgiver. I would have shown you within not an unblemished lamb slain in sacrifice, but the Lamb of God who is offered in the mystic sacrifice upon which the very angels look and tremble. (PK 2:2 ; Harkins 1963:148)

It is the very flesh of Christ that the priest distributes, the very body of Christ that the communicant receives. Those who wish to see Christ can see Him on the table. There is no need to go back in time, He is present on the table in the same way as he was during His earthly life, now with more glory than then. The communicant can now enjoy a closer relationship with Christ than his original disciples did, for now the communicant can touch and receive the Lord within his. Chrysostom believes that Christ left His flesh for people because people are not incorporeal beings. The soul is contained in a body and the mind can perceive God's salvation in sensible things. He states:

For if you had been incorporeal, He would have delivered you the incorporeal gifts bare; but because the soul has been locked up in a body, He delivers you the things that the mind perceives in things sensible. How many now say, I would wish to see His form, the mark, His clothes, His shoes. Lo! you see Him, you touch Him, you eat Him. And you indeed desire to see His clothes, but He gives Himself to you not to see only, but also to touch and to eat and receive within yourself." (Hom in Matt. LXXXII; PG 58: 743; altered)

The giving of the body of Christ is not only because of man's physical state, but because of Christ's great love. Christ gives Himself to the Church to have and to hold. 'Oh, the loving-kindness of God to men! He who sits above with the Father is at that moment held in our hands, and gives Himself to those who wish to clasp and embrace Him - which they do, all of them, with their eyes." (Sac. III, 4; PG 48:642 cf Hom in I Cor. XXIV; PG 61:200).

Chrysostom stresses time and again that the Eucharistic feast is an extremely holy occasion. It is 'the most awesome sacrifice' (*τῆς φρικωδέστατης θυσίας*) (Sac VI.4; PG 48:641). It is awesome because the living Lord lies on the table and around Him are the angels of heaven, and the choir of the Seraphim. The believer is transported from earth to the very presence of the risen Christ. Chrysostom tells his hearers to tell others of the feast as follows: 'Teach those who are outside that you were partaking in the choir of the Seraphim, that you were received into the throng of those above, that you were enrolled in the choir of angels, that you have conversed with the Lord, that you were with Christ.' (Illud, Si Esurierit Inimicus; PG 51:179). For Chrysostom the celebration of the Eucharist on earth is absorbed into heaven. This is because the feast is worthy of heaven. All those who participate have been baptized into Christ and now have their citizenship in heaven. They are no longer of this earth. He illustrates this saying:

What are the heavenly sacrifices which he (the writer to the Hebrews) here (Hebrews 10 : 12 ff) speaks of? Spiritual things. For though they are celebrated on earth they are worthy of heaven. For when our Lord Jesus lies as a slain victim, when the Spirit is present, when He who sits at the right hand of the

Father is here, when we have been made sons by baptism and are fellow-citizens with those who are in heaven, when we have our fatherland in heaven and our city and citizenship, when we are only foreigners among earthly things, how can all this fail to be heavenly? What? Are not our hymns heavenly? Is it not true that these very songs which God's choir of angels sing in heaven are the songs which we on earth utter in harmony with them? Is not the altar heavenly? How? It has nothing carnal. All the oblations become spiritual. The sacrifice does not end in ashes and smoke and steaming fat. Instead it makes the oblations glorious and splendid. (Hom in Heb. XIV 1,2 PG 63:111; Dix 1964 :252).

Everything is in heaven. 'We have our Victim in heaven, our Priest in heaven, our sacrifice in heaven.' (Hom in Heb. XVII, 3; PG 63:131 Dix 1964:252; cf Sac II, 3; PG 48:634)

The holiness of the feast is stressed by the fact that the very angels of heaven tremble in its presence. (Hom in Eph. III; PG 62:29).

Those who come forward to communicate with the living Lord should 'think with whom they stand at the time of the mysteries.' (Hom in Eph. XIV; PG 62:104). The communicant not only comes into the presence of the Lord but also into the presence of the whole host of heaven, surviving only by the grace of God. 'Can anyone', says Chrysostom, 'not quite mad and deranged, despise this most awe-inspiring rite? Do you not know that no human soul could ever have stood that sacrificial fire, but all would have been utterly annihilated, except for the powerful help of God's grace? (Sac III, 4; PG 48:645).

With Christ and the whole company of heaven present, the Church brings its petitions for the martyrs. By the time of Chrysostom, the Eucharist had long been regarded by many as an effective sacrifice, with purchasing power for the needs of both the living and the dead. J. Houlden states that this was once more a 'feature of Eucharistic thinking that was peripheral to the rite's distinctive and central significance, for intercession, thanksgiving and penitence can be expressed quite apart from the Eucharist.' (1972:90). The Eucharist, however, was the time and the place when the communicant felt most confident to bring his/her petitions. For it was his/her closest approach to the throne of God. Christ, who had made the perfect sacrifice, would plead its merits, as the communicant's friendly advocate in the heavenly court. Chrysostom too shared this view. 'Not in vain', he states, 'did the Apostles order that remembrance should be made of the dead in the dreadful Mysteries. They know that great gain they receive, and great assistance; for when the whole people stands with uplifted hands, a priestly assembly, and that awful sacrifice lies displayed, how shall we not prevail with God by our entreaties for them? And this we do for those who have departed in the faith.' (Hom in Phil.IV; PG 62:207-208). The ever practical Chrysostom, however, does not stop with prayers and oblations. Alms too need to be offered for the departed faithful. The catechumens who are not allowed to attend the Eucharist are encouraged to give to the poor on behalf of the dead. Giving to the poor, however, is not limited to the catechumens; all are to give on behalf of the dead. This is not an exercise in futility; by giving to the poor the believer rids the person from poverty, makes a prayer for the dead and frees himself/herself from the chains of wealth. (Hom in Act XXI, 4; PG 60:168-169).

All this is done in the faith that Christ is present at the Eucharist.

It is not for nothing that the deacon cries, "for them that are fallen asleep in Christ, and for them that make memorials for them". It is not the deacon that utters this voice; but the Holy Ghost: I speak of the Gift. What do you say? There is the sacrifice in hand, and all things laid out duly ordered. Angels are there present, Archangels, the Son of God is there. All stand there with such awe, and in the general silence those stand by, crying aloud: and do you think that what is done is done in vain? Then is not the rest also in vain, both the oblations made for the church, and those for the priests, and for the whole body? God forbid! but all is done with faith. (Hom in Act XXI; PG 60:170).

It is with this eye of faith that the believer sees the splendour of the occasion, the honour of being mentioned in the presence of heaven.

It is a great honour to be named in the presence of the Lord, when that memorial is celebrated, the dead sacrificed, the unutterable mysteries. For just as, so long as the Emperor is seated, it is the time of the petitioner to effect what he wishes to effect, but when he is risen, say what he will, it is all in vain, so at that time while the celebration of the mysteries is going on, it is for all men the greatest honour to be held worthy of mention. For look: then is declared the dread mystery, that God gave himself for the world: along with that mystery he seasonably puts Him in mind of them that have sinned Then let us not approach indifferently, nor imagine that these things are done in any ordinary sort. But it is in another sense that we make mention of martyrs, and this, for assurance that the

Lord is not dead and this, for a sign that death has received its death's blow, that death itself is dead. (Hom in Act XXI; PG 60:170; altered)

With the eye of faith the communicant sees the feebleness of death and that the community extends beyond this world. The 'dead' intercede for the living and the living intercede for the dead. The living intercede through petition and through alms in the presence of the Lord.

The presence of Christ, (in symbol and in the flesh), at the Eucharist is a great blessing to the communicant, but also places a great responsibility on him/her. For the communicant must also consider the awesomeness of the occasion and see if they are worthy to handle the very body and blood of Christ. To approach Christ demanded a life of virtue.

For just as it is unsuitable that, when the Lord is sitting at the table, those of the servants who are culpable (of some offence) be present, and so they should leave, so too here : when the sacrifice is brought out, and Christ has been sacrificed and (becomes) the lamb of the Lord, when you hear: 'Let us pray together', when you see the curtains being opened, believe then that the heaven is being opened from above and the angels are descending. Now, just as there should be none of the uninitiated, neither should there be any of the initiated who are filthy. (Hom in Eph III, 5; PG 62:29; altered).

V. JUDAS AND THE CORRECT APPROACH TO
AND PARTICIPATION IN THE EUCHARIST

In the early church Baptism was the basic requirement for participation in the holy Eucharist. A person baptized is one whose life is proven and his/her trustworthiness demonstrated. The baptized person has been instructed in the faith and has avowed his/her confession. Baptism itself is a prerequisite inasmuch as that which is holy is to be received only by those who are holy. (Τὴ ἀγία τὰς ἁγίας, Brightman 1896; 393-3). The baptized have been washed by the sanctified waters and have been clothed with Christ. Through this action they have become worthy to participate in the feast. The catechumens had to leave before the prothesis for they had not yet been initiated into the koinonia of Christ.

Being baptized was not the only requirement for participation. The believers had to take account of the state of their souls before approaching the most awesome sacrifice. It is no trifling matter to partake of the body and blood of the Saviour. The believer needs to be prepared both within himself/herself and within the community as a whole. As the wise men drew near to the child Christ, so do the communicants, full of awe and reverence.

This Body, even lying in a manger the magi revered. And men profane and barbarous, leaving their country and their home, both set out on a long journey, and when they came, with fear and great trembling worshipped Him. Behold now, let us at least imitate those Barbarians, we who are citizens of heaven. For they indeed when they saw Him but in a manger, and in a shed, and no such thing was in sight as you now behold, drew near with great awe; but you behold Him not in a manger but on the altar, not a woman holding Him in her arms, but the priest standing by, and the Spirit with exceeding bounty hovering over the gifts set

before us. You do not merely see this Body itself, as they did, but you know also its power, and the whole economy, and are ignorant of none of the holy things which are brought to pass by it, having been exactly initiated into all." (Hom in 1 Cor. XXIV; PG 61 : 204 altered).

It is in an attitude of worship that the communicant must approach. The believer must be aware that the risen Lord lies on the table. With this in mind he/she approaches with the reverence that the magi displayed. In fact the believer should draw near with greater reverence because he/she is aware of what Christ has done for Man.

The communicant not only approaches with awe and reverence, but also with eagerness. The Eucharist is a joyful occasion. Here one cannot approach with sorrow and despair for the resurrected Christ gives His life to all who come and receive. 'Let then no one approach it with indifference, no-one fainthearted, but all with burning hearts, all fervent, all aroused.' (Hom in Matt. LXXXII; PG 58 : 743). As a child is eager to be fed by the mother so too the communicant should desire to be fed with the grace of the Spirit. 'Do you not see the infants with how much eagerness they lay hold of the breast? with what earnest desire they fix their lips on the nipple? With like eagerness let us also approach this Table, and the nipple of the spiritual Cup. Or rather, with much more eagerness let us, as infants at the breast, draw out the grace of the Spirit, let it be our one sorrow, not to partake of this Food.' (Hom in Matt. LXXXII; PG 58 : 744; altered). With this eager joy and spirit of expectation the communicant draws near to receive the promised spiritual food.

The communicant should not, however, allow his/her partaking to arise

from custom. Those who partake because of custom do not understand the mysteries of the Feast. They do not recognise the presence of Christ and the whole host of heaven. Consequently they have no consideration for their actions. 'I observe many partaking of Christ's body lightly and heedlessly, and rather from custom and form, than consideration and understanding.' (Hom in Eph. III; PG 62 : 27 - 28). Another group that is guilty of treating the Feast in an equally flippant manner is the group who attend infrequently. Neither does this group appropriate the gift to their lives, it remains a mere rite to them. These, Chrysostom states, are those who cause all the trouble in the Church, these are generally the schismatics. 'Mark the inconsistency', he says, 'for those who belong to this Church, some never approach to communicate at all, or but once in a year, and then carelessly and just as it may happen; others more regularly indeed, yet they too carelessly, and conversing with indifference and trifling about nothing; while those who, on the surface, seem to be in earnest, these are the very persons who work this mischief (schism).' (Hom in Eph. XI; PG 62 : 85; altered) Both groups approach the table indifferently without giving the Lord, who is present, due reverence. They approach without consideration and in so doing heap condemnation upon themselves. For if they knew that Christ was present, they would tremble and reform.

But why does he eat condemnation to himself? Not discerning the Lord's Body, i.e. nor searching, not bearing in mind, as he ought, the greatness of the things set before him; not estimating the weight of the gift. For if you should come to know accurately who it is that lies before you, and who He is that gives Himself, and to whom, you will need no other argument, but

this is enough for you to use all vigilance, unless you are altogether fallen. (Hom in. I Cor. XXVIII; PG 61 : 233).

For those who receive indifferently without repenting, are like the traitor who betrayed the Lord. They pretend to be a servant of Christ by participation but betray Him in the very lives they lead. Chrysostom warns those who participate indifferently to take heed lest they too become guilty of the body and blood of Christ as Judas and those who crucified the Lord were. 'Think how indignant you feel toward the traitor and those who crucified Him. But take care lest you too be guilty of the body and blood of Christ. They slew His Sacred Body and you, in return for so many benefits, receive that Body into a soul that is defiled.' (Hom in Matt. LXXXIII; PG 58 : 743). He pushes the point further stating that those who participate and remain unrepentant are worse than those who are possessed by demons.

Shall I say something more fearful. It is not so grievous a thing for the Energumens (those vexed with demons) to be within, as far as such as these, whom Paul affirms to trample Christ underfoot, and to "account the blood of the covenant unclean, and to despise the grace of God." (Heb. 10 : 29). For He that has fallen into sin and draws near, is worse than one possessed with a devil. For they, because they are possessed are not punished, but those, when they draw near unworthy, are delivered unto undying punishment. (Hom in Matt. LXXXII; PG 58 : 745)

The communicant must be aware that unworthy participation leads to destruction of the soul. For those who participate indifferently have to bear the consequences of their actions. They have to bear the punishment of God for they have disregarded His love for them.

Chrysostom states that it is not God who desires to inflict punishment, but those who participate unworthily bring judgement upon themselves. 'Those who receive irreverently, slay themselves, they pass judgement upon themselves' (Hom in I Cor. XXIV; PG 61 : 199)

For what can be worse than to handle the body of Christ with indifference and with irreverence. Such action is worse than that of Judas (Hom in Matt LXXXIII; PG 58 : 743). They disregard the benefits that God has given to people through the work of Christ. The correct approach is one of grateful appreciation for the work of grace in Christ. Without this attitude, the communicants heap judgement upon themselves. 'Let us draw near to Him then with inflamed love, and let us not have to endure punishment. For in participation of the greatness of the benefits bestowed on us, so much more exceedingly are we chastised, when we show ourselves unworthy of the bountifulness.' (Hom in I Cor. XXIV; PG 61 : 201).

The communicant must then approach the table regularly and with joyful reverence. He/she has to be vigilant over the state of his/her being. As the Jews of the passover were ready to move, so too must the communicant be vigilant over his/her soul. 'For if the Jews standing, and having their shoes and staves in their hands, ate with haste, much more ought you to be watchful. For they indeed were to go forth to Palestine, wherefore also they had the garb of pilgrims, but you are about to remove into heaven. Wherefore it is needful in all respects to be vigilant, for indeed no small punishment is appointed to them that partake unworthily.' (Hom in Matt. XXVII; PG 57 : 345).

The communicant must be worthy of the gift he/she is to receive. The person must be striving after virtue and knowledge of God and must

have turned their back on the vanities of this world. No one who is infatuated with temporal matters may be present at the table nor those who are covetous. (Hom in Matt. LXXXII; PG 58 : 737). The communicant is called upon to refrain from evil practices, he/she cannot expect the Lord, who is present at the feast, to overlook his/her vice. For Chrysostom a disciplined life of virtue is the prerequisite before approaching the table. The communicant literally has to labour to be able to enjoy the sacrament with good conscience. The whole season of Lent is orientated towards the communicants making themselves worthy of the feast.

For as in the case of those who run the race, all their circuits will be of no avail if they fall short of the prize; so neither will any advantage result from these manifold labours and toils with regard to the Feast, if we are not able to enjoy the sacred table with good conscience. To this end are fasting and Lent appointed, and so many days by this earnestness being cleansed in every particular way from the sins which we had contracted during the whole year, we may with spiritual boldness religiously partake of that unblocking sacrifice; so that should this not be the result, we shall have sustained so much labour entirely in vain, and without any profit Let no one rest on the feast merely; while remaining unreformed from evil practices. (de Stat Hom XX; PG 49 : 197).

The reward of all the communicant's labour is participation in the holy Feast with good conscience. The labour that brings about this reward is not primarily fasting but sincerity and purity of soul. If the soul was soiled, then the communicant could not enjoy communion with Christ. For coming into the presence of Christ with a sullied

soul, was worse than handling the body of Christ with soiled hands. It is not Lent that makes the communicant worthy, but the state of his/her soul.

When, says a Man, the holy season of Lent sets in, whatever a Man may be, he partakes of the mysteries, or, when the day of the Lord's Epiphany comes. And yet this does not make a fit time for approaching. For it is not the Epiphany, nor is it Lent, that makes people fit to approach, but it is sincerity and purity of soul. With this approach at all times; without it, never When you draw near to the sacrifice, at which the very Angels tremble, do you measure the matter by the revolutions of the seasons, and how shall you present yourself before the judgement seat of Christ, you who presume upon His body with polluted hands and lips? You would not presume to kiss a king with an unclean mouth, and do you kiss the King of heaven with an unclean soul? It is an outrage. Tell me, would you choose to come to the Sacrifice with unwashed hands? No, I suppose not. But you would choose not to come at all, than come with soiled hands. And then, as scrupulous as you are in this little matter, do you come with soiled soul, and thus dare to touch it? And yet the hands hold it for but a time, whereas into the soul it is received entirely. (Hom in Eph. III, PG 62 : 28; altered).

Chrysostom stresses the fact that the soul is that which receives the elements. The soul therefore has to be in order to receive the King.

In a sermon preached at Antioch he says: 'You would not dare to touch the holy sacrifice with unwashed hands, however pressing the extremity might be. Approach not then with an unwashed soul.' (de Stat Hom XX, PG 48 : 208). Approaching with a washed soul was not only a sign of

respect for the sacrifice, but it also indicated that one had appropriated the gift to oneself. It meant that one had recognised the worth of what one was about to receive. Chrysostom draws the analogy between the robe of a king and the body of Christ. All know the worth of the robe and treat it with respect, how much more then should they recognise the worth of the body of the Son of God. Through the robe they gain nothing but through the Body they gain life and access to heaven. 'One would not receive the robe with soiled hands, a robe spun by worms and dyed with the blood of dead fish. What then of the body and blood which is associated with the Divine nature, the body and blood that gives the communicants their life and access to heaven.' (Hom in I Cor. XXIV; PG 61 : 203). Preparing one's soul was an act of appreciation for what Christ had done for one. It was in response to the love of God. Without this the Eucharistic Feast was of no avail, in fact it only did one harm, not because of itself, but because of the communicant's irreverence. For Chrysostom the Feast had its own laws. Those who were faithful and disciplined in their approach were blessed, those who were indifferent brought destruction to themselves. It was not because God desired their destruction, but that is how the laws of the system worked.

Not only must the individual be vigilant but the community as a whole must be aware of its moral condition. Chrysostom, like St. Paul, could not conceive of a Christian existing outside the Church. The Christian is baptized into the κοινωνία of Christ and finds his/her identity within the Church, he/she is now a part of the body of Christ. Dix states that the κοινωνία of baptism is intimately bound up with the κοινωνία of the Eucharist. 'Koinonia', he states, 'as used by Paul in I Corinthians 10 : 16, includes the

fellowship of those who partake together. As here the participants are bound to one another not by what they do with one another, but by the common partaking of the body of Christ, so also the koinonia of Baptism rests on their being "baptized into the body of Christ". (1964 : 78). In both the baptismal and the eucharistic *κοινωνία* the body of Christ comes first. Through baptism the Christian enters into the body of Christ and at the Eucharist the Christian partakes of that body. It is around the body that the Church congregates and gives joyful thanks to God the Saviour. This they do in unity, because they are the very body of Christ. Whenever disunity arises, the Church fails to be that which it is called to be. The members, therefore, are constantly called to be aware of the moral condition of the body. Unity needs to be preserved. The members need to be vigilant and root out disunity. When the Church is united, it rises up on wings like eagles, in disunity, the Church degenerates into being daws.

These things therefore knowing, let us also, beloved, consult for the good of the brethren and preserve unity with them. For to this that fearful and tremendous sacrifice leads us, warning us about all things to approach it with one mind and fervent love, and thereby becoming eagles, so to mount up to the very heaven. "For wheresoever the carcass is", says He, "there will be the eagles," (Matt. 24 : 28) calling His body a carcass by reason of His death. For unless He had fallen, we should not have risen again. But He calls us eagles, implying that he who draws near to this Body must be on high, and have nothing in common with the earth, nor wind himself downwards and creep along; but must be ever soaring heavenwards and look on the Son of Righteousness, and have the eye of his mind quick-sighted. For eagles, not daws, have a right to the Table. Those also shall meet Him

descending from heaven, who now worthily have this privilege, even as they who do so unworthily, shall suffer the extremest torments. (Hom in I Cor. XXIV; PG : 61:203; altered).

For Chrysostom the Church's identity is distinctly obvious as it celebrates the Eucharist. The Church is fulfilling its calling when it gathers around the 'carcass' in unity, 'with one mind and fervent love.' For wherever the carcass is, there will be the eagles,; wherever the Eucharist is celebrated, there the church will be. The church too must be vigilant as it approaches the 'Son of Righteousness', she must be 'quick-sighted' lest she fall and become a claw.

Being 'quick-sighted' meant that the believer would notice disunity within the body and initiate reconciliation before the Church approached the body of Christ. This the believer did out of reverence to the Feast, and out of obedience to the call of the Feast. It was unity that the feast required and gave. Discord polluted the feast and the community.

Now since we are conscious of the truth of all this, let us set ourselves free from chastisement and vengeance; and let us show our reverence for the present feast by doing all that has been said, and those same favours which we think to obtain from the Emperor² on account of the feast, let us ourselves grant to others the enjoyment of it. For I hear, indeed, many saying that the Emperor, out of his reverence for the Holy Passover, will be reconciled to the city and will pardon all its offences. How absurd then is it, that when we have to depend for our safety upon others, we bring forward the feast and its claims; but when we are commended to be reconciled one with another, we treat

this same feast with disdain, and think nothing of it. No one, truly, so pollutes this holy feast, as he does, who, while he is keeping it, cherishes malignity. (de Stat Hom. XX; PG 49 : 208). The feast cannot be enjoyed if malignity exists between members of the body. He who bears malice cuts himself off from the community and from the grace of God. Chrysostom equates those who bear malice with a fornicator in an attempt to illustrate the gravity of the sin. 'For as it is not to be imagined that the fornicator and the blasphemer can partake of the Sacred Table, so it is impossible that he who has an enemy and bears malice, can enjoy the Holy communion.' (de Stat Hom XX; PG 49 : 198; altered). The evil in the community has to be rooted out, not only superficially covered.

For Chrysostom, conflicts between members of the Body often arise from people's self-sufficient arrogance. Conflict arises when the members of the body lose sight of Christ and concentrate on their own self. For conflicts to be resolved, people have to take the humble initiative to offer forgiveness to one another as they have received it from God. The forgiveness given by God frees the person from his/her sin and calls him/her to forgive others. Commenting on Phillipians 4:4 - 7 Chrysostom states:

... nothing so much delights God as to remember no evil. This sets you free from your sins, this loosens the charge against you: but if we are fighting and buffeting, we become far off from God; for enmities are produced by contention, and from enmity spring rancours. Cut out the root and there will be no fruit. Thus we shall learn to despise the things of this life, for there is no contention in spiritual things but whatever you see, either contention, or envy, or whatever a Man can mention,

all these things spring from the things of this life. Every contention has its beginning, either in covetousness or envy, or vainglory. If therefore we are at peace, we shall learn to despise the things of the earth. (Hom in Phil. XIV; PG 62 : 286; altered).

It is the duty of the priest to turn away those who wish to participate while they are at enmity with others, or while they are in a sinful state. It is by no means an insignificant duty, for the priest is responsible for the distribution of the body and the blood of Christ. It is the priest's responsibility not to cast pearls in front of swine. If he gives the elements to those whom he knows are unworthy of receiving them, then he brings judgement on the communicant and on himself.

Let no inhuman person be present no one who is cruel and merciless, no one at all who is unclean. These things I say to you that receive, and to you that minister. For it is necessary to address myself to you also, that you may with much awe, distribute the gifts there. There is no small punishment for you if being conscious of any wickedness in any Man, you allow him to partake of this Table. "His blood shall be required at your hands" (Ezek. 33 : 8). Though anyone be a general, though a deputy, though it be he himself who is invested with the diadem and come unworthily, forbid him; the authority you have is greater than his. You, if you were entrusted to keep a spring of water clean for a flock, and then were to see a sheep having much mire on its mouth, you would not suffer to stoop down unto it and foul the stream, but now being entrusted with a spring not of water, but of Blood and of Spirit, if you see any having on them

sin, which is more grievous than earth and mire, coming unto it, are you not displeased? do you not drive them off? and what excuse can you have? (Hom in Matt LXXXII; PG 58 : 744 - 745; altered).

This, for Chrysostom, is the honour of the priest to discern these things. He does not, however, expect the priest to be clairvoyant seeing to the very depths of people's souls. The priest can only turn away those who are notoriously evil. 'And whence know I, you may say, this person and that person? I speak not of the unknown, but of the notorious.' (Hom in Matt LXXXII; PG 58 : 746)

The priest should only give to the obedient and faithful disciples of Christ. He should not give to a Judas, for the communicant will suffer the same fate as Judas. He would be giving a sword of damnation to the person instead of the bread of life. Withholding the eucharistic elements from people is firstly a sign of respect for the feast. Chrysostom states: 'I would give up my life rather than impart of the Lord's Blood to the unworthy; and will shed my own blood rather than impart of such awful blood contrary to what is meet.' (Hom in Matt LXXXII; PG 58 : 746). It was secondly for the benefit of the unworthy. Chrysostom turned away the 'bedizened Jezebels' and those who swore oaths at the table. (de Stat Hom XX; PG 49 : 211 - 212). Ambrose refused communion to the emperor Theodosius after he had ordered the massacre at Thessalonica. St. Basil refused the Arian emperor, Valens, as well. This refusal to allow the unrepentant sinners to communicate, was not because the Church wanted to ignore them and cast them out for eternity. It was, on the contrary, aimed at restoring the person to his former dignity within the community. 'But these things I (Chrysostom) say, not that we repel them only, nor

cut them off, but in order that we may amend them, and bring them back, that we take care of them. For thus shall we both have God propitious and shall we find many to receive worthily; and for our own diligence, and for our care for others, receive great reward.'

(Hom in Matt LXXXII; PG 58 : 745). Thirdly, the whole church benefited from it for the body was in this manner healed.

To participate worthily, the communicants need to approach with reverence the King who lies on the altar. They must have repented from evil, initiated reconciliation and have accepted the forgiveness given by God. To approach the table, the communicants need to have realised what God has done for them through the death and resurrection of Christ and to have begun to appropriate the love of God in their lives.

VI. UNITY IN CHRIST

From the earliest of times in the Church, the Eucharist has been a public and not a private affair; the assembly of the children of God and not the private devotion of a series of individuals. M. Timiadis states that the liturgy is the incarnation of love. 'It stems from love,' he says, 'and invites to love. Worship must reflect community, a communal perichoresis interchange of gifts, communion. By its very nature there must be many partakers.' (1984 : 25). The Eucharist is the place where the whole assembly gathers to worship the Living God and to receive His lifegiving food.

The Eucharist is not celebrated by a number of individuals who are strangers to each other. The participants are bound together through Christ. The characteristic feature of the Eucharistic feast is unity. An overriding theme of the Fathers is that the Eucharist is a sign of and a means to unity. For Ignatius, the Eucharist is a sign of the unity of the people of God - 'there is one Eucharist, as there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, one Church, one bishop, one altar.' (Phil 1 : 4; Mag. 7; Smyrn 8.2). In the Didache a similar theme is to be found. In a passage which almost certainly refers to the Eucharist, Christians pray 'that the bread now broken and scattered upon the mountains' may be reassembled and reunited into one (Did 9:1). St. Augustine states: 'O symbol of unity! O bond of love' (In John XXVI, 13; PL 35 : 1613). For many of the Fathers, the Eucharistic assembly is an image of the Church, the people of God assembled with their Head both receiving and awaiting their final redemption.

Through participation in the Eucharist, the communicant incorporates Christ into his/her life. Through consuming the elements the communicant becomes one with the body and blood of Christ. As the

body absorbs the physical elements, so the soul absorbs Christ. By partaking of the Eucharist, the believer is mingled with Christ. He/she becomes the very body of Christ. Chrysostom emphasises the incorporation of the believer into Christ by using the word 'mingle' (ἀνακλιψάω). Christ first mingled Himself with Man in the incarnation. 'He was not satisfied to become Man, to be beaten and to be made a sacrifice; He even mingles (ἀναφύρεται) Himself with us, not only through faith, but in all reality; He makes us His body.' (Hom in Matt LXXXIII; PG 58 : 743). As the λόγος was mingled with Man in the person of Christ, so the communicant is mingled with Christ at the Eucharist. The incarnation now takes place within the worshipping community. Chrysostom states:

We must study this wonderful sacrament; we must learn the purpose of its institution and the effects which it produces. We are one body, says the Scripture, and "members of His Flesh and of His bones" (Eph. 5 : 30); let the initiated follow me. He wishes that we become His body, not through charity alone, but that we be actually mingled (ἀνακερασθῶμεν) with His own flesh. This union is accomplished by means of the food which He has given us as proof of His love for us. Therefore He has mingled (ἀναμίξεν) Himself with us, He has implanted His body in us, that we may be one, as a body united with its head. What ardent love this manifests All this has Christ done, to bring us into closer friendship with Himself and to show His love for us. To those who yearned for Him, He has not only appeared, but He has given Himself in the flesh, to be touched, to be eaten, to be broken by our teeth, to be mingled (συντηλακῆσαι) with us and thus to satisfy every desire. (Hom in Joh XLVI; PG 59 : 260).

As the water is mingled with the wine, so is Christ mixed with His Church. The effect of this mingling is unity among the Saints. In the liturgy of St. Chrysostom, it is stated as follows: 'And the deacon pours into the holy chalice wine and water, saying first to the priest: "Bless, Master, the holy union" (τὴν ἁγίαν ἕνωσιν): Who blesses them, saying: "Blessed is the union of your saints, always, now, and always and unto the ages of ages." (Brighman 1896 : 357 : 21 - 26).

Chrysostom was in keeping with the general belief of the Church Fathers. Hilary, for example, argues that anyone who partook by faith was held to be united to Christ, because he has received Christ's veritable flesh, the Saviour now lives in him (De Trin. 8, 13 PL 10 : 245 - 246). St. Ambrose emphasises the intimacy of the union stating that the communicant, through participation in the Eucharist, participates in Christ's divine substance. 'Forasmuch as one and the same Lord Jesus Christ possesses Godhead and a human body, you who receive His flesh are made to participate through that nourishment in His divine substance. (De sacram. 6, 4; PL 16 : 455). Among the Fathers, it was also believed that the communicants became that which they received. St. Leo put it: 'The sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ has no other effect than to turn and change us into what we receive.' (Serm LXIII, 7; PL 54 : 357). St. Augustine states: 'The actual power we find here (in the Eucharist) is unity; it consists herein: that incorporated in His Body and become His members, we are what we receive.' (Serm 57, 7; PL 38 : 389).

The unity that results from the Eucharist is due to the members of the

Church becoming the body of Christ. By being that which they receive, the body of Christ, the Church becomes a united body.

The unity that results is not due to the communicant's efforts, however important these may be. It is first and foremost the work of Christ. Any unity that does exist in the Church is a result of Christ's death and resurrection. For Chrysostom Christ is the initiator of unity for Christ wills to be one with Mankind. 'I have sought you; I, your God, have entered into you to take possession of you, Man. I have united you to Myself and have come into direct contact with you. I have told you: eat Me and drink Me' (Hom in I Tim V, 4; PG 62 : 586) Christ freely gives Himself to the Church (and to the world) in order that the Church and the world be united to Him. Through participation in the Mysteries, the communicants are totally united to Christ. Christ too is totally united to His Church. Christ lives in the Church and the Church lives in Christ. Chrysostom, as the Fathers quoted above, sees the church as the flesh and blood of Christ and participating in His substance.

What means, "of His flesh (ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς)?." It means, really from Him. And how are we thus members of Christ? In that we have been begotten after Him, and how of His Flesh (σαρκὸς)? You know, as many as partake of the Mysteries. For from Him are we at once created anew. And how? Hear again this blessed saint (Paul), where he says, "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also likewise took part of the same." Only here He imparts to us, not we to Him. How then are we of His flesh and bones? Some say that it is the blood and the water that are meant, but it is not so. But what he means to express is this, that like as, without conjugal union, He was begotten of the Holy Ghost, so also are we begotten

in the laver But mark, Adam was created, Christ was born. From Adam's side entered in corruption. From the side of Christ welled forth life. In Paradise sprang up death, in His cross was effected its destruction. As then the Son of God is of our nature, so are we of His substance; and as He has us in Himself, so also have we in Him in us. (Hom in Ephes XX; PG 62 : 139; altered).

All that the Church has and is, is as a result of the life and work of Christ. Christ continues to unite the Church to Himself through baptism and the Eucharist.

For Chrysostom the essence of the Eucharist is the uniting of the communicants with Christ, and so with one another: 'the union is complete, and eliminates all separation.' (Hom in I Tim XV, 4; PG 62 : 585).

Unity with Christ begins in baptism. In baptism the believer is clothed with Christ and taken into Christ. commenting on Galatians 3 : 27, Chrysostom states: 'Why does he not say, "All of you who were baptized into Christ, are born of God?" For this is what he ought to say, in order to show that they are sons. But Paul wishes to state this truth in a manner more striking. For if Christ is the Son of God, and if you have put on Christ, then since you have the Son within you and are assimilated unto Him, you are the same family and likeness as He .' (In Gal. comment. cap. 3 ; PG 61 : 656). He continues to stress the intimate union between the believers in his treatment of Galatians 3 : 28.

What an insatiable soul! He has just said, "You have all become the sons of God by faith." But he does not stop at this; he

wishes to say more, to express more clearly the intimacy of our union with Christ. Even after he has said. "You have put on Christ", he is not satisfied with the phrase; he explains it, and in doing so describes a closer union still: "You are all one person (εἷς) in Christ Jesus." Could one find a more outstanding declaration? He who before was but a Greek, or a Jew, or a slave, now bears the likeness, not of an angel or archangel, but of the Lord of all things, in his own person he is the image of Christ. (In Gal. comment. cap. 3; PG 61 : 656).

The Christian not only represents Christ, but in his own person is the image of Christ. Chrysostom speaks of a similar union as expressed by Cyril of Jerusalem who stated that the Christian was a Christ-bearer. Cyril states: 'We become Christ-bearers, since His body and blood are distributed throughout our limbs. So, as blessed Peter expressed it, we are made partakers of the divine nature.' (Cat. 22, 3; PG 33 : 1100).

For Chrysostom the Christian does not only bear Christ, but is the image of Christ. Both, however, stress the fact that through the Eucharist, Christ enters the body and the soul and becomes one with the believer. The intimacy attains to the level of a mystical union. As Christ was one with the Father, so the believer is one with Christ. It is not only the individual communicant who is united to Christ, but the whole community as well. By being united to Christ, the believers are united to one another. Theologically the Eucharist has always been understood as binding its participants together. The apostle Paul used the image of the grains in the loaf in I Corinthians 10 : 16, 17 to denote the unity of the church in Christ. This image was picked up by many of the Fathers. St. Augustine uses it as follows:

You should know what you have received, what you will receive, what you should receive daily. The bread which you see on the altar, when it has been sanctified by the word of God, is the body of Christ If you have received it rightly, you are what you have received. For the Apostle says: "Because there is one loaf, we who are many, are one body." (I Cor. 10 : 17). This is how he explained the sacrament of the Lord's Table. (Serm 227; PL 38 : 1099 - 1100).

In Chrysostom, however we have the most careful working out of the connection between I Corinthians 10 : 16 and 17. He raises the question why in verse 16 Paul does not use 'partaking' (μετοχή) but κοινωνία (Hom in I Cor XXIV; PG 61 : 200). This he answers by saying that communicating (κοινωνεῖν) involves not only partaking (μετέχειν and μεταλαμβάνειν) but also being made one (ἐνωσθαι), for as the body is united with Christ, so the communicants are united with Him through this bread.

Chrysostom does not speak against 'partaking' but wants to emphasise the meaning of κοινωνία. In dealing with this text, his desire is to show that it carries even more meaning. The deeper meaning is the concept of the 'koinonia of the body' (κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος):

What makes the koinonia (τὸ κοινωνοῦν) is not the same as that with which the koinonia is made (ὃ κοινωνεῖ). Even this apparently trifling difference he (Paul) sets aside. By speaking of the "koinonia of the body" he strives for an even closer description, and so adds: "Because it is one bread, we many are one body." (Here he proceeds to verse 17). "What do I mean with koinonia?" he says. "We are that self-same body." For what is the bread? The body of Christ. What do they become who partake of it (μεταλαμβάνοντες)? The body of Christ:

not many bodies, but one body. Many grains are made into one bread so that the grains appear no more at all, though they are still there. In their joined state (συναφεία) their diversity is no longer discernible. In the same way we are also bound up (συνκτιόμεθα) with one another and with Christ. You are not nourished from one body and the next Man from a different body, but all from one and the same body. For this reason he adds, "We have all partaken of one bread. If of one and the same bread, then we are all become the same thing." (Hom in I Cor. XXIV; PG 61 : 200; Elert 1966 : 27 - 8).

In partaking the communicant approaches as an individual, but by the very nature of the feast, the many become one whole. Those who participate in eating from the same loaf, are together the body of Christ. They do not produce this body, for the body of Christ is there before they participate. They are rather drawn into it, so that they become members of it. The fellowship-nature of the Eucharist is in this that Christ incorporates into Himself those who partake of it.

The body of Christ can only be perfect if the members are united to each other. When one member considers himself/herself greater than the other members, the body ceases to be whole, for discord reigns. In the body each member depends on the other so when disunity arises, the fellowship of the community is impaired.

The complement, he (Paul) says, i.e. the head is, as it were, filled up by the body, because the body is composed and made up of all its several parts, and has need of every one. Observe how he introduces Him as having need of all alike; for unless we be

many, and one be the hand, and another the foot, and another some other member, the whole body is not filled up. Then is the head filled up, then is the body rendered perfect, when we are all together, all knit together and united. (Hom in Ephes III; PG 62 : 26).

The fellowship of the community of Christ is weakened when members within the body are full of enmity and strife. Chrysostom paints a graphic picture when he states that those who are at war with each other, end up devouring each other. They end up tearing the body apart. The importance of reconciliation is therefore not to be downplayed. 'Do you not know how great the pleasure after reconciliation? For what, though in our enmity it appears not great? For that is sweeter to love him who does us wrong than to hate him, after the enmity is done away you shall be able to learn full well. Why then do we imitate the mad, devouring one another, warring against our own flesh?' (Hom in Matt. LXXIX; PG 58 : 723). Reconciliation is vitally important for the survival of the 'fellowship of the body.'

The $\tau\alpha\lambda\alpha\upsilon\sigma\iota\alpha\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \sigma\omega\mu\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ (Hom in 1 Cor XXIV; PG 61 : 200) ceases to exist when the body is full of strife and division. The body in fact is tortured by those who fail to be reconciled (or initiate reconciliation). The whole body suffers, not only the guilty parties, when members war against each other, Christ himself is injured in the process as well.

Schism causes the most damage to the fellowship of the body. Those, therefore, who cause division in the Church are worthy of severe punishment. They are worthy of punishment for through their action

nothing positive is achieved, only negative injury. For Chrysostom not even their numerous glorious acts can redeem them for they are just as guilty as those who crucified Christ.

Nothing so provokes God's anger as the divisions of the church. Yes, though we achieve ten thousand glorious acts, yet shall we, if we cut to pieces the fullness of the Church, suffer punishments no less sore than they who mangled his body. For that indeed was brought to pass for the benefit of the world, even though it was done with no such intention; whereas this produces no advantage in any case, but the injury is excessive. (Hom in Eph. XI; PG 62 : 85).

The schismatics are no less guilty than heretics. Chrysostom expresses this understanding in the most vivid terms. The schismatics tear the body of Christ apart. Such people have no regard for Christ and His Church.

Therefore I assert and protest, that to make a schism in the Church is no less an evil than to fall into heresy. Tell me, suppose a subject of some king, though he did not join himself to another king, nor lend himself to any other, yet should take and keep hold of his king's royal purple, and should tear it all down from its clasp, and rend it into a number of shreds; would he suffer less punishment than those who join themselves to the service of another? And what, if withal he were to seize the king himself by the throat and slay him and tear him limb from limb, what punishment could he undergo, that shall be equal to his deserts? Now if in doing this toward a king, his fellow-servant, he would be committing an act too great for any punishment to reach; of what hell shall not he be worthy who slays Christ and plucks Him limb from limb? of this which is

threatened? No, I think not, but of another far more dreadful.

(Hom in Ephes XI; PG 62 : 87).

For Chrysostom unity had to be maintained at virtually any cost. At the time of his first exile (c403) there was a great division in the Church between those who supported the exile (predominantly the bishops from Alexandria led by Theophilus) and those who supported Chrysostom (predominantly the bishops from Syria and the laity of Constantinople). Chrysostom, not wishing to cause a schism, rather went into exile and encouraged his followers to stay within the Church. Even after his second and final exile (c404) Chrysostom encouraged his followers (by far the majority, i.e. including the laity) to obey the new archbishop (an opponent of Arsacius) as they obeyed him for the sake of unity within the Church.

The greatest union that is effected through the Eucharistic feast is the union of Mankind with the Godhead. Through the incarnation and resurrection, the Christian community is taken into the very presence of God, the community in fact becomes a part of the very Godhead. It is only through Christ that this came to be.

See my beloved friends, how we are honoured! And yet some foolish and thoughtless men will ask: "Why are we free and masters of our actions?" But all these actions which we have mentioned, all these acts in which we can imitate God, would be impossible for us without free will. God tells us: "I command the angels, and so do you, through the first-fruits (Christ). I am seated on the royal throne and so are you, through the first fruits. He has raised us up with Him, as it is written, and seated us with Him at the right hand of the Father. The cherubim and seraphim, the whole host of heaven, principalities, powers,

thrones and dominations adore you because of the first-fruits. Accuse not the body that is so honoured and before which the very incorporeal Powers tremble. But what am I saying? It is not only by these honours that I manifest My love, but also by My passion. For you I was covered with spit and beaten, I stripped Myself of My glory, I left My Father and came to you, to you who hated Me, to you who made Me flee, who did not wish even to hear My name. I followed you, I ran after you; I caught hold of you and embraced you. "Eat Me", I said, "and drink Me" It is not enough that I should possess your first-fruits (the physical body of Christ) in heaven; that does not satisfy my love. I came once more to the earth, not only to "mingle" (ἐνὸς/ίενω) Myself with you, but to entwine (συνὸφαισθῆναι) Myself in you. I am eaten, I am broken into pieces, that this fusion, this union, may be more intimate. When other things are united, each remaining distinct in itself; but I weave Myself into you. I want nothing to come between us; I wish the two to become one. (Hom XV in I Tim; PG 62 : 586; altered).

Christ unites Himself with the communicant in such a manner that the two become inseparable. One party does not remain distinct in itself, but is only fulfilled in the other. The purpose of Christ is fulfilled when the world is united to Him and the world receives its salvation through the union with Christ.

This total union of God the Father, Christ and the believers, takes place at the Eucharist.

St. John the Evangelist, stresses the fact that we must become aware of the miracle of the mysteries; what it is and why it is given, as well as its advantages. We become one body, says the

Holy Scripture, as well as members of His own flesh and of His own bones. This is achieved through the supernatural (extraordinary) food He gave us to show His desire for us. This is why He involved His whole person totally with us, and He entwined His own body with ours, in order that we might become one being, as the body is indissolubly and organically united with the head. (Hom in Joh XLVI, 3; PG 59 : 260; altered).

The union is a voluntary union. The communicant decides to participate in the Feast, in no way is the union forced on him/her. St. Chrysostom would agree with St. John Damascene who stated: 'If communion of the sacraments constitutes the union of Man with Christ, it constitutes, at the same time, the union of the faithful among themselves. All those who receive Holy Communion at the same time voluntarily unite themselves one with another.' (De Fide orthod. IV, 13; PG 94 : 1153).

Everything, all union, is brought about through Christ. Through Him believers are united to each other, through Him the Church to Himself and again through Him the Church with the Father. Chrysostom never loses sight of the centrality of the Incarnation. The whole mystery of union is demonstrated at the Eucharist. Mersch describes Chrysostom's method and language to describe the feast. 'The Saint's doctrine is realistic throughout, Christ's flesh comes truly into us, our lips, he says, with a force of expression that requires explanation, our lips are reddened with His blood, and our flesh becomes truly the flesh of Christ. At communion the word enters into

all of us, as He had entered into one at the Incarnation. All blends into a single perspective, with the Incarnation ever at its centre. (1938 : 329 - 30).

VII. CHRIST AND THE POOR

For Chrysostom Christ is intimately interwoven with the church. Christ is present through the sacrament in the church and the church through Christ in the Godhead. Christ is also present in a physical sense in the poor. This he takes from Matthew 25 : 40, 'Inasmuch you did it to one of the least of My brothers, you did it to Me.' The poor are part of the family of Christ, not only because of their faith, but particularly because of their poverty. Commenting on Matthew 25 : 40, Chrysostom states:

What are you saying? They are your brothers; and how do you call them least? Why, for this reason they are brothers, because they are lowly, because they are poor, because they are outcast. For such does He most invite to brotherhood, the unknown, the contemptible, not meaning by these the monks only, and those who have occupied the mountains, but every believer; though he be a secular person, yet if he is hungry, and famishing and naked, and a stranger, His will is he should have the benefit of all this care. (Hom in Matt LXXIX: PG 58 : 718; altered).

The poor are by their poverty members of the Body of Christ. The community is called to be responsible toward these members because they are poor. The poor need to experience the benefit of all the care that the body of Christ offers.

The community needs to be aware of the needs of the poor and obey the will of God, to care for them. It also needs to be aware of Christ's identification with the poor and Christ's presence in the poor. The community needs to be able to see Christ in the poor, it needs to look beyond the surface and identify Christ in the poor and suffering. This is done not because of what the christian sees, but because it is an injunction of Christ. What the christian sees might not convince

him/her of Christ's presence in the poor, but Christ commanded him/her to care for the poor in the same manner he/she would for Christ.

Do you see the courage of the holy women, their love for Christ, the generosity with which they spend their treasures and risk their lives? We ought to imitate these women; let us not abandon Jesus in His hour of need. They gave so generously of their goods at the risk of their lives for His dead body. But we refuse to feed Him when He is hungry, to clothe Him when He is naked, when He asks an alms of us, we pass Him by. Oh, no doubt, if you were to see Christ Himself you would each give lavishly. But this Man is Christ; He tells us: "It is I." Why then do you not give Him all you have? For even now you still hear Him say, "You did it to Me", whether you give to Him or to this beggar matters not, and what you do is no less noble than the deed of the holy women in ministering to Him then. No, your act is even more noble. No, do not be shocked! To feed the Lord when he is visibly present, and when the very sight of Him would move a heart of stone, is not as meritorious as to care for the poor, the lame and the deformed because of His works. For in the first instance, His appearance and the majesty of presence makes us feel generous. But here the reward of charity is due solely to your good will. Besides it is a greater love for Christ to lavish every attention upon a fellow servant simply because of His words. (Hom in Matt LXXXVIII; PG 58 : 778; altered).

The Christian then, by ignoring the poor, ignores Christ who is in the poor. Neglecting the poor is tantamount to neglecting Christ, even persecuting the very body of Christ. Chrysostom continually reminds his hearers that they are responsible agents and that at the end of

time they will have to give account of their actions. The poor are not to be treated lightly.

He (Jesus) it is whom we despise in the poor; hence the enormity of the crime. Thus, when Paul persecuted Christ's brethren, he was persecuting Christ Himself. Wherefore He says: "Why do you persecute Me?" (Acts 9 : 4). Let us then be so disposed in giving alms as if we were giving to Christ. For His words are even more trustworthy than the evidence of our eyes. So when you see a poor Man, remember the command He has given us to feed Him. Even though it be not Christ that we see, still beneath these appearances it is really He who begs and receives. Do you blush at my saying that Christ begs? Blush rather with shame when He begs and you do not give. That is shameful and deserves punishment. For that He should beg of us is owing to His goodness and we ought to rejoice at it. But if we do not give, we are guilty of cruelty. If now you do not believe that when you ignore one of the poor faithful, it is Christ Himself that you ignore, you will believe it when you are summoned to appear before Him, and hear Him say: "Inasmuch as you did not do it to one of these least, neither did you do it to Me." (Hom in Matt LXXXVIII; PG 58 : 778)

What often blinded many Christians from seeing Christ in the poor was selfish pride. Self-sufficient arrogance led many to restrict Christ to the heavenly realm and expected Him to appear in heavenly things, not in the lowly and outcast. Chrysostom was angered by those who disdained to associate with the lowly, thinking themselves of greater importance. The Eucharistic feast demonstrated a different

understanding of the matter. At the Eucharist both rich and poor receive the same benefits from the hand of God, Christ befriends and 'mingles' (ἀναφύρει) Himself with both classes of society. For Chrysostom Christ comes to Man through the poor, it is therefore wise to associate with the poor for in so doing the christian is drawn closer to Christ. As Christ does not disdain to be associated with the poor, so neither should the christian.

For he does not disdain to call them (the poor) to His spiritual table, and make them partakers of that Feast. But the maimed and the lame and the old and he that is clothed in rags and is in filthy, and sickly, comes to partake of that Table with the young and the beautiful, and with him even who is clothed in purple, and whose head is encircled with a diadem - and is thought worthy of the spiritual Feast, and both enjoy the same benefits, and there is no difference Does then Christ not disdain to call them to His Table with the King, for both are called together, and you perhaps disdain even to be seen giving to the poor, or even conversing with them? Fie upon your haughtiness and pride! ... For if we are ashamed of those of whom Christ is not ashamed, we are ashamed of Christ, being ashamed of His friends. Let your table be filled with the maimed and the lame. Through them Christ comes, not through the rich. (Hom in I Thes XI; PG 62 : 467 - 8; altered).

Through the poor Christ comes to Man offering salvation. For Chrysostom Christ's Passion and salvific work continues to be offered to Man through the sufferings of the poor. Christ suffers in the poor in the hope that the christian will stretch out a helping hand and relieve the suffering and in so doing work out his/her salvation.

Through the poor the sufferings of Christ are re-enacted. Have you no regard even for these? yet still for very nature's sake be softened at seeing Me naked, and remember that nakedness wherewith I am now naked on the cross for you; or, if not this, yet that wherewith I am naked through the poor. I was then bound for you, no, still I am bound for you, that neither moved by the former ground or the latter, you might be minded to show some pity. I fasted for you, again I am hungry for you. I was athirst when hanging on the cross, I am athirst also through the poor, that by the former as also by the latter, I may draw you to Myself, and make you charitable to your own salvation (Hom in Rom XV; PG 60: 547 - 8; Mersch 1938 : 334).

Christ wills to continue suffering in order to bring Man to salvation. He earnestly desires Man's salvation. He bears the suffering of the poor in order to bring Man to compassion, to free people from the enslaving desires of this world. Chrysostom stresses that Christ was not content merely to endure the cross and death. Christ's love for Man drives Him on to continue to suffer for Man.

He willed to become a poor pilgrim, a beggar; He willed to be naked, to be cast into prison and to be subject to infirmities, in order that these at least might move your heart. "If you will give Me no return for the sufferings I endured for your sake," He says, "then take pity on My poverty. If you will not pity my poverty, let My infirmity and My chains stir you to compassion. If all this still leaves you unmoved, at least grant My petition because it is such a little thing I beg. I ask for nothing costly, but for bread, a roof, and words of comfort. If you are even yet hostile, at least be stimulated by the thought of the

kingdom of heaven and the rewards I have promised. Has even this no appeal for you? Then show at least a natural compassion when you see Me naked and remember the nakedness I endured for you on the cross. (Hom in Rom XV; PG 60 : 547 - 8).

The reward for acts of compassion is the association with Christ. Chrysostom continues saying: 'I wish to be fed by you, for I love you ardently. Like all who love, I am happy to be at your table. I am proud to be there, and I shall proclaim you before the whole world. "Behold him who fed Me".' (Hom in Rom XV; PG 60 : 548).

Chrysostom, in fact, urges his hearers to give to the poor in order to make Christ their Debtor. In clothing the poor and satisfying their hunger, Christians not only clothe and satisfy Christ, but also earn for themselves the right to wear the royal robe. For by caring for the poor, Christians work out their salvation. (Hom in Rom VII; PG 60 : 450). Giving to the poor in the belief that Christ is intimately united to them involves the element of risk. The christian does not receive the royal robe immediately, but can only hope for it. The act of giving is therefore an act of faith, humbly trusting in the mercy of God. As the farmer sows and waits, so the christian gives and does not expect rewards immediately; 'Look to the sower', says Chrysostom, 'and consider that he cannot in any other way gather more together, save by scattering what he has, and letting go of what is at hand.' (Hom in Rom VII; PG 60 : 450; altered). Giving to Christ, letting go of material goods, builds up the spiritual strength of the christian. For Chrysostom every action creates a reaction. The action of charity to Christ through the hands of the poor, results in Christ building up those who provide charity, Christ provides them with His security. 'Let us not neglect Him here when He hungers, that He may ever feed

us there. Here let us clothe Him, that he leave us not bare of the safety which is from Him' (Hom in Joh XXV; PG 59 : 152; altered).

Chrysostom, however, often met Christians whose hands gripped tightly the things of this world. These people would not realise the benefits they had received from the hand of Christ and consequently refused to let go and risk giving. They rather reinvested their goods in themselves and ignored Christ's presence in the poor.

All this leaves us unmoved; so ungrateful are we that we deck out our servants, our mules and our horses with trappings of gold, and despise our Lord who goes naked and begging from door to door and who stands with outstretched hand at the street corner. No, often we look at Him with distrust. Yet it is for our sake that He submits to these miseries. Willingly does He hunger that He may feed you; He goes naked to give you a robe of immortality. But you will give Him nothing of your own. Of your robes, some are being eaten by the moths; the rest, locked away in chests, are but useless worry to you. Meanwhile He that has given you all this, and everything else beside, goes naked! (Hom in Joh XXVII; PG 59 : 161; Mersch 1938; 332)

Chrysostom usually illustrates the violent contrast between the sumptuous life of Christians and the absolute degrading poverty of Christ. He describes the magnificent raiment, the lavish use of gold and silk, even in the matter of footwear; then abruptly: 'Shall I present you Christ hungry, Christ naked, Christ everywhere chained in prison?' (Hom in Matt XLIX; PG 58 : 502).

The Christian was given wealth not to ornament himself/herself, but to

aid the poor. Giving to the poor took priority over giving gifts to the church. Of what use are ornaments to a person dying of hunger. For Chrysostom such gifts insult the poor person's humanity and put the church in a very bad light. The church then loses a lot of its significance to society, it becomes nothing more than an opiate for the wealthy.

What is the use of loading Christ's table with vessels of gold if He Himself is dying with hunger? First satisfy His hunger; then adorn His table with what remains Tell me, if you saw a Man in need of even the most necessary food and if you should leave him standing there, in order to set the table with dishes of gold (but no food), would he be thankful to you? would he not rather be angry? Or again, if you saw him clothed in rags and shivering with cold, but without giving any thought to his raiment, you were to erect columns of gold, telling him it was all in his honour, would he not think you were mocking him and treating him with utmost contempt? But consider well that this is the way you treat Christ when He goes about as a pilgrim, a homeless vagabond, and when instead of taking Him in, you embellish the floors and walls and capitals of columns, and suspend lamps from silver chains, but refuse even to visit Him when He is in chains. I am not saying this to criticize the use of such ornaments; we must attend to both, but to Christ first. (Hom in Matt I; PG 58 : 509; Mersch 1938 : 331)

Being prepared to open the hand and give to the poor was also a prerequisite for approaching the holy Eucharist. How could the christian approach and participate in the Eucharist while at the same time he/she neglects Christ's suffering in the poor. At the table he/she

expects to be fed with the body and blood of Christ yet leaves Christ hungry at the street corner. People who approach the table and are guilty of this offence do not participate in the sacrifice of Christ, but rather in the slaughter of Christ. Their actions do not match that of the disciples, but of those who crucified the Lord.

Commenting on I Corinthians 11 : 27 Chrysostom states:

Why so, because he poured it out, and makes the thing appear a slaughter, and no longer a sacrifice. Much therefore as they then pierced Him, pierced Him not that they may drink, but that they might shed His blood; so likewise does he that comes forward unworthily and reaps no profit thereby For how can it be other than unworthily, when it is he who neglects the hungry? who besides overlooking him, puts him to shame? ... "What impieties? say you. Why do you say, what impieties? You have partaken of such a table and when you ought to be more gentle than any, and like the angels, none so cruel as you have become. (Hom in I Cor. XXVII; PG 61 : 230; altered).

Caring for the poor is an act of sacrifice. It is an act in imitation of the holy Eucharist. As Christ is offered on the altar so are the gifts to the poor sacrificed on Christ, for in the poor Christ lives.

This altar (the poor) is composed of the very members of Christ, and the Lord's body becomes an altar for you. Venerate it; for upon it, in the flesh, you offer sacrifice to the Lord. This altar is greater than the altar in this church, and hence far greater than the altar of the Old Testament. Do not protest! This stone altar is august because of the Victim that rests upon it; but the altar of almsgiving is more so because it is made of this very Victim. The former is august because, though made of

stone, it is sanctified by contact with the body of Christ; the latter, because it is the body of Christ. Therefore, my brother, it is more venerable than the altar beside which you are standing. What is Aaron when compared with this? What are the crown, the bells, the Holy of holies? But why speak of the altar of the Old Law when the altar of almsgiving is so sublime in comparison with our own altar here? You do honour this altar because it receives the body of Christ. But the other, which is the body of Christ, you treat with ignominy and you look on indifferently while it perishes.

This altar you can see everywhere, in the streets and in the market place, and at any hour you may sacrifice thereon; for it too is a place of sacrifice. And, as the priest standing at the altar brings down the Spirit, so you too bring down the Spirit, like the oil which was poured out in abundance (upon the altar of the Old Law). (Hom in II Cor XX; PG 61 : 540; Mersch 1938:335)

The Eucharistic sacrifice was not limited to the breaking of bread at the 'stone altar'. For Chrysostom it was performed both in the church and on the poor. The priest presided over the ceremony in the church, the laity presided over the ceremony in the market place. The ceremony in the church was in imitation of the Old Law interpreted through Christ, in the market place it was in imitation of the ceremony of the New Law celebrated in the church. Christ was equally present in both instances, present in the flesh.

The Christian had to be aware that just as Christ was present at the Eucharist, so He is present in the poor. Once the christian had

recognised the presence of Christ, it was his/her responsibility to 'free' Christ from suffering, to reach out a hand in loving concern. In stretching out a hand, the christian not only gave aid to Christ and the poor, but also received salvation from Christ through the poor. As in the Eucharist, as the believer brought his/her gift to the table and offered them, so he/she also received salvation from Christ through the gift. The christian who saw Christ, saw also all that He had given to him/her and gave out of a grateful heart. For Chrysostom the age-old maxim was true: 'As you give so shall you receive'. But he also knew that the christian had also received more than he/she deserved, consequently he could not reconcile hardness of heart with belief in the mercy of God. Nor could he reconcile the fact that the believer received the body and blood of Christ yet ignored Him as He stood begging in the poor.

VIII. RESPONSE TO THE EUCHARIST

Emilianos Timiadis states that 'eucharistic spirituality reflects the degree of inner transformation achieved: The "existential" and ontological metamorphosis obtained, insofar as is possible, for the earthly nature of Man.' (1984 : 179). For the communicant is touched by the Spirit at the Eucharist and refashioned, no longer is he/she the same for the old is gone and the new is come. The person changed by the Spirit does not become a perfectionist, unable to relate to the condition of most people. On the contrary, he/she is someone human and loving, capable of laughter and independence. The person transformed through the Eucharist is he/she of whom it is true to say, with Irenaeus, that 'the glory of God is a living Man.' (contra haeres. iv, 20, 7; PG 7 : 1037). The transforming effect of the Eucharist should, or rather can be seen in the daily life of the communicant. He/she is aware of the awesome gift that he/she has received and carries out the injunction to give as he/she has received. The Eucharist, it must be noted, does not magically transform the communicant without his/her consent and concerted effort. By receiving the body and blood of Christ, the communicant receives the gift of the Spirit and endeavours to work in harmony with the Spirit. Those who participate and neglect their responsibility to God and Man imitate Judas. Chrysostom states: 'Ah! how great the blindness of the traitor! Even partaking of the mysteries, he remained the same; and admitted to the most holy Table, he changed not.' (Hom in Matt LXXXII; PG 58 : 743). The influence of the Eucharist can only be felt if the communicant realises the responsibility that is required of him/her. Transfiguration can only occur if the communicant takes his/her faith seriously, and faith has no room for apathy.

Taking the faith seriously meant, for Chrysostom, being aware. It meant being aware of the condition of one's soul and of the surrounding social conditions. The communicant had to be alert that even though he/she be continually involved with church affairs, he/she did not drift away from the source of the faith and christian life. The communicant needed always to be aware and to keep watch.

For if when he who was redeemed among that holy band, who had enjoyed so great a gift, who had wrought miracles, (for he too was with the others who were sent to raise the dead and to heal the lepers), if when he was seized by the dreadful disease of covetousness and betrayed his Master, neither the favours, nor the gifts, nor the being with Christ, nor the attendance on Him, nor the washing of the feet, nor the sharing of His table, nor the bearing the bag, availed him, if these things rather served to help on his punishment, let us also fear lest we ever through covetousness imitate Judas. (Hom in Joh xlvii, 2; PG 59 : 265; altered).

Not even if the communicant continually touched the awesome body of Christ would he/she be changed if he/she did not will to be changed. If the communicant did not will to change and partook of the sacrament, the feast would bring damnation rather than life. Only by being alert and responsible, does the communicant begin to realise the power of the Eucharist.

The communicants, however, are not left to labour on their own, they are not left without solace. Although Chrysostom stresses human responsibility (sometimes to the extent of minimising the grace of God), he does not see the communicant struggling without the assistance from God. The Eucharist is not only a call to responsible

living, but it is also a comfort to the believer, a source of nourishment for the faithful. It is the spiritual food for the communicant which equips and strengthens him/her for spiritual battle. The strength of the food lies in the fact that it is the very body and blood of Christ the victor (IC XC NIKA). The reception of the body of Christ fills the communicant with the energy to love.

This body He has given to us both to hold and to eat; a thing appropriate to intense love. For those whom we kiss vehemently, we often even bite with our teeth. Wherefore also Job, indicating the love of his servants towards him, said, that they often out of their great affections toward him, said, "Oh! that we were filled with his flesh!". Even so Christ has given to us to be filled with his flesh, drawing us on to greater love.

(Hom in I Cor XXIV; PG 62 : 204; altered).

By being fed with the body of Christ the soul does not waste away, but is enriched by the Body. - "I (Jesus) have willed to become your brother, for your sake I shared in flesh and blood by which I became your kinsman." This blood causes the image of our King to be fresh within us, produces beauty unspeakable, does not permit the nobleness of our souls to waste away, watering it continually and nourishing it.' (Hom in Joh XLVI, 4; PG 59 : 262 altered). The living force behind the christian is the action of God. It is through the Eucharist that the believer is renewed so that he/she can continue in Christ.

Christ is both the sustainer and the protector of the church. The church has its being from the side of Christ, i.e. through baptism and the Eucharist.

It is from both of these that the church is sprung through the bath of regeneration and renewal by the Spirit, through baptism and the mysteries. But the symbols of baptism and the mysteries come from the side of Christ. It is from His side, therefore, that Christ formed His church, just as He formed Eve from the side of Adam Just as then He took the rib from Adam when he was in a deep sleep, so now He gave us blood and water after His death, first the water and then the blood. (STAV 3 : 17 - 18; Harkins 1963 : 62).

That which initiated the formation of the church is also that which now sustains the church. 'Have you seen how Christ unites to Himself His bride? Have you seen with what food he nurtures us all? It is by the same food that we have been formed and fed. Just as a woman nurtures her offspring with her own blood and milk, so also Christ continuously nurtures with His own blood those whom He has begotten.' (Stav3 : 19; Harkins 1963 : 62). For Chrysostom everything is through Christ, especially Christ at the table. It is at the Eucharistic table that the communicant internalises the blessings of Christ. 'Do you wish to know how He also becomes your food? As I live through the Father', Christ says, "so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me." (John 6 : 58). And he also becomes your house: "He who eats of my flesh abides in Me and I in him." (ibid). And he shows that He is our root and foundation when He says: "I am the vine and you are the branches" (John 15:5)' (Montf 2 : 14; Harkins 1963 : 176).

It was Christ as food that enabled the communicant to resist the attacks of the devil. For Chrysostom once the communicant had partaken of the Eucharist, Christ dwelt within him/her and therefore evil would flee from him/her. 'This Blood, if rightly taken, drives

away devils, and keeps them far away from us, while it calls to us angels and the Lord of angels. For wherever they see the Lord's Blood, devils flee, and angels run together.' (Hom in Joh XLVI.3; PG 59 : 261; altered; cf STAV 3 : 12; Harkins 1963 : 60). This food that God has prepared is stronger than any armour. It is not only the moral life of the communicant that caused the devil to flee, but it is primarily the blood of Christ. It was the blood of Christ that stained the tongue giving the Christian victory.

Chrysostom saw the Eucharist as a blessing that brought peace to fellow believers, it brought koinonia to the church. In the fourth century, in fact, the Eastern church used the term koinonia as the simple term for the sacrament, as communio was used in the Western church. Chrysostom speaks of the 'time of koinonia' (καρπὸς κοινωνίας) and says: 'You are about to receive the King through koinonia.' (De consubs.; PG 48 ; 755f). There is hardly another exegete who has been at such pains as Chrysostom to ascertain and differentiate the various meanings of koinonia in the New Testament. For example, he refers to Phillipians 2:1 to the relationship of the Phillipians to the apostle. He therefore paraphrases κοινωνία πνεύματος with εἰ ἔστιν ὑμῶν κοινωνῆσαι ἐν πνεύματι and adds εἰ ἔστι κοινωνῆσαι ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ (Hom in Phil VI; PG 62:213). Koinonia is in this instance understood as the fellowship between the apostle and his readers in their relationship to the Spirit and to the Lord. On the other hand, his comment on ἐκκοινωνήσεν of Phillipians 4 : 14 is κοινωνία γὰρ τὸ πᾶν ἔστιν. The giving and receiving of which Paul speaks are related to one another as buying is to selling ταῦτα γὰρ ἔστιν κοινωνία (Hom in Phil XV; PG 62 : 290). Here koinonia is a reciprocal

relationship among the parties. (Elert 1966 : 31 - 2). The kiss of peace was a symbolic expression of the koinonia that existed in the community. It also had the effect of uniting members. 'Having then knit them together by his (Paul) exhortation, he naturally bids them use the holy kiss also as a means of union, for this unites, and produces one body.' (Hom in I Cor XLIV, 4; PG 61 : 379). The holy kiss was a symbolic expression of the reciprocal relationship among the members, they gave as they received. The fellowship (koinonia) of the body depended upon this relationship. Chrysostom noted, however, that many share the peace more out of custom than out of sincere love for the koinonia. This was nothing less than monstrous hypocrisy.

How then is it not monstrous, if, while hearing so many times that we are to have peace, we are in a state of fuel with each other: and receiving peace, and giving it back, are at war with him who gives it to us? You say, "And to your spirit". And do you defame him abroad? Woe is me! that the majestic usages of the church are become forms of things merely, and not the truth. Woe is me! that the watchwords of this army proceed no further than to be only words. (Hom in Col III, PG 62 : 323; altered).

Sharing out of custom and not out of love was dangerous to the fellowship of the body. It made the Eucharistic rite into something shallow and meaningless. The central theme of the faith, viz. unity with God and Man, was rendered into nothing more than a pious platitude.

Within the koinonia the communicants have to give to each other as they receive from Christ. Chrysostom continually reminds his hearers to be more compassionate to each other because of what Christ has done

for them. 'If therefore, your Master poured forth His blood for your brother, it must be right that each of us give encouragement at least by our words and that we stretch out our hand to our brothers who by their laxity have fallen into the snares of the devil.' (STAV 6 : 20; Harkins 1963 : 101). Because Christ has shown compassion and stretched out a saving hand to fallen humanity, so too the believer is responsible to a fallen brother/sister. This is particularly true of those who have partaken of the Eucharist. Once having received the body and blood of Christ, the communicant is called to live a life that is upbuilding of the community. His/her actions have to match the gift that he/she has received. 'And do you', Chrysostom warns, 'having taken the bread of life, do an action of death, and do not shudder?' (Hom in I Cor XXVII, PG 61 : 231).

Within the fellowship all are regarded as being equal. This is clearly demonstrated in the Eucharist as all the members partake of the same body. For Chrysostom equality went hand in hand with unity. As in Christ all people are equal so in Christ all believers are united. Still there were those who refused to allow Christ to bring equality.

Since Christ for His part gave Himself equally to all, saying, "Take, eat". He gave His body equally, but you do not give so much as the common bread equally. Yes, it was indeed broken for all alike and became the body equally for all After the same manner also the cup, when He had supped, saying, "This cup is the New Testament in my Blood: this do as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me." What are you saying? Are you remembering Christ, and you despise the poor, and you tremble not? (Hom in I Cor XXVII, 5; PG 61 : 231 - 232; altered).

At the table the communicants are not only reminded of their equality before the Lord, but also of their Lord's suffering for them. As the Lord suffered for the world, so the believers should suffer for each other. As the communicants share in the table of the Lord, so they are to share their tables with the poor.

Your Master counted all worthy of the same table, though it be very and most exceedingly awful, and far exceeding the dignity of all: but you consider them (the poor) to be unworthy even of your own, small and mean as we see it is, and while they have no advantage over you in spiritual things, you rob them in the temporal things. For neither are these your own Therefore he (Paul) leads us to the remembrance of all those things, by His time, His table, and His betrayal, putting us to shame, and saying, "Your Master gave up even Himself for you and you do not even share a little food with your brother for your own sake."

(Hom in I Cor XXVII, 5; PG 61 : 230; altered).

Caring for the poor was a response the communicant made to the grace of God shown in the Eucharistic feast. It was a response based on the understanding of the equality and unity of all believers. As Christ has given so the communicant gives. 'Wherefore I beseech you, that we do not this to condemnation, let us nourish Christ, let us give Him to drink, let us clothe Him. These things are worthy of that table.'

(Hom in I Cor XXVII; PG 61 : 232; altered).

A response that is worthy of the table is made when the communicant is aware of what he/she has received. At the table the communicant receives the very body of Christ and his/her members are glorified through contact with the body. To go and harm a neighbour, the very hand that has been glorified in contact with Christ, is to profane

the sacrament. 'After you have considered how great was His sacrifice, beautify the members of your body. Think of what you received in your hand, and never lift it to strike another and never disgrace with the sin of assault the hand which has been honoured with so great a gift. Think of what you receive in your hand and keep it clean of all greed and theft.' (Mont. 2 : 15; Harkins 1963 : 177). The same applies to the tongue that is reddened by the blood of Christ.

Consider that you not only receive this gift in your hand, but that you also bring it up to your mouth, and keep your tongue clean of all disgraceful and outrageous words, blasphemy, perjury, and all other sins of this sort, For it is a deed fraught with destruction to take the tongue which serves such awesome mysteries, which has become purpled with a blood so precious and which has become a sword of gold, and to change its course to abuse, insolence, and ribald jests. Have reverence for the honour of God which has been bestowed on it, and do not lead it down to the vileness of sin. (Montf. 2 : 16; Harkins 1963 : 177; cf Montf 2 : 17; ibid).

Once the communicant had partaken of the Eucharistic feast, there had to be a basic change in his/her attitude to the Church, the koinonia of Christ, and in the conduct of his/her life. As the communicants prepared themselves to partake in the Feast, so even more should they be watchful over their soul after they have consumed Christ.

Chrysostom points out that all the effort that the communicants expend in order to prepare themselves for the feast is wasted if they return to a base manner of life after the Feast. For as they needed to be worthy before they received, so they need to continue to be worthy of

what they have received.

Consider, when the Apostles partook of that holy Supper, what they did: did they not betake themselves to prayers and to singing of hymns? to sacred vigils? to that long work of teaching, so full of all self-denial? For then He related and delivered to them those great and wonderful things, when Judas had gone out to call them who were about to crucify Him. Have you not heard how the three thousand also who partook of the communion, continued ever in prayer and teaching, not in drunken feasts and revelings? But you fast before you partake, that in a certain way you may appear worthy of the communion: but when you have partaken, and you ought to increase your temperance, you undo all. And yet surely it is not the same to fast before this and after it. Since, although it is our duty to be temperate at both times, yet most particularly after we have received the bridegroom. Before, that you may become worthy of receiving: after, that you may not be found unworthy of what you have received. (Hom in I Cor XXVII: PG 61 : 231; altered).

It was primarily in the field of human relationships that the Eucharist was to be influential. It was to lead to the forgiveness of one another and to the creation of a harmonious community. This was illustrated in the dealings Chrysostom had with the chamberlain Eutropius. Eutropius had won his position through treachery and extortion and had tried to maintain his position through similar means. Through an unfortunate series of incidents (see note³), his evil caught up with him and he found himself the victim of his rivals. He took refuge in the church and Chrysostom offered him protection. In his sermon, with Eutropius clutching the altar for security,

Chrysostom reminded the congregation, who were all glad to see the fall of the wicked, that the Eucharist called the communicant to forgive. 'If', he said, 'you ask that this Man be punished for his crimes against you, how will you be able presently to draw near to take the Body of the Lord? How will you be able to say those words, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us?". He (Eutropius) is guilty of terrible injustices, but this is a time for mercy, not for passing judgements, a moment not for reckoning, but for forgiveness". (Attwater 1959 : 98). The communicant was only forgiven if he/she was ready to offer forgiveness. Those who withhold forgiveness towards others, withhold forgiveness from themselves. 'How' asks Chrysostom, 'can you ask your Lord to be mild and merciful to you, when you are so hard and unforgiving to your fellow-servants?' (de Stat Hom XX; PG 49 : 198 - 199; altered). The community was built on reciprocal forgiveness. As the Father forgives through the Son, so the believers forgive one another through the Son.

The Eucharist, for Chrysostom, should not only be accompanied by forgiveness, but with compassionate concern for one another. Commenting on I Corinthians 11 : 33, he states:

Therefore when you come together to eat, tarry for one another. Thus, while their fear was at its height, and the terror of hell remained, he chooses again to bring in the exhortation on behalf of the poor, on account of which he set all these things, implying if they do not this, they must partake unworthily. But if the not imparting of our goods excludes us from that table, much more the violent taking away. And he did not say, "Wherefore when you come together, impart to them that need",

but, which has more a reverential sound, "tarry for another".
(Hom in I Cor XXVIII, 3; PG 61 : 228; altered).

It was particularly for the poor that the communicant had to tarry, those who were defenceless against exploitation. It was not only at the Feast that he/she had to show concern, but rising from the feast he/she had to take his/her concern with him/her and share it with those whom he/she met, particularly with the poor. Chrysostom draws the communicant's attention to the very first feast. He states:

This table is the same as that, and has nothing less. For it is not so that Christ wrought that, and Man this, but He does this too. This is that upper chamber, where they were then; and hence they went forth to the Mount of Olives. Let us also go out unto the herds of the poor, for this spot is the Mount of Olives. For the multitude of the poor are olive-trees planted on the house of God, dropping the oil, which is profitable for us there, which the five virgins had, and the others that had not received perished thereby. Having received this, let us enter in, that with bright lamps we may meet the Bridegroom; having received this, let us go forth hence. (Hom in Matt LXXXII, 5; PG 58 : 744; altered).

If the communicants refused to share the love of God which they had received with the poor they, like the five virgins, would be excluded from the final wedding feast. Sharing what was received was the call of the Eucharistic feast, it was the response that was expected.

What the communicant received is the 'cup of blessing'. Through this cup Man has been freed from its error and the path of Christ has been revealed. Through this cup the communicants partake in the

'unspeakable mercies of God' and are given the right hand of fellowship.

What do you say, O blessed Paul? When you would appeal to the hearers' reverence, when you are mentioning the awful mysteries, do you give the title of the "cup of blessing" to that fearful and most tremendous cup? "Yes", he says, "and no mean title is that which was spoken. For when I call it 'blessing', I unfold all the treasure of God's goodness, and call to mind those mighty gifts." Since we too, recounting over the cup the unspeakable mercies of God, and all that we have been made partakers of, so proceed to offer it, and to communicate; giving Him thanks, that He has delivered from error the whole race of mankind; that being afar off, He brought them near; that when they had no hope and were without God in the world, He appointed them as His own brothers and fellow-heirs. (Hom in I Cor XXIV, PG 61 : 200; altered).

The communicant has received hope from God, he/she has been given the benefits of God. In response to the gifts of God, the communicant extends the compassionate hand of charity towards his/her neighbour. It is an act of the will to share the blessings of the Eucharist. The will, however, is motivated by the Spirit and nourished by the body and blood of Christ at the Eucharist.

CONCLUSION

The Eucharist, for Chrysostom, is the central celebration of the christian church. All christian dogma and life flows towards it and from it. Here the whole drama of the passion and resurrection is re-enacted. Here the body of Christ lies slain, surrounded by the whole host of heaven, giving life to those who partake worthily.

In participation in the feast, the church offers itself through the elements and is sanctified by the Spirit. By receiving the elements, she becomes the very body and blood of Christ, and at the same time is called to be that which she has received. The whole of the christian life is then, for Chrysostom, a receiving of one's identity and a struggle to be worthy of that identity. The christian had to take his/her call to be Christ in the world seriously. It was not only the monks who needed to be disciplined, but the whole church needed to follow Christ seriously. Those who failed to repent, not only damaged themselves, but the whole body of Christ.

Chrysostom was an idealist, often overlooking human weaknesses. Although he saw that God accommodated Man's weaknesses, especially when God allowed sacrifices in the Old Testament (Adv Jud PG 48 : 880), he could not tolerate mediocrity within the church. The christian had to work out his/her salvation with fear and trembling. Chrysostom stressed human responsibility to the extent that he has been accused of being a Pelagian. This he certainly was not and Augustine capably defends him from this charge (adv. JULIANUM, 1.1.x.vi). Chrysostom saw Man as a free agent who was to be responsible for

his/her actions, partaking of the Eucharist was a voluntary action. Those who partook knew the demands that went with the blessings.

In receiving Christ at the table, the communicant had to let go of all that is false, finding security only in the body of Christ. Once having received, the communicant is no longer orientated toward himself/herself and can now share the life of God with others. By internalising Christ and sharing Christ, the communicant is what the Eucharist calls him/her to be. In this way he/she gives glory to God and this, for Chrysostom, is the meaning of life. 'Let all things which you undertake and accomplish have its root and foundation', viz., that they attend to the glory of God, and let no action of yours fail to have this foundation. (STAV. 6: 8, Harkins 1863; 96).

The Eucharist stood at the centre, calling Man to greater heights and enabling Man to reach them. Chrysostom's Eucharistic theology continually relates to the christian life, calling Man out of mediocrity into the glory of God.

NOTES

1. In other sermons Chrysostom used Jacob's flight into Egypt as a type of Jesus' flight into Egypt, (Hom in Matt VIII, PG 57 : 85); the dove sent out of the ark by Noah as a type of dove which appeared at His baptism (Hom in Matt XII, PG 57 : 204); Jonah's three days in the whale as a type of Jesus' three days in the tomb (Hom in Matt XLIII; PG 57 : 458) and the manna in the desert as a 'type and shadow of Jesus' spiritual food.' (Hom in Joh XLVI; PG 59 : 262).

 2. In 387 a severe tax was levied on Antioch in order to pay for Theodosius's military exploits and for the celebration of his 'decennialia'. The wealthy people in Antioch objected and lodged a complaint to the governor who refused to listen. The crowd then moved to the forum and proceeded to tear down the statues of Theodosius, his son and his mother. The fury lasted for three hours after which sanity returned. Antioch was to be severely punished for her apostasy. Bishop Meletius went to Theodosius to plead for mercy which he received.

 3. The chamberlain Eutropius had enriched himself unscrupulously at the expense of the Eastern empire, but the revolt of the Gothic military governor Tribigild in Phrygia, who terrified the whole of Asia minor, brought about his downfall. Tribigild held a personal grudge against Eutropius and demanded the chamberlain's dismissal. The emperor, Arcadius, in order to maintain peace in the Eastern empire, fulfilled Tribigild's wish. Eutropius after dismissal ran to the church for protection which he received from Chrysostom. Soon, however, he fled the church for Cyprus where he was caught by his enemies and later was judicially convicted on a number of charges. He was beheaded at Chalcedon.
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