The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy

Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite (c. AD 500)

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ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY.

CAPUT I. To my Fellow Presbyter Timothy. Dionysius the Presbyter. What is the traditional view of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy and what is its purpose? Section I.

We must, then, most pious of pious sons, demonstrate from the supermundane and most sacred Oracles and traditions, that ours is a Hierarchy of the inspired and Divine and Deifying science, and of operation, and of consecration, for those who have been initiated with the initiation of the sacred revelation derived from the hierarchical mysteries. See, however, that you do not put to scorn things most holy (Holy of Holies); but rather treat them reverently, and you will honour the things of the hidden God by intellectual and obscure researches, carefully guarding them from the participation and defilement of the uninitiated, and reverently sharing holy things with the holy alone, by a holy enlightenment. For thus, as the Word of God has taught us who feast at His Banquet, even Jesus Himself----the most supremely Divine Mind and superessential, the Source and Essence, and most supremely Divine Power of every Hierarchy and Sanctification and Divine operation----illuminates the blessed Beings who are superior to us, in a manner more clear, and at the same time more intellectual, and assimilates them to His own Light, as far as possible; and by our love of things beautiful elevated to Him, and which elevates us, folds together our many diversities, and after perfecting into a uniform and Divine life and habit and operation, holily bequeaths the power of the Divine Priesthood; from which by approaching to the holy exercise of the priestly office, we ourselves become nearer to the Beings above us, by assimilation, according to our power, to their abiding and: unchangeable holy steadfastness; and thus by looking upwards to the blessed and supremely Divineself of Jesus, and reverently gazing upon what-

ever. we are permitted to see, and illuminated with the knowledge of the visions, we shall be able to become, as regards the science of Divine mysteries, purified and purifiers; images of Light, and workers, with God, perfected and perfecting.

Section II. Then what is the Hierarchy of the Angels and Archangels, and of supermundane Principalities and Authorities, Powers and Lordships, and Divine Thrones, or of the Beings of the same ranks as the Thrones----which the Word of God declares to be near, and always about God, and with God, naming them in the Hebrew tongue Cherubim and Seraphim---- by pondering the sacred ranks and divisions of their Orders and Hierarchies, you will find in the books we have written----not as befits their dignity but to the best of our ability---- and as the Theology of the most holy Scriptures guided, when they extolled their Hierarchy. Nevertheless, it is necessary to say this, that both that, and every Hierarchy extolled now by us, has one and the same power, throughout the whole Hierarchical transaction; and that the Hierarch himself, according to his essence, and analogy, and rank, is initiated in Divine things, and is deified and imparts to the subordinates, according to the meetness of each for the sacred deification which comes to him from' God; also that the subordinates follow the superior, and elevate the inferior towards things in advance; and that some go before, and, as far as possible, give the lead to others; and that each, as far as may be, participates in the truly Beautiful, and Wise, and Good, through this the inspired and sacerdotal harmony.

But the Beings and ranks above us, of whom we have already made a reverent mention, are both incorporeal, and their Hierarchy is both intelligible and supermundane; but let us view our Hierarchy, comformably to ourselves, abounding in the variety of the sensible symbols, by which, in proportion to our capacity, we are conducted, hierarchically according to our measure, to the uniform deification ----God and Divine virtue. They indeed, as minds, think, according to laws laid down for themselves; but we are led by sensible figures to the Divine contemplations, as is possible to us. And, to speak truly, there is One, to Whom all the Godlike aspire, but they do not partake uniformly of this One and the Same, but as the Divine balance distributes to each the meet inheritance. Now these things have been treated more systematically in the Treatise concerning "Intelligible and Sensible ." But now I will attempt to describe our Hierarchy, both its source and essence, as best I can; invoking Jesus, the source and Perfecting of all Hierarchies.

Section III. Every Hierarchy, then, is, according to our august tradition, the whole account of the sacred things falling under it, a most complete summary of the sacred rites of this or that Hierarchy, as the case may be. Our Hierarchy, then, is called, and is, the comprehensive system of the whole sacred rites included within it, according to which the divine Hierarch, being initiated, will have the communication of all the most sacred things within himself, as chief of Hierarchy. For as he who speaks of Hierarchy speaks of the order of the whole sacred rites collectively, so he, who mentions Hierarch, denotes the inspired and godly man----the skilled in all sacred knowledge----in whom the whole Hierarchy is clearly completed and recognized within himself. Head of this Hierarchy is the Fountain of Life, the Essence of Goodness, the one Triad, Cause of things that be, from Which both being

and well-being come to things that be, by reason of goodness. Of this most supremely Divine blessedness ----exalted beyond all, the threefold Monad, the really Being,----the Will, inscrutable to us, but known to Itself, is the rational preservation of beings amongst us and above us; but that (preservation) cannot otherwise take place, except those who are, being saved are being deified. Now the assimilation to, and union with, God, as far as attainable, is deification. And this is the common goal of every Hierarchy,----the clinging love towards God and Divine things divinely and uniformly ministered; and previous to this, the complete and unswerving removal of things contrary, the knowledge of things as they are in themselves; the vision and science of sacred truth; the inspired communication of the uniform perfection of the One Itself, as far as attainable; the banquet of contemplation, nourishing intelligibly, and deifying every man elevated towards it.

Section IV. Let us affirm, then, that the supremely Divine Blessedness, the essential Deity, the Source of deification, from Which comes the deification of those deified, bequeathed, by Divine Goodness, the Hierarchy, for preservation, and deification of all rational and intellectual Beings. And to the supermundane and blessed inheritances there is bequeathed something more immaterial and intellectual (for Almighty God does not move them to things divine, from without, but intelligibly, since they are illuminated as to the most Divine will from within, with brilliancy pure and immaterial), but to us----that which has been bequeathed to them, uniformly, and enveloped, is bequeathed from the Divinely transmitted Oracles, in a variety and multitude of divisible symbols, as we are able to receive it. For the Divinely transmitted Oracles are essence of our Hierarchy. And we affirm that these Oracles----all such as were given from our godly initiators in inspired Letters of the Word of God ----are most august; and further, whatever our leaders have revealed to us from the same holy men, by a less material initiation, and already akin, as it were, to the Heavenly Hierarchy, from mind to mind, through the medium of speech, corporeal, indeed, but nevertheless more immaterial, without writing. Nor did the inspired Hierarchs transmit these things, in conceptions clear to the commonalty of worshippers, but in sacred symbols. For it is not every one that is hallowed; nor, as the Oracles affirm, does knowledge belong to all.

Section V. Necessarily, then, the first leaders of our Hierarchy, after having been filled themselves with the sacred gift, from the superessential Godhead, and sent, by the supremely Divine Goodness, to extend the same gift successively, and, as godly, earnestly desiring themselves the elevation and deification of those after them, presented to us----by their written and unwritten revelations----in accordance with their sacred injunctions, things supercelestial, by sensible images, the enfolded, by variety and multitude, and things Divine, by things human, and things immaterial, by things material, and the superessential, by things belonging to us. Nor did they do this merely on account of the unhallowed, to whom it is not permitted even to touch the symbols, but because our Hierarchy is, as I said, a kind of symbol adapted to our condition, which needs things sensible, for our more Divine elevation from these to things intelligible. Nevertheless the reasons of the symbols have been revealed to the Divine initiators, which it is not permitted to explain to those who are yet being initiated, knowing that the Lawgivers of things divinely transmitted deliberately

arranged the Hierarchy in well-established and unconfused ranks, and in proportionate and sacred distributions of that which was convenient to each, according to fitness. Wherefore trusting in thy sacred promises (for it is a pious duty to recall them to thy recollection) ---- that, since every Hierarchical sacred word is of binding force, thou wilt not communicate to any other but those Godlike initiators of the same rank with thyself, and wilt persuade them to promise, according to hierarchical regulation, to touch pure things purely, and to communicate the mysteries of God to the godly alone, and things perfect to those capable of perfection, and things altogether most holy to the holy, I have entrusted this Divine gift to thee, in addition to many other Hierarchical gifts.

CAPUT II. I. Concerning things done in Illumination.

We have, then, reverently affirmed that this is the purpose of our Hierarchy, viz., our assimilation and union with God, as far as attainable. And, as the Divine Oracles teach, we shall attain this only by the love and the religious performance of the most worshipful Commandments. For He says: "He that loveth Me will keep My Word, and My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and will make Our abode with him. What, then, is source of the religious performance of the most august commandments? Our preparation for the restitution of the supercelestial rest, which forms the habits of our souls into an aptitude for the reception of the other sacred sayings and doings , the transmission of our holy and most divine regeneration . For, as our illustrious Leader used to say, the very first movement of the mind towards Divine things is the willing reception of Almighty God, but the very earliest step of the religious reception towards the religious performance of the Divine commandments is the unutterable operation of our being from God. For if our being from God is the Divine engendering, never would he know, and certainly never perform, any of the Divine instructions, who had not had his beginning to be in God. To speak after the manner of men, must we not first begin to be, and then to do, our affairs? Since he, who does not exist at all, has neither movement nor even beginning;

since he, who in some way exists, alone does, or suffers, those things suitable to his own nature. This, then, as I think, is clear. Let us next contemplate the Divine symbols of the birth in God. And I pray, let no uninitiated person approach the sight ; for neither is it without danger to gaze upon the glorious rays of the sun with weak eyes, nor is it without peril to put our hand to things above us. For right was the priesthood of the Law, when rejecting Osias, because he put his hand to sacred things; and Korah, because to things sacred above his capacity; and Nadab and Abihu, because they treated things, within their own province, unholily.

II. Mysterion of Illumination. Section I. The Hierarch, then, wishing that all men whatsoever should be saved by their assimilation towards God, and come to recognition of truth, proclaims to all the veritable Good News, that God being compassionate towards those upon earth, out of His own proper and innate goodness, deigned Himself to come to us with outstretched arms, by reason of loving-kindness towards men; and, by the union with Him, to assimilate, like as by fire, things that have been made one, in proportion to their aptitude

for deification. "For as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become children of God----to those who believe on His Name, who were begotten, not of bloods, nor of will of flesh, but of God ." Section II. He, who has felt a religious longing to participate in these truly supermundane gifts, comes to some one of the initiated, and persuades him to act as his conductor to the Hierarch. He then professes wholly to follow the teaching that shall be given to him, and prays him to undertake the superintendence of his introduction, and of all his after life. Now he, though religiously longing for his salvation, when he measures human infirmity against the loftiness of the undertaking, is suddenly seized with a shivering and sense of incapacity, nevertheless, at last, he agrees, with a good grace, to do what is requested, and takes and leads him to the chief Hierarch.

Section III. He, then, when with joy he has received, as the sheep upon his shoulders, the two men, and has first worshipped, glorifies with a mental thanksgiving and bodily prostration the One beneficent Source, from Which, those who are being called, are called, and those who are being saved, are saved. Section IV. Then collecting a full religious assembly into the sacred place, for co-operation, and common rejoicing over the man's salvation, and for thanksgiving for the Divine Goodness, he first chants a certain hymn, found in the Oracles, accompanied by the whole body of the Church; and after this, when he has kissed the holy table, he advances to the man before him, and demands of him, what has brought him here? Section V. When the man, out of love to God, has confessed, according to the instruction of his sponsor, his ungodliness, his ignorance of the really beautiful, his insufficiency for the life in God, and prays, through his holy mediation, to attain to God and Divine things, he (the Hierarch) testifies to him, that his approach ought to be entire, as to God Who is All Perfect, and without blemish; and when he has expounded to him fully the godly course of life, and has demanded of him, if he would thus live,----after his promise he places his right hand upon his head, and when he has sealed him, commands the priests to register the man and his sponsor.

Section VI. When these have enrolled the names, he makes a holy prayer, and when the whole Church have completed this with him, he looses his sandals, and removes his clothing, through the Leitourgoi. Then, when he has placed him facing the west and beating his hands, averted towards the same quarter, he commands him thrice to breathe scorn upon Satan, and further, to profess the words of the renunciation. When he has witnessed his threefold renunciation, he turns him back to the east, after he has professed this thrice; and when he has looked up to heaven, and extended his hands thitherward, he commands him to be enrolled under Christ, and all the Divinely transmitted Oracles of God. When the man has done this, he attests again for him his threefold profession, and again, when he has thrice professed, after prayer, he gives thanks, and lays his hand upon him.

Section VII. When the Deacons have entirely unclothed him, the Priests bring the holy oil of the anointing. Then he begins the anointing, through the threefold sealing, and for the rest assigns the man to the Priests, for the anointing of his whole body, while himself advances to the mother of filial adoption, and when he has purified the water within it by

the holy invocations, and perfected it by three cruciform effusions of the altogether most pure Muron , and by the same number of injections of the all holy Muron, and has invoked the sacred melody of the inspiration of the God-rapt Prophets, he orders the man to be brought forward; and when one of the Priests, from the register, has announced him and his surety, he is conducted by the Priests near the water to the hand of the Hierarch, being led by the hand to him. Then the Hierarch, standing above, when the Priests have again called aloud near the Hierarch within the water the name of the initiated, the Hierarch dips him three times, invoking the threefold Subsistence of the Divine Blessedness, at the three immersions and emersions of the initiated. The Priests then take him, and entrust him to the Sponsor and guide of his introduction; and when they, in conjunction with him, have cast over the initiated appropriate clothing, they lead him again to the Hierarch, who, when he has sealed the man with the most Divinely operating Muron, pronounces him to be henceforward partaker of the most Divinely initiating Eucharist.

Section VIII. When he has finished these things, he elevates himself from his progression to things secondary, to the contemplation of things first, as one, who, at no time or manner, turns himself to any other thing whatever than those which are peculiarly his own, but from things Divine to Divine,----is persistently and always ranging himself under the banner of the supremely Divine Spirit. III. Contemplation. Section I. This initiation, then, of the holy birth in God, as in symbols, has nothing unbecoming or irreverent, nor anything of the sensible images, but (contains) enigmas of a contemplation worthy of God, likened to physical and human images. For how should it appear misleading? Even when the very divine meaning of the things done is passed over in silence, the divine Instruction might convince, religiously pursuing as it does the good life of the candidate, enjoining upon him the purification from every kind of evil, through a virtuous and Divine life, by the physical cleansing through the agency of water in a bodily form. This symbolic teaching then of the things done, even if it had nothing more divine, would not be without religious value, as I think, introducing a discipline of a well-regulated life, and. suggesting mysteriously, through the total bodily purification by water, the complete purification from the evil life.

Section II. Let this, then, be, for the uninitiated, a conducting guidance of the soul, which separates, as is meet things sacred and uniform from multiplicity, and apportions the harmonious elevation to the Orders severally in turn. But we, who have ascended by sacred gradations to the sources of the things performed, and have been religiously taught these (sources), shall recognize of what moulds they are the reliefs, and of what invisible things they are the likenesses. For, as is distinctly shewn in the Treatise concerning "Intelligible and Sensible," sacred things in sensible forms are copies of things intelligible, to which they lead and shew the way; and things intelligible are source and science of things hierarchical cognizable by the senses. Section III. Let us affirm, then, that the goodness of the Divine Blessedness is always in the same condition and manner, unfolding the beneficent rays of its own light upon all the intellectual visions without grudging. Should, then, the self-choosing self-sufficiency of the contemplators either turn away from the light contemplated, by closing, through love of evil, the faculties for enlightenment naturally implanted within it, it

would be separated from the light present to it, not turned away, but shining upon it when shortsighted and turning its face from light generously running to it; or should it overstep the bounds of the visible given to it in due proportion, and rashly undertake to gaze upon the rays superior to its vision, the light indeed will do nothing beyond its proper functions, but it, by imperfectly approaching thing's perfect, would not attain to things unsuitable, and, by stupidly disregarding the due proportion, would fail through its own fault.

But, as I said, the Divine Light is always unfolded beneficently to the intellectual visions, and it is possible for them to seize it when present, and always being most ready for the distribution of things appropriate, in a manner becoming God. To this imitation the divine Hierarch is fashioned, unfolding to all, without grudging, the luminous rays of his inspired teaching, and, after the Divine example, being most ready to enlighten the proselyte, neither using a grudging nor an unholy wrath for former back-slidings or excess, but, after the example of God, always enlightening by his conducting light those who approach him, as becomes a Hierarch, in fitness, and order, and in proportion to the aptitude of each for holy things. Section IV.

But, inasmuch as the Divine Being is source of sacred order, within which the holy Minds regulate themselves, he, who recurs to the proper view of Nature, will see his proper self in what he was originally, and will acquire this, as the first holy gift, from his recovery to the light. Now he, who has well looked upon his own proper condition with unbiassed eyes, will depart from the gloomy recesses of ignorance, but being imperfect he will not, of his own accord, at once desire the most perfect union and participation of God, but little by little will be carried orderly and reverently through things present to things more forward, and through these to things foremost, and when perfected, to the supremely Divine summit. An illustration of this decorous and sacred order is the modesty of the proselyte, and his prudence in his own affairs in having the sponsor as leader of the way to the Hierarch. The Divine Blessedness receives the man, thus conducted, into communion with Itself, and imparts to him the proper light as a kind of sign, making him godly and sharer of the inheritance of the godly, and sacred ordering; of which things the Hierarch's seal, given to the proselyte, and the saving enrolment of the priests are a sacred symbol, registering him amongst those who are being saved, and placing in the sacred memorials, beside himself also his sponsor,----the one indeed, as a true lover of the life-giving way to truth and a companion of a godly guide, and the other, as an unerring conductor of his follower by the Divinely-taught directions.

Section V. Yet it is not possible to hold, conjointly, qualities thoroughly opposed, nor that a man who has had a certain fellowship with the One should have divided lives, if he clings to the firm participation in the One; but he must be resistless and resolute, as regards all separations from the uniform. This it is which the teaching of the symbols reverently and enigmatically intimates, by stripping the proselyte, as it were, of his former life, and discarding to the very utmost the habits within that life, makes him stand naked and barefoot, looking away towards the west, whilst he spurns, by the aversion of his hands, the participa-

tions in the gloomy baseness, and breathes out, as it were, the habit of dissimilarity which he had acquired, and professes the entire renunciation of everything contrary to the Divine likeness. When the man has thus become invincible and separate from evil, it turns him towards the east, declaring clearly that his position and recovery will be purely in the Divine Light, in the complete separation from baseness; and receiving his sacred promises of entire consort with the One, since he has become uniform through love of the truth. Yet it is pretty evident, as I think, to those versed in Hierarchical matters, that things intellectual acquire the unchangeableness of the Godlike habit, by continuous and persistent struggles towards one, and by the entire destruction and annihilation of things contrary. For it is necessary that a man should not only depart from every kind of baseness, but he must be also bravely obdurate and ever fearless against the baneful submission to it. Nor must he, at any time, become remiss in his sacred love of the truth, but with all his power persistently and perpetually be elevated towards it, always religiously pursuing his upward course, to the more perfect mysteries of the Godhead.

Section VI. Now you may see the distinct illustrations of these things in the religious rites performed by the Hier-arch. For the Godlike Hierarch starts with the holy anointing, and the Priests under him complete the Divine service of the Chrism, summoning in type the man initiated to the holy contests, within which he is placed under Christ as Umpire: since, as God, He is Institutor of the awards of contest, and as wise, He placed its laws, and as generous, the prizes suitable to the victors. And this is yet more Divine, since as good, He devotedly entered the lists with them, contending, on behalf of their freedom and victory, for their power over deathand destruction, he who is being initiated will enter the contests, as those of God, rejoicing, and abides by the regulations of the Wise, and contends according to them, without transgression holding fast the hope of the beautiful rewards, as being enrolled under a good Lord and Leader of the awards: and when after following in the Divine footsteps of the first of athletes, through goodness, he has overthrown, in his struggles after the Divine example, the energies and impulses opposed to his deification, he dies with Christ----to speak mystically ----to sin, in Baptism.

Section VII. And consider attentively, I pray, with what appropriateness the holy symbols are presented. For since death is with us not an annihilation of being, as others surmise, but the separating of things united, leading to that which is invisible to us, the soul indeed becoming invisible through deprivation of the body, and the body, through being buried in earth in consequence of one of its bodily changes, becoming invisible to human ken, appropriately, the whole covering by water would be taken as an image of death, and the invisible tomb. The symbolical teaching, then, reveals in mystery that the man baptized according to religious rites, imitates, so far as Divine imitation is attainable to men, by the three immersions in the water, the supremely Divine death of the Life-giving Jesus, Who spent three days and three nights in the tomb, in Whom, according to the mystical and secret teaching of the sacred text, the Prince of the world found nothing.

Section VIII. Next, they throw garments, white as light, over the man initiated. For by his manly and Godlike insensibility to contrary passions, and by his persistent inclination towards the One, the unadorned is adorned, and the shapeless takes shape, being made brilliant by his luminous life. But the perfecting unction of the Muron makes the man initiated of good odour, for the holy perfecting of the Divine birth unites those who have been perfected to the supremely Divine Spirit. Now the overshadowing which makes intelligibly of a good savour, and perfect, as being most unutterable, I leave to the mental consciousness of those who are deemed worthy of the sacred and deifying participation of the Holy Spirit within their mind. At the conclusion of all, the Hierarch calls the man initiated to the most Holy Eucharist, and imparts to him the communion of the perfecting mysteries. CAPUT III. I. Concerning things accomplished in the Synaxis.

Courage, then, since we have made mention of this (Eucharist) which we may not pass over to celebrate any other Hierarchical function in preference to it. For according to our illustrious Leader, it is ”initiation of initiations,” and one must first lay down the Divine description of it, before the rest, from the inspired and hierarchical science of the Oracles, and then be borne by the supremely Divine Spirit to its sacred contemplation. First, let us reverently consider this; for what reason that, which is common also to the other Hierarchical initiations, is pre-eminently attributed to it, beyond the rest; and it is uniquely called, ”Communion and Synaxis,” when each consecrating function both collects our divided lives into uniform deification, and gives communion and union with the One, by the Godlike folding together of our diversities. Now we affirm that the Perfecting by the communications of the other Hierarchical symbols springs from the supremely Divine and perfecting gifts of it. For it scarcely ever happens, that any Hierarchical initiation is completed without the most Divine Eucharist, as head of the things done in each, ministering the collecting of the person initiated to the One, and completing his communion with God, by the Divinely transmitted gift of the perfecting mysteries. If, then, each of the Hierarchical initiations, being indeed incomplete, will not make perfect our communion and our gathering to the One, even its being initiation is precluded on account of the lack of completeness.

Now since the imparting of the supremely Divine mysteries to the man initiated is the head and tail of every initiation, naturally then the Hierarchical judgment hit upon an appellation propel to it, from the truth of the facts. Thus, for instance, with regard to the holy initiation of the Divine birth; since it imparts first-Light, and is head of all the Divine illuminations, we celebrate the true appellation from the enlightening effected. For, though it be common to all Hierarchical functions to impart the gift of sacred light to those initiated, yet it gave to me the power to see first, and through its first light I am enlightened to gaze upon the other religious rites. Having said this, let us minutely investigate and examine hierarchically the accurate administration and contemplation of the most pure initiation, in every particular.

II. Mysterion of Synaxis, that is, Communion.

The Hierarch, having completed a reverent prayer, near the Divine Altar, starts with the incensing, and proceeds to every part of the enclosure of the sacred place; he then returns to the Divine Altar, and begins the sacred chanting of the Psalms, the whole ecclesiastical assembly chanting, with him, the sacred language of the Psalter. Next follows the reading of the Holy Scriptures by the Leitourgoi. After these readings the catechumens quit the sacred enclosure, as well as the ”possessed,” and the penitents. But those who are deemed worthy of the sight and participation of the Divine Mysteries remain. Of the Leitourgoi, some stand near the closed gates of the sanctuary, whilst others perform some other duty of their own rank. But chosen members of the ministering Order with the Priests lay the holy Bread and the Cup of Blessing upon the Divine Altar, whilst the universal Song of Praise is being professed beforehand by the whole body of the Church. Added to these, the Divine Hierarch makes a sacred prayer, and proclaims the holy Peace to all. When all have kissed each other, the mystical proclamation of the holy tablets is performed. When the Hierarch and the Priests have washed their hands in water, the Hierarch stands in the midst of the Divine Altar, and the chosen Deacons alone, with the Priests, stand around.

The Hierarch, when he has sung the sacred works of God, ministers things most divine, and brings to view the things sung, through the symbols reverently exposed , and when he has shewn the gifts of the works of God , he first proceeds to the sacred participation of the same, and turns and exhorts the others. When he has received and distributed the supremely Divine Communion, he terminates with a holy thanksgiving; whilst the multitude have merely glanced at the Divine symbols alone, he is ever conducted by the Divine Spirit, as becomes a Hierarch, in the purity of a Godlike condition, to the holy sources of the things performed, in blessed and intelligible visions.

III. Contemplation. Section I. Here then, too, O excellent son, after the images, I come in due order and reverence to the Godlike reality of the archetypes, saying here to those yet being initiated, for the harmonious guidance of their souls, that the varied and sacred composition of the symbols is not without spiritual contemplation for them, as merely presented superficially. For the most sacred chants and readings of the Oracles teach them a discipline of a virtuous life, and previous to this, the, complete purification from destructive evil; and the most Divine, and common, and peaceful distribution of one and the same, both Bread and Cup, enjoins upon them a godly fellowship in character, as having a fellowship in food, and recalls to their memory the most Divine Supper, and arch-symbol of the rites performed, agreeably with which the Founder of the symbols Himself excludes, most justly, him who had supped with Him on the holy things, not piously and in a manner suitable to his character; teaching at once, clearly and Divinely, that the approach to Divine mysteries with a sincere mind confers, on those who draw nigh, the participation in a gift according to their own character.

Section II. Let us, then, as I said, leave behind these things, beautifully depicted upon the entrance of the. innermost shrine, as being sufficient for those, who are yet incomplete for contemplation, and let us proceed from the effects to the causes; and then, Jesus lighting

the way, we shall view our holy Synaxis, and the comely contemplation of things intelligible, which makes radiantly manifest the blessed beauty of the archetypes. But, oh, most Divine and holy initiation, uncovering the folds of the dark mysteries enveloping thee in symbols, be manifest to us in thy bright glory, and fill our intellectual visions with single and unconcealed light. Section III.

We must, then, in my opinion, pass within the All Holy Mysteries, after we have laid bare the intelligible of the first of the votive gifts, to gaze upon its Godlike beauty, and view the Hierarch, divinely going with sweet fragrance from the Divine Altar to the furthermost bounds of the holy place, and again returning to it to complete the function. For the Blessedness, supremely Divine above all, even if, through Divine goodness, It goes forth to the communion of the holy who participate in It, yet It never goes outside its essential unmoved position and steadfastness; and illuminates all the Godlike in due degree, being always self-centred, and in nowise moved from its own proper identity; so, too, the Divine initiation (sacrament) of the Synaxis, although it has a unique, and simple, and enfolded Source, is multiplied, out of love towards man, into the holy variety of the symbols, and travels through the whole range of the supremely Divine description; yet uniformly it is again collected from these, into its own proper Monady, and unifies those who are being reverently conducted towards it. In the same Godlike manner, the Divine Hierarch, if he benignly lowers to his subordinates his own unique Hierarchical science, by using the multiplicities of the holy enigmas, yet again, as absolute, and not to be held in check by smaller things, he is restored to his proper headship without diminution, and, when he has made the intellectual entry of himself to the One, he sees clearly the uniform raisons d'être of the things done, as he makes the goal of his philanthropic progress to things secondary the more Divine return to things primary.

Section IV. The chanting of the Psalms, being co-essential with almost all the Hierarchical mysteries, was not likely to be separated from the most Hierarchical of all. For every holy and inspired Scripture sets forth for those meet for deification, either the originated beginning and ordering of things from God; or the Hierarchy and polity of the Law; or the distributions and possessions of the inheritances of the people of God; or the understanding of sacred judges, or of wise kings, or of inspired Priests: or philosophy of men of old time, unshaken in endurances of the things let loose in variety and multitude; or the treasures of wisdom for the conduct of life; or songs and inspired pictures of Divine Loves; or the declaratory predictions of things to come; or the Theandric works of Jesus; or the God-transmitted and God - imitating polities and holy teachings of His Disciples, or the hidden and mystic gaze of the beloved and divinely sweet of the disciples, or the supermundane theology of Jesus; and implanted them in the holy and Godlike instructions of the mystic rites. Now the sacred description of the Divine Odes, whose purpose is to sing the words and works of God throughout, and to praise the holy words and works of godly men, forms an universal Ode and narrative of things Divine, and makes, in those who inspiredly recite it, a habit suitable for the reception and distribution of every Hierarchical mystery.

Section V. When, then, the comprehensive melody of the holy Hymns has harmonized the habits of our souls to the things which are presently to be ministered, and, by the unison of the Divine Odes, as one and concordant chorus of holy men, has established an accord with things Divine, and themselves , and one another, the things, more strained and obscure in the intellectual language of the mystic Psalms, are expanded by the most holy lections of the inspired writings, through more full and distinct images and narratives. He, who devoutly contemplates these, will perceive the uniform and one conspiration, as being moved by One, the supremely Divine Spirit. Hence, naturally, in the history of the world, after the more ancient tradition, the new Covenant is proclaimed; the inspired and Hierarchical order teaching this, as I think, that the one affirmed the Divine works of Jesus, as to come; but the other accomplished; and as that described the truth in figures, this shewed it present. For the accomplishment, within this, of the predictions of that, established the truth, and the work of God is a consummation of the Word of God.

Section VI. Those who absolutely have no ear for these sacred initiations do not even recognize the images,---- unblushingly rejecting the saving revelation of the Divine Birth, and in opposition to the Oracles reply to their destruction, "Thy ways I do not wish to know

Now the regulation of the holy Hierarchy permits the catechumens, and the possessed, and the penitents, to hear the sacred chanting of the Psalms, and the inspired reading of the all-Holy Scriptures; but it does not invite them to the next religious services and contemplations, but only the eyes of the initiated. For the Godlike Hierarchy is full of reverent justice, and distributes savingly to each, according to their due, bequeathing savingly the harmonious communication of each of the things Divine, in measure, and proportion, and due time. The lowest rank, then, is assigned to the catechumens, for they are without participation and instruction in every Hierarchical initiation, not even having the being in God by Divine Birth, but are yet being brought to Birth by the Paternal Oracles, and moulded, by life-giving formations, towards the blessed introduction to their first life and first light from Birth in God. As, then, children after the flesh, if, whilst immature and unformed, they should anticipate their proper delivery, as untimely born and abortions, will fall to earth without life and without light; and no one, in his senses, would say from what he saw, that they, released from the darkness of the womb, were brought to the light (for the medical authority, which is learned in the functions of the body, would say that light operates on things receptive of light); so also the all-wise science of religious rites brings these first to delivery, by the preparatory nourishment of the formative and life-giving Oracles; and when it has made their person ripe for Divine Birth, gives to them savingly, in due order, the participation in things luminous and perfecting; but, at present, it separates things perfect from them as imperfect, consulting the good order of sacred things, and the delivery and life of the catechumens, in a Godlike order of the Hierarchical rites.

Section VII.

Now the multitude of the possessed indeed is unholy, but it is next above the catechumens, which is lowest. Nor is that which has received a certain participation in the most holy

offices, but is yet entangled by contrary qualities, whether enchantments or terrors, on a par, as I think, with the altogether uninitiated and entirely uncommunicated in the Divine initiations; but, even for them, the view and participation in the holy mysteries is contracted, and very properly. For, if it be true that the altogether godly man, the worthy partaker of the Divine mysteries, the one carried to the very summit of the Divine likeness, to the best of his powers, in complete and most perfect deifications, does not even perform the things of the flesh, beyond the most necessary requirements of nature, and then as a parergon, but will be, at the same time, a temple, and a follower, according to his ability, of the supremely Divine Spirit, in the highest deification, implanting like in like;----such an one as this would never be possessed by opposing phantoms or fears, but will laugh them to scorn, and when they approach, will cast them down and put them to flight, and will act rather than comply, and in addition to the passionless and indomitableness of his own character, will be seen also a physician to others, for such ”possessions” as these;

(and I think further, yea, rather, I know certainly that the most impartial discrimination of Hierarchical persons knows more than they , that such as are possessed with a most detestable possession, by departing from the Godlike life, become of one mind and one condition with destructive demons, by turning themselves from things that really are, and undying possessions, and everlasting pleasures, for the sake of the most base and impassioned folly destructive to themselves; and by desiring and pursuing the earthly variableness, and the perishable and corrupting pleasures, and the unstable comfort in things foreign to their nature, not real but seeming; these then, first, and more properly than those, were shut out by the discriminating authority of the Deacon; for it is not permitted to them to have part in any other holy function than the teaching of the Oracles, which is likely to turn them to better things. For, if the super-mundane Service of the Divine Mysteries excludes those under penitence, and those who have already attained it, not permitting anything to come near which is not completely perfect, and proclaims, and this in all sincerity, that ”I am unseen and uncom-municated by those who are in any respect imperfectly weak as regards the summit of the Divine Likeness” (for that altogether most pure voice scares away even those who cannot be associated with the worthy partakers of the most Divine mysteries).;

how much more, then, will the multitude of those who are under the sway of their passions be unhallowed and alien from every sight and participation in the holy mysteries. When, then, the uninitiated in the mysteries, and the imperfect, and with them the apostates from the religious life, and after them, those who through unmanliness are prone to the fears and fancies of contrary influences, as not reaching through the persistent and indomitable inclination towards godliness, the stability and activity of a Godlike condition; then, in addition to these, those who have separated indeed from the contrary life, but have not yet been cleansed from its imaginations by a godly and pure habit and love, and next, those who are not altogether uniform, and to use an expression of the Law, ”entirely without spot and blemish,” when these have been excluded from the divine temple and the service which is too high for them, the all-holy ministers and loving contemplators of things all-holy, gazing reverently upon the most pure rite, sing in an universal Hymn of Praise the Author and

Giver of all good, from Whom the saving mystic Rites were exhibited to us, which divinely work the sacred deification of those being initiated. Now this Hymn some indeed call a Hymn of Praise, others, the symbol of worship, but others, as I think, more divinely, a Hierarchical thanksgiving, as giving a summary of the holy gifts which come to us from God.

For, it seems to me the record of all the works of God related to have been done for us in song, which, after it had benevolently fixed our being and life, and moulded the Divine likeness in ourselves to beautiful archetypes, and placed us in participation of a more Divine condition and elevation; but when it beheld the dearth of Divine gifts, which came upon us by our heedlessness, is declared to have called us back to our first condition, by goods restored, and by the complete assumption of what was ours, to have made good the most perfect impartation of His own, and thus tp have given to us a participation in God and Divine things.

Section VIII. When the supremely Divine love towards Man has thus been religiously celebrated, the Divine Bread is presented, veiled, and likewise the Cup of Blessing, and the most Divine greeting is devoutly performed, and the mystic and supermundane recital of the holy-written tablets. For it is not possible to be collected to the One, and to partake of the peaceful union with the One, when people are divided amongst themselves. For if, being illuminated by the contemplation and knowledge of the One, we would be united to an uniform and Divine agreement, we must not permit ourselves to descend to divided lusts, from which are formed earthly enmities, envious and passionate, against that which is according to nature. This-unified and undivided life is, in my opinion, established by the holy service of the ”peace,” which establishes like in like, and separates the Divine and unified visions from things divided. The recital of the holy tablets after the ”peace” proclaims those who have passed through life holily, and have reached the term of a virtuous life without faltering, urging and conducting us to their blessed’ condition and Divine repose, through similarity to them, and, announcing them as living, and, as the Word of God says, ”not dead, but as having passed from death to a most divine life .”

Section IX. But observe that they are enrolled in the holy memorials, not as though the Divine memory were represented under the figure of a memorial, after the manner of men; but as one might say, with reverence towards God, as beseems the august and unfailing knowledge in God of those who have been perfected in the likeness of God. For ”He knoweth,” say the Oracles, ”them that are His,” and ”precious, in the sight of the Lord, is the death of His saints, ”death of saints,” being said, instead of the perfection in holiness. And bear this religiously in mind, that when the worshipful symbols have been placed on the Divine Altar, through which (symbols) the Christ is signified and partaken, there is inseparably present the reading of the register of the holy persons, signifying the indivisible conjunction of their supermundane and sacred union with Him. When these things have been ministered, according to the regulations described, the Hierarch, standing before the most holy symbols, washes his hands with water, together with the reverend order of the Priests. Because, as the Oracles testify, when a man has been washed, he needs no other washing, except that

of his extremities, i.e his lowest; through which extreme cleansing he will be resistless and free, as altogether uniform, in a sanctified habit of the Divine Likeness, and advancing in a goodly manner to things secondary, and being turned again uniquely to the One, he will make his return, without spot and blemish, as preserving the fulness and completeness of the Divine Likeness.

Section X. There was indeed the sacred laver, as we have said, in the Hierarchy of the Law ; and the present cleansing of the hands of the Hierarch and the Priests suggests it. For it behoves those who approach the most hallowed service to be purified even to the remotest imaginations of the soul, through likeness to it, and, as far as possible, to draw nigh; for thus they will shed around more visibly the Divine manifestations, since the supermundane flashes permit their own splendour to pass more thoroughly and brilliantly into the brightness of mirrors like themselves. Further, the cleansing of the Hierarch and the Priests to their extremities, i.e. lowest, takes place before the most holy symbols, as in the presence of Christ, Who surveys all our most secret thoughts, and since the utmost purification is established under His all-surveying scrutiny, and most just and unflinching judgment, the Hierarch thus becomes one with the things Divine, and, when he has extolled the holy works of God, he ministers things most Divine, and brings to view the things being sung .

Section XI.

We will now explain, in detail, to the best of our ability, certain works of God, of which we spoke. For I am not competent to sing all, much less to know accurately, and to reveal their mysteries to others. Now whatever things have been sung and ministered by the inspired Hierarchs, agreeably to the Oracles, these we will declare, as far as attainable to us, invoking the Hierarchical inspiration to our aid. When, in the beginning, our human nature had thoughtlessly fallen from the good things of God, it received, by inheritance, the life subject to many passions, and the goal of the destructive death . For, as a natural consequence, the pernicious falling away from genuine goodness and the transgression of the sacred Law in Paradise delivered the man fretted with the life-giving yoke, to his own downward inclinations and the enticing and hostile wiles of the adversary----the contraries of the divine goods; thence it pitiably exchanged for the eternal, the mortal, and, having had its own origin in deadly generations, the goal naturally corresponded with the beginning; but having willingly fallen from the Divine and elevating life, it was carried to the contrary extremity,----the variableness of many passions, and lead astray, and turned aside from the strait way leading to the true God,----and subjected to destructive and evil-working multitudes----naturally forgot that it was worshipping, not gods, or friends, but enemies. Now when these had treated it harshly, according to their own cruelty, it fell pitiably into danger of annihilation and destruction;

but the boundless Loving-kindness of the supremely Divine goodness towards man did not, in Its benevolence, withdraw from us Its spontaneous forethought, but having truly participated sinlessly in all things belonging to us, and having been made one with our lowliness

in connection with the unconfused and flawless possession of Its own properties in full perfection, It bequeathed to us, as henceforth members of the same family, the communion with Itself, and proclaimed us partakers of Its own beautiful things; having, as the secret teaching holds, loosed the power of the rebellious multiplicity, which was against us; not by force, as having the upper hand, but, according to the Logion, mystically transmitted to us, "in judgment and righteousness."

The things within us, then, It benevolently changed to the entire contrary. For the lightless within Our mind It filled with blessed and most Divine Light, and adorned the formless with Godlike beauties; the tabernacle of our soul It liberated from most damnable passions and destructive stains by a perfected deliverance of our being which was all but prostrate, by shewing to us a supermundane elevation, and an inspired polity in our religious assimilation to Itself, as far as is possible. Section XII.

But how could the Divine imitation otherwise become ours, unless the remembrance of the most holy works of God were perpetually being renewed by the mystical teachings and ministrations of the Hierarchy? This, then, we do, as the Oracles say, "for Its remembrance. Wherefore the Divine Hierarch, standing before the Divine Altar, extols the aforesaid holy works of God, which proceed from the most divine forethought of Jesus on our behalf, which He accomplished for preservation of our race, by the good pleasure of the most Holy Father in the Holy Spirit, according to the Logion. When he has extolled their majesty, and gazed, with intellectual eyes, upon their intelligible contemplation, he proceeds to their symbolical ministration,----and this,----as transmitted from God. Whence after the holy hymns of the works of God, he piously and, as becomes a hierarch, deprecates his own unworthiness for a service above his merits, first, reverently crying aloud to Him, "Thou hast said, This do for My remembrance. Then, having asked to become meet for this the God-imitating of service, and to consecrate things Divine by the assimilation to Christ Himself, and to distribute them altogether purely, and that those who shall partake of things holy may receive them holily, he consecrates things most Divine, and brings to view through the symbols reverently exposed the things whose praises are being sung.

For when he has unveiled the veiled and undivided Bread, and divided it into many, and has divided the Oneness of the Cup to all, he symbolically multiplies and distributes the unity, completing in these an altogether most holy ministration. For the "one," and "simple," and "hidden," of Jesus, the most supremely Divine Word, by His incarnation amongst us, came forth, out of goodness and love towards man, to the compound and visible, and benevolently devised the unifying, communion, having united, to the utmost, our lowliness to the most Divine of Himself; if indeed we have been fitted to Him, as members to a body, after the identity of a blameless and Divine life, and have not, by being killed through destructive passions, become inharmonious, and unfastened, and unyoked, to the godly and most healthy members. For, if we aspire to communion with Him, we must keep our eye fixed upon His most godly Life in the flesh, and we must retrace our path to the Godlike and

blameless habit of Its holy sinlessness by assimilation to It; for thus He will communicate harmoniously to us the communion with the similar.

Section XIII. The Hierarch makes known these things to those who are living religiously, by bringing the veiled gifts to view, by dividing their oneness into many, and by making the recipients partakers of them, by the utmost union of the things distributed with those who receive them. For he delineates in these things under sensible forms our intelligible life in figures, by bringing to view the Christ Jesus from the Hidden within the Divine Being, out of love to man, made like unto us by the all-perfect and unconfused incarnation in our race, from us, and advancing to the divided condition of ourselves, without change from the essential One, and calling the human race, through this beneficent love of man, into participation with Himself and His own good things, provided we are united to His most Divine Life by our assimilation to it, as far as possible; and by this, in very truth, we shall have been perfected, as partakers of God and of Divine things.

Section XIV. Having received and distributed the supremely Divine Communion, he terminates with a holy thanksgiving, in which the whole body of the Church take part. For the Communion precedes the imparting, and the reception of the mysteries, the mystic distribution. For this is the universal regulation and order of the Divine Mysteries, that the reverend Leader should first partake, and be filled with the gifts, to be imparted, through him, from God to others, and so impart to others also. Wherefore, those who rashly content themselves with the inspired instructions, in preference to a life and condition agreeable to the same, are profane, and entirely alien from the sacred regulation established. For, as in the case of the bright shining of the sun, the more delicate and luminous substances, being first filled with the brilliancy flowing into them, brightly impart their overflowing light to things after them; so it is not tolerable that one, who has not become altogether Godlike in his whole character, and proved to be in harmony with the Divine influence and judgment, should become Leader to others, in the altogether divine.

Section XV. Meanwhile, the whole order of the Priests having been collected together in hierarchical order, and communicated in the most Divine mysteries, finishes with a holy thanksgiving, after having recognized and sung the favours of the works of God, according to their degree. So that those, who have not partaken and are ignorant of things Divine, would not attain to thanksgiving, although the most Divine gifts are, in their essential nature, worthy of thanksgiving. But, as I said, not having wished even to look at the Divine gifts, from their inclination to things inferior, they have remained throughout ungracious towards the boundless graces of the works of God. "Taste and see," say the Oracles, for, by the sacred initiation of things Divine, the initiated recognize their munificent graces, and, by gazing with utmost reverence upon their most Divine height and breadth in the participation, they will sing the super-celestial beneficent works of the Godhead with gracious thanksgiving.

CAPUT IV. I. Concerning things performed in the Muron, and concerning things perfected in it. So great and so beautiful are the intelligible visions of the most holy Synaxis, which minister hierarchically, as we have often said, our participation in, and collection towards,

the One. But there is another perfecting Service of the same rank, which our Leaders name "Initiation of Muron," by contemplating whose parts in due order, in accordance with the sacred images, we shall thus be borne, by hierarchical contemplations, to its Oneness through its parts. II. Mysterion of Initiation of Muron . In the same way as in the Synaxis, the orders of the imperfect are dismissed, that is, after the hierarchical procession has made the whole circuit of the temple, attended with fragrant incense; and the chanting of the Psalms, and.the reading of the most Divine Oracles. Then the Hierarch takes the Muron and places it, veiled under twelve sacred wings, upon the Divine Altar, whilst all cry aloud, with most devout voice, the sacred melody of the inspiration of the God-rapt Prophets, and when he has finished the prayer offered over it, he uses it, in the most holy mystic Rites of things being hallowed, for almost every Hierarchical consecration.

III. Contemplation. Section I.

The elementary teaching, then, of this the perfecting service, through the things done over the Divine Muron, shews this, in my judgment, that, that which is holy and of sweet savour in the minds of devout men is covered, as with a veil, since it Divinely enjoins upon holy men to have their beautiful and well-savoured assimilations in virtue to the hidden God not seen for vain glory. For the hidden comeliness of God is unsullied, and is sweet beyond conception, and manifested for spiritual contemplation to the intellectual alone, through a desire to have the unsullied images of virtue in souls of the same pattern. For by looking away from the undistorted and well imitated image of the Godlike virtue to that contemplated and fragrant beauty, he thus moulds and fashions it to the most beautiful imitation. And, as in the case of sensible images, if the artist look without distraction upon the archetypal form, not distracted by sight of anything else, or in any way divided in attention, he will duplicate, if I may so speak, the very person that is being sketched, whoever he may be, and will shew the reality in the likeness, and the archetype in the image, and each in each, save the difference of substance; thus, to copyists who love the beautiful in mind, the persistent and unflinching contemplation of the sweet-savoured and hidden beauty will confer the unerring and most Godlike appearance .

Naturally, then, the divine copyists, who unflinchingly mould their own intellectual contemplation to the superessentially sweet and contemplated comeliness, do. none of their divinely imitated virtues "to be seen of men , as the Divine text expresses it; but reverently gaze upon the most holy things of the Church, veiled in the Divine Muron as in a figure. Wherefore, these also, by religiously concealing that which is holy and most Divine in virtue within their Godlike and God-engraved mind, look away to the archetypal conception alone; for not only are they blind to things dissimilar, but neither are they drawn down to gaze upon them. Wherefore, as becomes their character, they do neither love things, merely seeming good and just, but those really being such; nor do they look to opinion, upon which the multitude irrationally congratulate themselves, but, after the Divine example, by distinguishing the good or evil as it is in itself, they are Divine images of the most supremely

Divine sweetness, which, having the truly sweet within itself, is not turned to the anomalously seeming of the multitude, moulding Its genuineness to the true images of Itself.

Section II. Come, then, since we have viewed the exterior comeliness of the entirely beautiful ministration, let us now look away to its more godly beauty (whilst itself, by itself, has uncovered the veils), gazing upon its blessed radiance, shedding its bright beams openly around, and filling us with the fragrance unveiled to the contemplators. For the visible consecration of the Muron is neither uncommunicated in, or unseen by those who surround the Hierarch, but, on the contrary, by passing through to them, and fixing the contemplation above the many, is reverently covered by them, and by Hierarchical direction kept from the multitude. For the splendour of things all holy, by shedding its light clearly and without symbol to men inspired, as being congenial to the thing contemplated, and perfuming their contemplating perceptions without; concealment, advances not yet in the same way to the inferior, but by them as deep contemplators of the thing contemplated is concealed under the enigmas of the wings, without ostentation, so that it may not be defiled by the dissimilar; through which sacred enigmas the well-ordered Ranks of the subordinate are conducted to the degree of holiness compatible with their powers.

Section III. The holy consecration, then, which we are now extolling, is, as I said, of the perfecting rank and capacity of the Hierarchical functions. Wherefore our Divine Leaders arranged the same, as being of the same rank and effect as the holy perfecting of the Synaxis, with the same figures, for the most part, and with mystical regulations and lections. And you may see in like manner the Hierarch bearing forward the sweet perfume from the more holy place into the sacred precincts beyond, and teaching, by the return to the same, that the participation in things Divine comes to all holy persons, according to fitness, and is undiminished and altogether unmoved and stands unchangeably in its identity, as beseems Divine fixity. In the same way the Psalms and readings of the Oracles nurse the imperfect to a life-bringing adoption of sons, and form a religious inclination in those who are possessed with accursed spirits, and dispel the opposing fear and effeminacy from those possessed by a spirit of unmanliness; shewing to them, according to their capacity, the highest pinnacle of the Godlike habit and power, by aid of which they will, the rather, scare away the opposing forces, and will take the lead in healing others; and, following the example of God, they will, whilst unmoved from their own proper gifts, not only be active against those opposing fears, but will themselves give activity to others; and they also impart a religious habit to those who have changed from the worse to a religious mind, so that they should not be again enslaved by evil, and purify completely those who need to become altogether pure; and they lead the holy to the Divine likenesses, and contemplations and communions belonging to themselves, and so establish those who are entirely holy, in blessed and intelligible visions, fulfilling their uniform likeness of the One, and making them one.

Section IV.

What, then, shall I say further? Is it not those Ranks already mentioned, which are not entirely pure, that the present consecrating service excludes without distinction, in the same

way as the Synaxis, so that it is viewed by the holy alone, in figures, and is contemplated and ministered, by the perfectly holy alone, immediately, through hierarchical directions? Now it is superfluous, as I think, to run over, by the same statements, these things already so often mentioned, and not to pass to the next, viewing the Hierarch, devoutly holding the Divine Muron veiled under twelve wings, and ministering the altogether holy consecration upon it. Let us then affirm that the composition of the Muron is a composition of sweet-smelling materials, which has in itself abundantly fragrant qualities, of which (composition) those who partake become perfumed in proportion to the degree to which they partake of its sweet savour. Now we are persuaded that the most supremely Divine Jesus is superessentially of good savour, filling the contemplative part of ourselves by bequests of Divine sweetness for contemplation.

For if the reception of the sensible odours make to feel joyous, and nourishes, with much sweetness, the sensitive organs of our nostrils, ----if at least they be sound and well apportioned to the sweet savour----in the same way any one might say that our contemplative faculties, being soundly disposed as regards the subjection to the worse, in the strength of the distinguishing faculty implanted in us by nature, receive the supremely Divine fragrance, and are filled with a holy comfort and most Divine nourishment, in accordance with Divinely fixed proportions, and the correlative turning of the mind towards the Divine Being. Wherefore, the symbolical composition of the Muron, as expressing in form things that are formless, depicts to us Jesus Himself, as a well-spring of the wealth of the Divine sweet receptions, distributing, in degrees supremely Divine, for the most Godlike of the contemplators, the most Divine perfumes; upon which the Minds, joyfully refreshed, and filled with the holy receptions, indulge in a feast of spiritual contemplation, by the entrance of the sweet bequests into their contemplative part, as beseems a Divine participation.

Section V. Now it is evident, as I think, that the distribution of the fontal perfume to the Beings above ourselves, who are more Divine, is, as it were, nearer, and manifests and distributes itself more to the transparent and wholesome mental condition of their receptive faculty, overflowing ungrudgingly and entering in many fashions; but as regards the subordinate contemplators, which are not so receptive, piously concealing the highest vision and participation, it is distributed in a supremely Divine proportion, in fragrance corresponding to the recipients. Amongst the holy Beings, then, who are above us, the superior order of the Seraphim is represented under the figure of the twelve wings, established and fixed around Jesus, casting itself upon the most blessed contemplations of Him, as far as permissible, and filled reverently with the contemplated truth distributed in most pure receptions, and, to speak after the manner of men, crying aloud, with never silent lips, the frequent Hymn of Praise; for the sacred knowledge of the supermundane minds is both untiring, and possesses the Divine love without intermission, and is at the same time superior to all baseness and forgetfulness. Hence, as I think, that phrase, ”unceasing cry,” suggests their perpetual and persistent science and conception of things Divine, with full concord and thanksgiving.

Section VI. Now we have, as I think, sufficiently contemplated, in the description of the super-heavenly Hierarchy, the incorporeal properties of the Seraphim, Divinely described in the Scriptures under sensible figures explanatory of the contemplated Beings, and we have made them evident to thy contemplating eyes. Nevertheless, since now also they who stand reverently around the Hierarch, reflect the highest Order, on a small scale, we will now view with most immaterial visions their most Godlike splendour. Section VII. Their numberless faces then, and many feet, manifest, as I think, their property of viewing the most Divine illuminations from many sides, and their conception of the good things of God as ever active and abundantly receptive; and the sixfold arrangement of the wings, of which the Scripture speaks, does not, I think, denote, as seems to some, a sacred number, but that of the highest Essence and Order around God; the first and middle and last of its contemplative and Godlike powers are altogether elevating, free, and supermundane. Hence the most holy wisdom of the Oracles, when reverently describing the formation of the wings, places the wings around their heads , and middle, and feet; suggesting their complete covering with wings, and their manifold faculty of leading to the Really Being.

Section VIII. Now if they cover their faces and their feet, and fly by their middle wings only, bear this reverently in mind, that the Order, so far exalted above the highest beings, is circumspect respecting the more lofty and deep of its conceptions, and raises itself, in due proportion, by its middle wings, to the vision of God, by placing its own proper life under the Divine yokes, and by these is reverently directed to the judgment of itself. Section IX. And, as regards the statement of Holy Scripture, that "one cried out to the other," that shews, I think, that they impart to each other ungrudgingly their own visions of God. And this we should deem worthy of religious recollection, that the Hebrew word in the Holy Scriptures names the most holy Beings of the Seraphim by an explanatory epithet, from their glowing and seething in a Divine and ever-moving life.

Section X.

Since, then, as those who understand Hebrew say, the most Divine Seraphim were named by the Word of God, "Kindling" and "Heating," by a name expressive of their essential condition, they possess, according to the symbolical imagery of the Divine Muron, most elevating powers, which call it to manifestation and distribution of most exhilarating perfumes. For the Being, sweet beyond conception, loves to be moved by the glowing and most pure minds into manifestation, and imparts Its most Divine inspirations, in cheerful distributions, to those who thus supermundanely call It forth. Thus the most Divine Order of supercelestial Beings did not fail to recognize the most supremely Divine Jesus, when He descended for the purpose of being sanctified; but recognizes, reverently, Him lowering Himself in our belongings, through Divine and inexpressible goodness; and when viewing Him sanctified, in a manner befitting man, by the Father and Himself and the Holy Spirit, recognized its own supreme Head as being essentially unchanged, in whatever He may do as supreme God. Hence the tradition of the sacred symbols places the Seraphim near the Divine Muron, when it is being consecrated, recognizing and describing the Christ as unchanged, in our

complete manhood in very truth. And what is still more divine is, that it uses the Divine Muron for the consecration of every thing sacred, distinctly shewing, according to the Logion, the Sanctified Sanctifying, as always being the same with Himself throughout the whole supremely Divine sanctification.

Wherefore also the consecrating gift and grace of the Divine Birth in God is completed in the most Divine perfectings of the Muron. Whence, as I think, the Hierarch pouring the Muron upon the purifying font in cruciform injections, brings to view, for contemplative eyes, the Lord Jesus descending even to death itself through the cross, for our Birth in God, benevolently drawing up, from the old gulping of the destructive death, by the same Divine and resistless descent, those, who, according to the mysterious saying, ”are baptized into His death,”and renewing them to a godly and eternal existence.

Section XI. But further, the perfecting unction of the Muron gives to him who has been initiated in the most sacred initiation of the Birth in God, the abiding of the supremely Divine Spirit; the sacred imagery of the symbols, portraying, as I think, the most Divine Spirit abundantly supplied by Him, Who, for our sakes, has been sanctified as man by the supremely Divine Spirit, in an unaltered condition of His essential Godhead. Section XII.

And bear this also hierarchically in mind, that the Law of the most pure initiation completes the sacred consecration of the Divine Altar, by the all pure effusions of the most holy Muron. And the super-celestial and superessential contemplation is source and essence, and perfecting power, of all our deifying holiness. For if our most Divine Altar is Jesus---- the supremely Divine sanctifying of the Godly Minds ----in Whom, according to the Logion, ”being sanctified and mystically offered as a whole burnt-offering, we have the access,” let us gaze with supermundane eyes upon the most Divine Altar itself (in which things being perfected, are perfected and sanctified), being perfected from the most Divine Muron itself; for the altogether most holy Jesus sanctifies Himself on our behalf, and fills us full of every sanctification, since the things consecrated upon them pass fraternally afterwards in their beneficent effects to us, as children of God. Hence, as I think, the Divine Leaders of our Hierarchy, in conformity with a Hierarchical conception divinely transmitted, name this altogether august ministration ”consecration of Muron,” from ”being consecrated thoroughly,” as one might say, ”consecration of God,” extolling its divine consecrating work in each sense. For both the being sanctified for our sakes, as becomes Man, and the consecrating all things as supreme God, and the sanctifying things being consecrated, is ”consecration of Him.” As for the sacred song of the inspiration of the God-rapt Prophets, it is called by those who know Hebrew, the ”Praise of God,” or ”Praise ye the Lord,” for since every divine manifestation and work of God is reverently portrayed in the varied composition of the Hierarchical symbols, it is not unfitting to mention the Divinely moved song of the Prophets; for it teaches at once, distinctly and reverently, that the beneficent works of the Divine Goodness are worthy of devout praise.

CAPUT V. I. Concerning sacerdotal Consecrations. Section I. Such, then, is the most Divine perfecting work of the Muroa But it may be opportune, after these Divine ministrations, to

set forth the sacerdotal Orders and elections themselves, and their powers, and operations, and consecrations, and the triad of the superior ranks under them; in order that the arrangement of our Hierarchy may be demonstrated, as entirely rejecting and excluding the disordered, the unregulated, and the confused; and, at the same time, choosing and manifesting the regulated and ordered, and well-established, in the gradations of the sacred Ranks within it. Now we have well shewn, as I think, in the Hierarchies already extolled by us, the threefold division of every Hierarchy, when we affirmed that our sacred tradition holds, that every Hierarchical transaction is divided into the most Divine Mystic Rites, and the inspired experts and teachers of them, and those who are being religiously initiated by them.

Section II.

Thus the most holy Hierarchy of the supercelestial Beings has, for its initiation, its own possible and most immaterial conception of God and things Divine, and the complete likeness to God, and a persistent habit of imitating God, as far as permissible. And its illuminators, and leaders to this sacred consecration, are the very first Beings around God. For these generously and proportionately transmit to the subordinate sacred Ranks the ever deifying notions given to them, by the self-perfect Godhead and the wise-making Divine Minds. Now the Ranks, who are subordinate to the first Beings, are, and are truly called, the initiated Orders, as being religiously conducted, through those, to the deifying illumination of the Godhead. And after this,----the heavenly and supermundane Hierarchy,----the Godhead gave the Hierarchy under the Law, imparting its most holy gifts, for the benefit of our race, to them (as being children according to the Logion), by faint images of the true, and copies far from the Archetypes, and enigmas hard to understand, and types having the contemplation enveloped within, as an analogous light not easily discerned, so as not to wound weak, eyes by the light shed upon them. Now to this Hierarchy under the Law, the elevation to spiritual worship is an initiation. Now the men religiously instructed for that holy tabernacle by Moses,----the first initiated and leader of the Hierarchs under the Law,----were conductors;

in reference to which holy tabernacle,----when describing for purposes of instruction the Hierarchy under the Law,----he called all the sacred services of the Law an image of the type shewn to him in Mount Sinai. But ”initiated” are those who are being conducted to a more perfect revelation of the symbols of the Law, in proportion to their capacity. Now the Word of God calls our Hierarchy the more perfect revelation, naming it a fulfilmentof that, and a holy inheritance. It is both heavenly and legal, like the mean between extremes, common to the one, by intellectual contemplations, and to the other, because it is variegated by sensible signs; and, through these, reverently conduces to the Divine Being. And it has likewise a threefold division of the Hierarchy, which is divided into the most holy ministrations of the Mystic Rites, and into the Godlike ministers of holy things, and those who are being conducted by them, according to their capacity, to things holy.

And each of the three divisions of our Hierarchy, comformably to that of the Law, and the Hierarchy, more divine than ours, is arranged as first and middle and last in power; consulting both reverent proportion, and well-ordered and concordant fellowship of all things in harmonious rank. Section III. The most holy ministration, then, of the Mystic Rites has, as first Godlike power, the holy cleansing of the uninitiated; and as middle, the enlightening instruction of the purified; and as last, and summary of the former, the perfecting of those instructed in science of their proper instructions; and the order of the Ministers, in the first power, cleanses the uninitiated through the Mystic Rites; and in the second, conducts to light the purified; and in the last and highest of the Ministering Powers, makes perfect those who have participated in the Divine light, by the scientific completions of the illuminations contemplated. And of the Initiated, the first power is that being purified; and the middle is that being enlightened, after the cleansing, and which contemplates certain holy things; and the last and more divine than the others, is that enlightened in the perfecting science of the holy enlightenment of which it has become a contemplator. Let, then, the threefold power of the holy service of the Mystic Rites be extolled, since the Birth in God is exhibited in the Oracles as a purification and enlightening illumination, and the Rite of the Synaxis and the Muron, as a perfecting knowledge and science of the works of God, through which the unifying elevation to the Godhead and most blessed communion is reverently perfected. And now let us explain next the sacerdotal Order, which is divided into a purifying and illuminating and perfecting discipline.

Section IV. This, then, is the all-sacred Law of the Godhead, that, through the first, the second are conducted to Its most Divine splendour. Do we not see the material substances of the elements, first approaching, by preference, things which are more congenial to them, and, through these, diffusing their own energy to other things? Naturally, then, the Head and Foundation of all good order, invisible and visible, causes the deifying rays to approach the more Godlike first, and through them, as being more transparent Minds, and more properly adapted for reception and transmission of Light, transmits light and manifestations to the subordinate, in proportions suitable to them. It is, then, the function of these, the first contem-plators of God, to exhibit ungrudgingly to those second, in proportion to their capacity, the Divine visions reverently gazed upon by themselves, and to reveal the things relating to the Hierarchy (since they have been abundantly instructed with a perfecting science in all matters relating to their own Hierarchy, and have received the effectual power of instruction), and to impart sacred gifts according to fitness, since they scientifically and wholly participate in sacerdotal perfection.

Section V. The Divine Rank of the Hierarchs, then, is the first of the God-contemplative Ranks; and it is, at the same time, highest and lowest; inasmuch as every Order of our Hierarchy is summed up and fulfilled in it. For, as we see every Hierarchy terminated in the Lord Jesus, so we see each terminated in its own inspired Hierarch. Now the power of the Hierarchical Rank permeates the whole sacred body, and through every one of the sacred Ranks performs the mysteries of its proper Hierarchy. But, pre-eminently, to it, rather than to the other Ranks, the Divine institution assigned the more Divine ministrations.

For these are the perfecting images of the supremely Divine Power, completing all the most Divine symbols and all the sacred orderings. For though some of the worshipful symbols are consecrated by the Priests, yet never will the Priest effect the holy Birth in God without the most Divine Muron; nor will he consecrate the mysteries of the Divine Communion, unless the communicating symbols have been placed upon the most Divine Altar; and neither will he be Priest himself, unless he has been elected to this by the Hierarchical consecrations. Hence the Divine Institution uniquely assigned the dedication of the Hierarchical Ranks, and the consecration of the Divine Muron and the sacred completion of the Altar, to the perfecting powers of the inspired Hierarchs.

Section VI.

It is, then, the Hierarchical Rank which, full of the perfecting power, pre-eminently completes the perfecting functions of the Hierarchy, and reveals lucidly the sciences of the holy mysteries, and teaches their proportionate and sacred conditions and powers. But the illuminating Rank of the Priests conducts those, who are being initiated under the Rank of, the inspired Hierarchs, to the Divine visions of the Mystic Rites, and in co-operation with it, ministers its proper ministrations. Whatever then this Rank may do, by shewing the works of God, through the most holy symbols, and perfecting those who draw nigh in the Divine contemplations, and communion of the holy rites, it yet refers those, who crave the science of the religious services contemplated, to the Hierarch. And the Rank of the Leitourgoi (which is purifying and separates the unfit, previous to the approach to the ministrations of the Priests), thoroughly purifies those who are drawing nigh, by making them entirely pure from opposing passions, and suitable for the sanctifying vision and communion. Hence, during the service of the Birth in God, the Leitourgoi strip him who draws nigh of his old clothing, yea further, even take off his sandals, and make him stand towards the west for renunciation;

and again, they lead him back to the east (for they are of the purifying rank and power), enjoining on those who approach to entirely cast away the surroundings of their former life, and shewing the darkness of their former conduct, and teaching those, who have said farewell to the lightless, to transfer their allegiance to the luminous. The Leitourgical Order, then, is purifying, by leading those who have been purified to the bright ministrations of the Priests, both by thoroughly purifying the uninitiated and by bringing to birth, by the purifying illuminations and teachings of the Oracles, and further, by sending away from the Priests the unholy, without respect of persons. Wherefore also the Hierarchical institution places it at the holy gates, suggesting that the approach of those who draw nigh to holy things should be in altogether complete purification, and entrusting the approach to their reverent vision and communion to the purifying powers, and admitting them, through these, without spot.

Section VII. We have shewn, then, that the Rank of the Hier-archs is consecrating and perfecting, that of the Priests, illuminating and conducting to the light; and that of the Leitourgoi purifying and discriminating; that is to say, the Hierarchical Rank is appointed not only

to perfect, but also at the same time,to enlighten and to purify, and has within itself the purifying sciences of the power of the Priests together with the illuminating. For the inferior Ranks cannot cross to the superior functions, and, besides this, it is not permitted to them to take in hand such quackery as that. Now the more Divine Orders know also, together with their own, the sacred sciences subordinate to their own perfection. Nevertheless, since the sacerdotal orderings of the well-arranged and unconfused order of the Divine operations are images of Divine operations, they were arranged in Hierarchical distinctions, shewing in themselves the illuminations marshalled into the first, and middle, and last, sacred operations and Ranks; manifesting, as I said, in themselves the well-ordered and unconfused character of the Divine operations. For since the Godhead first cleanses the minds which He may enter, then enlightens, and, when enlightened, perfects them to a Godlike perfection; naturally the Hierarchical of the Divine images divides itself into well-defined Ranks and powers, shewing clearly the supremely Divine operation firmly established, without confusion, in most hallowed and unmixed Ranks. But, since we have spoken, as attainable to us, of the sacerdotal Ranks and elections, and their powers and operations, let us now contemplate their most holy consecrations as well as we can.

II. Mysterion of Sacerdotal Consecrations. The Hierarch, then, being led to the Hierarchical consecration, after he has bent both his knees before the Altar, has upon his head the God-transmitted oracles, and the Hierarchical hand, and in this manner is consecrated by the Hierarch, who ordains him by the altogether most holy invocations. And the Priest, after he has bent both his knees before the Divine Altar, has the Hierarchical right hand upon his head, and in this manner is dedicated by the Hierarch, who ordains him with hallowing invocations. And the Leitourgos, after he has bent one of two knees before the Divine Altar, has upon his head the right hand of the Hierarch who ordains him, being completed by him with the initiating invocations of the Leitourgoi. Upon each of them the cruciform seal is impressed, by the ordaining Hierarch, and, in each case, a sacred proclamation of name takes place, and a perfecting salutation, since every sacerdotal person present, and the Hierarch who ordained, salute him who has been enrolled to any of the aforenamed sacerdotal Ranks.

III. Contemplation. Section I. These things, then, are common both to the Hier-archs, and Priests, and Leitourgoi, in their sacerdotal consecrations,----the conducting to the Divine Altar and kneeling,----the imposition of the Hierarchical hand,----the cruciform seal,----the announcement of name,----the completing salutation. And special and select for the Hierarchs is the imposition of the Oracles upon the head, since the subordinate Ranks have not this; and for the Priests the bending of both knees, since the consecration of the Leitourgoi has not this; for the Leitourgoi, as has been said, bend the one of two knees only. Section II. The conducting then to the Divine Altar, and kneeling, suggests to all those who are being sacer-dotally ordained, that their own life is entirely placed under God, as source of consecration, and that their whole intellectual self, all pure and hallowed, approaches to Him, and that it is of one likeness, and, as far as possible, meet for the supremely Divine

and altogether most holy, both Victim and Altar, which purifies, sacerdotally, the Godlike Minds.

Section III. And the imposition of the Hierarchical hand signifies at once the consecrating protection, by which, as holy children, they are paternally tended, which bequeaths to them a sacerdotal condition and power, and drives away their adverse powers, and teaches, at the same time also, to perform the sacerdotal operations, as those who, having been consecrated, are acting under God, and have Him as Leader of their own operations in every respect. Section IV. And the cruciform seal manifests the inaction of all the impulses of the flesh, and the God-imitated life looking away unflinchingly to the manly most Divine life of Jesus, Who came even to Cross and death with a supremely Divine sinlessness, and stamped those who so live with the cruciform image of His own sinlessness as of the same likeness. Section V.

And the Hierarch calls aloud the name of the consecrations and of those consecrated, the mystery denoting that the God-beloved consecrator is manifestor of the supremely Divine choice,----not of his own accord or by his own favour leading those who are ordained to the sacerdotal consecration, but being moved by God to all the Hierarchical dedications. Thus Moses, the consecrator under the Law, does not lead even Aaron, his brother, to sacerdotal consecration, though thinking him both beloved of God and fit for the priesthood, until moved by God to this, he in submission to God, Head of consecration, completed by Hierarchical rites the sacerdotal consecration. But even our supremely Divine and first Consecrator (for the most philanthropic Jesus, for our sake, became even this), did "not glorify Himself," as the Logia say, but He Who said to Him, "Thou art Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. Wherefore also whilst Himself leading the disciples to sacerdotal consecration, although being as God chief Consecrator, nevertheless He refers the Hierarchical completion of the work of consecration to His altogether most Holy Father, and the supremely Divine Spirit, by admonishing the disciples, as the Oracles say, not to depart from Jerusalem, but to "await the promise of the Father, which ye heard of Me, that ye shall be baptized in Holy Ghost.

And indeed, the Coryphaeus of the disciples himself, with the ten, of the same rank and Hierarchy with himself, when he proceeded to the sacerdotal consecration of the twelfth of the disciples, piously left the selection to the Godhead, saying, "Shew whom Thou hast chosen," and received him, who was divinely designated by the Divine lot, into the Hierarchical number of the sacred twelve. Now concerning the Divine lot, which fell as a Divine intimation upon Matthias, others have expressed another view, not clearly, as I think, but I will express my own sentiment. For it seems to me that the Oracles name "lot " a certain supremely Divine gift, pointing out to that Hierarchical Choir him who was designated by the Divine election; more particularly, because the Divine Hierarch must not perform the sacerdotal acts of his own motion, but, under God, moving him to do them as prescribed by the Hierarchy and Heaven.

Section VI. Now the salutation, for the completion of the sacerdotal consecration, has a religious significance. For all the members of the sacerdotal Ranks present, as well as the Hierarch himself who has consecrated them, salute the ordained. For when, by sacerdotal habits and powers, and by Divine call and dedication, a religious mind has attained to sacerdotal completion, he is dearly loved by the most holy Orders of the same rank, being conducted to a most Godlike comeliness, loving the minds similar to himself, and religiously loved by them in return. Hence it is that the mutual sacerdotal salutation is religiously performed, proclaiming the religious communion of minds of like character, and their loveable benignity towards each other, as keeping, throughout, by sacerdotal training, their most Godlike comeliness. Section VII

These things, as I said, are common to the whole sacerdotal consecration. The Hierarch, however, as a distinctive mark, has the Oracles most reverently placed upon his head. For since the perfecting power and science of the whole Priesthood is bequeathed to the inspired Hierarchs, by the supremely Divine and perfecting goodness, naturally are placed upon the heads of the Hierarchs the Divinely transmitted Oracles, which set forth comprehensively and scientifically every teaching of God, work of God, manifestation of God, sacred word, sacred work, in one word, all the Divine and sacred works and words bequeathed to our Hierarchy by the beneficent Godhead; since the Godlike Hierarch, having participated entirely in the whole Hierarchical power, will not only be illuminated, in the true and God-transmitted science of all the sacred words and works committed to the Hierarchy, but will also transmit them to others in Hierarchical proportions, and will perfect Hierarchically in most Divine kinds of knowledge and the highest mystical, instructions, all the most perfecting functions of the whole Hierarchy. And the distinctive feature of the ordination of Priests, as contrasted with the ordering of the Leitourgoi, is the bending of the two knees, as that bends only the one, and is ordained in this Hierarchical fashion.

Section VIII. The bending then denotes the subordinate introduction of the conductor, who places under God that which is reverently introduced. And since, as we have often said, the three Orders of the consecrators, through the three most holy Mystic Rites and powers, preside over the three ranks of those initiated, and minister their saving introduction under the Divine yokes, naturally the order of Leitourgoi as only purifying, ministers the one introduction of those who are being purified, by placing it under the Divine Altar, since in it the minds being purified, are supermundanely hallowed. And the Priests bend both their knees, since those who are religiously brought nigh by them have not only been purified, but have been ministerially perfected into a contemplative habit and power of a life thoroughly cleansed by their most luminous, ministrations through instruction. And the Hierarchy bending both his knees, has upon his head the God-transmitted Oracles, leading, through his office of Hierarch, those who have been purified by the Leitourgic power, and enlightened by the ministerial, to the science of the holy things contemplated by them in proportion to their capacities, and through this science perfecting those who are brought nigh, into the most complete holiness of which they are capable.

CAPUT VI. I. Concerning the Ranks of the Initiated. Section I. These, then, are the sacerdotal Ranks and elections, their powers, and operations, and consecrations. We must next explain the triad of the Ranks being initiated under them. We affirm then that the multitudes, of whom we have already made mention, who are dismissed from the ministrations and consecrations, are Ranks under purification; since one is being yet moulded and fashioned by the Leitourgoi through the obstetric Oracles to a living birth; and another is yet to be called back to the holy life, from which it had departed, by the hortatory teaching of the good Oracles; and another, as being yet terrorized, through want of manliness, by opposing fears, and being fortified by the strengthening Oracles; and another, as being yet led back from the worse to holy efforts; and another as having been led back, indeed, but not yet having a chaste fixedness in more Godlike and tranquil habits. For these are the Orders under purification, by the nursing and purifying power of the Leitourgoi. These, the Leitourgoi perfect, by their sacred powers, for the purpose of their being brought, after their complete cleansing, to the enlightening contemplation and participation in the most luminous ministrations.

Section II. And a middle rank is the contemplative, which participates in certain Divine Offices in all purity, according to its capacity, which is assigned to the Priests for its enlightenment. For it is evident, in my opinion, that, that having been cleansed from all unholy impurity, and having acquired the pure and unmoved steadfastness of its own mind, is led back, ministerially, to the contemplative habit and power, and communicates the most Divine symbols, according to its capability, filled with every holy joy in their contemplations and communions, mounting gradually to the Divine love of their science, through their elevating powers. This, I affirm, is the rank of the holy people, as having passed through complete purification, and deemed worthy, as far as is lawful, both of the reverent vision, and participation of the most luminous Mystic Rites. Section III.

Now the rank, higher than all the initiated, is the sacred Order of the Monks, which, by reason of an entirely purified purification, through complete power and perfect chastity of its own operations, has attained to intellectual contemplation and communion in every ministration which it is lawful for it to contemplate, and is conducted by the most perfecting powers of the Hierarchs, and taught by their inspired illuminations and hierarchical traditions the ministrations of the Mystic Rites, contemplated, according to its capacity, and elevated by their sacred science, to the most perfecting perfection of which it is capable. Hence our Divine leaders have deemed them worthy of sacred appellations, some, indeed, calling them ”Therapeutae,” and others ”Monks,” from the pure service and fervid devotion to the true God, and from the undivided and single life, as it were unifying them, in the sacred enfoldings of things- divided, into a God-like Monad, and God-loving perfection. Wherefore the Divine institution accorded them a consecrating grace, and deemed them worthy of a certain hallowing invocation----not hierarchical----for that is confined to the sacerdotal orders alone, but ministrative, as being ministered, by the pious Priests, by the hierarchial consecration in the second degree.

II. Mysterion on Monastic Consecration. The Priest then stands before the Divine Altar, religiously pronouncing the invocation for Monks. The ordinand stands behind the Priest, neither bending both knees, nor one of them, nor having upon his head the Divinely-transmitted Oracles, but only standing near the Priest, who pronounces over him the mystical invocation. When the Priest has finished this, he approaches the ordinand, and asks him first, if he bids farewell to all the distracted----not lives only, but also imaginations. Then he sets before him the most perfect life, testifying that it is his bounden duty to surpass the ordinary life. When the ordinand has promised steadfastly all these things, the Priest, after he has sealed him with the sign of the Cross, crops his hair, after an invocation to the threefold Subsistence of the Divine Beatitude, and when he has stripped off all his clothing, he covers him with different, and when, with all the holy men present, he has saluted him, he finishes by making him partaker of the supremely Divine Mysteries.

III. Contemplation. Section I. The fact that he bends neither knee, nor has upon his head the Divinely-transmitted Oracles, but stands by the Priest, who pronounces the invocation, signifies, that the monastic Rank is not for leading others, but stands by itself, in a monastic and holy state, following the sacerdotal Ranks, and readily conducted by them, as a follower, to the Divine science of sacred things, according to its capacity. Section II. And the renunciation of the divided, not only lives, but even imaginations, shews the most perfect love of wisdom in the Monks, which exercises itself in science of the unifying commandments. For it is, as I said, not of the middle Rank of the initiated, but of the higher than all. Section III. Therefore many of the things, which are done without reproach by the middle Rank, are forbidden in every way to the single Monks,----inasmuch as they are under obligation to be unified to the One, and to be collected to a sacred Monad, and to be transformed to the sacerdotal life, as far as lawful, as possessing an affinity to it in many things, and as being nearer to it than the other Ranks of the initiated. Now the sealing with the sign of the Cross, as we have already said, denotes the inaction of almost all the desires of the flesh. And the cropping of the hair shews the pure and unpretentious life, which does not beautify the darkness within the mind, by overlarding it with smeared pretence, but that it by itself is being led, not by human attractions but by single and monastic, to the highest likeness of God.

Section IV. The casting aside of the former clothing, and the taking a different, is intended to shew the transition from a middle religious life to the more perfect; just as, during the holy Birth from God, the exchange of the clothing denoted the elevation of a thoroughly purified life, to a contemplative and enlightened condition. And even if now also the Priest, and all the religious present, salute the man ordained, understand from this the holy fellowship of the Godlike, who lovingly congratulate each other in a Divine rejoicing. Section V.

Last of all, the Priest calls the ordained to the supremely Divine Communion, shewing religiously that the ordained, if he would really attain to the monastic and single elevation, will not merely contemplate the sacred mysteries within them, nor come to the communion of the most holy symbols, after the fashion of the middle Rank, but, with a Divine knowledge of

the holy things received by him, will come to the reception of the supremely Divine Communion, in a manner different from that of the holy people. Wherefore, the Communion of the most holy Eucharist is also given to the sacerdotal Orders, in their consecrating dedications, by the Hierarch who consecrated them, at the end of their most holy sanctifications, not only because the reception of the supremely Divine Mysteries is the consummation of each Hierarchical reception, but because all the sacred Orders, according to their capacity, partake of the self-same common and most godly gifts, for their own elevation and perfection in deification. We conclude, then, that the holy Mystic Rites are, purification, and illumination, and consecration. The Leitourgoi are a purifying rank, the Priests an illuminating, and the Godlike Hierarchs a consecrating. But the holy people is a contemplative Order. That which does not participate in the sacred contemplation and communion, is a Rank being purified, as still under course of purification. The holy people is a contemplative Rank, and that of the single Monks is a perfected Rank. For thus our Hierarchy, reverently arranged in Ranks fixed by God, is like the Heavenly Hierarchies, preserving, so far as man can do, its God-imitated and Godlike characteristics.

Section VI. But thou wilt say that the Ranks undergoing purification utterly fall short of the Heavenly Hierarchies (for it is neither permitted nor true to say that any heavenly Ordering is defiled), yea, I would altogether affirm myself, that they are entirely without blemish, and possess a perfect purity above this world, unless I had completely fallen away from a religious mind. For if any of them should have become captive to evil, and have fallen from the heavenly and undefiled harmony of the divine Minds, he would be brought to the gloomy fall of the rebellious multitudes. But one may reverently say with regard to the Heavenly Hierarchy, that the illuminating from God in things hitherto unknown is a purification to the subordinate Beings, leading them to a more perfect science of the supremely Divine kinds of knowledge, and purifying them as far as possible from the ignorance of those things of which they had not hitherto the science, conducted, as they are, by the first and more Divine Beings to the higher and more luminous splendours of the visions of God: and so there are Ranks being illuminated and perfected, and purifying and illuminating and perfecting, after the example of the Heavenly Hierarchy; since the highest and more Divine Beings purify the subordinate, holy, and reverent Orders, from all ignorance (in ranks and proportions of the Heavenly Hierarchies), and filling them with the most Divine illuminatings, and perfecting in the most pure science of the supremely Divine conceptions. For we have already said, and the Oracles divinely demonstrate, that all the heavenly Orders are not the same, in all the sacred sciences of the God-contemplating visions; but the first, from G.od immediately, and, through these, again from God, the subordinate are illuminated, in proportion to their powers, with the most luminous glories of the supremely Divine ray.

CAPUT VII. I. Concerning things performed over those fallen asleep. Section I. These things having been defined, I think it necessary also to describe the things religiously performed by us over those who have fallen asleep. For neither is this also the same between the holy and the unholy; but, as the form of life of each is different, so also, when approaching death, those who have led a religious life, by looking steadfastly to the unfailing promises of

the Godhead (inasmuch as they have observed their proof, in the resurrection proclaimed by it), come to the goal of death, with firm and unfailing hope, in godly rejoicing, knowing that at the end of holy contests their condition will be altogether in a perfect and endless life and safety, through their future entire resurrection . For the holy souls, which may possibly fall during this present life to a change for the worse, in the regeneration, will have the most Godlike transition to an unchangeable condition. Now, the pure bodies which are enrolled together as yoke-fellows and companions of the holy souls, and have fought together within their Divine struggles in the unchanged steadfastness of their souls throughout the divine life, will jointly receive their own resurrection; for, having been united with the holy souls to which they were united in this present life, by having become members of Christ, they will receive in return the Godlike and imperishable immortality, and blessed repose. In this respect then the sleep of the holy is in comfort and unshaken hopes, as it attains the goal of the Divine contests.

Section II.

Now, amongst the profane, some illogically think to go to a non-existence; others that the bodily blending with their proper souls will be severed once for all, as unsuitable to them in a Divine life and blessed lots, not considering nor being sufficiently instructed in Divine science, that our most Godlike life in Christ has already begun. But others assign to souls union with other bodies, committing , as I think, this injustice to them, that, after (bodies) have laboured together with the godly souls, and have reached the goal of their most Divine course, they relentlessly deprive them of their righteous retributions. And others (I do not know how they have strayed to conceptions of such earthly tendency) say, that the most holy and blessed repose promised to the devout is similar to our life in this world, and unlawfully reject, for those who are equal to the Angels, nourishments appropriate to another kind of life. None of the most religious men, however, will ever fall into such errors as these; but, knowing that their whole selves will receive the Christ-like inheritance, when they have come to the goal of this present life, they see more clearly their road to incorruption already become nearer, and extol the gifts of the Godhead, and are filled with a Divine satisfaction, no longer fearing the fall to a worse condition, but knowing well that they will hold firmly and everlastingly the good things already acquired.

Those, however, who are full of blemishes, and unholy stains, even though they have attained to some initiation, yet, of their own accord, have, to their own destruction, rejected this from their mind, and have rashly followed their destructive lusts, to them when they have come to the end of their life here, the Divine regulation of the Oracles will no longer appear as before, a subject of scorn , but, when they have looked with different eyes upon the pleasures of their passions destroyed, and when they have pronounced blessed the holy life from which they thoughtlessly fell away, they are, piteously and against their will, separated from this present life, conducted to no holy hope, by reason of their shameful life .

Section III. Now, whilst none of these attain the repose of the holy men, he himself, when coming to the end of his own struggles, is filled with a holy consolation, and with much satisfaction enters the path of the holy regeneration. The familiar friends, however, of him who has fallen asleep, as befits their divine familiarity and fellowship, pronounce him blessed, whoever he is, as having reached the desired end crowned with victory, and they send up odes of thanksgiving to the Author of victory, praying also that they may reach the same inheritance. Then they take him and bring him to the Hierarch, as to a bequest of holy crowns; and he right gladly receives him, and performs the things fixed by reverend men, to be performed over those who have piously fallen asleep. II. Mysterion over those who have religiously fallen asleep.

The Divine Hierarch collects the reverend Choir, and if the person who has fallen asleep were of the sacerdotal rank, he lays him down before the Divine Altar, and begins with the prayer and thanksgiving to God; but if he belonged to the rank of the chaste Monks, or the holy people, he lays him down near the hallowed sanctuary, before the sacerdotal entrance. Then the Hierarch finishes the prayer of thanksgiving to God; and next, the Leitourgoi, after reading the unfailing promises concerning our holy resurrection, contained in the Divine Oracles, reverently chant the odes of the same teaching and power, from the Oracles of the Psalter . Then the first Leitourgos dismisses the catechumens, and calls aloud the names of the holy people, who have already fallen asleep; amongst whom he deems the man, who has just terminated his life, worthy of mention in the same rank, and urges all to seek the blessed consummation in Christ; then the Divine Hierarch advances, and offers a most holy prayer over him, and after the prayer both the Hierarch himself salutes the defunct, and after him, all who are present. When all have saluted, the Hierarch pours the oil upon the fallen asleep, and when he has offered the holy prayer for all, he places the body in a worthy chamber, with other holy bodies of the same rank.

III. Contemplation. Section I. Now, if the profane should see or hear that these things are done by us, they will, I suppose, split with laughter, and commiserate us on our, folly. But there is no need to wonder at this. For, as the Oracles say, ”If they will not believe, neither shall they understand .” And as for us, who have contemplated the spiritual meaning of the things done, whilst Jesus leads us to the light, let us say, that, not without reason, does the Hierarch conduct to, and place the man fallen asleep, in the place of the same rank; for it shews reverently, that, in the regeneration, all will be in those chosen inheritances, for which they have chosen their own life here . For example, if any one led a Godlike and most holy life here, so far as the imitation of God is attainable by man, he will be, in the age to come, in divine and blessed inheritances; but if he led a life inferior to the divine likeness in the highest degree, but, nevertheless, a holy life, even this man will receive the holy and similar retributions. The Hierarch, having given thanks for this Divine righteousness, offers a sacred prayer, and extols the worshipful Godhead, as subjugating the unjust and tyrannical power against us all, and conducting us back to our own most just possessions (or judgments).

Section II. Now, the Chants and Readings of the supremely Divine promises are explanatory of the most blessed inheritances, to which those, who have attained a Divine perfection, shall be eternally appointed, and descriptive of him who has religiously fallen asleep, and stimulative of those, who are still living, to the same perfection. Section III. Observe, however, that not all the ranks under purification are customarily dismissed, but only the catechumens are expelled from the holy places, for this class is entirely uninitiated in every holy Rite, and is not permitted to view any of the religious celebrations, great or small, inasmuch as it has not participated in the faculty of contemplating the holy mysteries, through the Birth from God, which is Source and gift of light. The rest, however, of the ranks under purification, have already been under instruction in sacred tradition; but, as they have foolishly returned to an evil course it is incumbent to complete their proper elevation in advance, and they are reasonably dismissed from the supremely Divine contemplations and communions, as in holy symbols; for they will be injured, by partaking of them unholily, and will come to a greater contempt of the Divine Mysteries and themselves.

Section IV. Naturally, however, they are present at the things now done, being clearly taught by seeing both the fearlessness of death amongst us, and the last honour of the saints extolled from the unfailing Oracles, and that the sufferings threatened to the unholy like themselves will be endless; for it will perhaps be profitable for them to have seen him, who has religiously finished his course, reverently proclaimed by the public proclamation of the Leitourgoi, as being certainly companion of the Saints for ever. And, perchance, even they will come to the like aspiration, and will be taught from the science of the Liturgy, that the consummation in Christ is blessed indeed. Section V.

Then the Divine Hierarch, advancing, offers a holy prayer over the man fallen asleep. After the prayer, both the Hierarch himself salutes him, and next all who are present. Now the prayer beseeches the supremely Divine Goodness to remit to the man fallen asleep all the failings committed by reason of human infirmity, and to transfer him in light and land of living, into the bosom of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob: in a place where grief and sorrow and sighing are no more. It is evident, then, as I think, that these, the rewards of the pious, are most blessed. For what can be equal to an immortality entirely without grief and luminous with light. Especially if all the promises which pass man's understanding, and which are signified to us by signs adapted to our capacity, fall short, in their description, of their actual truth. For we must remember that the Logion is true, that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." "Bosoms" of the blessed Patriarchs, and of all the other pious men, are, in my judgment, the most divine and blessed inheritances, which await all godly men, in that consummation which grows not old, and is full of blessedness.

Section VI. But thou mayst, perhaps, say that these things are correctly affirmed by us, indeed, but want to know for what reason the Hierarch beseeches the supremely Divine Goodness, for the remission of the faults committed by the man fallen asleep, and his most glorious inheritance, amongst godly men of the same rank. For, if every one shall receive, by

the Divine justice, equivalents for what he has done in the present life, whether it be good or different, and the man fallen asleep has finished his own activities in this present life, from what prayer offered by the Hierarch will he be transferred to another inheritance, than that due to and equivalent for his life here? Now, well do I know, following the Oracles, that each one will have the inheritance equivalent; for the Lord says, he has closed respecting him, and each one shall receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or whether it be bad." Yea, the sure traditions of the Oracles teach us that the prayers, even of the just, avail only for those who are worthy of pious prayers during this present life, let alone (by no means) after death. What forsooth did Saul gain from Samuel? and what did the intercession of the Prophet profit the people of the Hebrews? For, as if any one, when the sun is shedding its own splendour upon unblemished eyes, seeks to enjoy the solar splendour by obliterating his own powers of vision; so does he cling to impossible and extravagant expectations, who beseeches the intercessions of holy men, and, by driving away the holy efforts natural to the same, plays truant from the most luminous and beneficent commandments, through heedlessness of the Divine gifts.

Nevertheless, according to the Oracles, I affirm that the intercessions of the pious are, in every respect, profitable in this present life, after the following fashion. If any one, longing for holy gifts, and having a religious disposition for their reception, as recognizing his own insufficiency, approaches some pious man, and should prevail upon him to become his fellow-helper, and fellow-suppliant, he will be benefitted in every respect, thereby, with a benefit superior to all; for he will attain the most Divine gifts he prays for, since the supremely Divine Goodness assists him, as well as his pious judgment of himself, and his reverence for devout men, and his praiseworthy craving for the religious requests requested, and his brotherly and Godlike disposition. For this has been firmly fixed by the supremely Divine decrees, that the Divine gifts are given, in an order most befitting God, to those who are meet to receive them, through those who are meet to distribute them.

If any one, then, should despise this sacred regulation, and betaking himself to a wretched self-conceit, should deem himself sufficient for the supremely Divine Converse, and look down upon pious men, and if he should further request requests, unworthy of God, and not holy, and if he should have his aspiration for things divine not sustained, and correlative to himself, he will fail in his ignorant request, through his own fault. Now, with reference to the prayer mentioned, which the Hierarch prays over the man fallen asleep, we think it necessary to mention the tradition which has come to us from our inspired leaders. The Divine Hierarch, as the Oracles say, is interpreter of the supremely Divine awards; for he is messenger of the Lord God Omnipotent. He has learned then, from the God-transmitted Oracles, that to those who have passed their life piously, the most bright and divine life is given in return, according to their due, by the most just balances, the Divine Love towards man overlooking, through its goodness, the stains which have come to them through human infirmity, since no one, as the Oracles say, is pure from blemish.

Section VII.

Now, the Hierarch knew these things to have been promised by the infallible Oracles; and he asks, that these things may come to pass, and that the right-teous returns be given to those who have lived piously, whilst being moulded beneficently to the Divine imitation, he beseeches gifts for others, as favours to himself; and, whilst knowing that the promises will be unfailing, he makes known clearly to those present, that the things asked by him, according to a holy law, will be entirely realized for those who have been perfected in a Divine life. For the Hierarch, the expounder of the supremely Divine Justice, would never seek things, which were not most pleasing to the Almighty God, and divinely promised to be given by Him . Wherefore, he does not offer these prayers over the unholy fallen asleep, not only because in this he would deviate from his office of expounder, and would presumptuously arrogate, on his own authority, a function of the Hierarchy, without being moved by the Supreme Legislator, but because he would both fail to obtain his abominable prayer, and he, not unnaturally, would hear from the just Oracle, ”Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss. Therefore, the Divine Hierarch beseeches things divinely promised, and dear to God, and which will, in every respect, be given, demonstrating both his own likeness to the good loving God, and declaring explicitly the gifts which will be received by the devout.

Thus, the Hierarchs have discriminating powers, as interpreters of the Divine Awards, not as though the All-Wise Deity, to put it mildly, were slavishly following their irrational impulses, but, as though they, as expounders of God, were separating, by the motion of the Divine Spirit, those who have already been judged by God, according to due. For ”receive,” he says, ”the Holy Spirit, whose faults ye may have remitted, they are remitted; whose ye may have retained, they are retained. And to him who was illuminated with the Divine revelations of the most Holy Father, the Oracles say, ”Whatsoever thou shalt have bound upon the earth, shall be bound in the heavens; and whatsoever thou shalt have loosed on earth, shall be loosed in the heavens,” inasmuch as he, and every Hierarch like him, according to the revelations of the Father’s awards through him, receives those dear to God, and rejects those without God, as announcing and interpreting the Divine Will. Further, as the Oracles affirm, he uttered that sacred and divine confession, npt as self-moved, nor as though flesh and blood had revealed it, but moved by God Who revealed to him the spiritual meaning of Divine things. The inspired Hierarchs then must so exercise their separations and all their Hierarchical powers as the Godhead, the Supreme Initiator, may move them; and the others must so cling to the Hierarchs as moved by God, in what they may do hierarchically, ”For he who despiseth you,” He says, ”despiseth Me .”

Section VIII. Let us now proceed to that, which follows the prayer mentioned. When the Hierarch has finished it, he first salutes the fallen asleep, and next, all who are present; for dear and honoured by all Godlike men is he who has been perfected in a Divine life. After the salutation, the Hierarch pours the oil upon the man fallen asleep. And remember, that during the sacred Birth from God, before the most Divine Baptism, a first participation of a holy symbol is given to the man initiated----the oil of Chrism----after the entire removal of the former clothing; and now, at the conclusion of all, the Oil is poured upon the man

fallen asleep. Then indeed the anointing with the Oil summoned the initiated to the holy contests; and now the Oil poured upon him shews the fallen asleep to have struggled, and to have been made perfect, throughout those same contests.

Section IX. When the Hierarch has finished these things, he places the body in an honourable chamber, with other holy bodies of the same rank. For if, in soul and body, the man fallen asleep passed a life dear to God, there will be honoured, with the devout soul, the body also, which contended with it throughout the devout struggles. Hence the Divine justice gives to it, together with its own body, the retributive inheritances, as companion and participator in the devout, or the contrary, life. Wherefore, the Divine institution of sacred rites bequeaths the supremely Divine participations to them both----to the soul, indeed, in pure contemplation and in science of the things being done, and to the body, by sanctifying the whole man, as in a figure with the most Divine Muron, and the most holy symbols of the supremely Divine Communion, sanctifying the whole man, and announcing, by purifications of the whole man, that his resurrection will be most complete.

Section X. Now, as regards the consecrating" invocations, it is not permitted to explain them in writing, nor may we bring their mysterious meaning, or the powers from God working in them, from secrecy to publicity; but, as our sacred tradition holds, by learning these, through quiet instructions, and being perfected to a more Godlike condition and elevation, through Divine love and religious exercises, thou wilt be borne by the consecrating enlightenment to their highest science. Section XI.

Now the fact that even children, not yet able to understand the things Divine, become recipients of the holy Birth in God, and of the most holy symbols of the supremely Divine Communion, seems, as you say, to the profane, a fit subject for reasonable laughter, if the Hierarchs teach things Divine to those not able to hear, and vainly transmit the sacred traditions to those who do not understand. And this is still more laughable----that others, on their behalf, repeat the abjurations and the sacred compacts. But thy Hierarchical judgment must not be too hard upon those who are led astray, but, persuasively, and for the purpose of leading them to the light, reply affectionately to the objections alleged by them, bringing forward this fact, in accordance with sacred rule, that not all things Divine are comprehended in our knowledge, but many of the things, unknown by us, have causes beseeming God, unknown to us indeed, but well known to the Ranks above us. Many things also escape even the most exalted Beings, and are known distinctly by the All-Wise and Wise-making Godhead alone. Further, also, concerning this, we affirm the same things which our Godlike initiators conveyed to us, after initiations from the early tradition. For they say, what is also a fact, that infants, being brought up according to a Divine institution, will attain a religious disposition, exempt from every error, and inexperienced in an unholy-life. When our Divine leaders came to this conclusion, it was determined to admit infants upon the following conditions, viz.:

that the natural parents of the child presented, should transfer the child to some one of the initiated,----a good teacher of children in Divine things,----and that the child should lead the

rest of his life under him, as under a godfather and sponsor, for his religious safe-keeping. The Hierarch then requires him, when he has promised to bring up the child according to the religious life, to pronounce the renunciations and the religious professions, not, as they would jokingly say, by instructing one instead of another in Divine things; for he does not say this, "that on behalf of this child I make, myself, the renunciations and the sacred professions," but, that the child is set apart and enlisted; i.e. I promise to persuade the child, when he has come to a religious mind, through my godly instructions, to bid adieu wholly to things contrary, and to profess and perform the Divine professions. There is here, then, nothing absurd, in my judgment, provided the child is brought up as beseems a godlike training, in having a guide and religious surety, who implants in him a disposition for Divine things, and keeps him inexperienced in things contrary.

The Hierarch imparts to the child the sacred, symbols, in order that he may be nourished by them, and may not have any other life but that which always contemplates Divine things; and in religious progress become partaker of them and have a religious disposition in these matters, and be devoutly brought up by his Godlike surety. So great, my son, and so beautiful, are the uniform visions of our Hierarchy, which have been presented to my view; and from others, perhaps, more contemplative minds, these things have been viewed, not only more clearly, but also more divinely. And to thee, as I fancy, more brilliant and more divine beauties will shine forth, by using the foregoing stepping-stones to a higher ray. Impart then, my friend, thyself also, to me, more perfect enlightenment, and shew to mine eyes the more comely and uniform beauties that thou mayst have been able to see, for I am confident that, by what has been said, I shall strike the sparks of the Divine Fire stored up in thee.

Thanks be to God. JOHN PARKER. All Saints' Day, 1898. [Footnotes moved to end and numbered]

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.