Excerpts from
"History of the Church"

Vol. I

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Content:

The Development of the Church's Organization

In comparison with the development of theology in the post-apostolic age, progress in completing the ecclesiastical organization in that period was far more extensive and significant. The links which bound the constitution of the post-apostolic Church to the organization of the Pauline

community were still indeed apparent; but everywhere a further development from the early beginnings is observable, leading to more highly organized forms both within the individual congregation and in the Church as a whole. This fact gives the post-apostolic age of the Church a special importance.

First of all, the individual congregation is more clearly defined as regards its significance and function as part of the Church's organism. The Christians of a city were now everywhere joined together in separate congregations or local churches. The church of God, dwelling far away in Rome, greets the church of God in Corinth; Ignatius addresses his letters to clearly defined local churches, to those of Ephesus and Magnesia, to the church which, in the territory of the Romans, stands first; the congregation of Smyrna sends to the church of God in Philomelion an account of the martyrdom of its bishop, Polycarp (*1 Clem prooem.;* the *inscriptiones* of the letters of Ignatius and the *Martyrium Polycarpi*). This joining together of the followers of Christ in a city to form a single congregation differs markedly from the organization of contemporary Judaism in the Diaspora, which had several synagogues in the same place, several congregations but smaller groups (*Cf.* for Rome J. B. Frey, *"Le Judaisme à Rome aux premiers temps de l'église"* in *Biblica* 12 (1931), 129-56).

There was no Christian that did not belong to such a local congregation. He joined with all his brethren in the eucharistic celebration, at which the unity of the post-apostolic congregation is most clearly apparent. Ignatius of Antioch unwearyingly proclaims this unity, which he seeks to explain by various images and comparisons: the congregation is like a choir whose singers praise the Lord with one voice, or like a company of travellers following the directions of its Lord. For the author of the first letter of Clement the unity of the congregation is symbolized by the harmony of the universe or by the arrangement of the human body, in which each member has its appropriate function. Hermas sees it in the image of a tower built upon the cornerstone that is Christ (Ignatius, *Magn.* 7, 1-2*; Eph.* 9, 2*; Philad.* 1, 2*; Rom.* 2, 2*; 1 Clem* 19:2-3; 20:1-4, 9-11; 37:5*;* Hermas, *Past. Vts.* 3 *and Past. Simil.* 9).

This vital, compact unity of the congregation was a possession to be constantly guarded, for it could be dangerously threatened by the tendency to disputatiousness and petty jealousy which led to divisions in the community, or by self-will in interpreting Christ's teaching. Schism and heresy were therefore regarded as the great enemies of unity in the early Church, even though they were not as sharply distinguished from one another as in later times. There is hardly a written work of the post-apostolic period which does not mention the schismatic tendencies which appeared now here, now there; it was not always a definite splitting away hardening into irreconcilability, but often ambition, jealousy, or backbiting, which created a climate of dissatisfaction against which the *Didache* and pseudo-Barnabas gave warning, but which was also present in the Roman congregation at the time of Hermas (*Didache,* 4, 3*;* Ps.-Barnabas, *Ep.* 19, 12; Hermas, *Past. Simil.* 8, 7, 4, *Past. Vis.* 3, 9, 7-10). More serious was the situation at Corinth, a congregation formerly distinguished by its spirit of brotherhood; although we cannot discover all the details of the events at Corinth, the epistle from Rome attributed to jealousy the deep division which had caused once leading members of the congregation to be removed from office — jealousy, which was the root of so many evils in the religious past of Israel and also even at that early date in the young Christian Church. The Roman congregation was profoundly grieved by these happenings and condemned them severely (*1 Clem* 4:1-7; 5-6; 54:1-2).

To the apostolic fathers, the danger of heresy was even greater. As the pastoral and Johannine epistles had had to warn against heretical falsification of Christian doctrine, so it was also Asiatic Christianity in particular that was exposed to danger from heretical groups in post-

apostolic times. Ignatius of Antioch directed his attack against spokesmen of Docetism, who said that Christ had not possessed a real body and asserted that the Jewish Law was still valid. There was only one attitude for members of the Christian community to adopt towards them, and that was strict avoidance of all association with them and a closer drawing together of the faithful among themselves, not only in Antioch, but also in Smyrna, Philadelphia, and Philippi. In Rome, too, Hermas knew of attempts to introduce strange doctrines (Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 4, 1; *Philad.* 6, 2; *Polyc.* 7, 1; 6, 3; Hermas, *Past. Simil.* 8, 6, 5). The leaders of the Church organized the campaign against heresy with exhortations and with warnings to other congregations, almost in the same way as they would soon have to do, with all energy, in opposing Gnosticism.

According to what is perhaps the oldest document of the post-apostolic period, the letter of the church of Rome to that of Corinth, the leaders of the congregation were divided into two groups: one bore the double designation of elders (presbyters, πρεσβύτεροι) and overseers (episcopi, επίσκοποι,), the other was represented by the deacons (διάκονοι, 1 *Clem* 44:2-6). At the end of the post-apostolic age we also meet in the *Shepherd* of Hermas the two names *overseers* or *elders* for the holders of leading offices in the Church, deacons and teachers being mentioned as well (Hermas, *Past. Vis.* 2, 4, 2-3; 3, 5, 1; *Past. Simil.* 9, 26, 2; 9, 27, 2). The *Didache* names only overseers and deacons, Polycarp on the other hand only elders and deacons (*Didache* 15, 1; Polyc., *Phil.* 5, 3; 11, 1). Only the letters of Ignatius distinguish clearly between the three offices of overseers, elders and deacons. Every congregation had only one overseer or bishop, to whom the college of elders (priests) and deacons was subordinate (Ignatius, *Magn.* 2, 1; 6, 1; *Philad.* 4; 1, 2; *Smyrn.* 8, 1; 12, 2; *Trall.* 2, 2-3; *Polyc.* 1, 2).

In Antioch and in a number of congregations in Asia Minor there existed therefore in the second decade of the second century a monarchical episcopate: the government of the church was assigned to one bishop, whereas elsewhere both previously and subsequently, this development was not complete, or at least our sources do not confirm that it was. The one office, which in apostolic times bore the double designation of episcop or presbyter, was divided into two and the term overseer or bishop reserved exclusively for the holder of the highest office in the congregation. The sources do not make it possible for us to follow the phases of this development, nor do they tell us if it took place everywhere in the same way. Soon after 150 the monarchical episcopate seems to have generally prevailed throughout the area of Christian expansion.

The apostolic fathers also partly worked out a theology of ecclesiastical offices, the authority of which is ultimately derived from God. He sent Jesus Christ, who gave the apostles the commission to proclaim the Gospel; they, in accordance with this commission, appointed overseers and deacons, whose places were to be taken at their death by other approved men who would continue their work among the faithful. Thus Clement of Rome (1 *Cor* 42; 44:1-3) regarded the authority of heads of congregations as based upon Christ's commission to the apostles, from whom all power of government in Christian communities must be derived by uninterrupted succession.

Ignatius further developed the theology of the episcopate in another direction; he was the most eloquent advocate of the complete and unconditional bond of union between bishop and congregation. The latter was one with its bishop in thought and prayer; only with him did it celebrate *agape* and Eucharist. Its members should follow him in obedience as Christ did the Father; nothing should take place in the congregation without the bishop. Even the administration of baptism and the performance of marriage ceremonies were reserved to him (Ignatius, *Eph.* 4, 1; 5, 2; *Polyc.* 5, 2; *Trall.* 7, 1-2). Presbyters and deacons had a share in his authority; the faithful were to obey the presbyters as the apostles, and in the deacons they were to honour the law of God (Idem,

Smyrn. 8, 1-2). The bishop could demand such an attitude from his people only because he represented Christ to them; he who, like the teachers of false doctrines, rejected the authority of the bishops was a rebel against the Lord, who was the actual if invisible bishop of every congregation (*Trall.* 1,1; 2,1; *Magn.* 3,2). The office-holders for their part saw their mission wholly in the light of its supernatural origin and were conscious that in the fulfillment of their task they were guided by the Spirit. Ignatius felt himself thus guided when he urged the Philadelphians to be in agreement with their bishop and presbyters; he was conscious of being the possessor of heavenly mysteries, he knew things visible and invisible. To Polycarp of Smyrna the manner of his death was supernaturally revealed; the Spirit moved Clement of Rome to address his admonition to the Corinthians (*Philad.* 7, 1-2; *Eph.* 20, 2*; Martyr. Polyc.* 5, 2).

Two factors then worked together in order that the bishop and his assistants might fulfill their official duty: the apostolic, that is, God-given origin of their authority, and guidance through the divine Spirit. Thus supported, they conducted the eucharistic celebration, presided at the *agape*, proclaimed the true doctrine and were guarantors of the purity of the Gospel, guardians of the apostolic traditions.

The working of the Holy Spirit was not, however, limited to the leaders of the congregation; it could be felt everywhere among the faithful. Clement of Rome saw in the faith, the wisdom and the chastity of the Corinthians special graces from the Spirit, which were shared by the congregations of Magnesia, Ephesus and Smyrna (1 *Clem* 28:1-2; 48:5; Ignat., *Magn.* 14, 1; *Eph.* 9, 1-2*; Smyrn.* inscr). Individual members of such congregations claimed to possess very special gifts, like Hermas or the author of the epistle of Barnabas, who speaks of a deep "insight" which he was able to transmit only in part (Ps.-Barnabas, *Ep.* 1, 4-5; Hermas*, Past. Vis.* 5, 5-7*; Past. Simil.* 9, 331). Charismatic gifts were therefore also present in post-apostolic times, and there were also, as in the earlier period, similar tensions between those of the laity who were favoured by the Spirit and the leaders of the community. This is especially apparent in the *Didache*, which gives to the "prophets" a special rank. They appear as teachers, they devote themselves to the service of the poor and they have to "give thanks"; they therefore have a particular role in the assemblies. But they had to prove before the congregation their claim to special gifts; for there were false prophets who did not preach the truth and were out to make money. Recognition was due to the tried and true prophet; he was above criticism, to submit him to judgment would have been to sin against the Lord. (*Didache,* 10, 7; 11, 3, 7-11; 13; 15, 1-2). One has the impression that the editor of the *Didache* is here fighting for a prophetic ideal which was sinking in general esteem, no doubt in favour of the "teacher," whose suitability had to be strictly examined.

Hermas, the author of the *Shepherd*, was a prophet of the Roman church to whom were vouchsafed many visions which he had to make known to the faithful. They concerned the single important subject of repentance, and he sought to win over to his point of view the presbyters, the official leaders of the congregation. Hermas claimed no teaching authority to which the heads of the congregation were obliged to submit; when he stepped forward in the assembly he was received with respect, for the Spirit spoke through him. That the Spirit did speak through him, it was the business of the authorities to make sure. Hermas knew too that there were false prophets who were known by their works (Hermas, *Past. Mand.* 11, 1-14, on which see G. Bardy, *La théologie de l'église de S. Clément de Rome à S. Irénée* (Paris 1947), 140-3). In the case of Hermas there was clearly no rivalry between the possessor of special gifts and the office-holders; harmony seems to have been established and their respective tasks recognized. A few decades later Montanism was to bring prophecy once more into the foreground and compel the ecclesiastical authorities to take up a definite position.

The congregation of post-apostolic times did not however exist in isolation and self-sufficiency. It knew itself to be linked with all the others and united in one organism, through which flowed a supernatural principle of life: Christ the Lord. All the congregations together formed a new people, the universal Church, which was made manifest in every individual congregation. All nations were to recognize that Christians were "the people of God and the sheep of his pasture" (1 *Clem* 60:4); under the banner of Christ the faithful, both Jews and Gentiles, were united in one body, the Church of Christ (Ignat., *Smyrn.* 1, 2); all who had received the seal were one in the same faith, in the same love (Hermas, *Past. Simil.* 9, 17).; Christ had given his flesh for his new people (Ps.-Barnabas, *Ep.* 7, 5). Ignatius of Antioch was the first to call this international community of the faithful "the Catholic Church," whose invisible bishop was Christ (Ignat., *Smyrn.* 8, 2). Its catholicity was such a striking characteristic that by its presence the true Church could be recognized. (The development of this idea is already indicated in *Martyr. Polyc.* 16, 226).

The Christian experienced the unity and catholicity of his Church in many ways in his daily life. Not only was the missionary welcomed like a brother when he met some of the faithful in a city; the bishop, priest, or deacon who brought a message, even the simple Christian whose business took him to foreign parts — they were all received with brotherly hospitality wherever there was a group of Christians (*Didache* 11, 1-10; 13, 1-4; Hermas, *Past. Simil.* 8, 10, 3; 9, 27, 2). An active correspondence between one congregation and another kept alive the consciousness of belonging to a great universal community. News was exchanged, joys and sorrows shared; long journeys were even undertaken in order that important questions of a religious nature might be discussed in common (1 *Clem* 55:1; Ignat., *Eph.* 1, 3; 2, 1; *Magn.* 2, 1; *Trall.* 1, 1).

The inner unity of the universal Church was assured by other powerful ties. Christians sought to maintain religious unity by a rule of faith which, beginning with simple forms, gradually acquired more precise and definite expression; (We already find in Ignatius, *Smyrn.* 1, 1-2; *Trall.* 9, forms which show a marked development compared with those of the N.T.) it was in essential points the same everywhere and was impressed upon all Christians at baptism. Unity of worship was established in the celebration of the Eucharist, which did indeed show local variations in form and in the text of many prayers, but which was essentially the same central act of the Christian liturgy, so that Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna in Asia Minor could celebrate it also in the church of Rome. (*Euseb. HE* 5, 24, 17). Unity in faith and worship was further preserved by the fact that the tradition of the Church was always the standard to be followed. For here no novelty of human origin could or should be admitted; loyalty to tradition was a prerequisite for the preservation of the truths of the faith and the unity of worship. With striking frequency we find the apostolic fathers, even at this early date, invoking tradition, which was looked upon as a legacy from the apostles and therefore inalterable (Especially Papias in *Euseb. HE* 5, 20). Unity in belief, worship and apostolic tradition could ultimately be guaranteed only by him who was their Lord and protector, Christ; therefore the Church turned to him in prayer, imploring him to gather together the people of God from the ends of the earth, to bring them to unity and to preserve them in it (*Didache* 9, 4; 10, 5; 1 *Clem* 59:2; Ignat. *Eph.* 4, 1-2).

Even though the bishop's sphere of activity was his own congregation, he was not exempt from all responsibility for the Church as a whole. It was not only a feeling of solidarity with the faithful of other congregations that prompted bishops like Ignatius and Polycarp to address to them words of encouragement or rebuke; they acted thus from a sense of duty. There was, indeed, no bishop of the post-apostolic age who intervened in the affairs of other local churches with the same authority as in his own congregation, or could give instructions to the whole Church. Even Clement of Rome was too much of a background figure, as compared with

the Roman church as such, to make it possible for us to attribute to him, on the strength of his epistle to the church of Corinth, a right to admonish, in the sense of a primacy, supported by a special authority. Rather was it the Roman congregation as such that made a claim exceeding the limits of brotherly solidarity. There are no grounds for supposing that Rome's advice had been asked for; the Roman letter seeks to re-establish peace by admonition and counsel, though sometimes its language takes on a more decisive, almost threatening tone that seems to expect obedience (1 *Clem* 57:1-2; 59:1-2). Noteworthy too is the respect which Clement's first epistle gained in Corinth and in the rest of the Church during the period immediately following, so that it was sometimes regarded as inspired scripture (G. Bardy, *op. cit.* 112f). This implies the existence in the consciousness of non-Roman Christians of an esteem of the Roman church as such which comes close to according it a precedence in rank. It is especially noticeable in Ignatius' letter to the Romans. Its enthusiastic introduction is unique when we compare it with the prefaces to his other letters; the accumulation of honorific and fulsomely respectful epithets is hardly to be explained by personal temperament or by the purpose of the letter alone. In obvious allusion to the epistle to the Corinthians, the letter states that the Roman congregation acted as teacher to others (Ignat., *Rom.* 3, 1). Ignatius does not however mention the Bishop of Rome, and his words about the precedence of Rome in charity (Ignat., *Rom.* inscr*)* (i.e. in charitable activities) can in no way be understood in the sense that any special personal dignity was accorded to its bishop.

pp 205-211

The Expansion of Christianity down to the End of the Second Century.

The question of the Church's expansion in the second century brings us back to Palestine again. The Jewish war of the first century had, for the time being, put an end to the missionary work of the Jerusalem congregation and of the Christians dwelling in the countryside. Many of the Christians who had fled to Pella, east of the Jordan, probably did not go back to Palestine; those who returned were faced with the task of rebuilding community life in and outside Jerusalem, so that by the years 73-74 a new period of Palestinian Jewish Christianity had begun. Its centre was again at Jerusalem, where the congregation was presided over by Simeon until his martyrdom about the year 107 (*Euseb. HE* 3, 32, 1-3). Regarding the size of the congregation our sources make only vague statements; but a remark of Eusebius is noteworthy, according to which "very many of the circumcision had come to the faith in Christ" down to the time of Simeon's death (Ibid., 3, 35). From this it is clear that the new community, like its predecessor, engaged in missionary activity; for Jews in large numbers had settled again in the city after the catastrophe of the seventies, but they now lacked a Temple as a centre for their religious life.

Hegesippus states that at this time there were also Christians outside Jerusalem, especially in Galilee, and this information is confirmed by rabbinical sources (Ibid., 3, 20, 6; 3, 32, 6; cf. A. Schlauer, *Die Geschichte der ersten Christcnheit* (Gütersloh 1927), 363). The missionary efforts of the Christians certainly encountered enormous difficulties. First of all they had to deal with heterodox Jewish Christianity, which, partly at least, continued to assert that the Law was still binding on all Christians and recognized Jesus of Nazareth as a great prophet indeed, but not as the Messiah and Son of God; moreover, it had been permeated by Gnostic ideas, as formulated by Simon Magus, Dositheos, Menander and Kerinthos (J. Danielou, *La théologie du judéo-christianisme* (Paris 1958), 67-89, Eng. tr. *The Theology of Jewish Christianity* (London 1964). Samaria especially was under the influ-

ence of Simon and Menander and offered little scope to the Christian mission (Justin, *Dial.* 120, 6; *Apol.* 26 56).

The Christians met the most determined opposition from orthodox Palestinian Jewry, based as it was upon a profound hatred of the "apostates" who had renounced the Sabbath and proclaimed as Messiah him whom the Jews had nailed to the cross (*Euseb. HE* 3, 27, 5). According to the evidence of Justin (Justin, *Dial.* 133, 6; 137, 2; 17, 1; 108, 2), not only was this hatred deliberately fomented in the synagogues of Palestine, but it led to powerful missionary counter-activity; from Palestine the Jews sent forth "chosen men" who were to work against the spread of the Christian faith everywhere, especially in the main centres of the Jewish Diaspora. The denunciation of Bishop Simeon also came from anti-Christian circles in Palestine. He was denounced before the proconsul Atticus as being a descendant of David and a Christian, and in the year 107 he was, according to the principle of Trajan's later rescript, crucified after steadfastly professing the faith (*Euseb. HE* 3, 32, 3-6). Accessions from paganism were probably not considerable in Palestine; the only convert from paganism who is mentioned is Aquila, the translator of the Bible, who, according to the late account of Epiphanios, joined the Church at Jerusalem, but because of his superstitious tendencies was subsequently excluded from the congregation (Epiph., *De mensuris* 14-15; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 3, 21, 1, calls him a proselyte).

As the Jewish war had brought to an end the original community, so did the rebellion of Bar Cochba in the years 132-5 conclude the second phase of Palestinian Christianity and with it the possibility of missionary work among the Jews of Palestine. Persecution by the leader of the rebellion caused the deaths of many Jewish Christians (Justin, *Apol.* 31); others again fled beyond the Jordan. As no person of Jewish race was allowed to live in the city of Aelia Capitolina, built on the site of Jerusalem, a Christian congregation could be recruited only from pagan converts. Its first bishop, Marcus, was therefore, as Eusebius states, a Greek; and all his successors down to the middle of the third century bore Greek or Roman names (*Euseb. HE* 4, 6, 4). The Gentile-Christian congregation of Jerusalem played no remarkable role during the rest of the second century, at the end of which the bishopric of Aelia ranked below that of Caesarea. In the rest of Palestine too, the Christians were now mainly Greeks, dwelling almost exclusively in the towns. All attempts at christianizing the Jewish rural population failed down to the time of Constantine, because of determined hostility towards everything Christian (Cf. *Harnack Miss* 638-43).

In neighbouring Syria the Christian churches dating from apostolic times maintained themselves or increased in importance. The Christians in Damascus, Sidon, and Tyre, likewise had increased in numbers during the course of the second century, while the Phoenician countryside remained largely pagan. In Antioch especially — its earliest important mission-centre — Christianity gained in consideration on account of its bishop, Ignatius, and acquired new converts from among the Greek-speaking population. The letter of Bishop Theophilos, written shortly after 180 to Autolykos, is both apologetical and propagandist in tone and shows that missionary work was going on among the pagan upper class.

In the second half of the second century new territory was opened up to Christianity in the east Syrian district of Osrhoëne, when the Jewish Christian Addai began to work in Edessa and its immediate neighbourhood. His labours were continued by the future martyr Aggai and the leaders of the Edessan congregation, Hystaspes and Aggai, the latter of whom had to excommunicate Bardesanes (converted to Christianity in 179) on account of his Gnostic errors. The existence of Christians between Nisibis and the Euphrates in the second half of the second century is suggested by the Aberkios inscription (Cf, I. Ortiz de Urbina, *Gr* 15 (1934), 84-86). At that time other congregations were established around Edessa, among which we must presume there existed a certain degree of organized union, for a synod at Edessa discussed the question of the date

of Easter (*Euseb. HE* 5, 23, 4). Tatian may have compiled his *Diatessaron* for these communities. The consecration of Bishop Palut for the see of Edessa, which took place at Antioch about the year 190, shows Antioch's interest in this promising mission-field, which was soon to be contested by various heretics. That the royal house was converted to Christianity in the second century and that Christianity was established as the State religion has often been accepted as fact; it remains, however, open to question (I. Ortiz de Urbina, *loc. cit.,* 86-91). The destruction of a Christian church at Edessa in the flood of 201 is evidence of a well developed ecclesiastical organization. Bardesanes mentions regular Sunday assemblies and fasting on particular days. (Cf. H.H. Schaeder, "Bardesanes von Edessa" in *ZKG* 51 (1932), 21-74, esp. 72). It is characteristic of the young Syrian church that it did not confine itself to the cities, but from the beginning concerned itself with the evangelization of the country folk. From Edessa Christianity penetrated farther east into Mesopotamia, thanks to the labours of the missionary Addai.

Whereas southern Arabia appears to have had no Christians for a long time, northern Arabia or Transjordan shows evidence that Christianity was known there in the first and second centuries. "Arabs" were represented among the Jews and proselytes staying in Jerusalem at the first Pentecost (Acts 2:11). The faith may also have been brought to the lands east of the Jordan by Jewish Christians fleeing from Jerusalem and Palestine. The apologist Ariston, who wrote his *Dialogue between Jason and Papiskos concerning Christ* shortly before the middle of the second century, belonged to the congregation of Pella (*Quasten P,* I, 195 f). But before the third century there can have been only individual Arab conversions, most likely in cities such as Bostra, which had come into contact with Hellenistic civilization.

The beginnings of Christianity in Egypt are obscure, in spite of the discovery of numerous papyri of the first and second centuries. As the account of the founding of the Egyptian church by Peter is based on later legends (*Euseb. HE* 2, 16*)*, the fragment of John's Gospel on papyri of the early second century may be regarded as the earliest proof of the presence of Christians on Egyptian soil. We must also bear in mind that the Gnostic mission had more initial success there than orthodox Christianity, of the existence of which in Alexandria we have no clear evidence dating from before the last two decades of the second century. Pantaenus is the first mentioned preacher of the Christian faith; about the year 190 Bishop Demetrios was the head of an already considerable congregation, consciously preparing for the growth of the Church in the third century.

Besides the district of Osrhoëne, the provinces of Asia Minor were the most receptive to Christian preaching in the second century. Both inland and on the west coast, missionaries could continue to build on the foundations laid by Paul. Even by the end of the first century a number of cities in the west of Asia Minor had organized churches (Apoc 2-3) in addition to those founded by the apostle. Ignatius of Antioch maintained relations with these and with the churches of Magnesia and Tralles. The testimony of Pliny is particularly significant: he states that about the year 112 there was in Bithynia a considerable Christian rural population (Pliny the Younger, *Ep.* 10, 96). In the following decades the names of cities in Asia Minor in which Christianity had gained a footing continued to multiply; they are found in nearly all provinces (*Harnack Miss* 737 f.). The correspondence of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, of which Eusebius tells us (*Euseb.HE* 4, 23, 1-13.), is addressed to a whole series of congregations, such as those of Nicomedia, Amastris, and "the communities in Pontus." It shows us a well-organized Christianity, able, in the synods of the eighties, effectively to oppose the Montanist movement (Ibid. 5, 16, 10). Bishop Polycrates of Ephesus could point to the glorious Christian tradition of his congregation, which

gave it a special place among those of the west coast (Ibid. 5, 24, 1-6, on which see V. Schultze, *Altchristliche Städte und Landschaften,* II/2 (Gütersloh 1926), 107 f).

In Crete the churches of Gortyna and Knossos are now known by name, as the correspondence of Dionysius of Corinth shows (*Euseb. HE* 4, 23, 5 7-8), whereas we have no information about the growth of the Pauline foundations in Cilicia and Cyprus during the second century. Compared with the rapid expansion of Christianity in Asia Minor, the areas of Greece and Macedonia evangelized by Paul clearly lagged behind. Corinth surpassed all other churches in the intensity of its life, which, under Dionysius, attained a high degree of ecclesiastical organization. Athens, at this time gave to the Church the apologist Aristides. We have no reliable information about attempts at christianizing the Danubian provinces in the second century; Christians among the soldiers stationed there may have won occasional converts to their faith (Cf. *RAC* IV, 166 f).

In the Latin West, the growth of the Christian congregation at Rome was probably greatest. The letter of Clement, Bishop of Rome, to the church of Corinth shows that despite the persecutions under Nero and Domitian the Gospel had gained many more believers before the end of the first century, though these may have been largely non-Romans (The list of popes (cf. *Harnack Miss* 818-32) shows predominantly Greek names during this period). The respect in which the Roman church was held appears from the powerful attraction it exercised upon the Christians of the eastern provinces; Ignatius speaks of it, as we have seen, with expressions of the deepest reverence. Marcion, Aberkios, Hegesippus and Irenaeus, Valentinus and Theodotos, Justin, Tatian, and Polycarp of Smyrna — all travelled for various reasons to the capital in the West; some to seek recognition for their peculiar doctrines, others to learn there the true Christian teaching or to work for the peace of the Church. Hermas, still writing in Greek, gives us a glimpse of ecclesiastical life in Rome with its everyday problems. With Bishop Victor towards the end of the second century the Latin element begins to predominate (Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 53). The educated Greek Justin set himself a missionary task in Rome when, in a school like those of classical Greece, he taught "the true philosophy" to interested persons among the intellectuals of the capital. From the extensive charitable activity which the Roman congregation was able to carry on in the second half of the century (Dionysius of Corinth thanks the Roman church for its support of many congregations: *Euseb. HE* 4, 23, 10) we may conclude that its membership was considerable. There is little evidence concerning Christian advances in other parts of Italy during the second century. One might well expect there to have been missionary expeditions from the capital, but, quite possibly, the fact that the majority of the congregation consisted of non-Latins made such undertakings too difficult. At the most, we can say that in the second half of the century some bishoprics had been established south of Rome.

Whereas Sicily does not appear to have been touched by Christian missionaries before the third century, Roman North Africa proved relatively early to be a profitable field for their activity, although we do not know their names nor the route they followed. The first document that gives information about African Christians, the Acts of the martyrs of Scili (Knopf-Kruger, *Ausgewahlte Martyrerakten* (Tubingen, 3rd ed. 1929), 28 f), already presupposes the existence there of Latin Christianity, for the six Christians who were put to death in July 180 (a later addition to the Acts shows that other Christians of the province fell victims to the persecution) evidently possessed the epistles of Paul in Latin. The place in which a large Christian community first grew up was, naturally enough, the capital, Carthage, where the catechetical and literary work of Tertullian about the year 200 was so extensive that it would have been possible only in a Christian group that was already numerically strong. The way in which the Roman, Scapula, proceeded against the Christians (Tertull., *Ad Scapul., passim*) also compels us to assume that a considerable

number of Christians had existed for some time in Africa. And if Bishop Agrippinus, about 220, could summon seventy bishops to a synod (Cyprian, *Ep.* 71, 4), we may conclude that intensive evangelization had been going on in the countryside for a considerable period. North Africa is the only large area of the Latin West at this time which can in any way be compared with the mission fields of eastern Syria and Asia Minor.

The populations of the delta and middle valley of the Rhone owed their first contact with Christianity to the commercial relations between Asia Minor and the south coast of Gaul. For the old Greek colony of Massilia this contact must have come quite early (E. Griffe, *La Ganle chretienne,* I (Paris 1947), 45). The numerical strength of the churches of Lyons and Vienne, which is implied in the account of forty or fifty Christians of those cities martyred under Marcus Aurelius, also presupposes a long period of development. Irenaeus of Lyons can be regarded as a missionary bishop, concerned for the Celtic population of his adopted homeland; no doubt he intended to preach the Gospel among the Gauls, although, as he himself hints, the language problem was a source of difficulties (Irenaeus, *Adv. haer., praef.* 1, 3; see E. Griffe, *op. cit.* 43). To him too we owe our knowledge of Christian congregations then existing "in the Germanics" — probably in the Rhenish provinces with their chief towns of Cologne and Mainz — and in the Spanish provinces (Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 1, 10, 2). But if Christianity had already penetrated to the frontier towns on the Rhine, it had certainly also reached Trier, situated further inside the frontier and much more frequented by traders. Its relations with the cities of the Rhone valley suggest too the way by which the faith reached the Moselle.

This survey of the expansion of Christianity in the course of the second century gives a clear impression that the missionary enthusiasm of the primitive Church was still fresh and active. Intensive work continued in the original mission fields of the apostles, with great success in the parts of Asia Minor, where Paul had preached. New areas were opened up, especially in east Syria and Mesopotamia in the Orient, in North Africa, Gaul, Germany, and Spain in the West. The bearers of the Gospel were primarily the congregations and the enthusiasm of individual Christians; there is no indication of a central direction and organization of missionary work. The names of the missionaries are for the most part unknown.

Besides the type of preaching familiar from the apostolic period, new ways of proclaiming the Gospel were being employed. First there was the written word, used by the apologetical writers of the second century, whose intentions were also missionary and propagandist. Then there were some Christians who made use of the classical system of education; as teachers in private schools, they expounded the Christian faith. Finally, the heroic behaviour of the martyrs in times of persecution became a missionary factor of the first importance, gaining for Christianity a body of new adherents which, if not numerically great, was spiritually of the highest quality.

Pp 229-242

Further Development of Christian Literature in the East in the Third Century.

The Beginnings of the Theological School of Alexandria.

The inner consolidation of Christianity in the third century is particularly evident and impressive in the domain of early patristic literature. More and more frequently, members of the ruling classes joined the new faith and felt impelled to serve it by word and writing in ways which corresponded with their level of culture. This created an essential condition for the development of a learned theology. The earliest attempts of this kind are found of course as early as the second century, when educated converts such as Justin and his pupil Tatian presented themselves publicly in Rome as teachers of the "new philosophy," and gave a well-grounded introduction to the understanding of the Christian faith to a relatively small circle of pupils (Tatian's pupil Rhodon must also be reckoned among these; he attracted some attention by his controversy with the Marcionite Apelles, cf. *Euseb. HE* 5, 13, 5-7).

The "schools" of these teachers were not, however, institutions of the Roman Christian community itself, but private undertakings by learned Christians. Out of a sense of missionary obligation, and in the manner of philosophical teachers of the time, these men expounded their religious beliefs to a circle of those who might be interested, and substantiated them by constant comparison with other religious trends. In a similar manner Gnostics like Apelles, Synerus, and Ptolemy, appeared in Rome as private teachers; and men like Theodotus from Byzantium and perhaps Praxeas, too, tried within the framework of such private schools to win support for their particular Monarchian views. While no objection was raised against the teaching activities of orthodox laymen like Justin, the authorities of the Roman community took exception to the activities of Gnostic or Monarchian teachers, and finally excluded them from the community of the Church. These problems induced the Roman bishops of the third century to seek to bring private Christian schools under their control and to transform them into a purely ecclesiastical institution which would administer the instruction of the catechumens. No theological school within the proper sense of the word developed either in Rome or elsewhere in the Latin West, because certain conditions of an intellectual kind were just not present. Neither were the personalities to whom they might have been of use. But both prerequisites were existent in great quantity in the East.

In the Greek East the Egyptian capital, Alexandria, with its scientific tradition and the interest generally shown by its educated upper classes in religious and philosophical questions, was to prove the most favourable soil for the development of a Christian theology on a learned intellectual basis. By establishing the two great libraries of the Sarapeion and the Museion, the first Ptolemies had laid the foundation of that lively interest in the most varied branches of learning which had developed in Alexander's city during the Hellenistic period. This cultural development, especially in the areas of Hellenistic literature and neo-Platonic philosophy, helped to create a general atmosphere which was to prove particularly fruitful when it encountered Christianity. Educated Alexandrians who had adopted the Christian religion were inevitably moved to confront it with the intense cultural life around them; and those of them who felt impelled publicly to account for their faith became the first Christian teachers in the Egyptian capital. The available sources of information about the beginnings of Christian teaching in Alexandria are not very rich; only Eusebius speaks of them in any detail, and his treatment is relatively late and rather uncritical. Nevertheless, the intensive research of recent years has produced some reliable results. According to these sources it is impossible to speak of a "school of catechists in Alexandria" as early as the end of the second century.

The first Christian teacher whose name is known is Pantainus, of Sicilian origin, who was giving lessons about the year 180, expounding and defending his Christian view of the world; but

he was teaching without ecclesiastical appointment, just as Justin or Tatian had earlier done in Rome. Any interested person, pagan or Christian, could frequent this private school, and the syllabus was entirely a matter for the teacher's judgment. Clement of Alexandria must be considered to have been the second teacher of this kind, but he cannot be regarded as the successor of Pantainus at the head of any school. He publicly taught the "true gnosis" independently of, and perhaps even simultaneously with Pantainus. The first phase of Origen's teaching activity still had this private character. At the request of some friends who were interested in the Christian religion, he gave up his position in a grammar school and devoted himself as an independent teacher to instruction in the Christian religion, which was clearly open to Christians and pagans alike. It was only later (There are contradictions in Eusebius's account. It seems extremely unlikely that a young man of seventeen would be placed in charge of a school for catechumens; cf. M. Hornschuh, in *ZKG* 71, 1960, 203-7), perhaps about 215, that he undertook the instruction of catechumens at the request of Bishop Demetrius (*Euseb. HE* 6, 14, 11), and so became the ecclesiastically-appointed head of a catechetical school. He soon further expanded this role assigning the actual teaching of the catechumens to his friend Heraclas, certainly with the consent of the bishop. He provided a circle of educated persons and advanced students with a systematic exposition of the philosophic knowledge of the age, crowned by instruction in the Christian religion (Ibid. 6, 18, 3-4. Origen expounds his educational ideal in a letter to his pupil Gregory of Neo-Caesarea: *Ep. ad Greg.* 1). In this respect, Origen had taken a decisive step; the work which Clement before him had undertaken as a private teacher was now placed directly at the service of the church of Alexandria, which thereby received a school of its own in which instruction in the Christian religion was given in no way inferior in quality to the contemporary pagan course of education. This institution alone has a claim to the title of a theological school. It is true that its real importance was due to the intellectual quality of the man who was its leader and soul until the year 230. And it is not surprising that Origen's bold step was received with some reserve: he soon had to defend himself against the accusation of attributing too much importance to profane philosophy (*Euseb. HE* 6, 19, 13-14), but the success and enthusiastic support of his students made him keep to the path he had taken. When the rift between Origen and Bishop Demetrius led to his quitting the country, the Alexandrian school of theologians quickly reverted to a simple school for catechumens, giving to those seeking baptism their first introduction to the Christian religion. Origen took the nature and spirit of his foundation with him to Caesarea and Palestine. Here he tried until his death to realize his ideal of a Christian institute for advanced teaching, this time with the full approval of the Palestinian episcopate.

After Origen's death, it is only possible to speak of an Alexandrian theological school in a wider sense; we can only denote a theology bearing the characteristic marks which the two first great Alexandrians, Clement and Origen, gave it: namely, the drawing of philosophy into the service of theology, a predilection for the allegorical method of scriptural exegesis, and a strong tendency to penetrate by speculation on an idealistic basis the supernatural content of the truths of revelation.

Clement of Alexandria.

While none of the writings of the first Alexandrian teacher, has come down to us (H.-I. Marrou considers he may well be the author of the *Letter to Diognetus;* cf. Marrou's ed., *SourcesChr* 33 (1951), 266 ff), three longer works and a small treatise survive from the pen of Clement. Though they are merely the remnants of a more extensive production, they permit us to form an impression of his characteristics as a writer, his theological interests, and the aim of his teaching. Clement was the son of a pagan family of Athens, became a Christian in adult life and, after extensive travels, reached Alexandria towards the end of the second century. There he was active as a Christian

teacher until the persecution under Septimius Severus forced him to emigrate to Asia Minor about the year 202, and he died still in this area, about 215.

Clement's secular learning is shown by the very title of the first of the three main works mentioned above. On the model of Aristotle, Epicurus, and Chrysippus, he too wrote a *Protrepticus*, a discourse of admonition and propaganda, which presupposes educated pagan readers who are to be won over to his "philosophy." His aim is, therefore, in fact the same as that of previous apologists, but his work is far superior to their writings in form and tone. Naturally, in a Christian apologia, polemic against pagan polytheism could not be lacking, but it is conducted by Clement in a calm and thoughtful manner. He concedes that many of the pagan philosophers, Plato above all, were on the way to a knowledge of the true God; but full knowledge, and with it eternal salvation and the satisfaction of all human aspiration, was only brought by the Logos, Jesus Christ, who summons all men, Hellenes and barbarians, to follow him. A level of discourse on the Christian faith was here attained that had not been known before, and one which could appeal to a cultivated pagan. Many a discerning reader must have had the impression that inquiry into this religion and discussion with its enthusiastic spokesman might be worthwhile.

Anyone who allows himself to be won over as a follower of the Logos must entrust himself absolutely to the latter's educative power. Clement's second main work, the *Paidagogus*, is therefore intended as a guide in this respect, and at the same time as an aid to training in Christian things. The fundamental attitude required is first developed: the Logos-Paidagogos has provided by his life and commands in Holy Scripture the standards by which the life of a Christian should be directed; the Christian who acts in accordance with them fulfills to a higher degree the "duties" to which, for example, an adherent of the Stoic philosophy knows he is obliged, since the demands of the Logos are in the fullest sense "in conformity with reason." Clement illustrates the application of this basic principle with many examples from daily life, and displays a gift of discernment and a balanced and fundamentally affirmative attitude to cultural values. Both Christian ascesis and Christian love of one's neighbour must prove themselves in the actual circumstances of civilization. The magnificent hymn to the Paidagogus Christ, which ends this work (*Paidag.* 3, 12, 101), effectively emphasizes the position occupied by the person of Christ in Clement's personal piety.

Their formal treatment and intellectual structure show that the *Protrepticus* and the *Paidagogus* are essentially related works. The second further suggests (Ibid. 1, 1, 3) that Clement intended to complete a literary trilogy with another work, the *Didascalos*, which was to follow the others and offer a systematic exposition of the chief doctrines of Christianity. But the third surviving work, the *Stromata*, cannot be considered as the conclusion of this trilogy, for its themes are quite different from those announced, and in style and form it in no way corresponds to the first and second studies. The title itself indicates its literary category: a number and variety of questions are treated in an informal manner, as in the *Deipnosophistae* of Athenaeus, or the *Attic Nights* of Aulus Gellius, and are intended in the first place to appeal to pagans interested in religious and philosophical matters. There is good reason to think that these questions relate to the themes which Clement treated in his oral teaching, and that consequently their very form reveals the marks of their origin (Cf. A. Knauber in *TThZ* 60 (1951), 249 ff). One purpose certainly pervades the whole work: to prove by reasoned confrontation with contemporary Gnosticism that the Christian religion is the only true gnosis, and to represent the faithful Christian as the true Gnostic.

At baptism every Christian receives the Holy Spirit and thereby the capacity to rise from simple belief to an ever more perfect knowledge; but only those rise to attain it in fact who per-

petually strive to do so, and who struggle for ever greater perfection in their manner of life. Only by an increasing effort of self-education and by penetrating more and more deeply into the gospel, and that solely within the Church, which is the "only virgin Mother" (*Paidag.* 1, 6, 42), does a man become a true Gnostic and so surpass the cultural ideal of the "wise man" of pagan philosophy. That pagan ideal certainly represents a value which must be acknowledged, but it is only a preliminary stage. The model of the Christian Gnostic is the figure of Christ, whom he must come to resemble, and by following whom he becomes an image of God (*Strom.* 7, 13, 2). Linked with this is a perpetual growth in the love of God, which makes possible for the Gnostic a life of unceasing prayer, makes him see God and imparts to him a resemblance to God. This ascent from step to step, does not, however, remove the true Gnostic from the company of his brethren to whom such an ascent has not been granted; rather does he serve them, ever ready to help, and summons them to follow his path by the example of the purity of his life. Such practical questions of actual living stand in the centre of Clement's thought and teaching. Speculative theological problems occupy only the fringe of his interests. He takes over the idea of the Logos from St John, but does not penetrate more deeply into it. The Logos is united with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the divine Trias; the world was created by him, and he revealed God with increasing clarity, first in the Jewish Law, then in Greek philosophy, and finally in becoming man. By his blood mankind was redeemed, and men still drink his blood in order to share in his immortality (*Paidag.* 2, 19, 4). The Redeemer Christ recedes, for Clement, behind the Logos as teacher and lawgiver. He did not further speculative theology properly so-called, but he is the first comprehensive theorist of Christian striving after perfection, and posterity allowed him to be forgotten far too readily.

Origen.

Fortune did not favour the life-work of Origen, the greatest of the Alexandrian teachers and the most important theologian of Eastern Christianity. The greater part of his writings has perished because the violent quarrels which broke out concerning his orthodoxy led to his condemnation by the Synod of Constantinople in 553. As a consequence, his theological reputation suffered for a long time, and the reading of his works was proscribed. Few of these works remain in his Greek mother-tongue, and the greater part of his biblical homilies has survived only in Latin translations, notably those by Jerome and Rufinus. Friends and admirers in the third and fourth centuries preserved a little of his canon and this helps to throw light on the aim and purpose of his life's work, the most useful of this evidence being preserved in the sixth book of Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. Though this sketch is transfigured by retrospect vision, Eusebius had at his disposal a collection of Origen's letters, and obtained many details from men who had known him personally in Caesarea.

The first decisive influence on Origen was that of the Christian atmosphere of his parents' home (Eusebius's precise details are to be preferred in this to Porphyry's vague allusions to a pagan period in Origen's life. It is certainly correct that Origen was familiar with Greek culture). There he inherited and never lost the high courage to confess his faith, and the constant readiness to be active in the ecclesiastical community. An excellent education in secular studies made it possible for him, after the martyr's death of his father, Leonides, to support the family by teaching in a grammar school. Quite soon, while instructing interested pagans in the Christian faith on his own initiative, he felt the need of a deeper philosophical training; and this he found in the lectures of the neo-Platonist Ammonius Saccas, whose influence on him was strong and lasting. Journeys in his early manhood took him to Caesarea in Palestine, where he became a friend of the bishop, Theoctistus, and

of Alexander, the head of the Jerusalem community, to Arabia at the invitation of the imperial governor; and also to the West, where he travelled to Rome. These journeys gave him a vivid idea of the life of the Church as a whole, and strengthened his inclination to work everywhere through his lectures for a deeper understanding of Scripture and belief.

His appointment as teacher of the catechumens and his duties as head of the theological school in Alexandria brought his rich intellectual and spiritual powers to full development, and initiated the creative period of his life. This was not fundamentally disturbed when, in the years 230-1, conflict with Bishop Demetrius forced him to transfer his activities to Caesarea in Palestine. The ostensible cause of his estrangement from the local bishop was his ordination to the priesthood without the former's knowledge. It was conferred on him by Palestinian bishops, although Origen, being a eunuch (he had castrated himself in a youthful excess of asceticism), was not, according to the views of the time, a suitable candidate. The deeper reason, however, was the bishop's inability to have a man of such high reputation and intellectual quality by his side. The understanding which was shown to Origen in his second sphere of activity, namely in Palestine, was munificently repaid by him; for, in addition to his actual teaching, he served the life of the Church directly, both by his tireless preaching and by public theological discussions about problems of the day, which repeatedly took him as far as Arabia. He had occasion to crown his fidelity to faith and Church by manfully confessing the faith during the Decian persecution, when he was imprisoned and subjected to cruel torture. About the year 253 or 254 he died in Tyre as a result of this treatment, when nearly seventy years of age.

The kernel of Origen's theological achievement was his work on the Bible, his efforts for its better understanding and the use made of it to create a right attitude in belief and true piety. The bulk of his literary production derived from this concern. It took the form of critical and philological work on the text of Scripture, scientific commentaries on individual books, and finally in his abundant discourses on the Bible, which were recorded by stenographers and later published. These are works of edification; not merely intellectually stimulating, they delve into the ultimate depths of Christian life. The impressive undertaking of the Hexapla (See Quasten P, II, 44 ff., and G. Mercati, Psalterii Hexapli reliquiae I; Rome 1958) served to establish a trustworthy text of the Bible. It presented in six parallel columns the original Hebrew in Hebrew characters, a Greek transcription, the translations by Aquila and Symmachus, the Septuagint and the Theodotion translation. What was probably the only copy of this work was placed in the library of Caesarea, where it could still be consulted in the time of Jerome and even later. A particularly hard fate overtook the great scriptural commentaries; many of which perished completely, or did so with the exception of a few fragments, such as the commentaries on Genesis, the Psalms, Proverbs, Isaias, Ezechiel, the Minor Prophets, Luke, and most of the Epistles of St Paul. Larger portions of the commentaries on the Canticle of Canticles, the Gospels of St Matthew and St John were preserved, partly in Greek and partly in Latin translations. The works which most frequently survived were homilies, particularly esteemed for their pastoral use of the Old Testament. About six hundred of them have come down to us, but only twenty-one in the original Greek.

It was with an attitude of deepest reverence that Origen undertook this service of Holy Scripture; for in it he encountered the living word of God which it embodies. Consequently, the understanding of Holy Scripture is for him "the art of arts" and "the science of sciences" (*In Ioannem comm.* 13, 46). And just as all events take place in mysteries, so Scripture also is full of mysteries which unveil themselves only to one who implores this revelation in insistent prayer (*In Exod. hom.* 1, 4; *Ep. ad Greg.* 4). From this consideration sprang Origen's spontaneous appeals to "his Lord Jesus" to show him the way to a right interpretation of a difficult passage of Scripture (*In Levit.*

hom. 1, 1; 5, 5; *In Matth. comm.* 10, 5). He knew that this is only found when the deeper spiritual and divine sense is recognized, that which is hidden behind the letter is the treasure hidden in a field. That is why the allegorical interpretation of Scripture was not for Origen merely a traditional and easily applied method, taken over from the exposition of secular texts. It was often a compelling necessity for him, absolutely essential if what is sometimes offensive in the purely literal sense of Scripture is to be transcended. Origen was fully aware that allegory has its limits (*In Num. hom.* 9, 1). Nevertheless, in the hand of the master and despite all errors in detail, this method remains the path that leads him to the very heart of Scripture, affording ultimate religious insight and knowledge.

The daily reading of Scripture, to which Origen exhorts us (*In Gen. hom.* 10, 3), became for him the well-spring of his personal religious life; and it also made him a teacher of the Christian ideal of striving after perfection, whose subsequent influence was immeasurable: first on Eastern monasticism, and then in the Latin West, by way of St Ambrose. The ultimate goal of the ascent to perfection is the resemblance to God, to which man was called when God created him in his own image and likeness. The surest way to this goal is the imitation of Christ; and to be so centred on Christ is the characteristic attitude of Origen's piety, just as later the principle "Christus" was the basic concept of his pupil, Ambrose of Milan (Cf. K. Baus, in *RQ* 49 (1954), 26-29). A man who imitates Christ chooses life and chooses light (*In Levit. hom.* 9, 10). A presupposition for the success of this imitation is correct self-knowledge, which brings awareness of one's own sinfulness; and this, in turn, imposes a stubborn fight against the perils which threaten from world and from one's own passions. Only a person who has reached *apatheia* is capable of further mystical ascent, but this cannot be attained without a serious ascetic effort, in which fasting and vigils have their place just as much as the reading of Scripture and the exercise of humility (*In Ierem. hom.* 8, 4; *In Exod. hom.* 13, 5). Those who, following Christ's example, freely choose a celibate life and virginity will more easily reach the goal (*In Num. hom.* 24, 2; *In Cant. comm.* 2, 155). The ascent to mystical union with the Logos takes place by degrees, a progress which Origen sees prefigured in the journey of the people of Israel through the desert to the promised land (*In Num. hom.* 27). The profound yearning for Christ is fulfilled in a union with him which is accomplished in the form of a mystical marriage (*In Cant. comm.* 1); Christ becomes the bridegroom of the soul, which in a mystical embrace receives the *vulnus amoris* (Ibid. 2, 8). Origen here is not only the first representative of a profound devotion to Jesus, but also the founder of an already richly developed Christocentric and bridal mysticism, from which the medieval Christocentric spirituality of William of St Thierry and Bernard of Clairvaux derived, and from which it drew considerable substance. In this way the personality of the great Alexandrian had its deepest ultimate influence precisely where it is most authentically evident: in its calm, limpid, and yet ardent love for Christ.

While in Alexandria, Origen wrote a systematic exposition of the chief doctrines of Christianity. He gave this first dogmatic handbook in the history of Christian theology the title Περί αρχών (Concerning Principles), and dealt in four books with the central questions concerning God, the creation of the world, the fall of man, redemption through Jesus Christ, sin, freedom of the will, and Holy Scripture as a source of belief. The Greek original has perished, as has also the literal Latin translation made by Jerome. This surviving version by Rufinus, has smoothed down or eliminated entirely many things to which objection might be raised. There is, consequently, some uncertainty about the precise view which Origen held on certain questions (Cf. M. Harl, "Recherches sur le Περί άρχω __ d'Origéne en vue d'une nouvelle édition" in *Studia Patristica* 3 (Berlin 1961), 57-67).

In his introduction, Origen speaks with great clarity about the principles of method which guided him in his work; Scripture and tradition are the two primary sources for his exposition of

Christian doctrine. He knows that they cannot be approached with a philosopher's inquiry, but only with the attitude of a believer. The Old and New Testaments, the books of Law, the Prophets and the Epistles of St Paul: all contain the words of Christ and are a rule of life for the Christian, because they are inspired (Origen, *De princ. praef.* 1; *In Matth. comm.* 46). The authority of the Church guarantees that no spurious writings intrude; only what is accepted in all the communities as indubitably Holy Scripture is free from the suspicion of being apocryphal (*De princ. praef.* 8; *In Matth. comm.* 61). Only that truth can be received in faith which does not contradict ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition, and this is found in the teaching of the Church which per *successionis ordinem* was handed down from the apostles (*De princ. praef.* 2). Consequently, the Church is not only intended to be the guardian of Holy Scripture, but is also its authentic interpreter, for she alone has received from Christ the light which enlightens those who dwell in darkness (*In Gen. hom.* 1, 5). She is the true Ark in which alone men can find salvation: the house which is marked with the blood of Christ and outside which there is no redemption (Ibid. 2, 3; *In Jesu Nave hom.* 3, 5). She is like a fortified city, and anyone who remains outside her walls is captured and killed by the enemy (*In Ierem. hom.* 5, 16). Men enter Jesus' house by thinking like the Church and living according to her spirit (*Disput. cum Heracl.* 15).

As the rule of faith contains only the necessary fundamental doctrines preached by the apostles, without giving further reasons for them or showing in any detail their inner connexions, a wide field of activity remains open to theology. According to Origen, this is where the task lies for those who are called to it by the Holy Spirit through the special gifts of wisdom and knowledge. Theirs is the vocation of penetrating deeper into the truths of revelation and of framing by an appropriate method a theological system from Scripture and tradition (*De princ. praef.* 3 and 10). The execution of his own project makes it plain that Origen was not a born systematizer; he had not the power to carry through his conception on a strictly logical plan. But of much greater weight than this imperfection of form, are the particular theological views which gave rise to the later controversies about their author's orthodoxy. In his doctrine of the Trinity, Origen still thinks in Subordinationist terms: only the Father is ὁ θεός or αὐτόθεος: the Logos, of course, likewise possesses the divine nature, but in regard to the Father he can only be called δεύτερος θεός (*De princ.* 1, 2, 13; *Contra Cels.* 5, 39). Yet Origen clearly expresses the eternity of the Logos and characterizes him as ομοούσιος (*In Ep. ad Hebr. Fragm*); and so an advance is made here as compared with early Subordinationism. Origen, one might say, is on the path that led to Nicaea. In Christology, too, he devises modes of expression which point to the future: the union of the two natures in Christ is so close in his doctrine that the communication of idioms follows from it (*De princ.* 2, 6, 3); as far as can now be traced the term God-man, θεάνθρωπος, first occurs with Origen, and probably he prepared the way for the term Θεοτόκος (*In Ezech. hom.* 3, 3; *In Luc. hom.* 6, 7). Origen also followed paths of his own in the doctrine of Creation; before the present world, a world of perfect spirits existed to which the souls of men then belonged; these were, therefore, pre-existent. Only a fall from God brought upon them banishment into matter which God then created. The measure of their pre-mundane guilt actually determines the measure of grace which God grants each human being on earth (*De princ.* 2, 8ff.; *Contra Cels.* 1, 32-3).

All creation strives back towards its origin in God, and so is subjected to a process of purification which can extend over many aeons and in which all souls, even the evil spirits of the demons and Satan himself, are cleansed with increasing effect until they are worthy of resurrection and reunion with God. Then God is once more all-in-all, and the restoration of all things (ἀποκατάστασις των πάντων) is attained (*De princ.* I, 6, 1 and 3; 3, 6, 6; *Contra Cels.* 8, 72). The eternity of hell was practically abandoned as a result of this conception. That a new Fall would be possi-

ble after this process and consequently a new creation of the world and a further series of purifications necessary, was presented by Origen merely as an arguable possibility and not as certain Christian teaching. Critics have reproached Origen with further errors in his theology, which might be described as spiritualism and esotericism. By this is meant his tendency to undervalue the material creation and to except the spirit from the need for redemption, and also his tendency to reserve the innermost kernel and meaning of the truths of revelation for the circle of the perfect, the *pneumatikoi*, or the spiritual ones. Both accusations have a certain justification but have often been very much exaggerated. Origen recognized perfectly the proper value of what pertains to the senses and the body, and in fact, saw its importance precisely in its function as an image of a spiritual world that lies behind it. Consequently, he did not call for its annihilation, but for its spiritualization and transfiguration. He was likewise convinced that every baptized person is called on principle to perfection, but that there are many stages on the way to it, and that every stage can assimilate only an appropriate part of the truth of revelation. He believed in consequence that the full grasp of Christian truth is only possible at the final stage.

Like every theological achievement, that of Origen must be judged according to the possibilities and conditions which the age provided. He approached theological problems with the equipment and questions of a third-century man trained in philosophy; and most of the defects of his theology can be seen to derive from the limits and conditioning circumstances of this philosophy. But, viewed as a whole, his theological work, and especially his systematic treatise *Concerning Principles,* represents a creative personal achievement and consequently an enormous advance in Christian theology. For a judgment of the whole, the fact is important that the work was inspired by the purest ecclesiastical spirit. For all the independence and freedom of his theological questioning and inquiry, Origen wanted only to serve the Church, and was always ready to submit to her judgment. "If I," he once addressed the Church, "I, who bear the name of priest, and have to preach the word of God, offend against the doctrine of the Church, and the rule of the gospel and were to become a scandal to the Church, then, may the whole Church with unanimous decision cut off me, her right hand, and cast me out" (*In Ios. hom.* 7, 6). Such an attitude should have prevented posterity from proscribing Origen's work as a whole merely because of particular errors and mistakes, in the way that happened later.

Dionysius of Alexandria; Methodius; Lucian of Antioch and his School.

Subsequent teachers in the school of Alexandria, which after Origen's departure, as has been said, assumed once more the character of a school for catechumens, are overshadowed by their great predecessors. The title of "great" was given to Dionysius, later bishop of the Egyptian capital (247-8 to 264-5), more on account of his personal bravery in the Decian persecution and his zealous activity in ecclesiastical affairs than because of any theological achievement. The orthodoxy of his teaching on the Trinity was doubted in Rome, and he attempted to demonstrate it in an apologia composed in four books against Dionysius, Bishop of Rome. He opposed the chiliastic ideas of Bishop Nepos of Arsinoë in his work *On the Promises,* in which he rejected John the apostle's authorship of the Apocalypse (*Euseb. HE* 7, 24 ff). Dionysius is the first Bishop of Alexandria for whom we have evidence of the custom of announcing the date of the day of the Resurrection each year to Egyptian Christendom in the so-called "Easter letters." With the exception of two letters, his extensive correspondence has been lost. The written works of Theognostus and Pierius, Dionysius's successors at the head of the school for catechumens, drew on Origen's achievement. The *Hypotyposes* of Theognostus was a dogmatic work, while Pierius occupied himself more with exegesis and homiletics (Fragments in R. Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae* 3 (Oxford

1846), 405-35; cf. L. B. Radford, *Three Teachers of Alexandria, Theognostus, Pierius and Peter;* Cambridge 1908). Whether Peter, who was Bishop of Alexandria from about 300, also worked in the catechetical school is uncertain: the fragments of his treatises indicate particularly pastoral interest, as do those on penitential regulations and on the Pasch, though some opposed the alleged errors of Origen.

Other Eastern writers are also found within the range of Origen's influence, and their inferior performances make the greatness of the master stand out in sharper relief. We owe a panegyric on Origen to his pupil Gregory Thaumaturgus († *c.* 270), a miracle-working bishop in central Asia Minor who was soon transfigured by legend and became a highly honoured figure in the Byzantine church. Gregory's panegyric gives an instructive glimpse at the teaching method of the revered master. The laity, too, took an interest in theology and exegetical questions. This is proved by Julius Africanus of Palestine († *post* 240), a friend of Origen, who in a letter to the latter raised doubts about the authenticity of the story of Susanna, and in another inquired into the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke (W. Reichardt, *Die Briefe des S. Julius Africanus* (Leipzig 1909); E. Blakeney, "Jul. Africanus" in *Theology* 29 (1934), 164-9). The learned priest Pamphilus of Caesarea in Palestine sought to serve Origen's aims by continuing the tradition of the master in his teaching and learned inquiries. His interests lay particularly in the text of Scripture, as well as in collecting Origen's writings and in taking care of the library founded by Origen in Caesarea. The Diocletian persecution brought him martyrdom after long imprisonment (310), during which he wrote an Ἀπολογία ὑπέρ Ὠριγένους, or *Defence of Origen*, in six books, of which only the first survives in the Latin translation by Rufinus (*Euseb. HE* 6, 32, 3; *PG* 17, 521-616). The writer Methodius is included in the opposition that formed against Origen. According to Jerome and Socrates (Jerome, *De vir. ill.* 83; *Socrates HE* 6, 13), he was Bishop of Olympus in Lycia, but more probably he lived as an ascetic and as a private Christian teacher. In his discussion of Origen he rejected the latter's doctrine of the pre-existence of souls and the theory of a cycle of several creations of the world, but could not free himself from Origen's allegorical interpretation of Scripture. For his literary works he preferred the dialogue form, and he displays a good knowledge of Plato (Cf. M. Margheritis, "L'influenza di Platone sul pensiero e sull'arte di s. Metodio. d'Olimpo" in *Studi Ubaldi* (Milan 1937), 401-12. On the dialogue technique, cf. G. Luzzati, ibid. 117-24). His *Symposium* was in fact an important work, especially in its influence on the history of spirituality. It praises the Christian ideal of virginity and ends with a famous hymn to Christ the bridegroom and his bride the Church.

The beginnings of the second theological school in the East are no less obscure than those of the Alexandrian school. It sprang up in the Syrian capital of Antioch, an important centre of the Hellenic world where conditions were similar to those in Alexandria. Tradition unanimously names the Antiochan priest Lucian as founder of the school, which may have been preceded by undertakings on a smaller scale and more private in character. In the time of Bishop Paul of Samosata, a priest named Malchion enjoyed a considerable reputation in Antioch for wide learning, but was a teacher in a secular Greek school. He demonstrated his superior theological training in the controversy with Paul of Samosata at the Synod of Antioch (268) which led to the latter's condemnation (*Euseb. HE* 7, 29, 2). Another priest of Antioch whose biblical interests and knowledge of Hebrew were praised, was Dorotheus, a contemporary of Lucian, but he is not expressly said to have been a Christian teacher (Ibid. 7, 32, 3-4). It is only with Lucian that the records in the sources become more precise. The fact that Lucian was one of the clergy of Antioch permits the assumption that his activity as a Christian teacher was authorized by his bishop. His theological learning, which is praised by Eusebius (Ibid. 9, 6, 3), did not find expres-

sion in extensive publications. His real interest was in biblical work and more particularly in a new recension of the Septuagint, for which he consulted the Hebrew original. It enjoyed high repute and was widely used in the dioceses of Syria and Asia Minor. Lucian's exegetical method must be gathered from the biblical works of his pupils; it takes principally into account the literal sense and only employs typological interpretation where the text itself demands it. Similarly, it is only from the works of his pupils that it is possible to form an idea of Lucian's other theological characteristics. He always starts from biblical data, not from theological presuppositions, and attains, among other things, a strict Subordinationism in the doctrine of the Logos. This was represented soon after by Arius and some of his fellow-pupils, the so-called Syllucianists, and they expressly referred to their teacher for it. The characteristics of the Antioch school became fully clear only in the great age of the Fathers, in connexion with the Trinitarian and Christological controversies.

pp 268-318

Further Development of the Liturgy.

The growth of theological literature within the Church of the third century was accompanied by an equally important development in the liturgical domain. Here, too, new creative impulses are perceptible, from which the forms of divine worship grew, and which answered the needs of the communities of the great Church as they increased in strength.

Easter and the Easter Controversy.

In the first place the feast of Easter was given an elaboration which made it in the minds of the faithful the central and pre-eminent celebration and memorial of Christian redemption. Two factors are especially responsible for this development: first of all the unfolding of the previous Easter festival itself, by increasing the duration of preparation and celebration; and, secondly, the bringing of the administration of the sacrament of Christian initiation into the Easter liturgy. The beginnings of this double movement extend back probably into the second century, since they are already apparent in an advanced stage early in the third. The sources which show this development most clearly, such as the Syrian *Didascalia*, some writings of Tertullian and the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, belong in all instances to the third century. The homilies on the Psalms by Asterius the Sophist were in fact written in the early fourth century, but often reflect a state of liturgical development which can be ascribed to the late third century.

Despite differences of emphasis in detail, considerable similarity of view concerning the root idea of the celebration of the Easter festival can be assumed in both the East and West. It commemorated the fundamental truths and facts of Christian redemption, which were conferred upon mankind by the death and triumphant resurrection of the Lord (Of fundamental importance: O. Casel, "Art und Sinn der ältesten christlichen Osterfeier" in *JLW* 14 (1938), 1-78). In second-century Asia Minor and a few neighbouring regions, a Christian Passover was kept which naturally placed the thought of the Lord's passion in the foreground, but also included the idea that this passion leads to the resurrection. In accordance with Jewish custom, 14 Nisan was kept as the date for this Passover, by the Quartodecimans of Asia Minor and perhaps generally at first; it was prepared for by a strict fast and included a homily on Exodus 12 (as did the Jewish Passover). It was not exclusively a day of mourning nevertheless, and had a joyous conclusion with the agape and celebration of the Eucharist early on 15 Nisan. The Sunday Passover, the celebration of Easter on

the Sunday following 14 Nisan, such as was known for instance in Syria, Egypt, Pontus, and the Latin West, likewise in no way excluded the thought of the Lord's passion from the fundamental idea of the feast. This thought was in fact incorporated into it by explicit commemoration, linked in this case also with a strict fast, because the recollection of the passion was the necessary condition for significant celebration of the triumphal resurrection of the Lord. The Easter vigil brought this Easter fast to an end, and constituted the bridge to Easter joy ln the redemption perfected by the resurrection.

The so-called Easter controversy at the end of the second century is therefore misconstrued, if its basis is thought to have been a dispute over Easter festivals with fundamentally different content between the Quartodecimans (See, for example, B. Lohse, *Das Passafest der Quartadecimaner* (Gütersloh 1953), who does not go into the views of O. Casel) and the supporters of the Sunday pasch. It was rather a dispute about the date of the same Easter festival, and about the nature and duration of the same Easter fast. It led initially to no agreement, for both groups thought they could appeal to apostolic tradition in support of their own view (*Euseb. HE* 5, 23,1; 5, 24, 6). It is no longer possible to determine when and by whom this Sunday Passover was introduced in Rome, but it must have become established there early in the second century, for Irenaeus plainly assumes the festival to have existed in the time of the Roman Bishop Xystus (Ibid. 5, 24, 14, and on this see B. Lohse, *op. cit.* 117. The interpretation of the passage in Irenaeus suggested by M. Richard seems untenable. Irenaeus definitely restricts the subject of the discussion to the date of the already existing feastday, and the duration and nature of the fast usual before it; there was no question at issue whether the festival should be celebrated or not. According to M. Richard, a specifically Roman dispute about the date of Easter is to be postulated, within the Roman community under Soter's predecessors, in which the actual introduction of the Easter feast was controverted). And the practice referred to by him is unlikely to have been a special creation in Rome itself, for such a supposition finds no support in the sources. Furthermore, the common elements shared by the Sunday celebration of the Easter festivities and the Passover feast of the Quartodecimans are very clear: the introductory strict fast; the reading of Exodus 12 with a homily appended; and, incorporated into a vigil celebration, a concluding eucharistic supper. These are best understood if we take the Sunday Easter celebration as a further development of the original Quartodeciman custom, but one which made the Sunday after 14 Nisan the culmination of the festival. This was done in order to emphasize more strongly the contrast with Judaism, and at the same time to bring more vividly into consciousness faith in the resurrection of the Lord as the crown of his work of redemption.

The remaining differences in the manner of keeping the feast, whether according to the Sunday Easter rite or the Quartodeciman practice, were certainly felt and also disputed, as Irenaeus reports with reference to Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna and Anicetus of Rome (*Euseb. HE* 5, 24, 16); but they did not at first burden the relations of the communities to one another in such a way as to endanger peace within the Church. That the differences in practice easily caused controversy is proved by the debate between Melito of Sardes and Bishop Claudius Apollinaris of Hierapolis about the year 170 in Asia Minor: a debate in which Clement of Alexandria also intervened. The latter based his argument on the Johannine chronology so as to criticize, in a work of his own, the custom of the Quartodecimans, and emphasized that Jesus, the true Paschal lamb, died and was buried on one day, the day of preparation of the Passover. In his reply, Melito justified the Quartodeciman practice by the dating of the Synoptics, according to which Jesus had celebrated the Passover before his death; and he asserted that this was what should still be maintained (Fragments of Apollinaris from the *Chronicon paschale: PG 5*, 1297. The title of Clement's work, Κανών εκκλησιαστικός ή προς Ίουδαίζοντας seems to indicate that in other places the Quartadeciman practice was felt to be a Jewish custom; cf. A. v. Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*, I, Tübingen, 5th ed. 1931, 314).

A few years before the turn of the century, the dispute over the date of the Easter celebration assumed graver forms. The immediate occasion is most probably found in Rome, where the priest Blastus sought to introduce the Quartodeciman custom, and managed to secure support among the Christian immigrants from Asia Minor (On Blastos, see, as well as *Eusebius HE* 5, 15, Ps.-Tertullian, *Adv. haer.* 8). About 195 the Roman Bishop Victor wished to establish a uniform regulation for the Church as a whole, and caused synods to be held everywhere for this purpose. Later Eusebius still possessed the results of the deliberations of some of these synods, which took place in Palestine, Pontus, and Osrhoëne; and he also knew the corresponding resolutions of a Roman synod, as well as the decisions of the churches of Gaul and of some individual bishops (*Euseb. HE* 5, 23, 3-4). The majority expressed itself in favour of the Sunday practice; but determined contradiction came from the stronghold of the Quartodecimans, the province of Asia, for whose communities Bishop Polycrates of Ephesus made himself the spokesman. In accordance with a Roman request, he had likewise summoned the bishops of the province to a synod. This assembly came to the conclusion that the traditional practice was to be retained, as in Asia it was founded upon apostolic tradition (Ibid. 5, 24, 1-8). The decision of the majority of all the synods moved Pope Victor to more severe action against the churches of Asia Minor, which he "attempted," as Eusebius emphasizes (Ibid 5, 24, 9), to exclude from the ecclesiastical community. But his action did not meet with general approval; and Irenaeus of Lyons resolutely advocated a course of tolerant treatment towards the followers of the divergent practice, which was evidently adopted (Ibid. 5, 24, 15-17. It seems impossible to limit Victor's action to the group of Quartodecimans at Rome; Eusebius' account is too plain. Victor would scarcely have summoned the synods outside Rome for such a limited purpose). The bishops of Palestine, too, strove for a uniform manner of celebrating Easter in accordance with the majority decision. The Quartodeciman minority remained faithful to their previous practice throughout the whole of the third century, and the Novatians in Asia Minor followed them in this (*Socrates HE* 5, 21). The first canon of the Synod of Aries in 314 imposed the Sunday Easter, the Council of Nicaea expelled the Quartodecimans from the ecclesiastical community (For Arles: *Acta et symbola conciliorum, quae saec. IV habita stin,t* Leyden 1954, 23; For Nicaea: Eusebius, *Vita Constantini* 3, 18). Thereafter, their numbers continually declined, though even into the fifth century the great Church had to deal with them on occasion (B. Lohse, *op. cit.* 128 ff).

According to the most important sources for the third century, the pattern of the Easter celebration itself was also largely uniform in East and West. It was introduced by a strictly obligatory fast, which was viewed as an integral part of the Easter festival. The length of the fast was different from place to place, and could last for one, two, or even more days, as Irenaeus already attests (In *Euseb. HE* 5, 24, 12). It was kept most strictly in the East, where from the Monday of the appropriate week onwards, only bread, salt and water were taken, and on Friday and Saturday all food was dispensed with (*Didasc. apost.* 5, 18: see ed. by Funk, *Didascalia et Constitutiones apostolorum* I, Paderborn 1905, 288). Fasting on these last two days was also demanded by the *Traditio apostolica*, but could be restricted to the Saturday in special cases (*Trad. apost.* 29: see ed. by Botte in *SourcesChr* 11 (1946), 64). Tertullian emphasizes that this fast gave special character to the days on which the Church was deprived of the Bridegroom (Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 12-13). Consequently, it was felt to be inseparably linked with the festival which had the whole occurrence of redemption as its content, the passage of the Lord and his community from death to life and from sorrow to joy.

The heart of the Easter celebration was the nocturnal vigil, for which all the Christians of a community assembled, so that it was not a family rite like the Jewish Passover, but essentially a social rite for all members of a congregation. Participation in it was a strict duty, so that Tertullian was afraid that the pagan husband of a Christian wife might have hesitation in allowing her

to go to such a nocturnal festival (*Ad uxor.* 2, 4). The community assembled first of all for a service of prayer and readings, which occupied the first hours of the night; psalms, readings from the prophets and the Gospel are specially mentioned (*Didasc. apost.* 5, 19, 290 Funk; according to Asterius Soph. (*Hom.* 8 and 9, and 28) psalms 5 and 15 in particular were used). According to the *Didascalia*, the vigil belonged essentially to Easter day and consequently had a joyful conclusion (*Didasc. apost.* 5, 20, 300 Funk); and this aspect came increasingly to the fore with the further elaboration of the vigil celebration, such as must have occurred at the beginning of the third century. The solemn baptism must particularly be mentioned here, since about this time it was incorporated as a new element into the framework of the Easter liturgy. Tertullian had already regarded Easter, on account of ts festive character, as being a particularly suitable date for baptism, without actually indicating the vigil in particular. But if Easter were really, as he says, the "dies baptismo solemnior," the liturgical location of the administration of baptism on this day could scarcely be sought outside the vigil celebration (*De bapt.* 19: "diem baptismo solemniorem Pascha praestat." Hippolytus, too, *In Dan. comm.* 16, gives Easter as a date for baptisms). Although Hippolytus's *Church Order* does not formally name Easter day as a date for baptism, its statements concerning the immediate preparations for baptism make sense only if they refer to the last days of what was later to become Holy Week. The observation that people "must keep watch all night and have readings and instructions given to them (that is, to those to be baptized)" clearly points to the baptismal rite as part of the Easter vigil (*Trad. apost.* 20, 48 ff. Botte). Asterius in the early fourth century speaks so much as a matter of course of the baptismal liturgy as an integral part of the festival of Easter night that the introduction of this liturgical custom must be ascribed to the third century according to him also (Asterius, *Hom* 11, which also makes the ritual use of light in the liturgy of baptism quite probable). In one of his homilies there is a hymn of praise to Easter night, which may rightly be described as a prefiguration of corresponding parts of the later Latin *Exsultet.* It gives authentic expression to the high place which the liturgy of the Easter vigil already occupied in the religious devotion of the early Christian Church (Ibid. Hom. 11, 4, and on this see H. J. Auf der Maur, "Der Osterlobpreis Asterios' des Sophisten" in *LJ* 12, 1962, 72-85): "O night, brighter than day! O night, more radiant than the sun! O night, whiter than snow! O night, more dazzling than lightning! O night, more shining than torches! O night, more precious than Paradise! O night, freed from darkness! O night, filled with light! O night, which banishes sleep! O night, which teaches us to watch with the angels! O night, terror of the demons! O night, longing of the year! O night, which brings the Bridegroom to the Church! O night, mother of the newly baptized!" The crown and conclusion of the vigil was formed by the eucharistic celebration of Easter Sunday, which in all probability was very early distinguished in the East by the *Trishagion* (Once again Asterius provides the earliest certain evidence in *Hom.* 16, 15; he says that on this night the newly baptized would sing for the first time the ὕμνος των πιστών. As Gregory of Nyssa also views the Trishagion in connexion with the solemn baptism, it was probably first used in the Easter liturgy. Gregory exhorts a catechumen to receive baptism so that he can sing it with the faithful; *De bapt. PG* 46, 461).

The third century also produced the first outline of a paschal season which then became the nucleus and the first ritual cycle, of the developing ecclesiastical year. For fifty days after Easter the faithful commemorated with joyful hearts the resurrection of the Lord and their own salvation which this bestowed; the joyful character of this pentecost was emphasized by refraining from fasting and from kneeling at prayer (Cf. Tertullian, *De cor.* 3; *De ieiun.* 14: "…quinquaginta exinde dies in omni exsultatione decurrimus." The custom of standing up to pray during Pentecost was sanctioned by the Council of Nicaea, canon 20). The development of a definite octave of Easter is perhaps to be assigned to the end of the third century or the beginning of the fourth, since Asterius takes it for granted as a well-established custom. Several of his extant homilies were pronounced on various days of Easter week to the newly-baptized, and consequently represent the earliest known exam-

ple of mystagogic catechetics. He also accepts the Sunday after Easter as the conclusion of the octave (Asterius, in the headings to *Homilies* 8, 11, 30, 31; cf. *Homily* 21 as a whole).

The final day of Pentecost at first had no festive character. A single reference indicates that in Spain, about the year 300, no uniform practice was followed regarding the final date of Eastertide: one group of Christians kept the fortieth day after Easter, while others kept the fiftieth. The Synod of Elvira disapproved of the former of these customs, and expressly declared that the fiftieth day after Easter was to be celebrated as the feast which ended the Easter cycle (Synod. Illib., can. 43). Since the feast of the Epiphany cannot be shown with certainty to have existed in the universal Church before the fourth century, its possible pre-Constantinian roots in Egypt must be discussed later.

The basis for the development of a third-century Christian calendar of feasts can be observed in the commemoration of the martyrs, which was already customary in the Church at that time. This practice sprang from the general honour paid to the dead which was also shown by the Christians to their own departed. On their private initiative, Christians often had the eucharistic oblation made for their dead at the grave-site on the anniversary of death, and customarily remembered them in their prayers. Tertullian repeatedly attests this custom at the beginning of the third century (Tertullian, *De cor.* 3; *De exhort. cast.* 11; *De monog.* 10). That such commemoration was emphatically held in honour of the Christian martyrs can easily be understood from the deep veneration which was very early shown them by the faithful. In the East a commemoration for the martyrs, as can be seen from the account of the martyrdom of St Polycarp of Smyrna, which in its concluding report speaks of the celebration on his "birthday," that is, the anniversary of his death (*Martyr, polyc.* 18; but see on this H. v. Campenhausen, *Bearbeitungen und Interpolationen des Polykarpmartyriums,* Heidelberg 1957, 3). In the West, such a development is perceptible from the sources only much later. The commemoration of a martyr, officially celebrated by the Church, is found in Rome in the first half of the third century: the *Depositio martyrum*, the Roman calendar, names the Roman Bishop Callistus (†222) as the earliest example of a martyr honoured in this way, perhaps because it was only then that the Roman community acquired its own cemeteries, and so obtained by this legal right the possibility of organizing a commemorative ceremony (*Depos. mart.,* 14 Oct., ed. H. Lietzmann, *Die drei ältesten Martyrologien,* Bonn, 2nd ed. 911; 4; cf. A. Stuiber, "Heidnische und christliche Gedächtniskalender" in *JbAC* 3 (1960), especially 30 ff).

For North Africa, Cyprian testifies to a cult of the martyrs, regulated by the Church, in which the *confessores* were also included. He ordered that the days of their deaths also should be carefully noted, so that the eucharistic sacrifice might be offered (Cyprian, *Ep.* 12, 2; 39, 3. On the whole question, see *Delehaye OC* 24-49) on those days, too, as well as on those of the martyrs. The giving of special prominence to the grave of a martyr by the architectural elaboration of his tomb probably occurred in places even in the third century, but only the *Memoria apostolorum* on the Appian Way outside Rome can be said with certainty to be a construction in that period, of a kind which was later generally called *martyrion* (See, in particular, F. W. Deichmann in *JdI* 72 (1957), 44-110 and, in general, A. Grabar, *Martyrium;* Paris 1946). There are reasons for thinking that the pre-Constantinian memorial under the *Confessio* in St Peter's which must be identified with the *Tropaion* on the Vatican Hill mentioned by the Roman presbyter Gaius, should also be mentioned here (See above). At all events, the organization of a cult of the martyrs as a whole becomes in the third century a matter for ecclesiastical authority, that is, of the bishop of the community, whose influence on the development of liturgical worship is here particularly evident.

Catechumenate and Baptism.

With the introduction of the catechumenate under ecclesiastical direction, as an institutional preparation for the reception of baptism, the growing Church at the end of the second century and beginning of the third accomplished one of its most important achievements and one very rich in consequences. Several causes were decisive in the Church's gradual construction of a carefully planned and organized course of instruction, containing provision for moral and religious training of those seeking baptism. The first impulse must have come from the considerable missionary success of the Church which developed towards the end of the second century. Such progress must have suggested the idea of an intensive probation of the pagan neophytes, if the previous level in the Christian communities was to be maintained. The urgent need for better instruction in the faith and deeper knowledge of it, was also increased by the threatening growth of propaganda from heretical groups, especially from the powerful Gnostic movement which penetrated even into the communities of the great Church. Finally, a systematic introduction on firm principles into the world of the Christian sacraments of initiation was found desirable, in view of the rival mystery cults, whose influence on pagan religious inquirers is not to be minimized.

In the development of the ecclesiastical institution of the catechumenate, certain earlier forms must be taken into account, which at first lay principally in the domain of private initiative. In particular, the first instruction in the faith must generally have been given on a private basis, but it was placed at a later stage under ecclesiastical supervision or made to depend on ecclesiastical authorization. Often an individual Christian was the first teacher of a pagan who had become acquainted with the new faith, and whose subsequent community membership was in question. Later it was the educated convert who came forward on his own initiative as a private teacher of the Christian religion, as the activity of Justin and of the earlier Alexandrian teachers shows; and who could then be taken into service by the Church (See above and Justin, *Apol.* 61, 1). These forms of private preparation of candidates for baptism were gradually incorporated by the Church, until by the beginning of the third century the organized institution was in existence, as it is found in the *Church Order* of Hippolytus. Concurrently, the development in North Africa was just reaching completion, as Tertullian testifies. These sources indicate the following general picture of the catechumenate in its standard form.

The admission of catechumens to instruction was controlled by the Church, who submitted the candidate for baptism to a strict examination, especially of his moral qualities. For this reason she first of all required that the candidate should name a Christian acquaintance as guarantor, who could vouch for the seriousness of his intention in conversion (*Trad. apost.* 16; 44 Botte). One may generally consider this guarantor to have been an apostolically active Christian, to whom the candidate for baptism owed his acquaintance with the Christian religion, and who now introduced him to the leader of the Christian community. There was as yet no special name for these witnesses in the catechumenate; they were not identical with a godfather in the later sense, since they undertook to guarantee only the worthiness of the candidate, and assumed no responsibility for his future manner of life. The acceptance into the catechumenate depended, moreover, on an examination of the candidate by the teacher of the catechumens, who might be a cleric or layman (Ibid.16 and 19. According to Origen, *Contra Cels.* 3, 51, it was still the Christians as a whole who had the duty of examining the candidates for baptism), and whose inquiry extended to the motives of the candidate's request, his marital status, profession, and social position (For what follows, cf. *Trad. apost.* 16 as a whole; 43-46 Botte). In the case of the slave of a Christian master, the latter's agreement and testimonial were required; and if this was unfavourable, the candidate was rejected. A number of professions were forbidden to the Christian of the third century, and therefore a candidate for the

catechumenate might have to abandon his previous trade. Those occupations in particular were incompatible with his future status as a Christian which stood in a direct or highly potential connexion with pagan worship, such as those of a sacrificial priest, temple guard, actor (Cyprian, *Ep.* 2 also includes a man who instructs actors; the original connexion with the worship of the gods was still vividly felt), astrologer, or magician, to which the Synod of Elvira added that of a charioteer in the circus (Canon 62). Service in the army or in the civil administration gave rise also to hesitation. Tertullian could not believe that soldiers or officials could avoid every situation in which participation in pagan sacrifice and worship would be required of them, or in which they would come into contact with the service of the temples, or have to employ violence or weapons against others (*De idol.* 17). Anyone who joined the army after being accepted into the catechumenate was, according to Hippolytus's *Church Order*, immediately to be excluded from further instruction. The Christian attitude to sexual offences in the candidate for baptism was quite uncompromising: every prostitute was to be rejected and, if need be, the marital situation was to be regularized before admission to instruction. It is clear that, in the investigation of all these questions, decisive weight was attributed to the testimony of the guarantor. The precision of all these regulations shows the mentality of a Church conscious of her responsibility, who took her moral ideal seriously and courageously laid down clear conditions for those who wanted to become her members.

A favourable outcome of this initial inquiry opened the way to the catechumenate, into which the candidate was then received by a special rite, the marking with the sign of the cross; and thus became a *Christianus* or *catechumenus* (Cf. F. J. Dölger, *Sphragis* (Paderborn 1911), 177; Tertullian, *De idol.* 1 and *De cor.* 2. In North Africa the catechumens were also known as *audientes* or *auditores*, as opposed to the *fideles*, the baptized: Cyprian, *Ep.* 29). A detailed set of rules regulated the life and activity of the catechumens (In Hippolytus, *Trad. apost.* 17-20 (46-49 Botte); B. Capelle has attempted a reconstruction of the Latin translation in *RThAM* 5; 1933, 136-9). They were placed under the *doctor audientium* for three years, though this period could be shortened in particularly zealous individual cases (*Trad. apost.* 17; the Synod of Elvira; canon 42; lays down two years). Their time was now occupied with special instruction, introducing them to the world of Christian belief, and with practical training in Christian spiritual life. The teaching was based on Holy Scripture, with which attendance at the service of the Word and the homily also made them more familiar. Every lesson ended with a prayer and imposition of hands by the catechist (*Trad. apost.* 18 and 19). The three-year period of the catechumenate was concluded by yet another examination of the candidate for baptism extending over his moral and religious performance during that time. The examination took place a few weeks before Easter, the principal date for baptism, and was conducted probably by the bishop. Once again a guarantor was required to appear for the candidate (Cf. E. Dick in *ZKTh* 63 (1939), 25-27); and the latter's performance was measured by "good works," among which visiting the sick and respect for the widows were expressly included (*Trad. apost.* 20, 1). An eminent form of excellence in a catechumen was arrest for Christ's sake; and if thereby death was suffered without baptism, the catechumen was nevertheless saved, because he had been "baptized in his own blood" (Ibid. 19, 2; Tertullian, *De bapt.* 12 and 14; Cyprian, *Ep.* 57, 4; 73, 21 and 23).

A satisfactory outcome of the second inquiry led to the second and final stage of the catechumenate, which served directly to prepare the candidates, now called *electi*, for the reception of baptism soon to ensue. This stage was characterized by a greater use of liturgical prayers of purification or exorcisms, intended to heal and liberate more completely from Satanic power (Cf. A. Stenzel, *Die Taufe, eine genetische Erklärung der Taufliturgie* (Innsbruck 1958), 62 and 72). The bishop as leader of the community came even more prominently into the foreground. As the day of baptism approached, he tested once more by an exorcism the purity of the candidates and excluded the

energumens. He prayed with them on the Saturday before baptism, laid his hands on them, and blessed their senses with the sign of the cross (*Trad. apost.* 20, 3, 5; 48 f. Botte). Perhaps the beginning of this second stage of the catechumenate was also the special time for the first renunciation of Satan, of which Tertullian speaks (*De cor.* 3). He also mentions that the weeks of final preparation included more intense practices of penance and frequent prayer and fasting (*De bapt.* 20), which emphasized the importance of the event which was to come. A baptismal fast was imposed on the candidates on the Friday and Saturday preceding the Sunday when baptism was to be conferred (*Trad. apost.* 20, 5). In addition to this preparation of a liturgical kind, Hippolytus also mentions as a special task of the *electi* that "they are to hear the Gospel" (Ibid. 20, 2). This comment probably means that they were now strictly obliged, and no longer merely authorized, to be present at the service of the Word at the celebration of the Eucharist, and there to hear readings from the Gospels and the homily (Cf. A. Stenzel. *op. cit.* 64 ff).

The act of baptism was enclosed in the impressive framework of a nightlong vigil, which time was occupied with readings and final liturgical instructions. It was chiefly during the Easter vigil that the greatest number of candidates were baptized; otherwise it was during a Saturday to Sunday night that the ceremony took place, if a special reason required a different date for baptism. The break of day, signalized by the crowing of a cock, brought the beginning of the baptismal action proper (*Trad. apost.* 21, 1; 49 Botte). The candidates had set aside their clothes and all ornaments, and advanced to a font with a flow of clear water. The bishop had first of all consecrated the oils to be used at the baptism: the oil of thanksgiving and the oil of exorcism, which were each held ready by a deacon on the left and right of the priest. The sequence of candidates was prescribed as follows: children were baptized first (Infant baptism prevailed everywhere from the end of the second century, though hesitation was expressed on occasion, cf. K. Aland*, Die Säuglingstaufe im Neuen Testament und in der alten Kirche;* Munich 1961), with their parents or perhaps a member of their family giving the answers to the priest's questions for them; the men came next and then the women. The priest required each candidate individually to say the words of baptismal renunciation, turning to the West as he did so: "I renounce you, Satan and all your pomp and all your works" (*Trad. apost.* 21, 6; 50 Botte). Then followed the anointing with the oil of exorcism, together with the formula: "Every evil spirit go forth from you." Thereupon the candidate went to the priest by the font, and a deacon accompanied him into the water. The officiating bishop or priest laid his hands on him, and asked in sequence three questions regarding his belief (Ibid. 21, 8-12): "Do you believe in God the Father almighty? Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God who was born by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, died, and was buried, who rose alive from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of the Father, who will come again to judge the living and the dead? Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, Holy Church, and the resurrection of the flesh?" To each question the candidate answered "I believe"; and as he did so the officiant poured water over his head (For North Africa, cf. Tertullian, *De cor.* 3; *Adv. Prax.* 26. For the accompanying anointing, *De bapt.* 7, 1). A priest then anointed him with the oil of thanksgiving: "I anoint you with the oil in the name of Jesus Christ"; the baptized person now put his clothes on again, and after the end of the baptisms all went from the baptistery into the church. There a new rite was carried out with each of the baptized individually, the *consignatio* (*Trad. apost.* 22; 52 f. Botte), performed by the bishop. The latter placed his hand on the baptized person, and said a prayer as he did so, imploring the grace of God for the newly-baptized that he might serve God according to his will. Then he anointed the head of each with oil, made the sign of the cross on their brows, and gave each a kiss with the words: "The Lord be with you"; whereupon the confirmed person answered: "And with thy spirit." Then the

newly-baptized joined the congregation of the faithful and celebrated the Eucharist with them for the first time.

The foregoing account of the catechumenate and the baptismal liturgy are derived from the *Church Order*, or *Liturgy*, of Hippolytus, a document which is by far the most advanced ritually and, one might say, rubricistically, in the period. Since this is now considered to have been an ideal liturgical plan, originating in the East and suitable for adoption by any community, it can no longer be viewed with complete confidence as the typical baptismal liturgy of the Roman church (Cf. J. M. Hanssens, *La liturgie d'Hippolyte;* Rome 1959). The only informative material on the subject apart from this source and in any way comparable to it, concerns the North African church. Tertullian's occasional, but nevertheless valuable observations about the baptismal liturgy and practice of his country show points both of agreement and difference with those described above. The agreement is found mostly in factual details: chiefly in the existence of the catechumenate, the form of administration of baptism, and the way baptismal symbolism was employed. The differences consist less in the absence of particular features than in a different kind of assessment of the significance of preparation for, and administration of this sacrament. There seems to be no second stage in Tertullian's version of the catechumenate; the days of immediate preparation before the date of baptism are not described in detail ; the special work *De baptismo* gives not a single text of the prayers used in the administration of baptism: all of these elements being necessarily related to a stage of organization of the ritual which had not yet been reached in North Africa. On the other hand, in the catechumenate of North Africa, the moral and ascetical training of the candidates had clearly greater weight than their introduction to a knowledge of the faith; the demand made on their moral quality was very high. The rejection of failures or dubious candidates was inexorable. The "juridical" evaluation of the act of baptism was especially marked; the latter appears as the "sacramentum militiae" or "sacramentum fidei," as the "pactio fidei" and "sponsio salutis"; a binding pact is concluded with the Church, which enrols the baptized in the "militia Christi" (Cf. Tertullian, *De cor.* 11; *De spect.* 24; *Ad mart.* 3; *De bapt.* 6; *De pud.* 9. On the whole question cf. F. J. Dölger, "Sacramentum militiae" in *AuC*, II; 1930, 268-80. Fundamentally the *pactio* is also present for Hippolytus in the baptismal renunciation).

Broadly speaking, at the beginning of the third century the early Christian Church as a whole had laid down the essential pattern regulating baptism which remained in force for the two centuries that followed. That pattern was still capable of completion, and underwent considerable modifications when peace came, but these only emphasized the quality of the foundations.

The Celebration of the Eucharist.

In order to be able to survey more clearly and better estimate the development reached in the eucharistic liturgy by the end of the third century, it is well to start with the description given by Justin Martyr about the year 150. He first sketches the course of the ritual linked to baptism, then speaks of the common ceremony to which all came "on the day named after the sun" (*Apol.* 65 and 67). From this double description, it can be seen that the service of readings which opened the liturgy had kept its place on Sundays: "The memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read aloud"; the reading is followed by the homily of the man presiding; and then come the prayers in common "for ourselves, for the newly-baptized and for all others wherever they may be." The reference to prayer for the newly-baptized permits the supposition that it was possible to insert prayers at this point for some special purpose, their formulation being left to the leader. The service of prayers and readings was terminated by the kiss of peace (Only mentioned in c. 65). The second part of the ceremony stands out in clear contrast: it began with the

bringing in of the sacrificial gifts though it is not said who brought the bread and the chalice with wine and water to the president. The essential element of this part is the prayer of the man presiding, which is called εὐχαριστία, and in which he sends up praise and honour to the Father of all things through the name of the Son and the Holy Spirit, and gives thanks that the faithful had been given those gifts. The whole congregation taking part confirmed and ratified the εὐχαριστία of the president with the Hebrew word "Amen." The consecrated eucharistic gifts were then given by the deacons to all present, to be consumed, and portions were also taken to those who were absent. Justin emphasizes that only the baptized could receive this food, which was itself called Eucharist (Ibid. c. 66).

Two features stand out in an especially clear manner in this eucharistic liturgy; first of all, there was its social character, drawing all the participating faithful into the actual liturgical action; they ratify expressly the thanksgiving uttered by the leader, and also share as a whole in the eucharistic meal. Moreover, the eucharistic great prayer is primarily one of thanksgiving. Justin insists on this idea in other contexts too, as other writers of the second and third centuries do after him (Justin, *Dial.* 41, I; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 4, 17, 5; Origen, *Contra Cels.* 8, 57), so that the word "eucharistia" could now become a technical term for the Christian celebration of Mass (Cf. T. Schermann in *Philologus* 69; 1910, 375-410). The absence of explicit mention in Justin's *Apology* of the idea of sacrifice in the eucharistic liturgy may be due to the fact that he does not quote a complete text of the prayer. The concept was by no means unknown to him (*Dial.* 41, 2; 117,2 and 3), and εὐχαριστία could certainly include for him the idea of sacrifice (Cf. T. Schermann, *loc. cit.* 385ff. On the sacrificial character of the Eucharist before Justin's time, see J. A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, I, 25 ff.; New York 1951). Irenaeus speaks more clearly on this point, emphasizing especially that the gifts of bread and wine, which by God's word have become Christ's flesh and blood, represent the pure sacrifice of the New Covenant (*Adv. haer.* 4, 18,1; 3, 18, 1 and 19, 3).

The elaboration which the eucharistic liturgy underwent between the period of the Apologists and the first half of the third century is again most clearly revealed by Hippolytus's *Church Order*, which also records a double description of the celebration of Mass, explaining firstly how it is carried out in connexion with the consecration of a bishop, and secondly how the Christian community celebrates Mass with its newly-baptized members (*Trad. apost.* 4 and 23; 30-33 and 53-56 Botte). The chief value of this source lies in the formulary of the eucharistic great prayer, of which a text is provided in full. The first of these two Mass liturgies starts with the introduction of the sacrificial offering carried by the deacons; the bishop, with the presbyters, stretches out his hands over the offering as he begins the great prayer of thanksgiving; the latter is introduced by a prayer of versicle and response between him and the whole congregation, just as it is found to the present day in the liturgy of the Roman Mass. The thanksgiving of the great prayer is addressed to the Father "through his beloved Son Jesus Christ," whom he has sent as saviour and redeemer. Christ is the Father's Word through which he created all things; he took flesh in the womb of the Virgin and was born of the Holy Spirit and of her; he took suffering freely upon himself to break the power of death and of Satan, and made known his resurrection. The congregation is following his example and command at the Last Supper (here the words of Christ are quoted), when it is mindful of his death and resurrection, offers to the Father the bread and the chalice, and gives thanks to him for considering them worthy to stand in his service. The bishop also prays that the Father may send down his Holy Spirit on the sacrificial offering of Holy Church, so that they may strengthen their faith in truth, "so that we may praise and glorify thee through thy Son Jesus Christ, through whom is glory and honour to thee, the Father and the Son with the Holy Spirit, in thy Holy Church, now and for ever." The Amen of the whole congregation here, too, ratifies the bishop's prayer (Ibid. 4; 33 Botte).

Just as Hippolytus's liturgy of the Mass was intended as a guide, which the leader of a community could keep to a greater or less extent, so too the eucharistic great prayer, in particular, was not intended as an obligatory text for all churches and all purposes, but as a model formulary, the structure and fundamental ideas of which could be retained, but which might be varied and developed in detail (Hippolytus says quite plainly, *Trad. apost.* 10; 41 Botte, that the texts he provides were not to be learnt by heart by the bishop: "Each must pray according to his capacities"). The bishop could therefore still on occasion freely create and shape the text, so that various types of eucharistic prayers of thanksgiving were possible for the celebration of Mass in the third century; and they can still be traced in the formularies which have been preserved in more recent liturgies. It is not possible to decide whether the *Trishagion* was already present in some of them. Hippolytus does not mention it; and the way in which Tertullian, and before him Clement of Rome, speak of the liturgy does not require the assumption that the *Trishagion* was always used in the Mass at that time (Cf. W. C. van Unnik, "1 Clement and the 'Sanctus'" in *VigChr* 5; 1951, 204-48). But the "form of Mass" presented by Hippolytus can be regarded as a basic outline of the eucharistic liturgy as it was generally celebrated in the Church in those days: it is a liturgy still quite clear in structure and without much detailed elaboration. But when Pope Anicetus could invite Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna, during the latter's visit to Rome about the year 154, to celebrate the liturgy in the Roman community, and when in the Syrian *Didascalia*, about a hundred years later, it is said that an episcopal guest should be given the honour of "offering the sacrifice" (*Euseb. HE* 5, 24; *Didasc. apost.* 2, 58, 3; 168 Funk), such evidence presupposes in different geographical regions a regulation of the ritual of the Mass which was uniform at least in its main features.

Occasional observations by other writers confirm and complete this picture of the eucharistic liturgy drawn by Hippolytus. Tertullian's writings in particular show on many points the identity or similarity of the African Mass liturgy with it (See on this E. Dekkers, *Tertullianus en de geschiedenis der liturgie;* Brussels-Amsterdam 1947, 49-67). In Tertullian's record also bread and wine were the gifts which the faithful provided for the sacrifice (*De monog.* 10; *De exhort. cast.* 11; and even clearer Cyprian, *De op. et eleem.* 15). The eucharistic great prayer was addressed to the Father "per Christum Jesum" (*Adv. Marc.* 4, 9); but Tertullian does not expressly quote from it, though many echoes can be detected in his style and thought. He explicitly stresses that Christ, with the words "Hoc est corpus meum," makes the bread his body (Ibid. 4, 40); but he does not clarify the position of the Our Father and the place of the kiss of peace in the Mass liturgy. His remarks about the communion ritual are more informative (Cf. E. Dekkers, *op. cit.* 59ff): the Eucharist was received under both kinds, as in Hippolytus's rite (Tertullian, *De resurrect. carn.* 8; *Trad apost.* 23; 54 Botte); but while the latter cites the formulas with which the species were distributed by the bishop or priests to the faithful, that is "panis caelestis in Christo Jesu," "In Deo patri omnipotenti," and "Et Domino Jesu Christo et spiritu sancto et sancta ecclesia," with a confirmatory "Amen" from the communicant, Tertullian mentions only the Amen, which certainly presupposes that there was some preceding formula (*De Spect.* 25). He demanded reverent care in handling the consecrated bread and wine; the faithful could take the former home, in order to receive the Eucharist privately when they were prevented from attending divine worship (*De cor.* 3; *De orat.* 19; *Ad uxor.* 2, 5). Tertullian also implies the existence of a formula for dismissing the congregation when he speaks of the people being sent away at the end of the eucharistic ceremony (*De an.* 9, 4, and cf. F. J. Dölger in *AuC*, V; 1940, 108-17). He does not name Sunday as the day preferred for celebrating the Eucharist, but he does mention Wednesday and Friday as days of the Stations, together with Mass (*De orat.* 19). That Mass was also celebrated at the funeral and on the anniversary of the death of one of the faithful has already been made clear. Since the second century, the time for

Mass had been in the early morning before sunrise, as Tertullian clearly testifies (*De cor.* 3; *De orat.* 19; *De fuga* 14; cf. also *Didasc. apost.* 2, 60, 2; 172 Funk). Therefore, it was not linked, or was no longer linked, with the agape, which persisted as an independent meal.

The first beginnings of the so-called "discipline of the secret" can also be traced in the third century. This is a modern term for the early Christian custom of keeping secret from the uninitiated the most important actions and texts of liturgical worship, especially baptism, the Eucharist, the Our Father, and the creed, or of referring to them in the presence of unauthorized persons in veiled terms only. In particular, the nature and form of liturgical initiation were to be kept secret, and "discovered" solely through the initiation itself. As this attitude took shape slowly, its beginnings cannot be discerned with complete clarity. It is scarcely possible to refer to Tertullian for elucidation since his occasional relevant remarks are obscure, and he moreover speaks ironically of the passion for secrets in the pagan mystery cults, in a manner which would hardly have been possible if the North African Christians had observed a similar custom in his time (The references usually given are to *Apol.* 7, 6; *Ad ux.* 2, 5; *Adv. Val.* 1. On this see E.Dekkers, *op. cit.* 80-82). But the attitude is apparent in Hippolytus's *Church Order*, according to which an unbeliever was not to be instructed about baptism and the Eucharist before he had been baptized or admitted to communion (*Trad. apost.* 23; 56 Botte, with variants. This is so although Hippolytus himself speaks in detail of baptism and the Eucharist). The use of the language of the mysteries was also probably in conformity with a growing discipline of the secret (Cf. *Protr.* 12, 118-20; *Paed.* 1, 5, 26). Similary, in Origen, formulas are found which may be interpreted as echoes of this thinking when he refrains from disclosing details to his hearers concerning the Eucharist, or when he tells the future candidate for baptism that he would later "be initiated into the exalted mysteries already known to those for whom such knowledge is appropriate" (Origen, *In Lev. hom.* 9, 10; In *Iesu Nave hom.* 4, 1:" si... initiatus fueris venerandis illis magnificisque sacramentis, quae norunt illi, quos nosse fas est."). Since most of this evidence comes from the East, the place of origin of the discipline of the secret is perhaps thus indicated. It attained its real force only in the fourth and early fifth centuries; consequently, its deeper motives and relation to the pagan mysteries will be discussed in greater detail later.

The Beginnings of Christian Art.

A Christianity which had increased in numbers and self-awareness was provided for the first time in the third century with the possibility of engaging in artistic activity inspired by a Christian spirit, for only the longer periods of peace coming at that time afforded the special conditions required. Christian art was, however, initially opposed by a trend of considerable strength within the Church itself that stood in irreconcilable opposition to artistic activity as such (Cf. H. Koch, *Die altchristliche Bilderfrage nach den literarischen Quellen,* Göttingen 1917; W. Elliger, *Die Stellung aer alten Christen zu den Bildern;* Leipzig 1930). The Old Testament prohibition of images (in Exod 20:4) was influential in this respect. Origen, for example, refers to it in saying that the Christians abominated temples, altars and images (*Contra Cels.* 7, 64). The pure spirituality of the Christian God was also felt by Minucius Felix to be an obstacle that obstructed worshipping Him in a special building (*Octavius* 32). The close connexion between the art of antiquity and pagan worship was in the forefront of Tertullian's mind when he radically rejected Christian activity in this domain. The devil alone, he says, had sent sculptors and painters into the world (*De idol.* 3). Even at the beginning of the fourth century the synod of Elvira decreed for the territories of the Spanish bishops that: "Images are forbidden in Church; what is honoured and worshipped must not be represented on the walls" (Synod. Illib., can. 36). This hostile tendency to art and images could not, however, prevail over the positive trend which succeeded in making an important advance in the

third century. Tertullian knew Christians who possessed drinking vessels bearing the image of the Good Shepherd (*De pud.* 7, 10). Clement of Alexandria, for all his reserve regarding a representation of God, nevertheless suggested to the Christians of his day some symbols which their signet rings might bear, as the dove, fish, ship, anchor, and fisherman (*Paed.* 3, 59, 2, and cf. L. Eizenhöfer in *JbAC* 3; I960, 51-69). Giving due regard to such a favourable attitude towards art in the private domain, it was nevertheless the needs of liturgical worship in the stronger communities of the Church as a whole which finally obtained for art an official recognition by ecclesiastical authority. Another contributory factor was the inclination of the Christians, surrounded by a widespread pagan cult of the dead, to express in artistic form on the tombs of their dead whatever their faith proclaimed to them concerning death and resurrection.

First of all, the desire must have developed among the Christians for a place of worship of their own where the worthy celebration of the eucharistic liturgy would be possible, when the size of the congregations made this increasingly difficult in private houses. The written evidence for the existence of specifically Christian places of worship appears at the beginning of the third century (Cf. J. R. Laurin, "Le lieu du culte chrétien d'après les documents littéraires primitifs" in *AnGr* 70; 1954, 39-57, and W. Rordorf in *ZNW* 55; 1964, 110-28). About 205 a flood in Edessa in the East of Syria destroyed, among other things, "the temple of the Christians" (*Chronicum Edessenum* in *CSCO* 4, 3). Hippolytus reports in his commentary on Daniel that the enemies of the Christians forced their way "into the house of God," just when the faithful had gathered there for prayer (*In Dan. comm.* 1, 20). About the same time, Tertullian spoke of the "house of our dove," in a context which most probably indicates that the Christian place of worship in Carthage was referred to (*Adv. Val.* 3, and cf. F. J. Dölger in *AuC*, II; 1930, 41-56. See also Tertullian, *De fuga* 3; *De idol.* 7). For the second half of the third century, evidence is available of Christian "churches" in Palestine (*Euseb. HE* 7, 15, 1-5) and Sicily (Porphyry, *Fragment* 76). About the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth, the Christian churches had become very numerous. Eusebius indicates that the earlier places where the Christians had worshipped, prior to Diocletian, were everywhere replaced by more spacious buildings (*HE* 8, 1, 5). Christian places of worship were destroyed in Bithynia, Galatia and Pontus, Thracia, Africa, Spain, and Gaul, as a result of the Diocletian decree of persecution (See J. R. Laurin, " Le lieu du culte chrétien, d'après les documents littéraires primitifs" in *Studi sulla chiesa antica;* Rome 1954, 55f). In contrast to these abundant and plain statements of the written sources, archaeological findings have not until now been rich. It has of course been thought, that the remains of older Roman houses found during excavations under some of the most ancient titular churches of Rome, such as San Clemente, St Pudenziana, St Martino ai Monti and others, are the remnants of the pre-Constantinian *domus ecclesiae* in each case (Cf. J. P. Kirsch in the Italian edition of *Fliche-Martin,* III, 537ff); but definite proof of the liturgical character of these earlier buildings has not been discovered (Cf. A. M. Schneider, "Die ältesten Denkmäler der römischen Kirche" in *Festschrift der Akad. der Wiss. Göttingen*, II; Göttingen 1951, 195-7). An undoubted example of a pre-Constantinian Christian church has, however, been brought to light by excavations in Dura-Europos, a Roman frontier garrison on the west bank of the Euphrates, built about 232. The Christian character of this private house, adapted for use in divine worship, is clearly demonstrated by the frescoes of a room which was perhaps used as a baptistery: they depict the Good Shepherd among tombs, the healing of the man born lame, and Christ walking on the water (See illustrations 42-51 in Hopkins-Baur, *Christian Church at Dura-Europos;* New Haven 1934).

New possibilities of Christian artistic activity presented themselves when the Church in the first half of the third century came into possession of her own burial-grounds (Cf. F. de Visscher, "Le régime juridique des plus anciens cimetières chrétiens à Rome" in *AnBoll;* 9, 1951, 39-54), which were at first called cemeteries. In Rome from the ninth century onwards these were called the cata-

combs; this appellation deriving from the name of the field *in* or *ad catacumbas*, at the cemetery of St Sebastian on the Appian Way. The *cemeterium Callisti* must be considered the earliest purely Christian underground burial-place; it stood on land which Bishop Zephyrinus (199-217) donated to the Roman Church from his private estate, and the administration of which he entrusted to the deacon Callistus. The wall and ceiling surfaces in the grave-chambers of the catacombs were furnished with pictures. The painters were naturally dependent in form on contemporary secular art, but their choice of themes was mostly determined by Holy Scripture or other Christian sources. Among the earliest subjects were, for instance, Daniel between two lions in the den, Noah in the Ark, Jonah swallowed by the fish and cast out again, or the New Testament scene of the resurrection of Lazarus (Cf. J. Kollwitz, *Das Christusbild des 3. Jahrhunderts;* Münster 1953, 7). They must all be understood as references to the biblical accounts of the saving of a man from deadly peril, and consequently aim at proclaiming the Christian hope of entering into an eternal life, safe from all peril and threat from the powers of evil. Proceeding from the same current of ideas is the figure of the Good Shepherd, which is found in the early catacomb paintings and in epitaphs (Ibid. 11, with illustrations 2-4). In this instance Christ is seen as the saviour who, as shepherd, brings life and, as teacher, brings true knowledge of God. Christ appears also as a teacher in the early Christian carvings on sarcophagi (F. Gerke, *Christus in der spätantiken Plastik* (Berlin 1940), 7-14). The image of Christ in pre-Constantinian times was enriched by a representation in mosaics in a mausoleum under St Peter's in Rome. These show the Christ-Helios journeying from Hades to the Father (O. Perler, *Die Mosaiken der Juliergruft im Vatikan;* Fribourg 1953). And so the third century had already in various ways laid the foundations of the flourishing art of the Christian empire in the following century.

Spiritual Life and Morality in the Communities of the Third Century.

If the sources are studied for the essential concepts and convictions which characterized the piety of the third century, two ideas and realities stand out, namely baptism and martyrdom. All writers of the period, who discuss in any detail Christian perfection and its actual realization, speak so insistently of baptism as the well-spring, and of readiness for martyrdom as the touchstone of the genuineness of a Christian way of life, that devotion to baptism and to martyrdom must be generally considered to be the fundamental twofold attitude to religious life in the early Christian Church.

Baptismal Spirituality.

The first attempts of any magnitude to develop a theory of Christian perfection were undertaken by the early teachers of Alexandria. Clement of Alexandria tried to trace such a theory in the portrait of the Christian Gnostic which he sketched in the *Paedagogus* and the *Stromata*. There is no mistaking, in his account, the fundamental importance, theoretical and practical, which baptism held for perfection (W. Volker, *Der wahre Gnostiker nach Clemens Alexandrinus* (Berlin 1952), 147-53). Using the terminology of the pagan mystery-cults, but in no way abandoning his conviction of the reality of the Christian sacrament of baptism, he describes its profoundly transforming effects: it brings complete forgiveness of sins, and liberates from the dark power of the demons (*Paed.* 1, 26, 2; 1, 30, 1; *Strom.* 4, 26, 5; *Exc. ex Theod.* 77, 3). In its positive aspect, it is a rebirth to new life in the kingdom of the Father, and so grants immortality; and, by the infusion of the

Holy Spirit into the soul, gives also true knowledge of God, or *gnosis* (*Paed.* 2, 118, 5; 1, 28, 1; *Protr.* 117, 4). Essentially, this gnosis is imparted to every baptized person, not merely to *pneumatikoi*, or spiritually endowed persons; and by it the grace-given root of all perfection is in principle implanted; this must grow throughout life (*Paed.* 1, 25, 1; *Strom.* 7, 14, 1; 4, 160, 3). For, even if the gnosis received in baptism cannot increase in its essential nature, it can nevertheless grow in extent within the baptized person; and above all it must stand the test in the struggle with evil (*Paed.* 1, 26, 3; *Protr.* 116, 4). In baptism there is a real, not merely a symbolic, repetition for the Christian of what baptism in the Jordan once effected for Christ. Consequently, the life which springs from baptismal grace is an imitation of Christ, with whom the believer is indissolubly united at his baptism (*Paed.* 1, 25, 3; *Strom.* 7, 14, 1).

What is expressed by Clement quite plainly, but with some reserve and a certain formulary concision, is developed by Origen in rich abundance. This is particularly evident in his homilies, in an ardent metaphorical style with insistent kerygmatic appeal. It was in this way that Origen became the most zealous preacher of a deep-felt baptismal spirituality for the early Christian Church generally. He lays the foundation first of all in a theology of baptism, which bases all exhortations to live in accordance with baptismal grace on the supernatural sacramental event which occurs at baptism. He prefers to explain that event by reference to those principal Old Testament prefigurations of baptism which were to play such an important part in the mystagogical preaching of the fourth century (Cf. J. Danielou, "Traversée de la mer rouge et baptême aux premiers siècles" in *RSR* 33; 1946, 402-30, and F. J. Dölger, "Der Durchzug durch den Jordan als Sinnbild der christlichen Taufe" in *AuC*, II; 1930, 70-79). He regards the whole path of the person seeking baptism from his first wish for instruction in the Christian faith through his acceptance into the catechumenate and his introduction to the law of God, to the day when in the midst of the priests he is initiated into the mysteries of baptism as prefigured in the exodus of Israel from Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the stages of the wandering in the desert and the crossing of the Jordan, after which the Promised Land is opened to him. Jesus instead of Moses is his guide on his further paths (*In Iesu Nave hom.* 4, 1; cf. also *hom.* 5, 1; *In Num. hom.* 26, 4; *In Ioann. comm.* 6, 42, 220). Just as Israel was then freed from the power of Pharaoh, so the baptized person is liberated from the dominion of Satan; and just as Israel journeyed through the wilderness, guided by the column of cloud and fire, so also the believer, who with Christ passed through Christ's death and burial, will rise on the third day through baptism in water and the Holy Spirit; and God will henceforth lead him on the way of salvation: "You become healthy, sound, and cleansed from the stains of sin; you come out a new man, ready to sing the new song" (Cf. the whole fifth *Hom, in Exod.*, especially 1, 2, and 5). By this act the Christian is summoned to follow Christ, the new guide who has been given him in baptism. Before, he was an *imitator diaboli;* now in baptism he has found a new example to follow: the Logos with whom and in whom he sets out on the paths of his spiritual life which is to lead him to the Father (*In Num. hom.* 12, 4; *In Exod. hom.* 10, 4; *In Gen. hom.* 2, 5). Baptism is, therefore, the beginning of this new life, since its life-giving power has its source in the death of Christ on the cross, and the life of baptismal grace derives ultimately from the crucifixion (*In Gen. hom.* 13, 4; *In Exod. hom.* 11, 2).

Origen bases his doctrine of the spiritual life as a baptismal one on these truths of the faith concerning the nature of baptism. That element which received its foundation by what happened sacramentally in baptism, must further develop; the new life then received must prosper in the spiritual life of the soul, but can do so only if it is renewed daily (*In Rom. comm.* 5, 8). The Logos must be able to act in the soul of the baptized person like a vine, whose grapes reach their full sweetness gradually (*In Cant. comm.* 2). The Logos already exercises this purifying power in a soul which is preparing for baptism; the whole ascetical struggle of the catechumen to train him-

self in the life of Christian virtue receives its effectiveness from the anticipatory radiance of the grace of baptism (*In Ioann. comm.* 32, 7; *In Iesu Nave hom.* 4, 1; *In Lev. hom.* 6, 2). But the spiritual life receives its accomplishment and stamp after baptism, and from the sacrament. The *apotaxis* of Satan pronounced in baptism must be constantly repeated if the grace of baptism is to be preserved. Its corresponding *syntage,* or covenant with Christ, imposes an obligation of absolute fidelity to the baptismal vow, which some keep without faltering, but which others break and so bear with them the shame of Egypt (In *Exod. hom.* 8, 4; *In Iesu Nave hom.* 26, 2; 4, 2). The task set every Christian in his religious life can be expressed, according to Origen, in the concise phrase τηρεῖν το βάπτισμα, that is to preserve baptismal grace (*In Ier. hom.* 2, 3). But the obligation of fidelity to the baptismal vow does not derive simply from the renunciation of Satan's world. By baptism Christ becomes the bridegroom and spouse of the soul, and marital fidelity must be preserved; a return to the impure spirits of the pagan period of life would break this fidelity and sully the white robe of baptism (*In Exod. hom.* 8, 5; 1, 5; 11, 7). Fidelity to baptismal vows and to the divine espousals can be kept solely by a perpetual fight against the powers of the evil one. In this combat the baptized persons follow once more the example of their master, who was likewise tempted after his baptism in the Jordan; and so the daily practice of a baptismal spirituality is an actual imitation of Christ (*In Exod. hom.* 2, 3; 1, 5). Viewed positively, the fidelity to baptism ensured by perpetual combat leads to the abundant development of all virtues. Two attitudes, which early Christianity held in particularly high esteem grow from a baptismal piety truly lived. These are genuine love of one's neighbour and readiness for martyrdom. Brotherly love is a transmission of the Father's love for us, which we receive in baptism: we imitate him when we give our love to our neighbour (*In Cant. comm.* 2; *In Ioann. comm.* 20, 17). And, further, the Spirit conferred by baptism bestows the courage to suffer (*Contra Cels.* 6, 44): baptismal renunciation includes a willingness for martyrdom (*Protr.* 11, 107).

In their doctrine of baptismal spirituality as the development of the grace of baptism and the imitation of Christ's example, the Alexandrian teachers were not framing the demands of an esoteric teaching on perfection addressed merely to an *élite.* Indeed, because in this context Origen was speaking to all Christians, he was therefore aware of the failure of many in the face of this lofty religious ideal (*In Rom. comm.* 5, 8; *In Num. hom.* 5, 1); and that is precisely what led him to preach repeatedly on a right understanding of the mystery of Christian baptism, and to call for its realization in daily life. Other pastors and writers of the third century speak in a similar way to the Alexandrians, if not with equal force. For Cyprian, Christian life is the continuance of the *renuntiatio saeculi*, which, once expressed in baptism, must now be made effective by following our Lord when God tests the Christians through persecution (*Ep.* 13, 5, 3). Cyprian's biographer Pontius reveals the same notion of Christian life as the carrying out of the obligations of baptism by not beginning his description of the bishop's life until the latter's baptism: "The deeds of a man of God should be counted only from the moment when he was born to God." He expressly emphasizes that Cyprian always preached during persecution that Christians must prove themselves worthy of their birth, and that a man born again of God could not belie his origin (Pontius, *Vita Cypr.* 2: "hominis dei facta non debent aliunde numerari, nisi ex quo deo natus est"; ibid. 9 "quos renatos per deum constat, degeneres esse non congruit."). It was in accord with this judgment on the importance of baptism for the daily religious life of the Christian that such care was taken by the leaders of the Christian communities to provide a preparation for baptism in the catechumenate, and to organize a solemn celebration of it. The whole impact of initiation into the mysteries of the Christian faith was to work itself out in a religious life which never forgot the radiance of that hour nor the gravity of the solemn baptismal vow. When Christian art, in the previously-mentioned baptistery of the house church of Dura-Europos, represented the Good Shepherd among his sheep (See

above), (signifying in this case Christ among the newly baptized Christians), it sought to inculcate forcefully in the faithful the importance and meaning of the baptismal sacrament.

Devotion to Martyrdom.

Whereas the preaching of baptismal spirituality was to increase in extent and depth in the spiritual doctrines of the fourth century, devotion to martyrdom as the second fundamental attitude in the striving for Christian perfection reached its height in the third. Closely linked with the idea of the imitation of Christ, esteem for martyrdom as the summit and crown of all perfection became the most widespread, and ascetically fruitful, watchword in the world of early Christian spirituality. At the end of the second century, when the Church increasingly made it a theme of preaching to her own members, there was already a rich tradition on which to build. With Ignatius of Antioch the connexion between martyrdom and imitation of Christ was already clearly grasped and forcefully expressed: a man is a true disciple of Christ only if he dies for Christ's sake; anyone who does not accept death willingly with eyes fixed "on his Passion" has not the life of Christ within him (Ignatius, *Ad Rom.* 4, 2; *Ad Magn.* 5, 2; cf. *Ad Rom.* 6, 3). The recorder of the martyrdom of Bishop Polycarp of Smyrna expressly drew a parallel between Christ and the martyr; he saw the justification for the honour which was beginning to be paid to martyrs in the fact that they are the authentic disciples and imitators of the Lord. Similarly, the communities of Lyons and Vienne said proudly that their martyrs of the year 177 were emulators and imitators of Christ. They expressed the idea in biblical terms, saying of Vettius Epagathus that "he was a true disciple of Christ, because he followed the Lamb wherever he went," even to the death of martyrdom (*Mart. Polyc.* 17, 3; 19, l; *Euseb. HE* 5, 2, 2; 5,1,10). Origen declared the same view (*In Ioan. comm.* 2, 34), and the pastor Cyprian took advantage of the persecutions to remind his flock that they had at such times to imitate Christ as a teacher of patience and suffering, and that in the daily celebration of the Eucharist they drank the Blood of Christ in order to be able one day to give their blood for him (Cyprian, *Ep.* 58, 1, 3). Anyone who suffers for confessing the name of Christ becomes thereby a "sharer and companion of his Passion," as Roman priests stressed in a letter to Cyprian (*Ep.* 31, 3: "collega passionis cum Christo."). The concept of following Christ and of imitating him occurs with especial frequence in the accounts of the martyrs and in the pronouncements of Christian writers concerning martyrdom (Cf. *Passio Perpet. et Felicit.* 18, 9; Clement of Alex. *Strom.* 4, 3, 14; Tertullian, *Scorp.* 9; *De resurrect. carn.* 8; Cyprian, *Ep.* 76, 7, 1; Pseudo-Cyprian, *De laude mart.* 6; 20, 29). Devotion to martyrdom received a particular force of attraction from the idea that a martyr's violent death led in a unique way to union with Christ. It was a widespread conviction in the third century that this union with Christ is already manifest when a Christian confesses his fidelity to his Lord under torture. At that moment it is Christ who strengthens him, and so fills him with his presence that, in a kind of exaltation, he scarcely feels the pain of torture and execution (Cf. *Mart. Polycarp.* 2, 2 and the Christians of Lyons, *Eusebius HE* 5, 1, 23, 42). Thus, the Christian captive Felicity replied to the jailer who derided her for groaning at the birth of her child: "Now it is I who suffer what I suffer; but there (that is, at her martyrdom), it will be another in me who will suffer for me, because I too will be suffering for him" (*Passio Perpet. et Felic.* 15, 3; Cf. *Ep. ad Diogn.* 7, 9). Cyprian comforted and strengthened Christians facing martyrdom with the assurance that the Lord "himself contends in us, goes to battle with us, and in our hard struggle himself gives the crown and receives it" (Cyprian, *Ep.* 10, 4; 37, 2; 76, 7. Further references in H. v. Campenhausen, *Die Idee des Martyriums in der alten Kirche;* Göttingen 1936, 90, note 1). It was this idea which culminated in the custom of honouring the martyrs with the title of *Christophorus:* union with Christ attains perfection by suffering martyrdom (F. J. Dölger in *AuC*, IV (1934), 73-80). The martyrs were convinced that noth-

ing united them with Christ as directly as a violent death while bearing witness to him. From this belief sprang the aspiration, found as early as Ignatius of Antioch, precisely for this kind of death, which is described by Cyprian as "the baptism which, after our departure from the world, unites us directly to God" (*Ad Fortun. praefat.* 4), and which consequently, as a baptism in blood, completely replaces the other baptism, and in fact surpasses it in efficacy, because there is no danger of later relapse. Ultimately the value set on martyrdom as absolute perfection was based on the double conviction that martyrdom represents the highest form of imitation of Christ and unites us in a unique way with him. Clement of Alexandria equates martyrdom with τελείωσις, since anyone who dies for his faith "has accomplished the work of perfect love" (*Strom.* 4, 4, 14).

There is no plainer way of proving love of God and of Christ than by suffering violent death under persecution. Consequently, the *exhortatio ad martyrium* was a regular part of early Christian preaching and literature; not a dull cliché, but a very real factor in the actual realities of the third century itself. Origen and Cyprian are its purest and most convincing exponents. Origen's work on the meaning and dignity of martyrdom is the expression of a genuine readiness and desire for martyrdom, exhorting his own father in prison not to be dissuaded by the thought of the fate of his family from bearing witness unto death, and pointing with pride to friends and pupils who had travelled the road to the end (*Euseb. HE* 6, 2, 3-6; 6, 3, 4). Origen regarded the times of persecution as the truly great age of the Church because of the martyrs, whereas he had to recognize with sorrow that long periods of peace quickly led to slackening of enthusiastic faith (*In Ier. hom.* 4, 3). Cyprian's letters to his flock during persecution present the same picture. In his own behaviour the Bishop of Carthage displayed the balanced and wise prudence that the Church demanded, which did not foolishly and fanatically seek martyrdom (Like the Montanists, cf. Tertullian's *De fuga in persecutione*), yet did not fail in the hour of trial. When, during the Decian persecution, an alarmingly large number of lapsed Christians created no small problem for the Church authorities, Cyprian had also to observe that readiness for martyrdom was found only in an *élite.*

Devotion to martyrdom is also clearly seen in the efforts of Christian circles to find substitutes for actual death by martyrdom, when for various reasons this was not in fact attainable. In very early times there were those who considered a serious striving for moral purity as an attitude which, though certainly not equal in value to real martyrdom, nevertheless revealed in a way a martyr's mentality which put God first (Already in Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 4, 7, 43). Origen was convinced that in a community there are Christians "who have taken up their cross and follow Christ and are ready to shed their blood for him", and so are martyrs before God (*In Num. hom.* 10, 2). Cyprian clearly expressed the difference between actual martyrdom and martyrdom of desire, and worked out a spirituality centred on martyrdom (*Ad Fortun.* 13; *De zelo et liv.* 16). What was of essential importance here was the evolution of martyrdom into a criterion for Christian perfection, even if in detail only a greater or lesser resemblance to martyrdom was retained. Dionysius of Alexandria judged the self-sacrifice of some Christians who died in the time of the plague in the service of the sick almost on the same level as a martyr's death (*Euseb. HE* 7, 22, 7). But a new development took place when certain ascetic modes of live, such as the state of virginity and retirement from the world, became considered as real substitutes for actual death by martyrdom, and were praised as a new way of following Christ.

The Asceticism of the Third Century.

Christians of both sexes who renounced marriage, who dissociated themselves more than others from secular life, yet remained with their families and put themselves at the service of the Christian community, are not found for the first time in the third century. The biblical basis for

such a mode of life and the example of a celibate life given by Christ and St Paul produced at a very early date their effect, for the letter of the Roman Bishop Clement presupposes the existence of celibates, and the *Didache* refers to a type of wandering ascetic which was commonly active in the missionary field (1 *Clem.* 38:2, which terms this life εγκράτεια: *Did.* 11 and 12). Ignatius of Antioch and Hermas of Rome knew of groups of virgins in their communities who enjoyed high esteem (Ignatius, *Ad Smyrn.* 13, 1; *Ad Polyc.* 5, 2; Hermas, *Pastor Sim.* 9, 2; 10, 3; *vis.* 1, 2, 4). The apologists, in their descriptions of the life of the Christian communities, did not fail to point out to the pagans that a notably high number of men and women leading celibate lives testified to the high moral quality of the followers of Christianity; and the pagans themselves were impressed by this feature of Christian spiritual life (Justin, *Apol.* 15; 29; Athenagoras, *Suppl.* 33; Min. Felix, *Oct.* 31, 5. For the judgment of the pagan Galen regarding the Christians, cf. R. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians;* Oxford 1949). Occasional references in second-century texts are followed in the third century by a series of writings which expressly concern Christian asceticism, and provide a detailed account of its ideals and of the dangers which beset it. Its adherents had become so numerous in the meantime that they represented an important factor in Christian daily life in the churches of both East and West. They were not yet committed to a definite mode of life with a fixed rule; and so they mostly remained with their families and still disposed of their own private property. Only the pseudo-Clementine letters *Ad virgines* indicate a tendency in that period for closer groupings, just as they also refer to missionary and charitable activity by the ascetics (Cyprian, *De hab. virg.* 7-12, 18-19; Pseudo-Clement, *Ad virg.* 1, 8, 4; 1, 2; Origen, *In Iudic. hom.* 9, 1; *In Ier. hom.* 20; *Contra Cels.* 5, 49). Moreover, there was still no set rite by which the Church herself received them into their state of life; they simply bound themselves by a very serious promise to a life of continence (Cyprian, *De hab. virg.* 4 and *Ep.* 62, 3. Canon 13 of the Synod of Elvira speaks of a *pactum virginitatis*). That promise, however, was known to the community authorities, who punished its transgression very strictly, namely by excommunication. On the other hand, the promise did not bind for ever; the ascetic for special reasons could forego his mode of life and contract matrimony.

Within the community and among its rulers, the ascetics enjoyed unique esteem. For Clement of Alexandria, they were the "elect of the elect," while Cyprian saw in them "the more splendid part of Christ's flock, the flower of Mother Church" (Clement of Alexandria, *Quis div. salv.* 36; Cyprian, *De hab. virg.* 3). A new element with increased prestige was ascetic virginity, since this was connected with the idea of the soul's espousal to Christ. Tertullian was already acquainted with the title "bride of Christ," used to honour virgin ascetics, both men and women (*De orat.* 22; *De resurr. carn.* 61; *De exhort. cast.* 13); and the term later became part of the customary official language of the Church. Origen's exposition of the Song of Songs (Both in the commentary as well as in the homilies on the Song of Songs), in terms of the individual's conception of it as a description of the relationship between the particular soul and its heavenly bridegroom, Christ, inaugurated the triumphant progress of this idea through the centuries which followed. At first this notion was at the service of the ideal of virginity; Methodius of Olympus meant by his lyrical praise of virginity that it is not to be separated from espousal to Christ. The records of the martyrdom of virgins consecrated to God, such as Agnes, Pelagia, and Caecilia, are pervaded by this idea (Cf. the texts collected by J. Schmid in *RAC* II, 560ff). A theological basis was sought for the worth of the ascetics. Their mode of life was declared to be the worthiest substitute for death by martyrdom; like the latter, it called for total self-sacrifice (Methodius, *Symp.* 5, 4; 11), and consequently, according to Cyprian's warning, the spirit of the martyrs must be living in the ascetics also. Methodius directly compares virginity with martyrdom, while others list the ascetics immediately after the martyrs: the latter bearing fruit a hundredfold, the former sixtyfold. The *corona virginitatis* is

accorded to the *virgines utriusque sexus*, just as the *corona martyrum* is to the martyrs, for their life is a true following of Christ (Cyprian, *De hab. virg.* 21; Methodius, *Symp.* 7, 3; Pseudo-Clement, *Ep. ad virg.* 1, 5, 5; 1, 7, 1-2). Such a lofty ideal is liable to particular perils. Tertullian warned the ascetics especially against pride, to which the high esteem in which they were held in the community might tempt them; the pseudo-Clementine letters show a similar awareness of the threat of vanity and empty show. Cyprian saw clearly the practical dangers which life in the world involved for the ascetics, and consequently demanded of them a high degree of all the virtues. Methodius tried to strengthen them positively by directing their minds to meditation and the wealth that lies therein; virginity should be a means of individual sanctification (Tertullian, *De virg. vel. passim;* Cyprian, *De hab. virg. passim;* Methodius, *Symp.* 4, 5, 7, 2; Pseudo-Clement, *Ep. ad virg.* 1, 3, 2; 1, 4, 2).

Ascetical excess and a disproportion between the individual's moral strength and such lofty idealism explain a grave aberration in Christian asceticism, especially in the third century. Christian ascetics lived together as "sister and brother" in a sort of spiritual matrimony, and so imperilled the virginity they had vowed to keep. Not only did they expose themselves to the insinuations and derision of the people around them, but they also failed grievously themselves. The sources leave no doubt about the existence and considerable extent of the aberration (Especially the *Ep.* 2 *ad virgines* of the Pseudo-Clement, Cyprian, *De hab. virg.* and *De singularitate clericorum*). The system of agapetae extended through the East, in Syria and Egypt as well as in North Africa (Dionysius of Alexandria (*Euseb. HE* 7, 30, 12) calls them γυναῖκες συνείσακτοι, which was later rendered in Latin as *virgines subintroductae*), and forced the ecclesiastical authorities to decisive action. In Cyprian's time a deacon who was guilty in this matter was excommunicated. Cyprian's clearsightedness and freedom from illusion made him intervene even where there were as yet no serious lapses (Cyprian, *Ep.* 4 and 13). The *De singularitate clericorum*, an anonymous treatise of the third century, could not conceal the fact that the evil had penetrated certain clerical circles, which sometimes employed biblical texts to justify their attitude. Already in the third century some synods imposed heavy sanctions on the guilty, but the custom persisted obstinately in East and West, surviving in Spain down to the sixth century (So the Synods of Antioch, c. 267-8, Elvira (canon 27), Ancyra (canon 19), Nicaea (canon 3). Jerome, *Ep.* 117, and John Chrysostom still had to take up a definite position on the matter. Later Synods: Carthage (348) canon 3; Hippo (393) canon 20; Carthage, 397, canon 17; Aries, 443 canon 3; Agde, 510, canon 10; Toledo, 531, canon 3).

The asceticism of the third century not only continued in its previous form, but also provided the source of two new developments which were rich in consequences. From this practice sprang the early monasticism of the East, which, in its first eremitical phase, was merely a transference of the life and activity of the ascetics from the Christian community into solitude, such as Athanasius's account of the eremitical period of St Antony's life records for the end of the third century. The baptismal spirituality and devotion to martyrdom of the second and third centuries, in conjunction with ascetical virginity, continued to exert influence as fundamental ideas of monasticism, and so proved their intense vitality. The vows taken by the monk were compared in value with a second baptism, and his life with a spiritual martyrdom which made him, like the actual martyr, an *athleta Christi*, while his continence ranked him in the company of those who are the brides of Christ (Cf. E. E. Malone, *The Monk and the Martyr;* Diss. Washington 1950; J.Schmid, "Brautschaft (heilige)" in *RAC* II, 561). The ideal of virginity additionally prepared the way for the concept of priestly celibacy (Cf. Origen, *In Lev. hom.* 1, 6, which demands continence of the priest, for he serves the altar).

Within the Church as a whole the manner of life of the ascetics was an highly esteemed ideal, but nevertheless one which was always freely accepted, and only by a minority. As soon as individual Christians or groups attempted to make it a norm binding on all Christians, it inevita-

bly led to conflicts between them and the ecclesiastical authorities. The Encratites, followers of the Syrian Tatian, represented such an ascetic ideal carried to extremes; they characteristically named themselves not after their teacher but after the ascetical principle of their life (Οἱ εγκρατείς according to Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 1, 28, 1; and cf. Origen, *Contra Cels.* 5, 65). The Encratites of Mesopatamia admitted no one to baptism who did not observe absolute sexual continence, and thus forced married people who did not want to renounce matrimony into a perpetual catechumenate existence *. It is true that the other heretical views held by Tatian were decisive in his expulsion from the great Church about 172, but his ascetical rigorism certainly contributed to that judgment. Encratite tendencies are perceptible in many apocryphal acts of apostles, as well as in the lives of individual Christians. As long as *encrateia* was not imposed by these on every Christian as necessary for salvation, the Church could tolerate them or excuse individual cases, such as Origen's self-castration, as ascetical enthusiasm carried too far. The intense attachment of the third-century Church to the ascetical ideal can certainly be taken as a general proof of her high moral quality.

Prayer and Fasting in Early Christian Spirituality.

Prayer not only maintained, as a matter of course, its position in the third century as an indispensable element in Christian worship of God, but to an increasing extent became the subject of theological reflection and practical concern for its right performance both liturgical and private. Alexandrian theologians worked devotedly at a theological interpretation of Christian prayer and endeavoured to incorporate it into their conception of Christian perfection as a whole. The Latins, Tertullian and Cyprian in particular, display in their expositions of the Our Father the greater interest of the Latin mind in questions of the actual practice of the life of prayer and in its importance for the detail of Christian daily life. For Clement of Alexandria the Christian's duty to pray is self-evident, for the soul must thank God without ceasing for all his gifts; and in the striving for perfection, prayer of petition is likewise indispensable, and it must be used to implore true gnosis and the forgiveness of sins (*Strom.* 6, 113, 2; 6, 102, 1; 5, 16,7). After the example of his master, brethren and enemies are included in this prayer of the Christian, and he is mindful, too, of the conversion of the whole world to the true God. Prayer accompanies him in all he does, binds him most closely to God, makes him "walk in God" (Ibid. 7, 62, 2ff.; 7, 41, 4, 6; 7, 40, 3; 7, 44, 5; 7, 35, 5). Clement's best answer to the pagan reproach of ασέβεια (impiety) addressed to the Christians, is to point out that for them, prayer is the most holy and precious sacrifice with which to honour God (Ibid. 7, 31, 7). With a certain hesitation he hazards the definition that prayer is "intercourse with God" (Ibid. 7, 39, 6: ομιλία προς τον θεον ή ευχή, ως ειπείν τολμηρότερον). So the Christian consecrates his everyday life to God when he conscientiously keeps the hours of prayer and in this way bears witness to the Lord throughout his life (Ibid. 2, 145, 6). The highest form of prayer for the true Gnostic is interior mental prayer, which Clement clearly distinguishes from vocal prayer. He does not, of course, reject the latter, but unquestionably assigns the highest rank to interior prayer: it needs no words; it is unceasing; it makes the whole life a holy day; and gives θεωρία, the vision of divine things (Ibid. 7, 49, 6ff.; 6, 102, 1; 7, 35, 6; 7, 49, 4). In this distinction between vocal and mental prayer the later division of the spiritual life into active and contemplative is already indicated in a purely Christian sense. Clement is its first important pioneer.

Where Clement provided an outline sketch of prayer, Origen gives a whole monograph, which deepens and carries farther what Clement had begun. In order to gain a full view of Origen's teaching on prayer one must draw upon his theoretical exposition and upon the lively observations and the spontaneous prayers found in his homilies and biblical commentaries. Like

Clement, Origen is profoundly aware that the life of the Christian must be a perpetual prayer, in which daily prayers have their indispensable place (Origen, *De or.* 1, 12, 2). To be blessed, such prayer requires a certain disposition in the soul. Origen very definitely includes in this a continual defence against sin, lasting freedom from emotional disturbance, and finally interior recollection and concentration, which excludes all from without and within that cannot be consecrated to God (Ibid. 8, 1; 9, 1, 3; *Contra Cels.* 8, 17; 7, 44). Under such conditions, a Christian's prayer develops in an ascent by stages. The first stage being prayer of petition, which should request the great and heavenly things: the gift of gnosis and growth in virtue (The kinds of prayer are dealt with in connexion with 1 Tim. 2:1 in *De or.* 14, 2. On the prayer of petition, see also *De or.* 1, 17; 2, 2; 13, 4; *Contra Cels.* 7, 44). At the stage of the προσευχή, the praise of God is linked with prayer of petition (*De or.* 14, 2; 13, 5). The summit of Christian prayer is reached in interior, wordless prayer which unites the soul to God in a unique way (*In Num. hom.* 10, 3; *Contra Cels.* 7, 44; *De or.* 9, 2; 10, 2). This mirrors Origen's basic conception of a spiritual ascent by stages, ending in the loving knowledge of God in which the soul is "divinized" (Cf. K. Rahner in *RAM* 13 (1932), 113-45). A more concrete view of Origen's practice of prayer is given by the many actual texts of prayers which occur frequently in his homilies (Cf. K. Baus in *RQ* 49 (1954), 46-55). Somewhat surprisingly, they are often addressed to Christ, though in his treatise on prayer, Origen always maintains that prayer is to be addressed to the Father; theoretical conviction was overborne by the spontaneous devotion to Christ which is also apparent in many other ways in the homilies. Not only does Origen repeatedly exhort his hearers to pray to Jesus, but in his addresses, he himself continually turns to him in supplications of his own composition which reveal a rich and heartfelt devotion to Jesus. It is an eminently important fact in the history of spirituality, and consequently in the history of the Church, that the theory and practice of prayer represented by the Alexandrian Origen exercised an extensive influence. His teaching on prayer decisively affected the spirituality of the Eastern Church, particularly in its monastic form, and the practice of devotion to Jesus formulated in his prayers influenced, by way of Ambrose, Western mystical devotion to Jesus down to St Bernard's day (Cf. F. Bertrand, *Mystique de Jésus chez Origène* (Paris 1951), 153ff).

The commentaries on the Our Father by the two Latins, Tertullian and Cyprian, introduce us to a view and atmosphere of Christian prayer that is both independent of, and very different from that of the Greeks. Both of them, of course, are like the Alexandrians, profoundly convinced of the obligation of prayer. Both they and the Greeks are inspired through the example given by Christ, who prayed himself and taught how to pray (Tertullian, *De or.* 1; Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 1, 3); they know the same times for prayer and the biblical grounds for them, and have similar ideas about the mental conditions necessary for proper prayer (Tertullian, *De or.* 11-15; Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 4-6, 34. For the Greeks, cf. Clement, *Strom.* 2, 145, 1; 7, 40, 3; Origen, *De or.* 31, 2). But the two Latins are very far removed from the lofty idealistic strain of the Greeks. Deeper speculation about the nature and dignity of interior prayer and its significance for growth in the spiritual life is alien to them, and there is certainly no hint in their writing of a theory about the various stages of prayer. Their urgent concern is with the actual concrete form of prayer and its place in the daily life of the Christian community. For them the form of prayer to be preferred is the Our Father, the new form of prayer taught by Christ, and known to the Christians alone, because they alone have God as their Father (Tertullian, *De or.* 2; Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 9-11). Both understand the petition for daily bread in a predominantly eucharistic sense, which Cyprian expresses with warmth and emphasis (Tertullian, *De or.* 6; Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 18). For both, humility is the right attitude in which to pray; all passions and faults must be laid aside if the prayer is to find acceptance with God (Tertullian, *De or.* 11-14, 17; Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 4, 6). A trait of the Latin organizing spirit is evident in

evident in Tertullian's detailed treatment of questions concerning the external order of prayer, such as the times for prayer — morning prayers, evening prayers, grace, prayer at the third, sixth, and ninth hours — and the physical posture of those at prayer: they are to pray with hands raised and extended, in imitation of their suffering Lord on the cross (Tertullian, *De or.* 18-25; more briefly, Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 35-36). Tertullian propounds an actual theological feature in what he says about the unlimited efficacy of Christian prayer (*De or.* 29), and in his exposition of the second petition of the Our Father, which like Origen he understands in a directly eschatological sense: "Yes, very soon, Lord, may thy kingdom come; that is the longing of Christians, the confounding of the pagans, the joy of the angels" (*De or.* 5). Perhaps Cyprian's undeniable dependence on Tertullian has sometimes caused the original contribution of the African bishop in his exposition of the Our Father to be too easily overlooked. The much greater religious warmth and persuasiveness with which he speaks of prayer are to be appreciated, and he deserves further recognition for his emphatic identification of the Kingdom of God with Christ: "For whose coming we daily long, and whose early arrival we desire and long for" (*De dom. or.* 13). Of paramount importance however, is the ecclesiological emphasis which he would like to see in the prayers of Christians: "When we pray, we do not pray for one but for the whole people, for we are all one"; the Christian people at prayer is joined together in the unity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit; anyone who breaks this unity sins grievously, and lacks an essential condition for genuine prayer (*De dom. or.* 8, 24, 30).

Besides the Our Father, Tertullian and of course, Cyprian too, freely recognize improvised prayers (Cyprian, *De dom. or.* 3; Tertullian, *De or.* 9). Early Christianity had also at its disposal a collection of set prayer texts in the Old Testament Psalter. Its liturgical and private use presupposed, of course, its christianization, which must have taken place in the second century, as the singing of the psalms in divine worship and at the agape was an established custom by the beginning of the third century (Tertullian, *Apol.* 39, 18; Hippolytus, *Trad. apost.* (Ethiopic) in *Hennecke-Schneemelcher* 581; Πράξεις Παύλου (Hamburg 1936), 50ff). This christianization took place by way of a typological interpretation of the psalms, which either viewed the speaker in the psalms as Christ himself addressing the Father, or heard in them the voice of the Church recognizing in the *Dominus psalmorum* her glorified Lord and speaking directly to him. A particularly striking example of the first kind is Psalm 3, verse 6: "ego dormivi et soporatus sum et exsurrexi," which was already regarded by Justin as spoken by the Risen Christ on Easter morning. This interpretation is also found in Irenaeus and was taken over by Hippolytus and Cyprian (Justin, *Dial.* 97, 1; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 4, 33, 13; Hippolytus, *Comm. on Psalms*, Frag. 37 (*GCS* 1, 2, 153); Cyprian, *Test.* 2, 24). Origen, too, has examples of praying the psalms to Christ (Cf. for example, *In Ioann. comm.* 19, 3; *In Psalm.* 29, 3) and thus illustrates the strength of the trend, for despite theoretical hesitation he cannot refrain from it. The christianization of the Psalter, which made it the prayer and hymn book absolutely preferred by the early Church, was furthered and facilitated by the importance and extent of prayer to Christ in early Christian popular devotion. This is strikingly evident in those prayers which rose spontaneously to the lips of martyrs when they were summoned to bear last testimony to their Lord. Most of these are words of gratitude to Christ for giving them the grace of bearing witness to him, or protestations that they accept death for his name's sake, or cries of supplication for Christ's strength and support in that hour of trial. A comparison of the number of prayers addressed to Christ by the martyrs with those addressed to the Father reveals their overwhelmingly Christocentric character (The proportion is about 6:1; cf. a selection of these prayers by K. Baus in *TThZ* 62 (1953), 23-8). In the domain of popular piety there are the strikingly numerous prayers to Christ in the apocryphal acts of apostles (A survey is found in E. v. d. Goltz, *Das Gebet in der ältesten Christenheit*

(Leipzig 1901), 343-56), and many of the above-mentioned prayers to Christ in Origen's homilies must have been an echo from private popular piety.

Finally, prayer addressed to Christ was expressed by turning to the East when praying. The first signs of this custom appear at the beginning of the second century, and it established itself widely in East and West in the third century. The grounds adduced for the custom are theologically notable: people prayed facing the East because the return of the Lord was awaited from that direction and because Paradise, the desire of all Christians, lies there (Cf. particularly, F. J. Dölger, *Sol salutis*, 136-70, 198-242. In the first concluding hymn of Methodius' *Symp.*, the virgins go in solemn procession eastwards to meet the heavenly bridegroom, Christ). This manner of praying to Christ therefore had an eschatological significance. For some Christian circles in the Greek and Syrian East, it was also a way of expressing the theological contrast to Judaism, whose followers prayed facing the Temple in Jerusalem. Another custom had been associated with it since the second century, that of praying before a crucifix, wooden or painted, so arranged that those praying stood facing the East. Here too the early Christian texts plainly indicate an eschatological motive for this custom: as a sign of the Lord's triumph, the cross will precede him, on his second coming, from the East (This has been established by E. Peterson, "Das Kreuz und das Gebet nach Osten" in *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis* (Freiburg i. Br.; 959). This emphasis on the crucifix in the Christian's position at prayer was probably based on the extensive use of the sign of the cross in both private devotion and the liturgy, many testimonies to which are found in the writers of the third century (Cf. F. J. Dölger, "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Kreuzzeichens" in *JbAC* 1; 1958, 5-l9; 2; 1959, 15-22; 3; 1960, 11-16; 4; 1961, 5-17). Tertullian's statement can stand for many: "Whenever we go out or depart, at the beginning or end of anything, when we dress or put on our shoes, before the bath or before sitting down to table, when putting on the lights, when we lie down to rest or sit down on a chair, in every action of daily life, we sign our foreheads with the sign of the cross" (*De cor.* 3, 4). The texts of prayers and the position adopted for prayer therefore show private prayer in the early Christian Church as a whole that was centred to a large extent on Christ and on the cross.

The ascetical enthusiasm of the third century also led to a considerable practice of fasting both in connexion with liturgical worship and in the private devotion of Christians. The weekly fasts on Wednesdays and Fridays that had descended from apostolic times (*Did.* 8, 1; Hermas, *Past. Sim.* 5, 1, 2) became more firmly established and received a further development in the *statio* of the North African church. In Tertullian's time the *statio* was still quite definitely an ascetical exercise freely undertaken; it lasted until the ninth hour (3 p.m.), and was linked with a special divine service (Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 2, 10, 12-14). This latter, however, must be understood to have been the celebration of the eucharist, which would take place at the usual time before sunrise. The high esteem of Station fasting among Christians of North Africa can be judged from the refusal of many of the faithful to take part in the celebration of the Eucharist on Station days, because they thought the reception of Communion would break the fast (Tertuilian, *De or.* 19; *De cor.* 3). In the East, the observation of the weekly fasts was, according to the evidence of the Syrian *Didascalia*, early imposed as an obligation (*Didasc.* 5, 14, 15). In Carthage, Station fasting was sometimes extended to Saturday; the Roman church must also have known this custom, and it is encountered in Spain at the end of the third century (Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 14; Hippolytus, *In Dan. comm.* 4, 20, 3; Synod. Illib., canon 26, and cf. J. Schummer, *Die altchristliche Fastenpraxis;* Münster 1933, 152-9). The Church had to defend the voluntary character of Station fasting against the rigorism of Montanists and Encratites who represented it as an obligation strictly binding on all Christians. At this period, too, the motive for the choice of the two fast days in the week changed; while earlier it emphasized the independence of the Christian custom from the Jewish one (the Jews kept Monday and Thursday as fast days), now it was the connexion of the two days with the events of our

Lord's Passion that was indicated: the betrayal by Judas on a Wednesday and death on the cross on a Friday. Thus fasting on these days was understood to be a fast of mourning and grief (Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 10; *Didasc.* 5, 14, 15).

The high value placed on fasting by the Church authorities is particularly evident from the various ways in which they incorporated it into the liturgy. As preparation for the feast of Easter, a Passover fast had been early introduced, but its duration differed from local church to local church and could extend over one, two, or even six days (Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 2; Irenaeus, in *Euseb. HE* 5, 24; *Trad. apost.* 29 (64 Botte); *Didasc.* 5, 18; Dionysius of Alexandria, *Ep. ad Basil.* 1). The baptismal fast of which there is evidence as early as the *Didache*, and in Justin, and which at first only lasted one or two days (*Did.* 7, 4; Justin, *Apol.* 61, 2; *Trad. apost.* 20; 48 Botte), was now extended further; in the first period of preparation for baptism it consisted of restriction to bread, water, and salt, but in the days immediately preceding baptism it involved total abstention from food and drink (Cf. J. Schümmer, *op. cit.* 166-8). The baptismal fast was envisaged in close relation to prayer, which fasting effectively supports; it was also considered a means of atoning for former sins and of preparing for the reception of the Spirit (Tertullian, *De bapt.* 20; *De ieiun.* 8, 12; Clement of Alex. *Exc. ex Theod.* 83, 84). Finally, fasting became an extremely important factor in the penitential discipline of the early Christian Church generally, which imposed on the sinner for the duration of his penance restrictions on food and drink and sometimes days of strict fasting as well. Here, too, the significance of the fast was seen to be in the support it gave to the atoning prayer with which the sinner turned to God; but the Church always stressed in addition the salutary character of such penitential fasts in themselves (Tertullian, *De paen.* 9-11; *Ad ux.* 2, 8; *Didasc.* 2, 16, 2; 2, 41, 6; Cyprian, *De laps.* 35).

Fasting as a means to gaining mastery over concupiscence and unregulated sense pleasure and consequently as a way to higher perfection, found special favour in early Christian ascetic circles. It brought with it the danger of over-emphasis, and this sometimes found expression in heroic record-breaking performances such as are reported repeatedly from the monastic groups which superseded the ascetics (Euseb. *De mart. Pal.* 3; Palladius, *Hist. Laus.* 1-2, 11, 18, 22, 36, 38, 43, 45, 48, 52). As opposed to such aberrations, Christian authors very early emphasized that what was decisive was the spirit, a genuine penitential attitude and self-denial, which alone give bodily fasting its value (Hermas, *Past. Sim.* 5, 1, 4; 5, 36; Justin, *Dial.* 15; Origen, *In Lev. hom.* 10, 2). Others stressed corporal works of mercy to the neighbour as a motive for fasting, for by its means a brother in need could be given more help (Aristides, *Apol.* 15). The most valuable views here also are those that envisaged fasting in close conjunction with prayer; which can be given greater efficacy by this ascetical attitude (Tertullian, *Apol.* 40, 13; *De fuga* 1). Similarly efficacious was the widespread conception of fasting as an important preparation for every kind of reception of the Spirit, so that fasting became an indispensable requirement for men of the Spirit, prophets, teachers, and bishops (Cf. Acts, 13:2 and also Hermas, *Past. Vis.* 2, 2, 1; 3, 1, 2; 3, 10, 6ff.; Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 13; *Fragm. Murat.* 9-16). This explains the inner link between prophecy and fasting which is encountered in Montanism; fasting there became an absolutely necessary condition for the gift of prophecy, and Tertullian in his work *De ieiunio* bitterly attacked from his own standpoint the great Church which should not approve such overrating of an ascetical practice (Cf. particularly R. Arbesmann, "Fasting and Prophecy in Pagan and Christian Antiquity" in *Tr* 7; 1949-51, 52-71).

Early Christian Morals.

The ideals of Christian perfection just described, represented, as has already been emphasized, maximum demands, the achievement of which was only possible to an *élite* and conse-

quently to a minority among the Christians. There arises, therefore, the question how the great majority of the community members in town and country lived their daily religious lives in pagan surroundings and within a secular civilization determined by pagan principles. Unfortunately the sources, even for the third century, still do not provide very much information on this, and do not make it possible to draw a complete picture of Christian life valid for all the territories where Christianity had spread at that time. Most informative are the sources for North Africa, where the leading writers Tertullian and Cyprian, because of their marked concern with the practical questions of daily religious life reveal much that is interesting. In addition to these men, the Alexandrian teachers Clement and Origen must be mentioned, for they frequently speak of similar features in the Christian daily life of the Egyptian communities.

Any attempt to estimate objectively the achievements of Christianity in this domain must indicate very plainly the difficulties that the implementation of Christian moral ideals inevitably met with day after day. First of all, there were the afflictions to which Christian minorities are liable in any period of Christian missionary activity when forced to form and establish themselves in the midst of a pagan environment encompassing every section of private and public life. A large number of professions and trades directly served the polytheism of later antiquity and the Christians had to exclude themselves from these if they were not to imperil their own religious convictions (See above). The whole pagan atmosphere further presented a perpetual temptation to relapse into former habits of life, and this demanded of all Christians a renunciation that had to be continually and precisely renewed in daily life. The sexual licentiousness which characterized moral life in later antiquity particularly necessitated a very high degree of self-discipline. This itself created a test case where the Christian moral ideal had to prove its real quality.

The sources show that precisely in the third century, the Christian communities were exposed to searching trials which they did not entirely withstand. In the longer periods of peace which that age provided, the poison of the surrounding pagan atmosphere could exercise its slow but enduring effect. This became terrifyingly evident when a powerful wave of persecution such as those of Decius and Diocletian broke upon the Christian communities as exceptional tribulations. The large number of those who lapsed in the years 249-50 revealed a considerable slackening of Christian self-discipline, a condition which could oppose no decisive resistance to the tempting amenities of a pagan civilization. The picture which Cyprian had to draw speaks for itself (See above). Eusebius too, in his description of the general situation of Christianity before the outbreak of the Diocletian persecution was forced to indicate many suspicious features. Among these were especially the slackening of moral discipline and not a few lamentable quarrels of Church leaders among themselves. The Christians "like so many pagans... piled sin upon sin," and Eusebius was moved to explain the persecution as a divine judgment (*Euseb. HE* 8, 1, 7-9). What we have to say about the question of penance will presently show that grave transgressions by Christians, especially those of a sexual kind, again and again moved the Church authorities to serious admonition and strict measures regarding atonement. But despite these undeniable dark shadows in the picture of general Christian life in the third century, it is indisputable that Christianity succeeded at that time in raising the moral level of the various churches and communities high above that of the pagan world around them.

Marriage and the Family.

This is particularly striking in the matter of marriage and the family. It is true that Tertullian's description of the beauty of Christian marriage is an ideal picture which transfigures reality, but it proves that this ideal was recognized and that earnest efforts were made to realize it.

Ignatius of Antioch had already recommended that the contracting of matrimony be sanctioned by the bishop. In Tertullian's time, too, Christians celebrated their marriage in the presence of the *ecclesia*, and had it sealed with a blessing, although this cannot have signified an actual liturgical rite or an indispensable participation of the bishop at the marriage in that period. The inner harmony of such a marriage derived from the common religious convictions of the two partners, and it drew its strength in good days and bad from a common sharing in the eucharistic repast (Ignatius, *Ad Polyc.* 5; Tertullian, *Ad ux.* 2, 8). As such conditions could not be present in marriages between Christians and pagans, these were disapproved of by the Church. Furthermore the Christian party was exposed all too easily to contact with pagan worship and the accomplishment of many religious duties and customs of the faith was made difficult by such an arrangement. When Cyprian lists the abuses in the North African church which called down the judgment of the Decian persecution, he assigns a special place to the marriages between Christians and unbelievers, through which "the members of Christ were abandoned to the pagans." Consequently such marriages were expressly forbidden by the Church, and parents who gave their consent to the marriage of their daughter to a heretic, a Jew, or a pagan priest, incurred heavy ecclesiastical punishment (Tertullian, *Ad ux.* 2, 4-6; Cyprian, *De laps.* 6; Synod. Illib., canons 15-17; Synod. Arel. canon 11). The indissolubility of Christian marriage which had since St Paul found its deepest ground in its symbolical representation of the union of Christ and the Church (Eph 5:32; 1 Cor 7:10ff.), is emphasized by most writers of the third century (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 2, 23; Origen, *In Matth. hom.* 14, 16; Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.* 4, 34; *De pat.* 12; *De monog.* 9). The Church was also concerned with maintaining the sanctity of matrimony by preserving conjugal fidelity and reverence for children. Adultery was strictly punished by ecclesiastical penitiential discipline, any kind of abortion was proscribed as murder, and the exposing of children after birth was condemned. It was here that the demands of Christian ethics came into sharpest conflict with pagan lasciviousness or the Roman legal view, which regarded only the born child as a human being (Synod. Illib., canons 14, 47, 64, 70, 78. Athenagoras, *Suppl.* 35; Tertullian, *Apol.* 9, 8; Min. Felix, *Oct.* 30, 2; Hippolytus, *Refut.* 9, 12, 25, and cf. F. J. Dölger in *AuC*, IV; 1934, 23-55).

Within Christian marriage of this kind, the position of the wife was that of a partner with equal rights, and Christianity thereby showed in principle a far higher regard for her than most of the pagan religions held at that time. Second marriages were not looked upon with favour; they were not of course forbidden as they were among the Montanists, but in accordance with the trend of the age towards asceticism, they were viewed as signs of diminished moral effort and even stigmatized by the apologist Athenagoras as "a respectable adultery." This opinion is not merely an isolated one, it corresponded to the Church's view which, on account of it, forbade clerics to take part in the celebrations of such marriages and treated a second marriage as an impediment to the assumption of or continuance in the clerical state. A third or fourth marriage was very definitely held to be a serious failure regarding the demands of Christian discipline and excluded one, as Origen said, from the circle of the perfect (Athenagoras, *Suppl.* 33; cf. Hermas, *Pastor. Mand.* 4; Theophilus, *Autol.* 3, 15; Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 2, 23; 3, 11; Origen, *In Luc. hom.* 17, 10; *In Ier. hom.* 20; *In Matth. comm.* 14, 22; Synod. Ancyr., can. 19; Neocaes., can. 3 and 17).

Early Christian Works of Mercy.

A criterion of the value of Christian ethical principles in daily life is provided by the way in which the commandment of Christian love for one's neighbour is fulfilled. Practical exercise of active charity towards a needy brother in the faith or towards a pagan afflicted with illness or misfortune was, in very striking contrast to the corresponding pagan attitude, an undeniable title of glory in the early Christian Church. One of the earliest forms of charitable activity was the

"agape," meals in the Christian community which were intended to strengthen community spirit among their members of different social rank, but which at the same time provided the possibility of extending effective material help, in a tactful way, to the poor and needy within the community. They were held either in the private dwelling of a well-to-do member of the congregation or in premises belonging to the church with the bishop presiding — he could also be represented by a priest or a deacon — and inaugurating the meal with a prayer said over the gifts that had been brought. The bishop discussed with those in charge questions concerning the life of the community, and made sure that the absent sick and widows also received their share of the gifts. Sometimes the widows were invited separately by a fellow-Christian or foodstuffs were taken to them in their houses. The abuses that occurred here and there in connexion with the agape do not lessen the value of these meetings which, according to Clement of Alexandria, represented an original form of Christian sociability in marked contrast to pagan custom, and were intended to prevent social conflicts arising within the churches (Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2, 1, 4ff.; Tertullian, *Apol.* 39, and cf. E. Dekkers, *Tertullianus en de geschiedenis der liturgie;* Brussels-Amsterdam 1947, 67-71; Hippolytus, *Trad. apost.* 26-7; 57-62 Botte; *Didasc.* 2, 28, 1-3).

Tertullian in his *Apologeticum* gives an instructive glimpse of the beginning of the third century. There was a sort of common fund for the voluntary contributions of members and from it the poor were fed, old people in need looked after, orphans and destitute children cared for, brethren in prison helped, and those condemned to forced labour in the mines given support (*Apol.* 39). A special kind of early Christian charitable work was hospitality, taking in and looking after, with warm generosity, brethren in the faith who were travelling through. This custom was already praised in apostolic and subapostolic times and was no less esteemed and recommended in the third century. Origen made hospitality the theme of two of his homilies. Cyprian left money with one of his priests to be spent on strangers in need during his absence. The Syrian *Didascalia* insistently urges care for strangers on the bishop, and the Synods of Elvira and Arles stress it too. In the fourth century there grew from this charitable obligation a comprehensive organization which established hostels and hospices (Cf. G. Stählin in *ThW* V, 1-36 (φιλοξενία). According to *Euseb. HE* 4, 26, 2, Melito of Sardes wrote Περί φιλοξενίας. Origen, *In Gen. hom.* 4 and 5; Cyprian, *Ep.* 7; *Didasc.* 2, 58, 6; Synod, illib., can. 25; Synod. Arel., can. 9. See also Justin, *Apol.* 67, 6; Tertullian, *Ad ux.* 2, 4). The impression made on pagan circles by this kind of practical charity is confirmed, despite himself, by Emperor Julian when he wrote that Christianity had been most lastingly furthered "by philanthropy to strangers and care for the burial to the dead" (*Sozom. HE* 5, 15). The last-mentioned feature, concern for the worthy burial of poor brethren in the faith, was felt to be a duty of love, and was specially praised as something that characterized Christianity as opposed to paganism. Whenever possible, the dead were buried among their deceased brethren in the faith, and love was shown them beyond the grave by having the eucharistic sacrifice offered for them and by being mindful of them at prayer (Aristides, *Apol.* 15; Tertullian, *Apol.* 39; Lactantius, *Div. instit.* 6, 12; Cyprian, *Ep.* 67, 6. Tertullian, *De monog.* 10; *De cor,* 3; *De exhort. cast.* 11; Cyprian, *Ep.* 1 and 12).

Pre-Constantinian Christianity had, of course, no slave problem in any sense that would have made it work for the abolition of slavery, but early Christian charity could not fail to be interested in the lot of the slaves. It contributed decisively to the improvement of their condition by recognizing slaves who became Christians as equal brothers and sisters with the rest of the faithful and by according them complete equality of rights (Tatian, *Or.* 11; Aristides, *Apol.* 15; Irenaeus, *Adv. haer.* 4, 21, 3; Tertullian, *De cor.* 13; Euseb. *De mart. Pal.* 11, 1). Ecclesiastical offices, including that of bishop, were open to a slave. It did not detract at all from the reputation of the *Shepherd* that its author Hermas had been born a slave (See the references in E. J. Jonkers in *Mnemosyne* 10; 1942, 286-302). Slaves among the martyrs, both men and women, were held in unqualified esteem; Blandina, for

instance, in Lyons and Felicity in Carthage. Degrading treatment of slaves by Christian masters was severely censured and, if need be, punished with ecclesiastical penalties. On the other hand, slaves who patently misunderstood "Christian freedom" and tried to have their freedom purchased from the common fund of the community were reminded of the deeper sense of Christian service which made it possible for them to bear their position for the honour of God (Synod. Illib., can. 5. — Ignatius, *Ad Polyc.* 4, 3).

Christian brotherly love had really to prove itself in the times of extraordinary catastrophes which were not lacking in the third century. Dionysius of Alexandria sang a paean to the Christian readiness for sacrifice which distinguished the laity as well as the clergy in Alexandria during an epidemic about the year 250. Without fear of infection, they had cared for their sick brethren and given their lives thereby, while the pagans had avoided their sick relatives and abandoned their dead without burial. When plague was raging in Carthage, Cyprian summoned his flock by word and example to organized relief action which did not deny care and attention to the pagans. And once again the attitude of the Christians contrasted honourably with that of their pagan fellow-citizens during an epidemic in Maximinus Daia's time, when they cared for the hungry and the sick without distinction of creed (*Euseb. HE* 7, 22, 7-10 and 9, 8, 1; Cyprian, *De mortal. passim;* Pontius, *Vita Cypr.* 9).

Practical Christian charity also extended to any communities which were in special need in any of the territories to which Christianity had spread. They were helped with an impressive, matter-of-fact spontaneity which reveals a sense of community among the faithful of the whole Church, and which was shown by no other religious group of the time. The sources give the strong impression that the conduct of the Roman church was felt to be exemplary in this regard. Apparently the church of Rome was immediately ready to give active assistance whenever news was received of special need in any community no matter how remote. What Dionysius of Corinth praised in this respect in 170 is also valid for the third century: "From the beginning it was your custom to do good to all the brethren in many ways and to send assistance to many communities in towns everywhere. In this way you have lightened the poverty of the needy, supported the brethren in the mines and so, like Romans, held fast to a custom handed down from of old by your fathers. Your blessed bishop Soter not only maintained this custom but carried it further" (*Euseb. HE* 4, 23, 10; cf. Ignatius, *Ad Rom. proem.:* η πρικαθημενη της αγαπης). For Dionysius of Alexandria reports about a hundred years later that Rome regularly sent relief to the churches in Arabia and Syria, and in Cappadocia it was not forgotten in the days of Basil that the Roman church under Bishop Dionysius (259-69) sent funds there so that Christian prisoners might be ransomed from pagan rulers. A remark by Eusebius implies that Rome gave similar help during the Diocletian persecution also (*Euseb. HE* 7, 5, 2; 4, 23, 9; Basil, *Ep.* 70). A similar sense of responsibility for other churches distinguished Cyprian of Carthage; he had a collection made among his flock for the communities in Numidia and its considerable yield was employed in caring for their prisoners (Cyprian, *Ep.* 76-79, especially *Ep.* 62).

The practical accomplishment of the tasks imposed by the duties of brotherly love required, in the bigger communities of the third century, a certain administrative organization and personnel. Women were increasingly employed in order to supplement the efforts of deacons who were the appointed helpers of the bishops in charitable welfare work; they were in any case indispensable in the care of their own sex. Widows were the ones first considered for such work; they were regarded as a special order within the community and held in high regard on account of Timothy 5:3-16. Only approved women were received — a judgement on this was a task of the bishop — without consecration and without prescribed vows. They were particularly em-

ployed in private pastoral work in the home and in missionary work among women. They devoted themselves to educating orphans, worked as nurses, and sometimes undertook the care of those in prison (Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 3, 97; Origen, *De or.* 28, 4; *In Luc. hom.* 17, 10; *In Is. hom.* 6, 3; *Euseb. HE* 6, 43, 11; *Didasc.* 3, 1, 2; 3, 21. Tertullian, *De virg. vel.* 9; *Ad. ux.* 1, 7; *De exhort. cast.* 13). From the second century onwards, unmarried women were also admitted for such purposes, and later for them as well as for the widows engaged in charitable works the title of deaconess was used. When the order of widows and virgins, through its adoption of an ascetical manner of life, detached itself more and more from this kind of task, the function of the deaconess became, especially in Syrian territory, a definite office in the community; she was now especially concerned in looking after women catechumens and candidates for baptism, in domestic pastoral work with Christian women in pagan families, and in caring for sick women. In the fourth century, as a consequence of the entry of the pagan masses into the Church, the office of deaconess increased even more in importance and attained its definitive form and full development.

As the office of deaconess cannot be shown to have existed in the Latin West before the fourth century, the widows who were already known to Hermas in Rome as a special order, probably retained the same functions (The name "deaconess" occurs for the first time at the Council of Nicaea, canon 19. - *Didasc.* 3 12, 1-4; Hermas, *Past. Vis.* 1, 4, 3). The deliberate creation of an institution so adapted to the talents and disposition of women is to that extent a praiseworthy original achievement of the early Christian Church. The benefits it brought caused later centuries to maintain it in principle even if in ever-different forms.

Christian charitable activity inevitably confronted the Church with a series of social problems, such as those of property and wealth, labour and poverty, which obliged her to adopt definite positions. The most detailed treatment of these is found in Clement of Alexandria, though his views cannot be taken as those of the Church as a whole. He maintains in principle the New Testament detachment from property and wealth, though his estimate of these is not so pessimistic as that of some other Christians. Wealth in itself does not exclude from the kingdom of heaven, just as poverty alone cannot guarantee access to it, but Clement is also profoundly convinced of the serious danger which wealth brings to any Christian. Whether wealth and property prove a curse to a Christian depends on whether or not he is the slave of these possessions and makes them the business of his life. Those who possess inner freedom in regard to them and bear their loss calmly, belong to the poor in spirit whom the Lord declared to be blessed. A right use is made of them when they are put to the use of the brethren (Clement of Alexandria, *Quis div. salv. passim; Paed.* 3, 35; *Strom.* 2, 22, 4; 4, 31, 1). Hence the high praise of almsgiving that is found in most writers of the age culminates, as far as pre-Constantinian times are concerned, in Cyprian's special treatise on this subject. Already in the so-called *Second Letter of Clement*, almsgiving had been ranked higher than fasting and prayer and with Cyprian it attains the rank of a means of grace by which the Christian can atone for daily faults committed after baptism (Clement, *Ad Cor.* 2, 16; Cyprian, *De op. et eleem.* 1). Without doubt the bishop's exhortations to benevolence were willingly followed by many Christians, as is proved by the forms of Christian charitable action which we have just described. Some in ascetical enthusiasm gave all they had or distributed their gifts without discretion, so that Origen for example utters the warning that the situation of anyone in need should be carefully investigated and appropriate help given (Cf. Hermas, *Pastor. Mand.* 4-6; Origen, *In Matth. Comm.* 61).

For all her welfare work, however, the Church in no way failed to proclaim the high personal worth of labour and she opposed the view of antiquity which regarded manual labour as an evil and a bitter necessity, as a sign of lack of freedom and of slavery. She followed the Jewish

and New Testament pattern in this and emphasized that even simple work was estimable and was preferable to the idle luxury of many pagans. Church ordinances simply regarded work as a duty and proclaimed that a Christian who was capable of working should not receive any relief from the community (*Did.* 12, 2-5; Aristides, *Apol.* 15; Tertullian, *De idol.* 5, 12; *Apol.* 41; Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 3, 11; *Didasc.* 2, 4, 3). It is only with Augustine that deeper reflection on the moral and religious meaning of labour began and led to the formation of a Christian ethic of work. The contribution which the Church of the third century made to the practical solution of the problem of labour was so comprehensive that it attracted the attention of the pagans. Tertullian reports how many of them, in light of this, said with ironic disdain, "Look how they love one another!" (*Apol.* 39). What was meant as derision, was in the last analysis high praise.

The Attitude of Early Christianity to Secular Civilization and Culture.

It was in accord with the fundamentally ascetical attitude of early Christianity that it regarded with marked reserve the amenities of late-antiquity civilization. Though Tertullian's rigorism may have gone too far in its radical rejection of most of civilization's benefits as the inventions of Pagan demons, even level-headed men condemned pagan luxury. Clement of Alexandria, for example, repudiated everything that served an exaggerated cultivation of beauty and the body and which degenerated into pleasure-seeking luxury, though he by no means opposed reasonable care for health and a moderate use of jewellery (Tertullian, *De cor. passim; De cultu fem. passim;* Clement of Alexandria, *Paed.* 2, 8 and 11-12; 3, 2 and 10-11; Min. Felix, *Oct.* 12, 38; Cyprian, *De laps.* 6). The great threats to the Christian ideal of morality represented by pagan entertainments, gladiatorial contests, theatrical shows, and dances, were deliberately shunned if for no other reason than their connexion with idolatry, even though this was often no longer very perceptible. But the discussions which Tertullian and Novatian had to engage in on the subject show that many Christians found it difficult to free themselves from their deep-rooted liking for these things (*De spect. passim*, especially 1; Novatian, *De spect.* 2-3).

The estimate of pagan literature and learning by Christian writers of the third century is very mixed. The Greeks with some reservations show themselves far readier than the Latins (excepting Lactantius) to attribute importance to them. Clement of Alexandria could not concur in the opinion of those who regarded philosophy as an invention of the devil. He even accorded to Greek philosophy a providential significance as a preparation for Christianity, while admitting that some of its representatives, in their preoccupation with words and style, had let themselves be misled into losing sight of the relevant content. Philosophical thought, even in Christianity, can still help to prepare the way for faith. In literature, Clement sets a positive value on tragedy because it teaches men to raise their eyes heavenwards (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 6, 17, 156; 6, 8, 66; 6, 17, 153; 1, 5, 28; 6, 16, 151; 5, 14, 122; *Protr.* 4. 59). Origen, too, felt and expressed open-minded sympathy with many achievements of secular learning. In his controversy with Celsus he defended himself against the latter's accusation that he was illogical in adducing the testimony of pagan philosophers in favour of the immortality of the soul; he also contested the assertion that the dialectical method was rejected by Christians. Origen recognized the importance of secular studies for Christian instruction, but compared unfavourably the sophistry and rhetoric of many teachers with the simplicity and conscientiousness of the evangelists (Origen, *Contra Cels.* 3, 81; 6, 7; 6, 14; 3, 39). The attitude of Hippolytus was much more reserved. He explained the rise of heresies by their dependence on Greek philosophies, though he still gave Greek literature preference over the wisdom of Egypt, or of Babylon and the Chaldees (Hippolytus, *Refut. I proem.;* 10, 5; 10, 34).

On the Latin side, Minucius Felix arrived at a radical repudiation of pagan poetry and literature, the mythological content of which rendered it unsuitable, he considered, for use in Christian education of young people. He was just as unwilling to overlook philosophical scepticism in the question of knowledge of God, though he passes a favourable judgment on the endeavours of other thinkers to arrive at a true conception of God (Min. Felix, *Oct.* 23,1; 23, 8; 38, 5; 20, 1-2; 14, 2; 31, l). Tertullian's attitude was of a particularly complex nature and was, of course, expressed with varying intensity and differently based according to his theme and the moment of writing. In his early apologetic works, the possibility of attributing some value to philosophical endeavour is at least indirectly conceded when Tertullian himself quotes the critical works of pagan philosophers on religion for the purposes of his own argument (*Ad nat.* 1, 10; 2, 4-7; 2, 16; *Apol.*14, 19, 24, 46-47). In his polemical works of controversy against heresies his judgment on the value of philosophy is more sceptical; he makes philosophy at least partly responsible for erroneous doctrine and its theses are only utilizable when they agree with Christian truth (*De praesc. 7; 43; De resurr. carn. 3; De an. 2.*). His practical, ascetical writings then reveal intense pessimism in his judgment of all pagan literature, which can make scarcely any contribution to the formation of Christian moral life. Consequently, the profession of teacher in pagan schools is intolerable for a Christian; Tertullian could not conceive of anyone teaching something of which he was not genuinely convinced (*De spect.* 30; *De pat.* 1; *De paen.* 1; *De cor.* 10). Here something of the contradictions in Tertullian's soul become apparant. He himself possessed a comprehensive knowledge of pagan literature and learning which he often placed in a very distinguished manner at the service of his work as a Christian writer. Yet he contested in an increasingly radical manner, and as it were despite himself, the idea that these studies possessed any worth whatsoever for the culture of a Christian. Cyprian, as a man of deeds, only expressed himself sporadically on these questions; according to him, the truths of Christian faith have no need of rhetoric; pagan tragedy only taught immoral behaviour, pagan ethics failed to provide motives for virtue and dealt with empty words, "but we are philosophers not in words but in deeds" (*Ad Don.* 2; 8-9; *De bono pat.* 2-3). Even more incisive in form is the uncompromising rejection of pagan literature found in the apocryphal writings of the third century that are attributed to Cyprian. It is only shortly before the turning-point under Constantine that in Lactantius there is found a Christian writing in Latin whose regard for the greatness of the past of Rome made possible a more favourable estimate of its literary achievements. As a former teacher of rhetoric, he also saw some value in this branch of knowledge, and he found more in philosophy, which teaches how to distinguish truth and falsity, even though pagan philosophy had often failed. Cicero remained for him *eloquentiae unicum exemplar*, and he esteemed Virgil as the *poeta summus* of Latin literature, but in regard to the theatre he expressed certain reservations (*Div. instit.* 1, 1, 9; 3, 13, 17ff.; *Epit.* 25, 7ff.; on Cicero and Virgil: *De opif.* 20, 5; *Div. instit.* 1, 19, 3).

The counterpart to the predominantly unfavourable estimate of pagan literature and philosophy made by the majority of third-century Christian writers was their proud awareness that in the Old Testament, the Gospels, Epistles and other documents of apostolic tradition, they possessed an intellectual patrimony far superior to the wisdom of the Greeks. The works of the apologists and exegetes and the achievements of the writers of Alexandria and North Africa who professed the Christian faith, represented in the eyes of their fellow-believers an intellectual life which provided a perfectly adequate substitute for what they had given up. If Christianity in the third century was not yet able to develop any systematic and specifically Christian ideal of culture, it nevertheless laid foundations upon which a later age could build.

The Early Christian Church and the Pagan State.

Of particular interest is the relation which developed in the third century between the pagan State and the Church. The Christian society became clearly aware of her growing inner strength and felt herself to be the "great Church." This increase in strength within and without was not hidden from the pagan State either, and it now reckoned with her as a power that required the adoption of a new attitude. This consciousness existed on both sides and is most strikingly revealed by Cyprian's proud remark that the emperor Decius heard the news of the rebellion of a rival usurper much more calmly than the announcement of the election of a new Bishop of Rome (*Ep.* 55, 9). Both sides considered the relationship afresh and the outcome was of far-reaching importance for the period that followed. Among the Christians there was really only one voice at the beginning of the century that expressed a radical rejection of the Roman State; Hippolytus saw the power of Satan behind the Roman *imperium*, he envisioned it as represented by the first beast in the Apocalypse (13:1f.) and the fourth beast in Daniel; in diabolical imitation the Roman empire copied the faithful Christian people which the Lord had gathered together from all nations and tongues (*In Dan. comm.* 4, 9; *De antichr.* 25). Such a judgment expresses the overwhelming pressure that sometimes weighed upon a Christendom fixed within a structure of power that worshipped its emperor as a god. The position of the Alexandrian teachers was quite different. Clement was fundamentally loyal to the pagan State when he affirmed the obligation of taxes and military service and recognized Roman law; if that State persecuted the Church, the hand of Providence was to be worshipped (*Paed.* 2, 14, 1; 3, 91, 3; 2, 117, 2; 3, 91, 2; *Strom.* 1, 171 and 4, 79, 1). The only limit to this recognition was set by the cult of the emperor and the idolatry encouraged by the State. Origen is the first to attempt to cope theoretically with the relation between the Church and the pagan State. On the basis of Romans 1:13ff., he derives the power of the *Imperium Romanum* from God, who has conferred judicial authority on it in particular. To the intrusive and insistent question of how a State authority that came from God could combat the faith and religion of the Christians, he answered that all the gifts of God can be abused and that those who held the power of the State would have to render an account before the judgment-seat of God (*In Rom. comm.* 9, 26). God's providence permitted persecutions but always gave back peace again (*Contra Cels.* 8, 70). In principle the Christian showed loyalty to this State and followed all its laws as long as they did not stand in contradiction to the clear demands of his faith, as, for instance, the required recognition of the cult of the emperor did (*In Rom. comm.* 9, 29). Origen, however, thought that a special providential mission had been assigned to the Roman empire; its unity which comprised the civilized world of that time and the *pax Romana* effective within it, had according to God's will smoothed the way for the Christian mission and so the empire acted, ultimately, in the service of the faith (*Contra Cels.* 2, 30). Tertullian, too, for all his bold defence of the freedom of the Christian conscience in the face of the Roman State, was profoundly convinced that it was under the authority of God. As the God of the Christians is therefore also the God of the emperor, they pray for the emperor's well-being and in fact for the continuance of the Roman Government (*Apol.* 30; 32; 39. Dionysius of Alexandria also stresses prayer by the Christians for the emperor: *Euseb. HE* 7, 1. The prayer *pro salute imperatorum* is an inheritance from very early Christian times, cf. L. Biehl, *Das liturgische Gebet für Kaiser und Reich;* Paderborn 1937). Tertullian's positive affirmation of the Roman State, in principle, is not altered by the frequent reservations he has to express regarding political activity by Christians. These latter spring from his conception of a considerable permeation of public life by Satanic influences which make Christians strangers in this world despite their loyalty as citizens (*De idol.* 17; *De cor.* 13).

It is not surprising that with so much recognition in principle of the authority of the Roman State, contacts in practice between it and the Church became frequent in the third century. Origen could lecture to the womenfolk of the Syrian rulers in Antioch; his correspondence with Emperor Philippus Arabs is a significant sign of tolerance. At the beginning of the reign of Valerian many Christians worked in the Roman imperial palace (*Euseb. HE* 6, 21, 3-4; 6, 36, 3; 7, 10, 3). Emperor Gallienus ordered by rescript that the Christians should be restored their consecrated places and he forbade further molestation (Ibid. 7, 13). The Christian community of Antioch could even dare to appeal directly to Caesar Aurelian for an edict in a lawsuit between itself and the deposed Paul of Samosata (Ibid. 7, 30, 18-19).

All this shows that in the third century the relation between State and Church cannot in many spheres be regarded as one of hostility nor, from the point of view of the Church, even as a matter of indifference. A process is perceptible which may be described as one of gradual mutual approach even though the Church unmistakably expressed the limits of her recognition of Roman power. Only twice, under Decius and Diocletian, was this development harshly interrupted. This occurred because both still believed in the possibility of a violent solution. How completely their opinions failed to recognize the signs of the times was shown by the enormously rapid change after Constantine's victory. A view of the exhaustive way the foundations of a reconciliation between Church and State were laid even in the third century shows that the events following the failure of the Diocletian persecution were not as revolutionary a turning-point as they have often been interpreted to be.

pp 346-355

The Development of the Church's Constitution in the Third Century.

The third century led in many ways to a further development of the Church's constitution. In addition to the three grades of the ministry in the second century, new lower clerical grades develop, the episcopal office is increasingly consolidated and gains in prestige, the organization of the various individual communities becomes more complex, and in the East, in particular, ecclesiastical provinces take form; the system of synods receives new and intense impetus, and finally, the pre-eminent position of the Roman church and its bishop grows unmistakably stronger by recognition and by contradiction. The sum of these developments in the Church's constitution confirms that here, too, Christianity had grown from its origins into the "great Church" of early Christian times.

The Clergy.

The existing orders of bishop, presbyter, and deacon remained unchanged in intrinsic significance, of course, but in many ways were more sharply differentiated, and to some extent, too, underwent an extension in the scope of their functions. The conditions for admission to a particular ministry were further developed, and for the office of bishop a deeper theological grounding was attempted. This strongly emphasizes the evergrowing importance of the bishops for the life of the Church as a whole in the third century. The various problems within the Church, such as the defence against Gnosticism and Montanism, the greater demands made on the authorities by the various waves of persecution, the elucidation of the question of penance, and the struggle

against threats of schism, display a monarchical episcopate functioning fully in the third century and in unquestionable possession of the plenary powers that its ministry conferred. The bishop was now the undisputed leader of the ecclesiastical community in all the expressions of its life; he proclaims the faith to it by preaching, and is ever vigilant for the purity of the faith, the correct performance of the liturgy, especially in baptism and the celebration of the Eucharist; he is the guardian of Church discipline and responsible for the observance of the Christian ideal of life by his flock. He guides its works of charity from day to day, and organizes its relief measures in times of need and crisis. He represents his community in its relation with other local churches or at the synodal assemblies of church leaders of a province, which were now becoming important, or at even larger regional assemblies. In this way the bishop became an important link between the individual community and the Church as a whole, and an effective furtherer of Church unity.

It is understandable that theological reflection, too, turned more and more to an office in the Church, the holder of which occupied so central a position in Church life and in the minds of the faithful. A deeper grasp was sought of its nature and basis, with a consequent emphasis on the duties that such an office imposes. Origen, more than any other writer of the third century, concerned himself with the ecclesiastical ministry. He met many of its representatives during his lifetime and in his maturity was himself ordained priest. Not for a moment did he doubt the right and justification of the ministry. The bishop's authority is founded on our Lord's words conferring the power of the keys on Peter; consequently, it is God who calls a man to such an office, and the choice should always be left to God when it is a question of appointing a new bishop in a community (*In Matt, comm.* 12, 14; *In Lev. hom.* 6, 6; *In Num. hom.* 22, 4; *In Jesu Nave hom.* 32, 2). The holder of this office has the task of leading men to the kingdom of God, consequently, he should be a model of every virtue (*In Matth.* comm. 14). He has to preach the word of God, therefore he must read and meditate the Holy Scriptures, not preaching his own ideas, but what the Holy Spirit has taught him (*In Ezech. hom.* 2, 2). He has to accomplish liturgical worship and he should only raise in prayer hands that are undefiled (*In Rom. comm.* 9, 42). Origen evidently holds the view that the efficacy of priestly authority is bound up with the personal holiness of the man who bears it (*In Matth. comm.* 12, 14; De or. 28, 8). Hence his unmistakably sharp judgment on the clergy of his time, when he compared the reality with the ideal held out to them. The Church which ought to be the temple of God and the house of prayer, had become a den of thieves; bishops, priests, and deacons were full of avarice, ambitious of power, ignorant and even irreligious; ambitious men intrigued for these offices which had become a traffic and which were transmitted from unworthy occupants to unworthy successors (*In Matth. comm.* 16, 21-2; 15, 26; *In Ezech. hom.* 10, 1; *In Num. hom.* 22, 4). In the choice of a new bishop, therefore, the community should be present and take care that the man chosen is outstanding by reason of his learning, holiness, and virtue (*In Lev. hom.* 6, 3).

In the West, it was Cyprian who, a few years after Origen, was the first Latin writer to try to determine the nature and function of the office of bishop in the Church. There can be only one bishop in the local church, who is its judge, and takes the place of Christ (*Ep.* 59, 5). The bishop is in the Church, and the Church in the bishop; anyone who is not with the bishop, is not in the Church, either (*Ep.* 66, 8). The Church, by the will of her founder, is an episcopal Church; "it is built up on the bishops and is ruled by them as overseers" (*Ep.* 33, 1: "… ut ecclesia super episcopos constituatur et omnis actus ecclesiae per eosdem praepositos gubernetur."). At his election, God in some way expresses his consent, and consequently, the bishop is responsible to God alone (*Ep.* 59, 5; 55, 21; 69, 17; 72, 3). But the responsibility is not limited to his own community; it extends to the whole Church. Origen, too, emphasized that a bishop is called to the service of the whole Church (*In Cant. comm.* 3: "qui vocatur ad episcopatum, non ad principatum vocatur, sed ad servitium totius ecclesiae."). With

Cyprian, this responsibility is expressed in the serious concern of the bishop for maintenance of ecclesiastical unity (*Ep.* 73, 26). He links the idea of succession with the office of bishop by saying that it is founded on our Lord's words to Peter (Mt 16:18), and from there proceed the ordination of bishops and the organization of the Church through the changes and succeeding course of time (*Ep.* 33, 1: "inde per temporum et successionum vices episcoporum ordinatio et ecclesiae ratio decurrit."). According to Cyprian, Bishop Stephen of Rome, too, claims to have the see of Peter *per successionem* (*Ep.* 75, 17).

On account of the importance of the office of bishop, the appointment of a man to the position had to be ensured by a sound method of choice. Like Origen, Cyprian, too, expects the community to collaborate in it. This was required because the congregation would be acquainted with a candidate who was a member of it, and be able to form a judgment of his manner of life (*Ep.* 67, 5; 59, 5; *populi suffragium;* 55, 8). The bishops of the province were to play a decisive part in the choice, too, and its validity depended on their consent, which included a judgment about the legitimacy of the way in which the election had been carried out (*Ep.* 67, 5; *episcoporum iudicium;* 59, 5; *coepiscoporum consensus*). The right of consecrating the chosen candidate also belonged to these bishops; the Canons of Hippolytus had already recognized this (Ibid. 67, 5 and *Trad, apost.* 2; 26, Botte). When it is stated, with a certain emphasis, that the bishop to be consecrated must have been chosen by the whole people, that must be understood in a way that does not exclude the collaboration of neighbouring bishops (Cf. K. Muller in *ZNW* 28; 1929, 276-8). Cyprian regards the method of election observed in North Africa as a divine tradition and apostolic custom, and one that was widespread (*Ep.* 67, 5: "traditio divina et apostolica observatio").

The Syrian *Didascalia* indicates in a very special way the pre-eminent position of the bishop in his community and pays homage to his dignity by the most laudatory expressions; he takes God's place in the community, he is the image of God and the mediator between him and the faithful (*Didasc.* 2, 18, 2; 2, 11; 2, 25, 7). In his office as preacher, he is "the mouth of God," encouraging righteousness, urging on to good works, enthusiastically extolling God's benefits, but speaking, too, of the future wrath at God's judgment (Ibid. 2, 28, 9; 2, 17, 6). The *Didascalia* speaks more insistently than any other pre-Constantinian work of the qualities required by the episcopate and the shortcomings that would exclude one from it. The first requirement is close familiarity with Holy Scripture, of which the bishop must be the interpreter. A wider intellectual formation is desirable, but is not an indispensable condition (Ibid. 2, 1, 2; 2, 5, 3). As all his conduct is to be a model to his flock, he must fulfill the highest demands on moral qualities and character (Ibid. 2, 6, 5). Guarantees of this are more likely to be provided by a certain maturity in age and so the bishop chosen should be fifty years old if possible, and in the case of a younger candidate, his real suitability should be determined by conscientious investigation (Ibid. 2, 1, 1-3). Access to episcopal office was barred to a man who had been married more than once; the manner of life of the wife and children had to be in harmony with the high dignity of the head of the family (Ibid. 2, 2, 1—4. There was, therefore, no obligation to celibacy yet in the third century; Canon 6 of the Synod of Elvira then imposed it on clerics from deacons upward). The presbyters or priests occupy, generally speaking, in the *Didascalia*, the position that the *Letters* of St Ignatius of Antioch had already assigned to them; they are the advisers and associates of the bishops, and collaborate particularly in judicial proceedings against a Christian, but have no claim to share by right the gifts of the community (Ibid. 2, 34, 3; 2, 46, 6; 2, 48, 4). The third century, however, also saw signs of increasing importance in the office of priest, at least in some of the regions to which Christianity had spread. This was connected with growing numbers of Christians in country districts for whom no bishop, but only a presbyter, could be appointed as leader of the community. This was certainly the case in Egypt

after the middle of the century as Dionysius of Alexandria testifies (In *Euseb. HE* 7, 24, 6-9; cf. also ibid. 6, 44, 2-5). It can scarcely be doubted that a village presbyter, appointed to such small communities, had also the right of celebrating the Eucharist. An extension of priestly faculties was also granted in times of need, such as persecutions, when the bishop, through arrest or flight, could no longer personally care for his flock. A letter of Cyprian is instructive here, which empowered presbyters and deacons in times of special peril through sickness, to hear the confessions of the lapsed and to reconcile them (*Ep.* 18, 1). Finally, the growth of priestly functions was due to the growth in this century of large Christian communities, often with several thousand members in the more important towns of the Roman Empire such as Rome, Carthage, Alexandria, and Antioch. The frequent mention of priests at the administration of baptism in the rite described by Hippolytus, is just as noticeable in this respect as the emphasis on the part they played in the ordination of new priests, on whom they laid hands with the bishop (*Trad, apost.* 8; 21; 37, 49-51 Botte). In Rome, the setting up of the *tituli* as actual pastoral districts gave a more independent position to the priests to whom they were entrusted than was possible in smaller communities. The care of Christians in the countryside around Alexandria by travelling priests (περιοδευταί) (*Euseb. HE* 8, 13, 7; *Epist. episc. Aegypt.* in *PG* 10, 1566) at the beginning of the fourth century, already points clearly to the incipient development that led to the "parish," which likewise was to give the presbyter a new and wider sphere of activities, and so bring increased importance to his office.

In the daily life of an average Christian community, the presbyters, however, were still less prominent than the deacons. As the chief official assistants of their bishops, especially for the care of the poor, and in the administration of funds, they came into more frequent contact with individual members of the congregation and so, as the *Didascalia* says, were the bishop's "ear and mouth, heart and soul" (*Didasc.* 2, 44, 4). As the deacon had to keep the bishop informed about all that happened in the community, discussions of its affairs gave him, by the nature of things, much influence. The *Didascalia* considers that the well-being of the community depended on harmonious collaboration between bishop and deacon (Ibid, and 3, 13, 7).

The growing needs of the communities in the third century finally led to the development of further grades in the series of clerical ministries which, however, all remained below the rank of deacon. They are listed in the catalogue of the Roman clergy which Bishop Cornelius drew up in a letter to Fabius of Antioch (*Euseb. HE* 6. 43, 11; they are also all mentioned, with the exception of the *ostiarius*, by Cyprian). According to this, there were seven subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, and fifty-two exorcists, lectors, and doorkeepers, in the Church's service. The holders of these offices mostly figured in a liturgical role, others had special tasks in connexion with corporate works of mercy, such as care for those mentally ill and for epileptics. The exorcists had charge of this latter task, whilst the sub-deacons are to be regarded as direct assistants of the deacons, with the acolytes, in turn, as helpers of the subdeacons. The most frequently mentioned office among the minor orders is that of the lector (Tertullian *De Praescr.* 41 mentions it; the East at first only had the grade of lector, reader, αναγνώστης), whose duty was to read aloud at divine service; this presupposed a certain education in the man entrusted with it, and gave special prestige. The doorkeeper looked after the entrances to the place of divine worship, and kept out unauthorized persons.

Appointment to these offices, as to those of priest and deacon, belonged exclusively to the bishop who, of course, could consult his flock about suitable candidates. The bishop handed the lector the book of readings when he was inducted into his office, but as the *Traditio apostolica* emphasizes, he received no ordination. The subdeacon was not ordained by imposition of hands, either (*Trad, apost.* 12 and 14; 43 Botte).

The beginnings of the so-called "irregularities," or canonical impediments are already clearly perceptible in the third century. As has already been said, anyone who had once been obliged to perform public canonical penance was incapable of receiving holy orders; similarly, baptism received in sickness *(baptismus clinicorum),* which was considered to show a lack of courage to confess the faith, excluded from ecclesiastical office; finally, voluntary self-mutilation was regarded an an impediment to orders, though in Origen's time this was not yet generally recognized.

As the bishop and deacons were completely occupied with their duties, in the larger communities, it was the obligation of the faithful to see to their upkeep; this was a charge on the general gifts of the faithful for the whole needs of the Church (*Didasc.* 2, 25,4 and 14). The other clerics were dependent on private means, or on their income from a profession in civil life. Cyprian even had to complain of the excessive acquisitiveness of some bishops, and the Synod of Elvira was obliged to lay down quite definite regulations about the clergy's commercial transactions (Cyprian, *De laps.* 6; Synod. Illib. can. 19).

Little information is available about the training of the clergy for its religious and ecclesiastical tasks at this period; it was not yet subject to fixed rules laid down by the Church authorities. Consequently, the cleric obtained his theological knowledge first of all in the lessons of the catechumenate and further by private study, sometimes, perhaps, with a learned Christian teacher, who after the fashion of the philosophers of antiquity, now also gave lessons in the "philosophy" of Christianity. Knowledge of liturgical functions was provided by direct participation in the prayer and worship of his church. The growing variety of ecclesiastical orders provided the possibility of being tested in a lower grade, and of gradually acquiring deeper religious knowledge and increasing familiarity with the tasks of a higher office (On this, see *Harnack Miss* 860-6).

The Bishop and his Church.

The growth of the Christian communities in the third century and the development of their organization which this involved, has already been pointed out several times. The elaboration of divine worship in the liturgy of baptism and the celebration of the Eucharist, and the creation of more grades in the ministry, are among the most significant phenomena of this kind. In this connexion, we have still to speak specifically about the position of the individual church under its bishop as the holder of ecclesiastical property. This, particularly in the large town communities of the third century, was becoming of considerable importance. The gifts of the faithful which were expended on the manifold activities of the local church, were collected in a common fund which probably became a permanent institution quite early (Ignatius of Antioch was already familiar with it: *Ad Polyc.* 4, 3; and so was Justin, for *Apol.* 67, 12 implies its existence). In Tertullian's time, these gifts had assumed the character of a voluntary monthly personal contribution, the proceeds of which were placed in the community chest *(arca)* (*Apol.* 39; the common chest of Alexandria was called γλωσσόκομον, cf. Origen, *In Matth. comm.* 11,9). In this way, the local churches everywhere acquired property and funds, the control and administration of which ultimately belonged to their bishops. As well as contributions in money and things in daily use (foodstuffs and clothes), there soon came gifts of houses and land, so that even before Constantine's time, the property of the church communities consisted of money and real estate (Cf. Tertullian, *Ad Scap.* 3; Origen, *In Lev. hom.* 11, 1; Cyprian, *De op. et eleem., passim.* On the property of the Roman church in houses and cemeteries, cf. *Liber pontif.* 26; *Euseb. HE* 4, 23, 10; for Antioch, ibid. 7, 30, 7). The existence of this church property was not unknown to the civil authorities; Tertullian and Origen, of course, discussed quite openly the problems connected with it. Since this property was not touched by the State, except in the abnormal circumstances of various particular persecutions, this presupposes the recognition of the

individual communities as the legal owners in civil law (Cf. G. Kruger, *Die Rechtsstellung der vorkonstantinischen Kirche;* Stuttgart 1935, reprinted Amsterdam 1961, 191-226). The decrees of the State authorities after the end of the Diocletian persecution, which provided for the return of the confiscated property to the various Christian communities as its legal owners, similarly indicate that the capacity of the churches to own property was recognized by the State in the third century (Ibid. 231-42). This development, too, shows clearly that the Church of the third century had grown into a condition and circumstances which plainly distinguish it from the preceding period, and justify the designation "great church" of early Christian times.

Another development in the sphere of organization was also important for many episcopal churches. They grew not only in numbers, but also in geographical extent. When, in Egypt (Cf. *Euseb. HE* 7, 24, 6. On the division of the Roman community into districts for Pastoral purposes, see *Harnack, Miss* 854-60), there were churches in the country which were served either by a resident priest or by a cleric from the bishop's centre, it followed that as the communities came into existence, they did not automatically receive a bishop as their head, but remained subject to the bishop of the nearest larger community. In that way a development began in the third century which led in the direction of a bishop's centre, it followed that as the communities came into existence, A re-shaping of organization was taking place which led to two new forms: a bigger episcopal diocese comprising several Christian communities in town and country, but with only one bishop at their head, and a Christian community which received a pastor of its own for its immediate religious needs; he however, whether priest, or, as in a few places, chorepiscopus (*Euseb. HE* 7, 30, 10; Syn. Ancr., can. 13), was always subject to the bishop.

Forms of Organization Larger than the Local Community.

The coming into existence of the "great church" is made very tangibly clear by the association of the various individual communities under their bishops into a higher structure, the church province. The rise of this was determined particularly by two factors. One of these followed from the method of the early Christian mission which first tried to gain a footing m populous towns, which would mean the provincial capitals in the Roman Empire, and attempted to found its first communities there. Normally, the evangelization of further larger centres in the province would begin from the bishop's community in the provincial capital, and the new churches that had come about in that way naturally maintained close relations with the mother-church. Consequently, all the daughter communities founded by a central episcopal church were bound together by mutual ties. In this association a certain leading role naturally fell to the bishop of the mother-church, and from the fourth century, this was expressed by the title "metropolitan." But more decisive than the link created by such missions, was the formation of ecclesiastical provinces by the establishment of synods which, from the end of the second century, brought together the bishops of specific regions to discuss important Church affairs. The question of the date of Easter, and the Montanist movement, are mentioned as motives for such meetings which, of course, were not limited to the bishops of particular political provinces, but extended beyond these. In this way, a synod on the occasion of the Easter controversy brought together the bishops of Caesarea in Palestine, Aelia, Ptolemais, and Tyre, whose sees, in fact, lay in two provinces, namely, Syria and Palestine. These bishops also kept in touch with the bishop of Alexandria and came to an agreement with him about the date of Easter (*Euseb. HE* 5, 23, 25). In the same way, bishops from various civil provinces such as Cappadocia, Galatia, Cicilia, and others, took part in the middle of the third century in the Synod of Iconium in Asia Minor (Cf. Cyprian, *Ep.* 75, 7). In any case, such synods were a regular custom in the East at the beginning of

the third century, while in North Africa they were still unknown, as appears from a remark of Tertullian which also shows that such synodal assemblies were felt to be an important and impressive outward manifestation of Christianity (Tertullian, *De ieiun.* 13). It is clear from the list of those who took part in the Council of Nicaea that, at least in the East, the association of the local churches into church provinces was later adapted to the frontiers of the political provinces, for the list follows the order of the latter (Cf. E. Schwarz in *AAM NF* 13; 1937, 14 ff). The same Council took for granted the existence of the ecclesiastical provinces by assigning to all the bishops of a province the right to install a bishop in his diocese and reserving the right of confirming this to the metropolitan of the province (Conc. Nic., can. 4).

In the Latin West, the tendency for wider associations of this kind only appeared later, and then assumed different forms. What happened was not really the formation of several ecclesiastical provinces in the proper sense, as in the East, but directly a supra-provincial association of all the episcopal sees in North Africa on the one hand and of central and southern Italy on the other. The leadership of these forms of organization fell to the bishops of Rome and Carthage, particular weight attaching to the fact that the communities of these great cities had been the starting-points in the christianization of the territories of which they were now the ecclesiastical leaders. When the Bishop of Carthage summoned synods in the third century, his invitation was addressed to the bishops of all the civil provinces in North Africa, and was so accepted (Cf. for example, the introduction to the *Sententiae episcoporum.* They come from the provinces of Africa (proconsularis), Numidia, Mauretania; cf. the list of the synods from 251-6 with the numbers of those taking part and the names of the provinces represented in *DHGE* 1, 747-50). Similarly, the synods held by the Roman bishops of the third century brought together all the bishops there were in Italy at that time. Consequently, Rome and Carthage were ecclesiastical administrative centres of a rank far superior to that of a mere ecclesiastical metropolis. Two such higher centres also became increasingly prominent in the third century East, Antioch and Alexandria. In Antioch, synods met which were attended by the bishops of all Syria and of eastern Asia Minor, like the one planned in 251 against Novatianism (*Euseb. HE* 6, 46, 3), or those of the years 264-8, which were particularly concerned with the case of Paul of Samosata (Ibid. 7, 5, 1-2). The missionary interests of the Antioch bishops extended further than the territory of a church province, too, as their concern about Cicilia or Osrhoëne shows (Ibid. 6, 12, 2). The same applies to the episcopal see of the Egyptian capital, whose occupant controlled the affairs of the episcopate of the Lybian Pentapolis, although this belonged administratively to Crete. Here, too, the third century development was confirmed by the Council of Nicaea (Conc. Nic., can. 6): all the bishoprics of Egypt, Libya, and the Pentapolis were made subject to the bishop of Alexandria, and at the same time, express reference was also made to the similar pre-eminence of Rome. Antioch had similar rights, obviously in the sphere of the political diocese of Oriens. In this way, the occupants of these two eastern episcopal sees were recognized as a sort of higher metropolitans, and so the foundation was laid for the development of later patriarchates. There is only a hint in Canon 6 of the Council of Nicaea that similar tendencies were showing themselves in other places. It is only Canon 2 of the Council of Constantinople (381), that makes it clear that the bishops of Ephesus, Heracleia, and Caesarea were also trying to obtain such supra-metropolitan rights for the political dioceses of Asia, Thrace, and Pontus — without, in the long run, succeeding.