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Ministering Between Heaven and Earth: John Chrysostom's Theology and Practice of Church Leadership

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PhD in Systematic Theology

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Signed Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where stated otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Beatrice Victoria H. Ang

August 31, 2021

Abstract

This thesis systematically explores Chrysostom's theology and practice of church leadership. It identifies major themes from Chrysostom's treatise, *De sacerdotio*, and discusses them in the larger context of his theological presuppositions and historical situation. Reflections on the contemporary significance of Chrysostom's insights are given at the end of each major chapter and in the appendix.

Chapter 1 gives the rationale, methodology, and research limits of the thesis. It discusses what is lacking in many theological studies of Chrysostom's views on church leadership and proposes to address the lack by employing a theological method that emphasises the interrelationship of his theological ideas whilst taking advantage of the revival in Chrysostomian studies that emphasise the historical and sociocultural influences present in his works. After discussing the background of *De sacerdotio*, interrelated themes are identified for further investigation in the next three chapters. These themes are 1) preaching and soul care; 2) asceticism and angelic virtue; and 3) episcopal authority and management.

Chapter 2 discusses preaching and its use in soul care and community building. After presenting a brief review of Chrysostom's contributions to hermeneutics and preaching as noted in modern scholarship, it argues, from *De sacerdotio* and various exegetical homilies, that Chrysostom had a much broader definition of preaching than is usually recognised. His understanding and practice of it is better described as persuasive teaching. The discussion is then placed in the larger context of his understanding of the human soul and of "soul care". Since Chrysostom viewed the soul as embodied, soul sickness, which he often associated with heterodoxy and moral failure due to uncontrolled passions, can and often do have material causes. The natural ability to overcome the passions incited by physical and biological conditions rests in the intellect, a faculty of the soul. The intellect gives human beings the ability to discern, will, and argue. Persuasive teaching is the best remedy for sick souls, as it creates experience and offers content to reinforce, challenge, or even replace a person's already held beliefs and ethics. Chrysostom exercised persuasive teaching for soul care and community building in several ways, including through preaching homilies, manipulating sacred spaces, conducting liturgical processions, and using exclusion for church discipline. I propose that contemporary theologians and church leaders should similarly expand their understanding of preaching, since one's

approach to preaching and its reception can qualitatively change if preaching is understood not only as the transmission of divine revelation but as a healthy exercise for the soul.

Chapter 3 discusses Chrysostom's pursuit of asceticism and how this influenced his concept and exercise of "angelic virtue," a moral requirement for priests. Various studies on Chrysostom's approach to virtue formation have noted his interaction with Greco-Roman values and his strategic use of rhetoric, exemplars, and liturgical rites to achieve his pastoral aims. These strategies can be brought into a cohesive whole by recognising Chrysostom's presuppositions concerning the nature and destiny of human beings and the problem of sin and evil. Drawing primarily from Chrysostom's homilies in Genesis and various monastic treatises, I argue that he viewed angelic life as that carefree life which prelapsarian humans were able to live because of God's gratuitous and supernatural gifts. Because of sin, humanity lost God's supernatural gifts and the angelic life, but Christ won these gifts back for them. Although the ultimate restoration of the angelic life is at a future resurrection, Christians are presently able to exercise angelic living through synergistic cooperation with the supernatural grace Christ obtained for them. This is angelic virtue. These soteriological presuppositions, along with early and memorable exposure to ministry-centric ascetic training, impacted Chrysostom's perception of the society in which he lived, the kind of virtues he found commendable, and the ways he attempted to cultivate angelic virtue through the monastery, church, and household. The role of angelic virtue in virtue formation is further explained through Chrysostom's use of the Christian concepts of rewards and the resurrection to spur his congregation to upright living. I then propose constructive ways that the same can be used to motivate contemporary Christian ministers toward a healthier and more balanced approach to ministry.

Chapter 4 discusses episcopal authority and management. For Chrysostom, episcopal authority rests on Christological and apostolic continuity in the areas of orthodoxy, ministry, and the endorsement of other legitimate bishops. His reflections on said categories were necessitated by legitimacy issues in the episcopal situation in Antioch and useful when he ascended to the see of Constantinople as an outsider. His clear convictions about the limits and responsibilities of episcopal authority also impacted his interactions with political powers, his clergy, and various episcopal figures. Chrysostom's theological ideals were often challenged by the harsh reality of

ministry and further complicated by the political environment in Constantinople. While he clung to certain theological commitments, he had to abandon others, leading to choices that had both positive and negative impact on himself and the people under his care. Finally, since Chrysostom's views on apostolic succession stem from his Christology, I compare his interpretation of Christ's High Priesthood with that of the Christian priest. For Chrysostom, the priest represents Christ not at the level of being but in the act of ministry—a ministry characterised by condescension and mediation. Inspired by Chrysostom, I argue that it is therefore in the act of ministry that a priest arrives at a mystical identification with Christ, where *theosis* can be a present reality but also still a reality to come. This privilege also extends to lay ministers, if Chrysostom is right that lay ministry is an extension of priestly ministry.

The appendix revisits and expands on four areas for contemporary reflection that were previously introduced. This includes appropriating what was learned from Chrysostom for rethinking the relationship between the laity and the ordained as conversation; exploring the natural and supernatural aspects of synergistic virtue formation in the context of the church; clarifying the interplay of individuality and community in the goals of church leadership; and rethinking the political impact of church leaders in contemporary society.

Lay Summary

This work explores John Chrysostom's views on church leadership. Chrysostom was an important church leader who lived from the latter half of the fourth to the early fifth centuries. He served as a priest for about thirty years in Antioch and six years as bishop of Constantinople, which was a coveted position in the then capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. He was highly regarded for being a person of good moral character, for his championship of the care of the poor, and for being a skilful preacher. Nonetheless, he had his share of critics concerning aspects of church management, including how he dealt with ascetics, his clergy, fellow bishops, and certain powerful political leaders in his congregation. Chrysostom's prolific output in the form of homilies, treatises, and letters, analysed alongside his unique historical circumstances and sociocultural background, provide a wealth of insight into church leadership that can be valuable for contemporary churches. This work especially reflects on the contemporary significance of Chrysostom's ideas and strategies in the areas of preaching, the formation of Christian virtues, and church authority. In relation to these, it also presents insights into his understanding of human beings, their make-up and why they were made, and what is their ultimate destiny. Because Chrysostom's convictions were challenged by the real hardships of leading people in the context of the fourth century church, much can be learned from both his shortcomings and his successes.

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Edinburgh, Scotland

August 24, 2021

Soli Deo Gloria

Dedication

To the matriarch of the Ho family, my maternal grandmother, *Maria Jesusita*

and

To my parents, *Victor* and *Gloria*, for making our home a “little church” and being the first to introduce me to the hope of eternal life

Abbreviations

John Chrysostom's Works

Ad Theod.	*Ad Theodorum lapsum 1-2*
Adv. opp. vit. mon.	*Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae*
C. anom. hom.	*Contra Anomoeos hom. 1-12*
Cat.	*Catecheses ad illuminandos 1-8*
C. eos qui subintr.	*Contra eos qui subintroductae habent virgines*
C. Iud. et theat.	*Contra Iudos et theatra*
Comp. reg. et mon.	*Comparatio regis et monachi*
Compunct. Dem.	*Ad Demetrium de compunctione*
Compunct. Stelech.	*Ad Stelechium de compunctione*
Cum presb. ord.	*Sermo cum presbyter fuit ordinatus*
De Bab. c. Iul. et gent.	*De s. Babyla contra Iulianum et gentiles*
De Bab. hom.	*De s. Babyla*
De Bern. et Prosd.	*De ss. Bernice et Prosdoce*
De capt. Eutr.	*De capto Eutropio*
De christ. div.	*De Christi divinitate = C. anom. hom. 12*
De Dros.	*De s. Droside*
De Laz. conc.	*De Lazaro conciones 1-7*
De Macab. hom.	*De Macabeis hom. 1-2*
De Melet.	*De s. Meletio*
De paen. hom.	*De paenitentia hom. 1-9*
De Pelag.	*De s. Palagia*
De Phoca	*De s. Phoca*
De recip. Sev.	*De recipiendo Severiano*
De regressu	*De regressu*
De sac.	*De sacerdotio*
De sanct. mart.	*De ss. martyribus*
De stat.	*De statuis hom. 1-21 = Ad populum Antiochenum*
De stud. praes.	*De studio praesentium*
De virg.	*De virginitate*

Ep. ad Innoc.	*Epistulae ad Innocentum*
Ep. ad Olymp.	*Epistulae ad Olympiadem*
Exp. in ps.	*Expositiones in psalmos*
In 1 Cor. hom.	*In epistulam I ad Corinthios hom. 1-44*
In 1 Tim. hom.	*In epistulam I ad Timotheum hom. 1-18*
In 2 Tim. hom.	*In epistulam II ad Timotheum hom. 1-10*
In Act. apost. hom.	*In Acta apostolorum hom. 1-55*
In ascen.	*In ascensionem d. n. Iesu Christi*
In Barlaam	*In s. Barlaam*
In Col. hom.	*In epistulam ad Colossenses hom. 1-12*
In Eph. hom.	*In epistulam ad Ephesios hom. 1-24*
In Eustath.	*In s. Eustathium*
In Eutr.	*In Eutropium*
In fac. ei rest.	*In illud: In faciem ei restiti*
In Gen. hom.	*Hom. 1-67 in Genesim*
In Heb. hom.	*In epistulam ad Hebraeos hom. 1-34*
In Ioh. hom.	*In Iohannem hom. 1-88*
In Iuv. et Max.	*In Iuventinum et Maximum*
In Lucian.	*In s. Lucianum*
In mart. aegypt.	*In martyres Aegyptios*
In mart. omn.	*In martyres omnes*
In Matt. hom.	*In Matthaeum hom. 1-90*
Inan. glor. et ed. lib.	*De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*
In Rom. hom.	*In epistulam ad Romanos hom. 1-32*
In Romanum	*In s. Romanum*
Pecc. fratr. non evulg.	*Peccata fratrum non evulganda*
Post. reliq. mart.	*Homilia dicta postquam reliquiae martyrum etc*
Quod nem. laed.	*Quod nemo laeditur nisi a seipso*
Vid. dom. hom.	*In illud: Vidi dominum hom. 1-6*

Other Ancient Sources

Cod. Theod.	*Codex Theodosianus*

Const. App.	*Constitutiones apostolorum*
Georg. Alex., *Vit. Chrys.*	George of Alexandria, *Vita s. Iohannis Chrysostomi*
Greg. Naz., *Or.*	Gregory Nazianzen, *Oratio 2 = De Fuga*
Jer., *Ep.*	Jerome, *Epistulae*
Lib., *Or.*	Libanius, *Orationes*
Pall., *Vit. Chrys.*	Palladius, *Dialogus de vita Joannis Chrysostomi*
Philost., *Hist. Eccl.*	Philostorgius, *Historia ecclesiastica*
Ps-Mart., *Or.*	Ps-Martyrius Antiochenus, *Oratio funebris in laudem sancti Iohannis Chrysostomi*
Sever., *De pace*	Severian of Gabala, *De pace*
Socr., *Hist. eccl.*	Socrates Scholasticus, *Historia ecclesiastica*
Sozom., *Hist. eccl.*	Sozomen, *Historia ecclesiastica*
Thdt., *His. eccl.*	Theodoret of Cyrrhus, *Historia ecclesiastica*
Vit. Epiph.	*Vita Epiphanii*
Vit. Olymp.	*Vita Olympiadis*
Vit. Porph.	Mark the Deacon. *Vita Porphyrii*
Zos., *Hist. nov.*	Zosimus, *Historia nova*

Modern Sources

ACW	Ancient Christian Writers
BDAG	Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
CPG	Geerard, M. *Clavis Patrum Graecorum*, 6 vols, Turnhout: Brepols, 1974-1998.

CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
FC	Fathers of the Church
GCS	Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller
JECS	Journal of Early Christian Studies
JECH	Journal of Early Christian History
LS	Liddell, Henry George and Robert Scott, eds. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1996.
Lum. Gen.	Lumen Gentium
NPNF	Schaff, Philip and Henry Wace, eds. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. 28 vols. in 2 series. 1886-1889. Reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995.
PG	Migne, J. P. , ed. *Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Graeca.* 162 vols. Paris: 1857-1886.
PL	Migne, J. P., ed. *Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Latina*. 221 vols. Paris: 1844-1864.
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
SH	Subsidia Hagiographica
SP	*Studia Patristica*
VC	*Vigiliae Christianae*

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Rationale and Methodology

Working on a project centred on the thought of John Chrysostom, a valuable and much studied figure in the fields of both theology and late antique studies, requires careful clarification of subject matter, methodology, research parameters, and intended contribution. Given Chrysostom's own enormous corpus, the biographies that have been written about him (ancient, hagiographical, modern), and the wealth of secondary sources on various aspects of his world, his activities, and his thinking, important decisions must be made.

First, there is the matter of textual analysis. Setting aside textual-critical issues, which are beyond the scope of this thesis, should one approach Chrysostom's text with a keener eye toward the theological ideas he expresses or the Hellenistic influences underlying his thought and rhetoric? If the answer is both, how much attention should be afforded to one over the other, given the spatial limitations of a dissertation? The chosen approach also affects which texts are included in the study. Some of Chrysostom's homilies are heavy with scriptural exegesis but are not as revealing of his philosophical influences. On the other hand, some of his treatises more explicitly engage the prevailing philosophies and cultural practices of his day, but scriptural quotations or inferences are included with little explanation as to their original context or how Chrysostom came to interpret them that way. Thus, to fully appreciate a text, there are often at least three types of subtexts to unpack: Chrysostom's theological presuppositions; the influences of his Hellenistic education and socio-cultural context; and the historical context in which he wrote a particular treatise or delivered a particular sermon. Of course, not all texts provide enough clues from which to infer the subtext, so the selection of which texts to include in a study is very important. Second, with regard to the historical context (i.e., of the events of Chrysostom's life), how much analysis of primary sources should be included? There is plenty of evidence through which to filter: details from Chrysostom's works and letters, the reports of historians that were contemporary to him, and the hagiographies of later historians. And then there are modern biographies of Chrysostom, which helpfully curate and analyse the primary sources—how much should one rely on these secondary materials, how much to interact with or even challenge them? Third is the question of aim. Should the aim of the study be to contribute more to the articulation

of Chrysostom's thinking or to the engagement of it? For although Chrysostom has been widely studied, there is much to uncover with regard to the depth of his thinking, as evinced by studies that continue to come out, bringing fresh insight into various aspects of his theology, exegesis, rhetoric, and pastoral strategies. It is an exciting time in Chrysostomian studies, but the volume of literature, both in English and other languages, and by both those who specifically study Chrysostom and those who study him as part of a consensus of Church Fathers, poses a challenge to the researcher. Finally, engaging Chrysostom, as opposed to only articulating him, brings with it its own set of challenges and opportunities. If there is an intention to bring Chrysostom's ideas into the present day, such ideas must be critiqued with consideration to the wisdom that has been accrued in the present day. Given the very different set of circumstances between his time and ours, engaging Chrysostom must inevitably be in a way that is constructive, that speaks to our time. Again, however, a decision must be made. Should one focus on doing something constructive with Chrysostom's theology or only with the application of it?

This thesis explores Chrysostom's thought and practice of ecclesiastical leadership. It employs a systematic approach that incorporates analysis primarily of his theological texts but interspersed with analysis of the historical and sociocultural influences present in his works and in the reports of ancient historians. The aim is to identify Chrysostom's priorities as a church leader and expound the theological and situational reasons that spurred him to prioritise them.

Why this choice of topic and methodology? Regarding methodology, this thesis merges the theological with the historical/sociocultural because it is responding to two types of development in modern scholarship. On the one hand, it is answering to the call, heard from various corners of modern theological scholarship, to return to the rich resources of the early church. I am thinking here of the *ressourcement* movement in the Roman Catholic Church, the neo-patristic movement in the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the paleo-orthodox and *ad fontes* movements in Protestantism. At the same time, this thesis is a response to the revival in Chrysostomian studies that, in the 1990s, was jumpstarted by Pauline Allen and Wendy Mayer in Australia.[1] Indeed, most

[1] The 2019 anthology, *Revisioning Chrysostom: New Approaches, New Perspectives*, ed. Chris De Wet and Wendy Mayer (Leiden: Brill, 2019), is representative of the fruits of this movement. Mayer describes the work contained therein as "changes in the field of Chrysostom studies … driven by a new generation of scholars" (ix).

of my conversation partners in this thesis are either participants in the Chrysostomian revival or are members or descendants of one of the aforementioned theological movements. Because of these developments, more and more of Chrysostom's works, as well as secondary materials that explore his world, rhetoric, and motivations, have become available in the English language. Because of the sheer numbers and the fact that I also conduct considerable primary source analysis in this thesis, I have, when it comes to secondary materials, limited my interaction to works that have been written or translated in English.

In recent years, a good number of published works and dissertations have recognised the value of studying Chrysostom's theology while also highlighting his indebtedness to late antique culture. But none of these have so far focused on the topic of church leadership, although they do touch on themes related to it (e.g., teaching, moral virtues, political thought). Often, when Chrysostom is consulted on matters of church leadership, it is either as part of a consensus of early Church Fathers, or his views (usually drawn from *De sacerdotio*) are discussed with only general or brief references to his historical/socio-cultural context.[2] These approaches give insufficient attention to what was particular about Chrysostom's theology of church leadership or his pastoral strategy, thus leaving many of his rich insights unprobed. This thesis addresses the deficiency by giving ample attention to Chrysostom's ideas on church leadership, as well as emphasising the interconnection between theology and life as it specifically unfolded in Chrysostom's situation.

How does the twofold approach of analysing the theological texts and the historical/sociocultural influences work out? Regarding the analysis of theological texts, I prioritise the interrelationship of his theological ideas. I begin with *De sac.*, as it is his sole treatise on the priesthood. The themes he emphasises, the language he uses, and the scripture verses he quotes point to theological presuppositions that are hinted at in the text itself, and which I then investigate further through cross-referencing them with similar or related passages in his other works. Where the provenance of a certain treatise or homily is possible to identify, I can moreover note if a development in Chrysostom's thought takes place and if there are situational reasons for it. Using this method, I arrive at some of my distinctive contributions to the study of Chrysostom's

[2] I begin chapters 2, 3, and 4 with a survey and assessment of the type of works mentioned in this paragraph, grouped according to the specific area of church leadership to which they make contribution.

theology. For example, in chapter 2, I show that Chrysostom had a broader concept of preaching than the mere delivery of sermons. His vocabulary and arguments in *De sac.* already suggest this, but the argument is strengthened when cross-referenced with his more explicit interpretations and examples of teaching and preaching in his homilies. In chapter 3, I explain in greater depth the connection between Chrysostom's concept of "angelic life," the monastic ideal, and the aimed for recapitulation of Adamic bliss. By studying Chrysostom's homilies in Genesis and paying close attention to what they say about his anthropology and soteriology, I uncover the difference between "angelic life" and "angelic virtue," the latter being the kind of virtue that, in *De sac.*, he claims a priest must have. The meaning of "angelic virtue," I demonstrate, goes beyond the simple concept of blamelessness or purity. Finally, in chapter 4, I compare Chrysostom's views of the Christian priesthood with his views of the High Priesthood of Christ. The High Priesthood of Christ is not discussed in *De sac.* but is discussed extensively in several of Chrysostom's homilies on the epistle to the Hebrews. In *De sac.*, Chrysostom borrows imagery from Hebrews that hints at a comparison. The strong parallels I identify between his early discussion of the Christian priesthood and his later reflections on the High Priesthood of Christ result in a richer understanding of the nature of priestly ministry than a study of *De sac.* alone could provide.

Despite these findings, concentrating on theological texts is not enough to fully appreciate Chrysostom's contributions to the study and exercise of church leadership. In this thesis, I also rely on and interact with secondary studies that investigate how Chrysostom himself depended on and interacted with various elements in his sociocultural context. I highlight how sociocultural influences both aided and challenged his theological commitments, especially in relation to the strategies he employed for the care of the church. Thus, in chapter 2, I draw on insights from late antique studies to better explain Chrysostom's anthropology. Such studies have explored, for example, the Hellenistic influences in Chrysostom's views regarding the composition of human beings; the meaning of soul sickness and heresy; how environment affects imagination and memory. I then demonstrate how these influences affected Chrysostom's various strategies for pastoral care. In chapter 3, my research into the type of virtue priests are supposed to cultivate is informed and enriched by studies exploring how Chrysostom used rhetoric (e.g., demonology; the meanings he attached to desert, city, and household; his use of theatrical images) to impose his view of virtue on his congregation. Studies on Chrysostom's use of the

concept of patronage and the differences he recognised between voluntary and involuntary poverty help us understand the community he sought to create and why he emphasised virtues like continence and almsgiving. While such studies recognise that Chrysostom's rhetoric was often aimed to control, I analyse why control was a significant aspect of his strategy of pastoral care. Some of the implications of Chrysostom's engagement with civilisation continue to crop up in chapter 4, where I tackle the subject of ecclesiastical authority. However, because chapter 4 has much more to say about Chrysostom's deposition and its aftermath, this last chapter contains less cultural analysis and more analysis of the historical data available to us.

Finally, one of the aims of this thesis is to highlight that studying a particular church father in depth is profitable for contemporary theology. As such, at the end of each major chapter (i.e., chapters 2-4) and in the thesis's appendix, I suggest ways that Chrysostom's views can be appropriated for church leadership today. In doing so, I have done my best to keep the foundations of his theology intact. However, because of the differences between his time and ours and the knowledge we have accrued in the millennium between, I do at times take inspiration from him but draw theological conclusions or suggest applications that Chrysostom would not have perhaps personally envisioned. Besides the difference in contexts, I do this to show that we can learn as much from Chrysostom's difficulties as from his successes, which is the point of studying his theological views alongside his historical circumstances. As such, I note the instances where I believe it is necessary to be more critical of Chrysostom and where I am drawing conclusions or suggesting applications that are inspired by him but not necessarily taught by him. Where possible, I have used inclusive language in my contemporary reflections, especially when referring to church leaders. I have done this by using the plural to refer to church leaders and using they/their pronouns. At some points, however, I have had to revert to the male gender pronoun (he/him) when emphasising a human being's or a church leader's individuality and personality. This is not out of preference for male persons or leaders but for stylistic reasons and for consistency.

The title of the thesis, "Ministering Between Heaven and Earth," is inspired by passages from book 3 of *De sac*. In it, Chrysostom associates the priesthood with heaven and earth a total of seven times. For example, he marvels that, in the priesthood, men in the flesh are privileged to represent the ministry of angels. He asserts that earth's inhabitants have been entrusted with the stewardship of heavenly

things. He declares that what priests do on earth, God ratifies above. The exciting part is discovering the nature of the relationship between heaven and earth from the standpoint of the priesthood. The language of heaven and earth aptly evokes the priestly ministry of condescension and mediation, the fact that the care of souls somehow always impacts the care of the body, and that Chrysostom strove after priestly ideals that were often tested by the real difficulties of ministry. I also constantly switch from using the word "leadership" to "ministry" in describing the priesthood for a reason. As will become evident, for Chrysostom, leadership is ministry.

2. Summary of John Chrysostom's Life

In the course of this work, I will be revisiting significant points in Chrysostom's life, analysing details that specifically relate to his priestly and episcopal ministries. Here, therefore, I offer only the broad strokes of his biography.

John Chrysostom was born in Antioch in the middle of the fourth century (ca. AD 345-49).[3] His parents' names were Secundus and Anthusa.[4] His father was a "top-class civil servant" of moderate affluence, who passed away shortly after Chrysostom's birth.[5] He had an older sister.[6] As a young man, he studied rhetoric under the famed Antiochene orator, Libanius.[7] Instead of going into the legal profession, he studied under Diodore of Tarsus and Carterius, heads of ascetic institutions (*asketeria*), for four years.[8] According to Palladius, it was also around this time (i.e., after Chrysostom was eighteen years old) that Meletius, bishop of one of the pro-Nicene communities in Antioch, took notice of him and baptised him. He was

[3] See discussion of how scholars have calculated the dates in appendix B of J. N. D. Kelly's *Golden Mouth: The Story of John Chrysostom—Ascetic, Preacher, Bishop* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 296-98.

[4] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (Günther Hansen, ed., SC 505, 264; A. C. Zenos, trans., NPNF 2/2:138).

[5] See discussion in Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 4-5, including how Palladius has been misunderstood as saying that Chrysostom's father was a military commander. See Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (A. M. Malingrey and Philippe Leclerq, eds., SC 341, 104; Robert T. Meyer, trans., *Dialogue on the Life of St. John Chrysostom* [New York: Newman Press, 1985], 34-35).

[6] Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 5 (SC 341, 104-106; Meyer, *Life*, 35). Of this older sister we, alas, know nothing.

[7] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 264; NPNF 2/2:138); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (Joseph Bidez et al., eds., SC 516, 234; Chester D. Hartranft et al., trans., NPNF 2/2:399).

[8] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 264-66; NPNF 2/2:139); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 234-36; NPNF 2/2:399). Sozomen uses the plural for *asketerion*, but we do not know enough about the *asketerion* to establish if Diodore and Carterius were heads of two separate institutions or shared headship of one institution with two arms or something else altogether. Socrates does not use the word *asketerion*, but says Chrysostom entered into the ascetic life under Diodore and Carterius. More on the *asketerion* from p. 112.

allowed to attend to the bishop for three years and then appointed reader.[9] The next decade of Chrysostom's life is a little more uncertain. If *De sac.* is autobiographical, there seems at this time to have been an attempt to ordain him to the priesthood. He escaped from this. Sometime afterwards, Meletius and Diodore were both exiled, freeing Chrysostom from service to the church and effectively ending his training in the *asketerion*. Based on some letters, we know he continued in some form of monastic life,[10] although Palladius is the only one that reports that he did so with increasing intensity, even living alone in a cave for two years, until he ruined his health. This forced him to return to the city, where he recuperated as well as resumed his service to the church.[11] Afterwards, he was ordained a deacon by Meletius,[12] who had returned from exile. He was later ordained to the priesthood by Flavian, Meletius's successor (Meletius having passed away in AD 381).[13] Chrysostom afterwards gained much fame from preaching and writing. Between late 397 to early 398, he was brought to Constantinople and made its bishop.[14] Although Chrysostom's outspokenness made him very popular with the public, it also made him enemies among the clergy and the powerful in Constantinople—most notably, the empress Eudoxia. He also came into conflict with Theophilus of Alexandria on account of the help he extended to certain Egyptian monks who were fleeing Theophilus's persecution. Chrysostom's enemies conspired against him and deposed him on the Synod of the Oak in AD 403, even though he was absent from the proceedings. He was exiled afterwards but recalled after only a few days because of the public's insistence. Having again earned

[9] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 106-108; Meyer, *Life*, 35). Palladius says it was when Chrysostom was eighteen that he turned from either the study or practice of pagan oratory to the study of scripture. On Chrysostom's baptism, cf. Ps-Mart., *Or.* 8, which also mentions Chrysostom was baptised by Meletius but puts the baptism after Chrysostom's ascetic experience (Martin Wallraff, ed., *Oratio funebris in laudem sancti Iohannis Chrysostomi* (Spoleto, Italy: Fondazione Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo, 2007), 50; Timothy D. Barnes and George Bevan, trans., *The Funerary Speech for John Chrysostom* [Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2013], 42).

[10] *Compunct. Dem.* (PG 47.393-410); *Compunct. Stelech.* (PG 47.411-22). See further discussion on Chrysostom's monastic activities in chapter 3.

[11] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 108-10; Meyer, *Life*, 35); Ps-Mart. also mentions that Chrysostom engaged in a period of intense asceticism where he intensely studied scripture, but, unlike Palladius, does not say how long he did it, where, and if he was trained under anyone (*Or.* 6-9 [Wallraff, *Oratio*, 48-52; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 41-42]).

[12] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 110; Meyer, *Life*, 36); cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 266; NPNF 2/2:138); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 6-9 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 48-52; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 41-43).

[13] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 110; Meyer, *Life*, 36).

[14] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 238; NPNF 2/2:400); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.2 (SC 505, 260-64; NPNF 2/2:138); Thdt., *His. eccl.* 5.28 (Léon Parmentier et al., eds., SC 530, 454-56; Blomfield Jackson, trans., NPNF 2/3:151§27); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 13-16 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 56-62; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 45-47); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 112-14; Meyer, *Life*, 36).

the ire of the empress, he was exiled for good in AD 404. Chrysostom spent about three years in exile in the region of Armenia. He was moved from place to place until he finally succumbed to a particularly difficult journey in AD 407.[15]

3. Background of *De sacerdotio*

De sac. is one of Chrysostom's most well-known and important works. It has appeared in various manuscripts and critical editions, most notably those prepared by Henry Savile (1610); Dom Bernard Montfaucon (1738); J. Arbuthnot Nairn (1906); and, most recently, A.M. Malingrey (1980).[16] In modern times, M. Lochbrunner's 1993 German monograph, *Über Das Priestertum*, provides the most comprehensive study of *De sac*.[17] However, a number of English articles have recently come out offering fresh perspectives on the treatise's intended audience and purpose. Moreover, *De sac.* is often referenced in various modern studies on Chrysostom's life, context, and thought.

3.1 Dating

Chrysostom was ordained a presbyter of Antioch in AD 386, prior to which he had served as deacon for about six years.[18] Scholars generally place the writing of *De sac.* in either the period of his diaconate (information that is provided by the historian, Socrates) or within a few years after he was ordained priest.[19] However, other scholars have been unable to dismiss the idea that Chrysostom's considerable knowledge could only have come from experience. What is certain is that *De sac.* was written before AD 393, because Jerome mentions it in his *De Viris Illustribus* as the sole work

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[15] Chrysostom's various activities in Constantinople are recorded by Palladius, Pseudo-Martyrius, Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret, and will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

[16] Henry Savile, ed., Τοῦ ἐν ἁγίοις πατρὸς ἡμῶν ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ Ἀρχιεπισκόπου Κωνσταντινουπόλεως τοῦ ΧΡΥΣΟΣΤΟΜΟΥ τῶν εὑρισκομένων Τόμος πρῶτος κτλ. ἐπιμελείας καὶ ἀναλωμάτων ΕΡΡΙΚΟΥ τοῦ ΣΑΒΙΛΙΟΥ ἑκ παλαιῶν ἐκδοθείς (Eton: 1610-13); Dom Bernard Montfaucon, ed., *S. Joannis Chrysostomi, archiepiscopi Constantinopolitani, Opera omnia quæ exstant vel quæ ejus nominee circumferuntur, ad mss. codices Gallicos, Vaticanos, Anglicos, Germanicosque castigata*, 13 vols. (Paris: 1718-38), which is the edition followed by J. P. Migne (PG 48.623-92); J. Arbuthnot Nairn, ed., ΠΕΡΙ ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ *(De sacerdotio) of St. John Chrysostom* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1906); Anne-Marie Malingrey, ed., and trans., *Jean Chrysostome. Sur le sacerdoce (Dialogue et Homélie)*, SC 272 (Paris: Éditions du CERF, 1980). For earlier editions and other minor editions of *De sac.*, see full discussions in Nairn, ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xxxviii-xlviii and Malingrey, SC 272, 40-51.

[17] Manfred Lochbrunner, *Über das Priestertum: Historische und systematische Untersuchung zum Priesterbild des Johannes Chrysostomus* (Bonn, Germany: Borengässer, 1993).

[18] Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 38.

[19] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 266; NPNF 2/2:139).

he has read of John of Antioch.[20]

When Chrysostom wrote *De sac.*, therefore, he must have been about 37 years old if he was already a presbyter (AD 386) or at least 32 if a deacon (AD 381). These were not, therefore, a young man's musings. If he had not yet undertaken the responsibilities of a presbyter himself, he would at least have had considerable time to observe and reflect on the ministries of other presbyters and of the bishops, Meletius and Flavian, whom he had personally assisted. He had time to form ideals of priestly ministry and perhaps even to plan his strategy should he become a bishop himself. Indeed, Mayer makes a strong case that Chrysostom was being groomed to replace Flavian in Antioch and had time to put at least some of his episcopal theories to practice while a presbyter there.[21]

3.2 Cultural Setting

As a primary resource, *De sac.* provides insights into the Antioch Chrysostom knew.[22] However, our interest is not in Antioch itself but in how living in Antioch shaped Chrysostom's method and thought. Scholars have identified four features of fourth century Antioch important to Chrysostomian studies.

First, Greek culture permeated the whole of Antiochene society. Its influence was palpable, as Robert Wilken notes, in education, civic organisation, art and

[20] Chris De Wet, "The Priestly Body: Power Discourse and Identity in John Chrysostom's *De Sacerdotio*," *Religion & Theology* 18, no. 3-4 (2011): 353-54. J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz follows Socrates for a date between AD 381-86, but Nairn and Malingrey prefer a date between AD 388-90 (ibid.). Richard Valantasis follows Socrates as well ("Body, Hierarchy, and Leadership in Chrysostom's *On the Priesthood*," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 30, no. 4 [1985]: 455), whereas Kelly prefers AD 390-91 (*Golden Mouth*, 25). Graham Neville suggests an even earlier period, i.e., during Chrysostom's retirement in the desert. He argues that, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom mentions no one would want to resign from the episcopate. But he would not have said this if he had known about Gregory Nazianzen's voluntary resignation in 381 (*Saint John Chrysostom: Six Books on the Priesthood* [London: S.P.C.K., 1964], 23). It is a rather circumstantial argument and has not received much attention. Nairn's argument is similarly circumstantial but worth mentioning. In the homily, *Vid. dom. hom.* 5.1.78-79, Chrysostom promises to explain the dignity of the priesthood in greater detail at another time, saying "περὶ μὲν ἱερωσύνης ... ἐν ἑτέρῳ καιρῷ δηλώσομεν" (Jean Dumortier, ed., SC 277, 184; Nairn, ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xii-xiii). If this future work is *De sac.*, then the presbyterate dating is more likely, since he is preaching already when he mentions it. Robert Hill, preferring the Socrates dating, oddly translates δηλώσομεν in the past tense (*St. John Chrysostom: Old Testament Homilies*, vol. 2, *Homilies on Isaiah and Jeremiah* [Brookline, MA: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2003], 97).

[21] See Wendy Mayer, "John Chrysostom as Bishop: The View from Antioch," *JECH* 55, no. 3 (July 2004): 459, 461-66; See also Mayer, "Patronage, Pastoral Care and the Role of the Bishop at Antioch," *VC* 55, no. 1 (2001): 58-70.

[22] Despite his reputation as a "popular" preacher, however, Chrysostom's perspective is more representative of the elite class. This is due to his family background, education, and social position, especially his later appointment to the see of Constantinople.

architecture, tastes and prejudices. Hellenic traditions were guarded by the landed elite, whose social class made up the majority of the city council and whose children "often became professional men, lawyers, teachers of rhetoric, high-ranking civil servants, and higher clergy."[23] Flavian, who was bishop when Chrysostom became presbyter, came from a distinguished family.[24] Chrysostom himself was not as wealthy, but he received an upper-class education from Libanius, the city's most famous rhetor. Blake Leyerle points out that even those that lacked the means for formal education were nonetheless steeped in the traditional canon through the theatre, which borrowed the majority of its plots from mythology. Indeed, Antioch was renowned, even more so than Constantinople, for its theatre, actors, and enthusiastic audiences.[25] This, as we shall see, had an impact on the type of rhetoric Chrysostom employed in his treatises and homilies, which he used to challenge and subvert Hellenistic thought and cultural patterns to show that Christian teachings are superior.

Second, because of Antioch's proximity to Mt. Silpius, its citizens had many opportunities for close contact with Syrian holy monks.[26] The monks sometimes came to festivals or were visited by the people in their abodes in "deserted forts, caves, and tops of hills."[27] While some were attracted to the monk's peculiar way of life, educated pagans found them offensive, anti-intellectual, and a threat to civic community.[28] In chapter 3, we will discuss in more detail why some pagans thought this way, and how Chrysostom sought to change their minds (and, indeed, the minds of Christian parents who were annoyed that their children were being recruited into the monastic life). We will also show that, in Syria, not all forms of monastic life were lived in isolation in deserts and caves. And, indeed, not all monks were educated only on Christian scripture. Chrysostom himself was educated, as we noted, by a skilled pagan rhetor and in pagan philosophy before he ultimately decided to use his skills and knowledge

[23] Robert Wilken, *John Chrysostom and the Jews: Rhetoric and Reality in the Late 4th Century* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1983), 4.

[24] Ibid., 6.

[25] Blake Leyerle, *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives: John Chrysostom's Attack on Spiritual Marriage* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001), 15-16. The theatre could be an important place of learning and refashioning knowledge for the lower social strata, especially when we consider that actors were often simple craftspeople (ibid., 34). According to Eusebius, even doctrinal disputes of Christians could become subject matter in theatre (Jaclyn Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and His Congregation in Antioch* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006], 52-53).

[26] Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), 305.

[27] Wilken, *Jews*, 8.

[28] Ibid., 27.

in the service of the church.[29] He was also, not uniquely, both a churchman and a monk. Thus, we will demonstrate the impact of Syrian monasticism on Chrysostom's leadership of the church.

A third feature of fourth century Antioch was the presence of divided Christian factions. For example, at the time of Chrysostom's ordination as priest in AD 386, there were at least three bishops vying for legitimacy and public support. From the Arian faction, there was Dorotheus, successor of Euzoius, who had been official bishop up until AD 376. From the pro-Nicene factions there were two—Flavian, Chrysostom's own bishop and head of the Meletian party, and Evagrius, successor of Paulinus and head of the Eustathian party.[30] It was not until AD 393 that Flavian's sole legitimacy was recognised by an Eastern council, and then by Rome in AD 399.[31] We will discuss these figures and their relationship to Chrysostom, as well as the impact that the Antiochene schisms must have had on his views and practice of church leadership, in chapters 2 and 4.

Fourth, Antioch had a strong Jewish presence. It was the site of the shrine of the Maccabean martyrs, which was acquired by Christians and turned into a martyrium in the fourth century. As Wilken points out, the Jewish community, with their synagogue, scripture, and magic and religious rites, must have proved very attractive to many Christians. Chrysostom only mentions the fallacy of Jewish doctrine once in *De sac.* (though, to be fair, he only deals with heresies in one section and only to make a point that priests must be able teachers), but he delivers a series of vehement sermons against Judaizing Christians in Antioch.[32] Moreover, as we shall see in chapter 3, vituperative rhetoric was not the only tactic he employed to reclaim the allegiance of his congregation from Jewish and pagan superstitions and activities. Across various sermons, he highlighted the concept that martyrdom is preferable to faithlessness, and he equated martyrdom with virtuous living. Thus, Christians can live in the world and overcome its challenges not by relying on "demons" or engaging in

[29] Besides being taught by Libanius, it is reported that he studied under a classical philosopher named Andragathius (Socr., *Hist eccl.* 6.3 [SC 505, 264; NPNF 2/2:138]; Sozom. *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 [SC 516, 236; NPNF 2/2:399]). As we shall see throughout this dissertation, many of his treatises display knowledge and use of Hellenic tropes, pagan literature, and political theory. As we will also show in chapter 2, education in Christian scripture and preference for it ought not to be seen as anti-intellectualism. Rather, it was considered by its proponents, Chrysostom included, as a greater form of philosophy than the philosophies being offered by pagans.

[30] See Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 11-12; 36-38; 101.

[31] Ibid., 117-18.

[32] See Wilken, *Jews*, 79-94. These homilies were *Adversus Iudæos or.* 1-8 (PG 48.843-942).

acts deemed immoral by the Christian church but by relying on God's grace through the church. One of the interesting things Chrysostom does to accomplish his objective is to provide a theological justification for depicting the Maccabean martyrs as symbols of Christian faith.

These four features demonstrate the close intertwining of religion, culture, and community in Chrysostom's world, the acknowledgement of which contributes to a deeper understanding of his ideas in *De sac.* and of church leadership in general.

3.3 Type of Literature and Purpose

The subject matter of *De sac.* is introduced through a brief autobiographical narrative and structured as dialogue between Chrysostom and his friend, Basil.[33] In presenting his case, however, Chrysostom adopts the tone of an apologia and employs elements of a didactic treatise. Different suggestions have therefore been proffered as to its literary type, intended purpose, and audience.

J. N. D. Kelly, for example, views *De sac.* as an *apologetikos logos*. He surmises that when Chrysostom refused ordination, he "earned himself widespread indignation and resentment."[34] The treatise was therefore written to help reestablish his credibility, which means that the biographical portions are not likely entirely fabricated. This also suggests that the intended audience was the general public at Antioch, especially the influential people who had wanted to ordain him.[35] It can, of course, be argued that Chrysostom might have been using the trope of flight to show he was not eager for the office, that this is an indication of humility. For he argues later in *De sac.* that people who are "strongly attracted" to priestly office should be disqualified from it.[36] But surely there is a difference between not actively campaigning for office and fleeing from it when it is offered. The former can indeed be seen as humility, but the latter, as Chrysostom himself indicates in *De sac.* through Basil's mouth, was seen by some people in the church as vainglory on Chrysostom's part, as insulting to themselves (i.e., to those that wanted to bestow on him the honour) and to the priesthood. Chrysostom was, therefore, at pains to prove that this was a

[33] For various proposals on the identity of this Basil, see Lochbrunner, *Priestertum*, 26-28. Basil of Raphnea seems to be the most likely candidate, but even then, we know nothing of him except his name and see.

[34] Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 28.

[35] Ibid.

[36] *De sac.* 3.10 (SC 272, 164-72; § 10-11 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 80-82).

misconception—that he had a very high view of the priesthood and an accurate estimation of his unworthiness, which was why he rejected it.[37] If running away from ordination was unanimously seen as a positive thing, what could Chrysostom have gained by introducing a negative spin on it? On the other hand, if he wanted to discourage new recruits from fleeing, why did he justify his own earlier flight? It seems best, therefore, to take Chrysostom's words at face value: that is, some did not take too kindly to his flight, requiring him to explain his actions. Meanwhile, using flight, he is also able to warn those not ready for the priesthood not to jump into it haphazardly. Thus, Chrysostom addresses both positive and negative views of flight. We might also look at the example of Gregory Nazianzen. Nazianzen, too, initially refused ordination into the priesthood and his flight is widely accepted as historical fact. Yet, when he finally did accept it, he had to write *De Fuga* to explain his actions, in the process informing readers that there were those who saw his flight not as a sign of humility but of cowardice, contempt of divine law, vainglory (the position offered, so claimed by Nazianzen's detractors, not good enough for him) etc.[38] In conclusion, although it is still possible to doubt that Chrysostom's own flight was a historical fact, *that* he wanted to give his opinion on the issue of refusing ordination and *that* refusing ordination was seen by some as humility but by others as impudence, must have historical basis.

While Kelly focuses on the aim of *De sac.* as an apology, a number of others see its main purpose as promoting reform. For example, like Kelly, De Wet sees Chrysostom's work as a public-relations manifesto, but he argues that its main aim is to articulate what Chrysostom thought of the priesthood and what he wanted the public to think of it. So, for example, Chrysostom stresses angelic hierarchy in relation to priestly ranks as a basis for cleansing the latter from worldly political defilement.[39] This

[37] *De sac.* 2.7-3.6 (SC 272, 128-56; Neville, *Priesthood*, 65-74).

[38] Greg. Naz., *Or.* 2.2-5 (Jean Bernardi, ed., SC 247, 88-94; Charles G. Browne and James E. Swallow, trans., NPNF 2/7:205-206). Both Nazianzen and Chrysostom eventually submitted to ordination. As Lochbrunner insightfully points out, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom's eventual obedience is incarnated in the acceptance of Basil. A century and a half later, the tension of flight and acceptance remained a concern for church leaders, as evinced in the writings of Pope Gregory the Great: "For he is not truly humble who, recognising the hint of the divine will to assume the office of chief, nonetheless rejects the office. Rather, he must, in all submission to the divine ordinances without the fault of self-will, when he is commanded to take over the pastoral office and he is equipped with facilities through which he could benefit others, on the one hand flee the office in his heart, on the other hand, against his will, submit" (translated from the German, *Priestertum*, 109-110).

[39] De Wet, "Priestly Body," 351-79. Besides the example of hierarchy, De Wet identifies other "discourses of power" with which Chrysostom engaged: the description of the priest as disciplinarian and psychagogue; the identification of disruptive others (i.e., heretics); andronormativity and normality; and, the view of priests as oratory and sacerdotal superstars.

view is shared by Richard Valantasis, who similarly highlights the comparison Chrysostom makes between priestly and angelic ministry and virtue to argue that Chrysostom must have written *De sac.* with the aim of removing corruption from the priesthood, concluding that the text's literary agenda (i.e., the story of Basil and Chrysostom's dilemma of ordination) merely occasions Chrysostom's theological agenda, namely, "to elevate the function of the leadership of the Church both priestly and episcopal."[40] Lochbrunner, too, saw reform as the *Sitz im Leben* of *De sac.*, grounding his observations more specifically on the schisms in Antioch. He speculates (admitting that Chrysostom's language is too general, and we can only speculate), first, that Chrysostom had the schisms in mind when, in book 3, he denounces how worldly status and partisanship have become the categories for the election of bishops, instead of virtue and spiritual quality. Second, it is also the schisms that occasioned the discussion of heresies in book 4, and, therefore, Chrysostom's advice that priests be skilled teachers and apologists. Finally, Lochbrunner argues it is only in the context of reform that one can make sense of Chrysostom's inclusion of the story of his flight—the flight reinforcing, as we have noted just a paragraph earlier, that priests should not covet office.[41] Returning to De Wet, he argues that there is implicit resistance from Chrysostom, too, to "fixed stereotypes of the priesthood." For instance, Chrysostom did not seem to appreciate that priests were seen as "oratory and sacerdotal superstars," recognising that audience expectations gave priests "excessive surveillance-anxiety brought on by public opinion."[42] Despite De Wet's modern language, what he simply means is that Chrysostom decried how the congregation could be too critical and unforgiving of their leaders. What is interesting is that these arguments of Chrysostom's are seemingly incidental to his overarching theme of the glories and difficulties of the priesthood, and the care with which a potential recruit must therefore embark on it. Yet, each section of discussion stands on its own, giving a commentary, albeit generally, of problems in church leadership in Chrysostom's day and suggesting simple but urgent course corrections. The observation that reform was therefore one of the uppermost objectives in his mind is thus convincing.

A less obvious objective, but creatively argued by Pak-Wah Lai, is that Chrysostom wrote *De sac.* to encourage other well-educated ascetics of the same sort

[40] Valantasis, "Body, Hierarchy," 455.
[41] Lochbrunner, *Priestertum*, 90-106.
[42] De Wet, "Priestly Body," 351-79.

as himself into the ministry. Lai's argument depends on establishing Chrysostom's intended audience for *De sac.* He does so by pointing out that the genre of *De sac.* is dialogue, which is not a genre that is straightforward in its sharing of information. One had to have the educational training to understand what elements of it are being used to produce what effect, in order to unpack and fully absorb its rhetorical impact. For instance, Lai argues that if *De sac.* is dialogue, then the autobiographical portion is likely not literal, since fictional settings are a common trope in dialogues, as seen in Plato's *Republic*. Educated readers would have been amused by the likely fictional story of Chrysostom deceiving Basil to get him ordained. Lai believes Chrysostom's intended audience must therefore have been educated ascetics like himself, readers who came from "the cultural elite who not only shared a common *paideia* but also had resources and time to engage in such literary pursuits."[43] Lai's arguments are convincing, and I do not doubt Chrysostom wanted new recruits to read his work. But, as we have shown, *De sac.* is multifaceted and deals with leadership issues too complex for young ascetics just contemplating ministry. They may have been a secondary target audience, but his work must have had more use for experienced leaders and older members of the congregation. For them, lack of leisure time would not have been an issue. It would not have taken long, even for busy priests, to unpack the literary elements in *De sac.*, for even if it is written in the framework of a dialogue, much of its content is straightforward and didactic.

Yet another article, by Andrew Hofer, argues that one purpose of *De sac.* was to liberate priests from the strictures of earthly social ties in favour of accountability to God. Hofer builds his case by marking an important difference between *De sac.* and Gregory Nazianzen's *De Fuga*, which scholars have long believed to be the inspiration for Chrysostom's own work. In Hofer's view, Nazianzen stressed the ties of family and friendship (representing earthly social ties) in his decision to enter the priesthood after initially refusing it (Christ's law being only a third reason). Meanwhile, Chrysostom, in his conversations with Basil in the context of the story, frequently dismissed Basil's appeals to their friendship (i.e., their equality and similarities) and maximised their differences. That is, though they had been friends initially, Basil, now a priest, must live by a different and more demanding set of rules, prioritising his accountability

[43] Pak-Wah Lai, "Reading *On the Priesthood* as Dialogue: Perspectives on John Chrysostom's Ascetic Vision." In *John Chrysostom: Past, Present, Future*, ed. Doru Costache and Mario Baghos (Sydney, Australia: AIOCS Press, 2017), 222.

toward and relationship with God.[44] Hofer's view is insightful in terms of identifying how *De sac.* departs from *De Fuga*, although we cannot ascertain that Chrysostom intended to modify Nazianzen's view, as opposed to him simply having a different emphasis based on a different experience of the call to ministry.

The interpretive variety as to the intended aim and purpose of *De sac.* is encouraging. Indeed, as we shall see in the summary below, Chrysostom addresses all these concerns (and more) in some way in his treatise. It demonstrates, on the part of modern readers, a greater consciousness for the cultural and historical context in which the text was written. The good news is that concentrated studies of a similar nature have been done on Chrysostom's various homilies. This aids our understanding of *De sac.*, since many of the same techniques and ideas that exist in his homilies are also present in this treatise. Although our topic is centred on the priesthood (or, rather, because of it), we cannot help but touch upon Chrysostom's views on other matters like wealth and poverty, martyrdom and asceticism, preaching and the sacraments. Indeed, it is possible to explore *De sac.* from many angles and come away with fruitful studies, proving there is much to be "received" from this treatise for both the original and contemporary audience.

3.4 Bishop or Priest?

A question that often arises concerning this treatise is whether "priesthood" (ἱερωσύνη) pertains to just bishops or refers to all priests. The scholarly consensus is that the treatise is about the priesthood in general. Chrysostom uses the term ἱερωσύνη to refer to both bishops and priests. Despite his occasional use of ἐπίσκοπος in *De sac.* to, as Andrea Sterk puts it, "emphasize the extent of responsibilities incumbent upon a bishop alone," Chrysostom is interested in discussing the "duties, demands, and dignity" of the priesthood as a whole.[45] Having said this, some English translations can be misleading as to when Chrysostom uses the word ἐπίσκοπος. For example, in book 3, Chrysostom does not specify the ἐπίσκοπος in relation to the grief that comes with the duty of excommunication. The Greek only says, "Τί ἄν τις λέγοι

[44] See Andrew Hofer, "The Reordering of Relationships in John Chrysostom's *De sacerdotio*," *Augustinianum* 51, no. 2 (2011), 451-71, esp. 454.

[45] Andrea Sterk, *Renouncing the World Yet Leading the Church: The Monk-Bishop in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 150n41. See also Malingrey, SC 272, 72-73n1; Wendy Mayer, *The Homilies of St. John Chrysostom—Provenance: Reshaping the Foundations* (Rome, Italy: Pontificio Instituto Orientale, 2005), 327; Nairn, ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xxiii.

τὰς λύπας ἃς ὑπομένουσιν, ἡνίκα ἂν δέῃ τινὰ τοῦ τῆς Ἐκκλησίας περικόψαι πληρώματος;"[46] Yet, probably because it is normally the bishop who performs this task, translators have specified that it is "bishops" who are grieved by this act.[47] We have reason to think, however, that Chrysostom could also have included presbyters in this. As Mayer has discovered, even outside *De sac.*, Chrysostom indicates that there are no meaningful differences in the ministry and authority of presbyters and bishops, except that bishops had the additional task of ordaining clergy.[48] This is explicitly stated in *In 1 Tim. hom.* 11, where Chrysostom explains why Paul jumps from discussing the qualifications for bishops to discussing deacons (seemingly passing over presbyters). Chrysostom writes,

> … Καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοὶ διδασκαλίαν εἰσὶν ἀναδεδεγμένοι, καὶ προστασίαν τῆς Ἐκκλησίας· καὶ ἃ περὶ ἐπισκόπων εἶπε, ταῦτα καὶ πρεσβυτέροις ἁρμόττει. Τῇ γὰρ χειροτονίᾳ μόνῃ ὑπερβεβήκασι, καὶ τούτῳ μόνον δοκοῦσι πλεονεκτεῖν τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους.[49]
>
> The reason of this omission was, that between Presbyters and Bishops there was no great difference. Both had undertaken the office of Teachers and Presidents in the Church, and what he has said concerning Bishops is applicable to Presbyters. For they are only superior in having the power of ordination, and seem to have no other advantage over Presbyters.[50]

In addition, Mayer notes how Chrysostom, in practice, adopts the authoritative tone of a bishop, even threatening to bar people from church, even in homilies he must have delivered while still a presbyter in Antioch (*De stat. hom.* 20; *In Col. Hom. 7*).[51] These findings will be very important when we come back to read *De sac.*, as even if excommunication is the prerogative of the bishop,[52] Chrysostom may be indicating either that priests could do it too (likely with the approval or in conference with the

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[46] *De sac.* 3.14.55 (SC 272, 222). Nairn's edition does not have ἐπίσκοπος also (*De sac.* 3.18.20 [ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, 94]). To compare, Chrysostom may have been specifying the bishop (ὁ τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν ἔχων) concerning visitations, but he could also have just been indicating the task rather than the office (*De sac.* 3.14.29 [SC 272, 220]).

[47] E.g., Neville's translation in *De sac.* 3.18 (*Priesthood*, 102); W. R. W. Stephens's translation in NPNF 1/9:58.

[48] Mayer, *Provenance*, 327.

[49] *1 Tim. hom.* 11 (PG 62.553. Quoted in Mayer, *Provenance*, 327n55).

[50] Ibid. (Philip Schaff, trans., NPNF 1/13:441).

[51] Mayer, *Provenance*, 332-33. Further examples of Chrysostom blurring the roles of priest and bishop in *De sac.* and other homilies can be found until p. 336.

[52] See this chapter, n76.

bishop), or to show the readers that priests are as grieved as bishops when an expulsion occurs. In reading the English translations, we must therefore take care not to assume that all indicated references to bishops are indeed referring to bishops alone.

It is also worth noting, that since Chrysostom often conflates the offices of presbyter and bishop in *De sac.*, the related question of whether, in *De sac.*, he had attempted to escape the presbyterate or the episcopate is no longer very significant. What we can be sure of is that he had then been young, and, owing to lack of experience and slow progress in virtue, felt himself inadequate.[53] Was this feeling of inadequacy justified? Chrysostom spends *De sac.* arguing yes, but not for fear of breaking any human law.[54] His emphasis is on the priest's accountability toward God.

4. Summary and Structure of *De sacerdotio*

De sac. has been divided by Byzantine editors into six short λόγοι, though manuscript variants disagree on chapter divisions.[55] Malingrey, among others, notes Chrysostom's tendency to repeat arguments at unexpected places or to go off tangentially to deal with another topic, making the six-book division somewhat unsatisfying. She and Neville, in their respective translations (French and English), create chapter titles to identify the shifting subject matters more closely.[56]

Here I have chosen to render succinct but informative summaries of each λόγος. While chapter divisions help us see the main arguments, longer sentences are required to stress the transitions. My aim is to accentuate the flow of argument, including the emphases intended by the repetitions.

The ostensible purpose of the text, indeed its overarching argument, is that great care must be taken in choosing worthy men for the priesthood. Chrysostom presents his young self as a weak and inexperienced character—an unsuitable candidate considering the priesthood's 1) glorious nature, 2) heavy responsibilities, and 3) strict requirements of skill and temperament. But this young Chrysostom is not an ignoramus. He seems to have given more thought to the priesthood than Basil,

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[53] This was most likely during his time as an urban ascetic in Diodore's group when he would have also been a reader in church, not yet even a deacon.

[54] *Contra* Nairn's implication, for example, that Chrysostom was fleeing from the episcopacy in part because of council laws that would have been broken had he been ordained before turning 30 and *per saltum* (ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xxiv).

[55] Lochbrunner, *Priestertum*, 23.

[56] See Malingrey, SC 272, 13-14; Neville, *Priesthood*, 5-7.

thereby demonstrating that knowledge does not necessarily guarantee capability. Paradoxically, Basil, though depicted as less knowledgeable, is claimed to exhibit the type of character required of a priest. After their talk, Basil comes away more knowledgeable about the weight of his office. As for Chrysostom, it takes about a decade, but he eventually gets ordained—and not only to the presbyterate but eventually to the episcopate, too.

I. *Book One*. Chrysostom opens with a narrative establishing his friendship with Basil and their unequal progress in the philosophical life. Nonetheless, both become candidates for ordination. Chrysostom tricks Basil into accepting while he himself flees. The dialogue begins with Basil reproaching him for this act of deceit. Chrysostom counters that it is "good management" rather than deceit. He defends his actions with scriptural precedents that show deceit is to be commended if it benefits the one deceived.

II. *Book Two.* When Basil asks how Chrysostom's "good management" advantaged him (i.e., Basil), Chrysostom responds that Christ, because of His exceeding love for the church, counted the tending of His flock as the greatest proof of love for Him. The person who undertakes it will be put in charge of all God's possessions. Few people have the excellence and spiritual stature for the role, but Basil has the necessary qualities. Chrysostom, on the other hand, is a novice. He thus refused the priesthood neither to disgrace his electors (τοῦ χειροτονηθέντος) nor out of vainglory,[57] but because he is unworthy. In honouring God more than his electors, he has also kept the latter from dishonour, since the public would have complained and gossiped about their unworthy choice.

III. *Book Three.* Contrary to accusations, Chrysostom demonstrates that he has a very high view of the priesthood. The unworthy who covet the priesthood are the ones with a low opinion of it. He launches into a panegyric of the nature of priestly ministry, the glorious responsibilities and the dangers that go along with it, and the kind of strength and grace required from the priest. He specifically covers the bishop's struggle in carrying out ecclesiastical promotions; the care for widows, sick people, and virgins; arbitration, visiting, and excommunication.

[57] *De sac.* 2.7.36 (SC 272, 132).

He concludes that he did not refuse the priesthood out of vainglory but out of fear of divine judgment should he cause the destruction of many.

IV. *Book Four.* Basil argues that Chrysostom should not fear judgment since he does not covet the office nor brag that he is worthy. Chrysostom responds that even the unambitious has no excuse. When the unworthy is given an abundant honour, he must live up to it or suffer the wrath of God. Both the unworthy who accepts office and those who put him in office will not be considered guiltless. Chrysostom then launches into a discussion of the importance and the difficulties of teaching the Word. Extensive experience is necessary to teach and persuade with tact, to set an example by word and deed, and to combat heresies. He again stresses the great punishment that awaits the leader whose inexperience causes the perdition of many.

V. *Book Five.* Chrysostom dedicates this section to the difficulties of preaching. A preacher must be both eloquent and contemptuous of praise to be able to handle audience expectation and unjust criticisms. He must be able to rebuke and instruct and to resist envy and dejection. Rejecting popular esteem is extremely difficult and will cause much suffering to a man like Chrysostom who cannot dispossess himself of human passions.

VI. *Book Six.* Chrysostom therefore argues that a priest must have angelic virtue. Responsible for multiple souls, he has no excuse for inexperience or ignorance. His virtue must be greater than a monk's, for a hermit can take precautions in isolation, but a priest is exposed to many temptations. As ambassador of humanity before God and pastor and patron to various kinds of people, he must be both blameless and many-sided. Lacking mastery over human passions, he concludes that while he recognises the importance of working for others' salvation, he would rather suffer mild punishment for neglecting this than face punishment for destroying their souls. The dialogue ends with Basil worrying about the responsibilities facing him. Chrysostom promises to help if he can and trusts that Christ, who put Basil in this position, will give Basil assurance in the course of his ministry. Chrysostom expresses the hope that, at the last day, he too shall have Basil as his patron before God.

5. Key Themes of *De sacerdotio*

Interspersed through Chrysostom's disquisition in *De sac.* are various illustrations and imagery that serve as thematic markers by which we can identify and categorise the treatise's key themes. These, as noted in the previous section, fall under the realms of nature, responsibility, and requirement.

5.1 The Nature of the Priesthood

Chrysostom's illustrations on the nature of the priesthood portray it as an office beyond compare in both glory and responsibility. The first illustration, discussed in Book 2, concerns the conversation between Peter and Christ in John 21. The second and third illustrations centre on the Eucharist and are found in Books 3 and 6. The discourse that follows the first Eucharistic illustration further describes in what ways priests surpass angels, earthly rulers, and fathers.

5.1.1 Tending Christ's Flock:

The occasioning incident for this illustration is Basil's response to Chrysostom's argument that deceit intended for good deserves commendation. How, Basil asks, has he benefited from being tricked into the priesthood? To this Chrysostom responds that Basil is now undertaking a task Christ values highly, which He Himself described as the greatest proof of love for Him.[58] Based on this response, it seems that, for Chrysostom, key to understanding the role of and necessity for a priest is the relationship between God and his people. Indeed, Chrysostom argues that Jesus's questions to Peter were not so much asked to get proof of *Peter's* love, which He already perceived, but to show His own exceeding love for the church.[59] This is demonstrated furthermore in Christ's death. Chrysostom highlights both the Father's decision not to spare His Son and the Son's own sacrifice, writing, "Why did God not spare his … Son? It was to reconcile to himself those who hated him and to make them a people of his own possession. Why did he [Christ] shed his blood? It was to

[58] *De sac.* 1.7-2.4 (SC 272, 94-118; § 1.9-2.4 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 51-54). Unless otherwise noted, all direct quotations from *De sac.* Come from Neville's English translation, which is based on the critical text of Nairn.

[59] Δεῖξαι … τῆς οἰκείας ἀγάπης τὴν ὑπερβολήν (*De sac.* 2.1.50 [SC 272, 104; Neville, *Priesthood*, 52-53). Jesus knew Peter's thoughts because Jesus is "he who lives in all men's hearts." The questions, Chrysostom claims, did not indicate perplexity on Jesus's part (*De sac.* 2.1 [SC 272, 100; Neville, *Priesthood*, 53]).

purchase the sheep which he entrusted to Peter and his successors."[60] Since the church is God's possession, Basil's "reward" is to be "set over all God's possessions" and to be showing his love for Christ by it. By his response to Peter, Jesus demonstrates that the tending of His church is more important than even fasting, vigils, social justice, and charity,[61] and indeed even more taxing than these.

Few, Chrysostom goes on to say, are up to the task of "the care of so many souls."[62] Implying the superiority of the soul over the body, he asserts that the loss of an ordinary sheep stops at money but losing sheep from the "rational flock of Christ" risks the priest's own soul.[63] Moreover, whereas animal flocks are only attacked by wolves, robbers, and pestilence, the church, of which the priest is part, is attacked by principalities and powers and works of the flesh.[64]

Highlighting the ability of humans to think and make decisions, Chrysostom argues that although a priest, like a doctor, is in charge of the spiritual health of the flock, it is not easy for him to diagnose what sickness plagues another human, for "no one knows the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him (1 Cor. 2:11)." Moreover, unlike sheep, which can be compelled to accept treatment when sick, the decision to receive treatment is with the patient, not the doctor. This is because God "gives the crown" not to those who do good by necessity but those who do so by choice. The shepherd of the church can thus correct by persuasion, not by force. Fortunately, God is the giver of the knowledge of truth. Hence, the shepherd need not grow despondent or neglect the salvation of those who wander from the faith.[65]

The most interesting aspect of this discussion is how Chrysostom equates

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[60] Ibid. (SC 272, 102).

[61] Ibid. 2.1-2.2 (SC 272, 102-106; Neville, *Priesthood*, 53-54). Chrysostom uses language from Tit. 2:14 and Matt. 24:45, 47.

[62] Ibid. 2.2 (SC 272, 104-106; Neville, *Priesthood*, 54). He even disqualifies all women and most men because of the "magnitude of the task."

[63] Ibid. More explicit declarations of the greater value of soul than body are in 2.4 (SC 272, 118; Neville, *Priesthood*, 59), where Chrysostom claims performing priestly ministry is better than charity and championing the wronged "as the body is less than the soul," and, in 3.5 (SC 272, 148-50; Neville, *Priesthood*, 72), where he claims priests have greater authority than earthly rulers "as heaven is more precious than earth and souls than bodies."

[64] Ibid. 2.2-3 (SC 272, 104 -108; § 2 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 54-55). Key passages here are Eph. 6:12 and Gal. 5:19-21; 2 Cor. 12:20.

[65] Ibid. 2.2-4 (SC 272, 104-18; Neville, *Priesthood*, 56-58). David Rylaarsdam identifies Chrysostom's views here as the Christian equivalent of psychagogy, a system of leading souls by Hellenist philosophers, which analyses the condition of students and then applies proper remedy by comforting, exhorting, reproaching, etc. (*John Chrysostom on Divine Pedagogy: The Coherence of His Theology and Preaching* [Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014], 32). Others have noted that Chrysostom later occasionally employed imperial decrees for the coercion of heretics and pagans. For e.g., Nairn, ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xxiii.

reward with labour and even with the priest's seeming lack of control in the face of human freedom.[66] Christ's approval is the sole anchor of hope and help, affirming Hofer's claim that, to Chrysostom, "The priest is defined chiefly by his relationship with Christ in service to Christ's flock."[67] That is, because of Christ, even in the act of *askesis* itself (that is, *askesis* for the sake of others), one can derive benefit. It is not about the glorious reward that comes *after* (which, interestingly enough, is never made an incentive to priestly labour throughout the treatise), but the intimate identification with Jesus in the act of labour itself.

5.1.2 Standing in the Midst of Heaven

Chrysostom first brings up the topic of the Eucharist against accusations that he had a low opinion of the priesthood and refused it out of vainglory. He thus counters with the most spectacular descriptions of the priestly ministry, which he claims is "ranked among heavenly ordinances," since it is ordained by the Paraclete Himself and represents the ministry of angels.[68]

In book 3, his Eucharistic descriptions call to mind two Old Testament scenarios.[69] The first is the Day of Atonement. The Lord, taking the place of the lamb, is described as sacrificed and lying before the people.[70] The "High Priest" (i.e., the Christian priest) stands over the sacrifice, praying, while all who partake are tinctured with the precious blood. Upon seeing this, Chrysostom demands, "Are you not at once transported to heaven?" In the form of a rhetorical question, he simultaneously challenges and invites Basil and his readers to drive out of their soul every carnal thought, and, "with soul naked and mind pure," look around upon the heavenly

[66] While *De sac.* is replete with warnings of eternal punishment, there is only a passing mention of heavenly reward (3.11 [SC 272, 170; Neville, *Priesthood*, 81]).

[67] Hofer, "Reordering," 452, 469.

[68] *De sac*. 3.4 (SC 272, 142; Neville, *Priesthood*, 70). Sterk notes Chrysostom was unique to count the priesthood amongst the heavenly order. Nazianzen and others limited the comparison to priests and prophets of Israel (*Renouncing*, 151).

[69] A tactic borrowed from the New Testament, specifically Heb. 8-10 and 2 Cor. 3:5-10. In 2 Cor. 3, Paul describes the "ministry of the Spirit" of which he is a minister as more glorious than the Old Testament ministry. OT ministry, based on the law, brings condemnation, but the ministry of the Spirit is a ministry of grace in that it gives life.

[70] Nairn argues that Chrysostom meant to identify Christ's body and blood with bread and wine not in a physical or carnal way, but ineffably, sacramentally, and mystically (ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xix). Mystical, I think, is correct. As we shall see especially in chapter 2 of this dissertation, Chrysostom tended not to try to explain the inexplicable but to simply accept what scripture says and leave it at that.

things.[71] Jesus, Chrysostom writes, "is at that moment held in our hands, and gives himself to those who wish to clasp and embrace him."[72]

The second illustration parallels Elijah's confrontation with the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:19-39. Just as Elijah prayed so that fire came down from heaven to consume the offering, so the priest, through his prayers, is depicted as bringing down not literal fire but the Holy Spirit. The Spirit does not consume the offering. Rather, He makes grace fall upon the sacrifice and sets alight the souls of all, making them appear brighter than silver refined in fire. The grace is important to stress because no one can withstand the sacrificial fire apart from it. Grace preserves the people from destruction. Grace allows the priest, while still entangled in flesh and blood, to approach that blessed and immaculate Being, which is Christ.[73]

Later in the treatise, Chrysostom returns to a description of the Eucharist. Meaning to emphasise the purity and piety required of one who "invokes the Holy Spirit," "offers the awful sacrifice," and "keeps on touching [our] common Master," he highlights the event's grandiosity through the presence of angels. As it is happening, "angels attend the priest, and the whole dais and the sanctuary are thronged with heavenly powers in honour [of Christ]."[74] He relates a story he heard of a visionary who claimed to have seen a host of angels encircle the altar and bow their heads to Jesus as soldiers in the presence of their king. Another visionary told him that one who is about to pass away is escorted by a bodyguard of angels "should they happen to have received the mysteries with a pure conscience just before they breathe their last."[75]

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[71] Because it is in dialogue, Chrysostom basically addresses the reader in the second person, almost as if he were delivering a homily and at that moment inviting the reader to be in the moment.

[72] *De sac.* 3.4 (SC 272, 142-46; Neville, *Priesthood*, 70-71).

[73] Ibid. Chrysostom is likely referring here to *epiclesis*, the part of the liturgy where the divine is called to participate in the communion. Its earliest practice can be traced to the Acts of Thomas and other apocryphal Acts in East Syria probably between AD 220-230 (Brian Spinks, *Do This in Remembrance of Me: The Eucharist from the Early Church to the Present Day* [London: SCM, 2013], 39-43). Chrysostom's Eucharistic descriptions give an idea of what liturgical rites may have been like in his day. The *epiclesis* and the intercession for both living and departed souls are found also in the "Anaphora of St. John Chrysostom," one of three *anaphoras* still used in the Byzantine rite. Spinks notes that Chrysostom's anaphora has a comparable date to the *Const. App.* (ca. AD 380). Moreover, based on a study by Robert Taft, the anaphora contains phrases and word order unique to Chrysostom. It is possible, therefore, that Chrysostom took the existing *anaphora* at Antioch, reworked it, and brought it with him to Constantinople (ibid., 129-31).

[74] *De sac.* 6.4 (SC 272, 314-20; Neville, *Priesthood*, 140-41).

[75] Ibid.

5.1.3 Surpassing Heavenly and Earthly Powers

As if the previous claims were not breath-taking enough, Chrysostom argues that the priesthood is superior in yet another way. The binding and loosing of souls, an authority not given even to angels, is granted to priests.[76] And while earthly rulers can imprison bodies at will, only priests have been given the authority to forgive sins.[77] In Chrysostom's mind, the Father has given all judgment to the Son (Jn. 5:22) and the Son (as the master) has placed all things in the hands of priests (as the slaves) to make judgments. God simply ratifies the decisions they make. In carrying out the binding and loosing of souls, He has given them "nothing less than the whole authority of heaven."[78] Through the binding and loosing of souls, therefore, priests take part in the accomplishment of God's salvific work.

It must be stressed, however, that the binding and loosing of souls find concrete expression through the ministries of baptism and the Eucharist.[79] Quoting Jn. 3:5 and Jn. 6:53, Chrysostom writes:

> For if a man "cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven except he be born again of water and the spirit," and if he that eateth not the Lord's flesh and drinketh not his blood is cast out of everlasting life, and all these things can happen through no other agency except their sacred hands (the priests', I mean), how can anyone, without their help, escape the fire of Gehenna or win his appointed crown?[80]

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[76] Claudia Rapp notes that the binding and loosing of souls, based on Matt. 16:19, comes under the bishop's task in the *Apostolic Tradition* and the *Didascalia* (both dating from the first half of the third century) and in the *Const. App.* (*Holy Bishops in Late Antiquity: The Nature of Christian Leadership in an Age of Transition* [Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2005], 94, 380). It is therefore interesting that Chrysostom still attributes it to all priests. Moreover, whereas Rapp focuses on "binding and loosing" as a post-baptismal penitential concept (ibid., 94), Chrysostom here associates it with equal emphasis to both baptism and the Eucharist.

[77] Chrysostom specifically quotes Jn. 20:23 in relation to the binding and loosing of souls, "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven, and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained."

[78] *De sac.* 3.5 (SC 272, 146-50; Neville, *Priesthood*, 71-72).

[79] According to Rapp, baptism "was the exclusive purview of priests or bishops," as was the ministry of penance for post-baptismal sins in the context of the church (*Holy Bishops*, 92). On penance, Pauline Allen and Wendy Mayer posit that there is little evidence in Chrysostom's writing of a formal rite of public or private confession accompanied by public acts of penance. However, it seems to have existed as an option and Chrysostom occasionally "threatened to exclude offenders from the doors of the church and from the Eucharist." Interestingly, he presumed authority to do this whether as presbyter of Antioch or bishop of Constantinople ("Through A Bishop's Eyes: Towards a Definition of Pastoral Care in Late Antiquity," *Augustinianum* 40, no. 2 [December 2000]: 364-65).

[80] *De sac.* 3.6 (SC 272, 150; § 5 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 72-73).

For this reason, Chrysostom argues that priests should not only be more feared than rulers and kings but more honoured even than fathers.[81] It is through them that believers "put on Christ, are united with the Son of God, and become limbs obedient to the blessed Head."[82] The salvation received with baptism Chrysostom describes as birth from God, second birth, true emancipation, and adoption according to grace. In an aside, he remarks that the Christian priest's ministry is superior to that of Jews, for where Jewish priests had authority to certify that bodily ailment (i.e., leprosy) is cured, Christian priests have authority over the cleanness of the soul to cure it.[83]

Returning again to his comparison of priests and natural parents, Chrysostom remarks that priests have been given greater power for punishment and help. Parents, he argues, cannot avert *bodily* death nor drive away the onset of disease, but priests have often saved sick and dying *souls* by making punishment milder for some or by preventing others from incurring it through instruction, warning, prayer, and the authority to remit sins both at the point of regeneration and afterwards (Jas. 5:14-15). To all this Chrysostom adds that priests have a superior intercessory ministry. While parents cannot help children who fall foul of rulers and kings, priests, he claims, have often appeased the anger of God and earthly rulers.[84] Chrysostom later goes so far as to describe priests as ambassadors for the whole world. They plead with God to be merciful to the sins of all human beings, both living and departed, with a confidence that exceeds even that of a Moses or Elijah. The priest is not just a father to believers, therefore, but to all humanity. And he prays not just for souls but for the cessation of wars and conflicts. He supplicates for peace and prosperity and for people to be speedily released from all private and public ills.[85]

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[81] Ibid. 3.6 (SC 272, 150-56; Neville, *Priesthood*, 73). Chrysostom also speaks of their "spiritual travail" in connection with birth, which is motherly language.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid. In comparison to the OT priesthood, he also calls the Christian priesthood "embellished and enhanced."

[84] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 74). Here, again, Rapp's research proves helpful. The accessibility of the emperor in Late Antiquity allowed the bishop to slip into the role of a city's advocate alongside prominent citizens. In times of crisis, they, too, might go on an embassy to the court of Constantinople or write to powerful connections. The bishop claimed privilege to intercede before civil authorities on behalf of the people and before God on behalf of the authorities. He could exercise παρρησία before both God and emperor because of his office and the confidence inspired by his asceticism (*Holy Bishops*, 260-65, 268-69). Παρρησία is a distinctive mark of spiritual authority—the freedom to say everything or to be bold of speech (ibid., 67).

[85] *De sac.* 6.4 (SC 272, 314-20; Neville, *Priesthood*, 140). The strong emphasis on the intercessory ministry of the priest may be a product of existing competition between priests, who receive the Holy Spirit uniquely upon ordination, and *pneumatophoroi*, which described holy men, including monastic leaders. The *pneumatophoroi* also claimed spiritual authority through a confluence

5.1.4 Conclusion

Chrysostom's insights into the nature of the priesthood can be summarised in three themes:

First, the tending of Christ's flock primarily denotes responsibility, one undertaken out of love for Christ and therefore as demonstrating Christ's love to the church. It is taking responsibility over many, to keep them from sin and judgment through diagnosis and persuasion. Chrysostom will build on these ideas later. For example, although here he puts a higher value on the soul over the body, we shall see later that he is not blind to the influence of bodily affliction on sickness of soul, and that finding solutions to both is therefore within the responsibilities of the shepherd.

The picture of the priest standing in the midst of heaven, meanwhile, signifies mediation. Through the Eucharist, priests, like angels, serve in the presence of the Lord of Heaven. Such an honour is not given for its own sake, but for the priest, through their invocation of the Holy Spirit, to enable the whole congregation to rise alongside them. Among the concrete expressions of this mystical reality is the dispensation of the sacraments by which believers are ushered into eternal life.[86]

The third picture—that of the priest surpassing heavenly and earthly powers—asserts authority. The authority given to priests trumps that of angels, of earthly rulers, of Jewish priests, and even of natural parents insofar as they faithfully carry the ministry entrusted to them (i.e., the sacraments, instruction and warnings, and prayers). Theirs is the authority to forgive sin and to discipline and rebuke the soul. They have also been given the authority to intercede for the human race before God.

The emphasis on authority is important in understanding why Chrysostom's treatise is replete with warnings of judgment should the priest fail in his task.[87] Since

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of asceticism, intercessory prayer, and the ability to alleviate the burden of the sins of others, which sometimes caused problems for institutional clergy (see Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 60,64-65, 73).

[86] In the larger context of Chrysostom's theology, Rylaarsdam explains this episode as a re-approriation of the Hellenistic concept of re-orientation. Philosophers are said to "take flight" on winged souls in order to have an accurate view of the world and reality. Through his incarnation, Christ "made earth into heaven" not by altering earth's nature but by enabling humans to live on earth as if in heaven. Priests play an important mediating role in that they are expected to participate, and therefore lead people, into this heavenly reality now. They do this by directing people's thinking to heavenly things (i.e., Christian teaching) through worship, sacrament, and preaching ("On Earth as if in Heaven: John Chrysostom on Christ, Priests, and the Making of Angels," *SP* 47 [2010]: 237-41).

[87] E.g., *De sac.* 2.7 (SC 272, 128-30; Neville, *Priesthood*, 65); 3.11 (SC 272, 194-96; § 15 on Neville, *Priesthood*, 90-91); 4.1 (SC 272, 224-26; Neville, *Priesthood*, 108); 4.9 (SC 272, 278-80; Neville, *Priesthood*, 126); 6.1 (SC 272, 304-306; Neville, *Priesthood*, 136-37); 6.10 (SC 272, 336-38; Neville, *Priesthood*, 150-51).

Chrysostom has raised the priesthood to an unimpeachable status, the only other person who can stand in judgment over him is God Himself. Of course, as we shall see, the priest is also paradoxically at the mercy of the criticisms of his subjects, but, when all is said and done, God's should be the sole judgment that counts.

5.2 The Responsibilities of the Priesthood

Of the priest's specific responsibilities, Chrysostom gives the most focus to the function of teaching or preaching. To these he dedicates Books 4 and 5. Book 3, meanwhile, discusses other priestly tasks that Chrysostom claims bring many anxieties. This includes promotion; the care for widows, sick people, and virgins; and, arbitration, visitation, and excommunication. The tasks in Book 3 are heavier on the bishop than on an ordinary presbyter, even though, as I have argued earlier, Chrysostom saw the tasks as being priestly rather than merely episcopal in nature (except in the case of promotions). I have, therefore, for consistency's sake, followed the English translation and used bishop as the subject when discussing the tasks in Book 3.

5.2.1 Teaching and Preaching

On the matter of teaching Chrysostom uses images and illustrations that are commonly used by a Hellenistic rhetor.[88] In addition, he uses language from Christian and Jewish scriptures.[89]

The first illustration is again that of the priest as doctor. This time, it is in the context of the biblical metaphor of Christ as Head and the church as His body. The body needs to be conformed to the Head, but it is often ailed by heretical teaching or moral failing. As doctor, the priest must understand the ailments of various members in the congregation and apply the correct remedy. The remedy is found in scripture and administered through preaching or teaching.[90]

A second image Chrysostom uses, albeit mixing metaphors, is the church as the City of God. In the context of warfare, he highlights the devil as the enemy who employs different kinds of attacks. The city is protected by "the nimble wits and wisdom

[88] See Wilken, *Jews*, 107, 110, 117 on physician; 118 on wolves and sheep. See also Jan R. Stenger, "Text Worlds and Imagination in Chrysostom's Pedagogy," in De Wet and Mayer, *Revisioning*, note 8, 208-209, for a list of studies on Chrysostom's use of metaphors and imagery.

[89] Wilken, *Jews*, 123.

[90] *De sac*. 4.2.96-4.3.47 (SC 272, 246-52; Neville, *Priesthood*, 114-15).

of the shepherd" like a wall all around. One crack in the wall could lead to the city's destruction. Chrysostom especially names the Jews, the Greeks, the Manichaeans, the Stoics, the Sabellians, the Arians, and the followers of Paul of Samosata among enemies (or wolves) aiming to pillage the church and slaughter the sheep inside. Of note is his assertion that the heresies of Sabellius and Arius can be avoided by the Nicene formula of three Persons in the one Godhead.[91]

But there are dangers within the church as well. Some people provoke God out of "restless curiosity," wanting "to elaborate idly and irresponsibly doctrines which are of no benefit to those who understand them, or else are actually incomprehensible." Others call God to account for His judgments and search things God "did not will us to know." [92] Using authority to silence people who pursue these enigmas has led to leaders being accused of arrogance and ignorance, so the leader needs great tact to dissuade people from inappropriate speculation and to escape criticisms. For all these matters, Chrysostom claims, "no other help has been vouchsafed but that of the word."[93]

The wall imagery, which Chrysostom first uses when discussing the church as the City of God, is repeated a little later in the same book, but this time applied to the Apostle Paul, whose example priests should follow. When Basil points out that Paul had bragged of being poor in speech, Chrysostom responds that Paul's words have often been misinterpreted.[94] Paul had indeed been inexpert at the "pedantry of heathen rhetoric,"[95] but he knew how to contend for doctrines of truth. This was why he had claimed he was "inexpert in speech but not in knowledge." Pointing to many examples in scripture, and especially to Paul's epistles, Chrysostom writes, "By this he has helped and will help and, as long as the human race remains, will never stop helping the faithful…. For his writings fortify the churches all over the world like a wall

[91] Ibid. 4.4 (SC 272, 252-60; § 3-4 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 115-18).

[92] Ibid. 4.5 (SC 272, 260-62; Neville, *Priesthood*, 118-19). This charge sounds like Chrysostom's criticism against the *anomoeans*. That he claims it as the idle speculations of "our own people" suggests *anomoean* doctrines are seeping into his congregation. See discussion on *anomoeans* in chapter 2, esp. p. 64, 66-68.

[93] *De sac*. 4.5 (SC 272, 260-62; Neville, *Priesthood*, 119).

[94] Even if he had been poor in speech, Chrysostom points out, men today still can't compare themselves with him in the great grace he has received (i.e., prayers that worked miracles; being caught up to the third heaven) and great virtue (i.e., angelic behaviour, persecutions he suffered for the churches, willingness to go to hell for his enemies, longing for Christ).

[95] I.e., the polish of Isocrates, the grandeur of Demosthenes, the dignity of Thucydides, the sublimity of Plato.

of steel."[96]

Since the writings of Paul help in both the discernment of true and false doctrine and in helping people live a good life, teaching scripture is the principal way that a priest can accomplish his responsibility as doctor and shepherd and wall. Teaching correctly is also a charge given to those under authority, but priests more than anyone must "lead their disciples, both by what they do and what they say."[97]

Although Chrysostom has many biblical exemplars, the choice of Paul and of his epistles here may be particularly significant.[98] As Margaret Mitchell notes, consistent throughout Chrysostom's oeuvres is an author-centred hermeneutic. Influenced by Greek *paideia* where men were taught to "install Demosthenes in their souls," Chrysostom aimed to install Paul in his soul. Chrysostom here is upholding Paul not just as an exemplar, but as one whose wisdom and virtues are preserved in written form and must be brought to the public's eyes. In the same way that the Greeks believed letters could mediate the presence of absent people, Paul's epistles mediate his presence.[99] Through his writings, Paul remains a priest to churches even after his death.[100]

Another matter worth highlighting is that Chrysostom also expected laypeople to know the Word and teach it. Like the Cynics who wanted to make philosophy

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[96] *De sac.* 4.6-7 (SC 272, 262-74; Neville, *Priesthood*, 119-23). Rylaarsdam posits that the importance of truth for Chrysostom again finds semblance in Greek *paideia*, where, without truth, an orator merely "offers the appearance of wisdom but not the reality" (*Divine Pedagogy*, 31). For more on Chrysostom's rhetorical tactics on this particular Pauline argument, see Margaret M. Mitchell, *The Heavenly Trumpet: John Chrysostom and the Art of Pauline Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 282-89.

[97] *De sac.* 4.8-4.9 (SC 272, 274-80; Neville, *Priesthood*, 124-26). He quotes Col. 3:16, Col. 4:6, 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 Thess 5:11 for evidence on the former and 1 Tim 5:17, Matt 5:19, and Paul's example in Acts 20:31 for the latter arguments.

[98] Like other Christian theologians of his day (most notably Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory Nazianzen), he taught Christianity as the true philosophy whose formative literature is the whole of scripture (Rylaarsdam, *Pedagogy*, 33-34). Chrysostom's other favourite biblical exemplars have also been recently explored: David (Pak-Wah Lai, "John Chrysostom and the Hermeneutics of Exemplar Portraits" [PhD diss., University of Durham, 2011], 93-128), Abraham (Demetrios Tonias, *Abraham in the Works of John Chrysostom* [Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014]), and Job (Douglas Finn, "Job as Exemplary Father according to John Chrysostom," *JECS* 26, no. 2 [2018]: 275-305).

[99] In this sense, Mitchell claims that Chrysostom viewed scripture as a relic. In his homilies on Gen. 11:4 and Gen. 36:8, Chrysostom intimates that the absent dead could be mediated to through physical things, especially writings (Mitchell, *Trumpet*, 43-49). It is also worth noting that the whole scripture itself mediates God to humans in that it is God's letter to humanity (Rylaarsdam, *Pedagogy*, 39-42).

[100] Rylaarsdam makes a similar observation that Paul here is being depicted as the model priest (*Pedagogy*, 206).

available to the public,[101] the priest had an important role in making Christian teaching available to everyone. Not that the public could not read scripture for themselves, but the priest helped in proper interpretation and practical use. This was why, as David Rylaarsdam notes, the church was more like a school than a religion in the social world of the fourth century. It was a place for "reading texts and forming a culture based on a rival literature to the pagan classics."[102] Maxwell also posits that the primary purpose of sermons was to deepen the laity's grasp of Christian doctrine and behaviour.[103]

All of this means that the preacher has an important function to fulfil in the communication between God and humanity. Nonetheless, Chrysostom complains that those under authority do not treat preachers as their instructors. And instead of disciples, they act like spectators, judging preachers as if they were watching secular speechmakers, plays, or concerts.[104] Leyerle's research supports the idea that Antioch had an intimidating audience, whose sharp eyes and even sharper tongues actors feared.[105] Meanwhile, Wilken notes that the same skills and techniques (e.g., encomium, invectives, comparison) used by rhetors also found their way to the pulpit. Rhetors used to deliver speeches on various special and religious occasions, at an audience before important political figures, or at the invitation of a neighbouring city. "Christians began to idolize their preachers the way pagans admired the rhetors."[106] The impact of this era, called the Second Sophistic, was felt in the preaching and writing style of fourth century bishops, including Chrysostom and the Cappadocian fathers.[107]

To combat these attitudes, Chrysostom recommends two qualities for preachers: contempt of praise and force of eloquence. Force of eloquence is necessary not just to avoid public scorn but to make one's rebuke effective. Chrysostom insightfully points out that people who are nettled by a rebuke, unable to retaliate in any other way, look for fault instead in the preacher's skill. Contempt of

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[101] Maxwell, *Christianization*, 22-30. Cynics aimed to make the teaching of virtue available to all and had quite the similarity with Christian teachers in appearance, the rejection of wealth, and rhetorical training.

[102] Rylaarsdam, *Pedagogy*, 199. Chrysostom's views on laypeople reading and teaching scripture will be discussed in more detail in chapter 2.

[103] Maxwell, *Christianization*, 7.

[104] *De sac.* 5.1 (SC 272, 280-84; Neville, *Priesthood*, 127). For instance, preachers are criticised if they borrow from another's work or repeat their own work too soon.

[105] Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 15-16.

[106] Wilken, *Jews*, 97, 100-101.

[107] Ibid. See also chapter 2 of Maxwell, *Christianization*, 42-61. The use of rhetoric was found everywhere: in weddings and birthdays, religious festivals, arguments in lawcourts, funerals, etc.

praise is necessary, meanwhile, because those who live for applause are tempted to speak to give pleasure rather than profit.[108] Of course, this latter virtue was not new or limited to Christians. As Maxwell notes, to the Emperor Julian, the love of public acclaim was a vice, especially for those who claimed to be philosophers (though this did not mean philosophers should withdraw from public life). Likewise, some pagans had a low opinion of sophists who wanted to entertain but not teach.[109]

5.2.2 Promotions

Chrysostom begins by calling to mind a public festival, where appointments for ecclesiastical offices (τῶν ἐκκλησιαστικῶν ἀρχῶν τὰς αἱρέσεις) are made. On this occasion, the candidate is assailed by many accusations because the synod of presbyters (τῶν πρεσβυτέρων συνέδριον), i.e., those who are qualified to bestow honour (οἱ δοῦναι κύριοι τὴν τιμὴν) are split into many factions, agreeing neither amongst themselves nor with their bishop about the candidates.[110] Chrysostom laments that instead of choosing someone for spiritual worth, priests are chosen based on whether they come from a distinguished family, possess a large fortune, are a convert from another faction, are a friend or relative, or even a flatterer. Some are promoted because of seniority or are enlisted to the clergy to prevent them from siding with the enemy or to stop them causing trouble if they are overlooked.[111]

Aside from this, suitable candidates are rejected for the weakest reasons: perhaps because he is young, or has not learnt to flatter, or has offended someone important. Some are hurt because their own nominee is rejected. Some reject a man because he is just and they are wicked. When they have no better excuse, they even claim that the number of available clergy is enough and there is no need for more. Or they pretend concern, arguing it is better not to promote a man to honour suddenly, but gently and by degrees. In other words, they do everything to keep a good man from office. Secular rulers may distribute honours like this, but Chrysostom insists that

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[108] *De sac.* 5.1-3 (SC 272, 280-86; Neville, *Priesthood*, 128-29).

[109] Maxwell, *Christianization*, 14-18. Leyerle points out Chrysostom's aversion toward *philotimia,* the pursuit of public praise, in his invectives against the theatre (Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 4).

[110] *De sac*. 3.11.1-14 (SC 272, 188).

[111] *De sac.* 3.11 (SC 272, 189-92; § 15 in Neville, *Priesthood,* 89-91). Rapp notes that none of the church's normative texts at the time gave specific recommendations for social background or personal wealth when it came to suitable candidates for the clergy. However, most men from humble backgrounds (e.g., former slaves) only became bishops in exceptional cases. Most came from landowning *curiales*. Bishops who were poor men could also be looked down upon, even, for example, by Nazianzen and Basil of Caesarea. Chrysostom, as bishop of Constantinople, would later appoint several freed slaves as bishops (*Holy Bishops*, 173-75, 183-84).

the church should not.[112] Unfortunately, if a bishop attempts to solve this conflict by honest assessment, he makes many enemies who "stir up feuds" and "heap endless ridicule on those he has chosen" until they either depose them or get their own men into the ranks. On the other hand, if the bishop chooses to please these men, he ends up provoking God, while the men conspire together and gain strength.[113]

5.2.3 Widows and the Sick

The ministry to the disadvantaged was another source of anxiety for bishops and priests. Mayer notes that, by this time, the church had made institutional care available to orphans, widows, and lepers, so that, in an Antiochene homily on Matthew 18:23, Chrysostom could refer to the bishop as the "patron of the poor."[114]

In *De sac.*, Chrysostom discusses some of the challenges attached to this title. First, he expresses the need to carefully scrutinise the enrolment of widows. Some of the candidates, Chrysostom claims, have wrecked homes, broken marriages, or been caught stealing or committing other disgraceful offences. Supporting women like these will bring down the vengeance of God, the condemnation of men, and, furthermore, discourage supporters, since no one would want to support those who dishonour Christ's name.[115]

The second big anxiety is making sure that their material needs are met. Chrysostom first demonstrates how involuntary poverty can be an insatiable evil. Widows, "owing to poverty, age, and sex, tend to use … an unbridled freedom of speech." [116] They often scold out of reason, find unnecessary fault, are ungrateful, and criticise. And yet they must be pitied, not insulted, for their misfortunes. Chrysostom asserts that people are forced to beg for fear of starvation, and so become brazen in their begging. When they are insulted because of their brazenness, they are attacked by great despondency. But a person who hears a kindly word and receives a gift offered with sympathy brightens up and is happy. Therefore, the manner of giving to

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[112] *De sac.* 3.11 (SC 272, 190-94; § 15 in Neville, *Priesthood,* 91-92).

[113] Ibid. 3.11 (SC 272, 194-198; § 15 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 92-93).

[114] Wendy Mayer, "Poverty and Generosity Toward the Poor in the Time of John Chrysostom," in *Wealth and Poverty in Early Church and Society*, ed. Susan R. Holman (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 142. According to Nairn, the income, offerings, and alms received by the Church were under the disposition of the bishop, who dispenses it by himself or by his proper officers with the general sanction of his presbyters. But the Council of Antioch (AD 341) forbids the bishop to deal with Church revenues without the consent of the presbyters or deacons; and orders him to render an account of those revenues to the provincial synod (ΙΕΡΩΣΥΝΗΣ, xxvi-xxvii).

[115] *De sac.* 3.12 (SC 272, 200-210; § 16 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 94-95).

[116] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 95).

them is just as important as the gift they are given.[117] Mayer notes, in her insightful study, that this unfortunate reaction to the involuntary poor and to solicitation was something that Chrysostom hoped to correct. Wealthy citizens tended to support the voluntary poor (holy ascetics), hoping to gain spiritual benefit and to display their social status, but ignored and despised the true beggars.[118]

In response to the difficulties of the poor, the bishop must be just, forbearing, and a good steward. He must not hoard resources but distribute them among the needy quickly. The treasure of the Church is the good will of the congregation. Expenditures should be allocated not just for the poor, but for hospitality to strangers and care for the sick. It is thus the bishop's job to be a discreet and shrewd treasurer, encouraging the wealthy to emulate one another and to give cheerfully of their substance. His object is to provide for the relief of the sick but without scourging the souls of the contributors. In a short aside, he remarks again on the necessity for forbearance and concern in the case of the sick, who tend to be "hard to please and given to languor."[119]

5.2.4 Virgins

Chrysostom next deals with anxieties related to virgins, whom he calls the princesses of the church. He laments the growing problem that many "impious women" have intruded into their ranks. If Chrysostom emphasises the virgins' need for modesty and the importance of protecting their reputation, it is because virgins have prepared themselves for a greater prize and devoted themselves to the highest philosophy, "professing to display" on earth the behaviour of angels. Unbecoming conduct, like walking abroad unnecessarily, speaking without reason, or engaging in abusive talk and flattery, has the potential to disgrace Christ Himself, the consequence for which is eternal torment.[120]

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[117] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 95-97). He quotes Ecclus. 4:8.

[118] Mayer, "Poverty and Generosity," 140-58. Rapp's research supports this view. She notes that civic benefactors of the classical world could be generous in their public donations, but the recipients were primarily their peers. Meanwhile, Jewish communities looked after widows and orphans but only those from their own circle. Bishops made it a point to help the have-nots and to extend charity even to those who were not of the same religion (*Holy Bishops*, 223).

[119] *De sac.* 3.12 (SC 272, 200-210; § 16 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 97). Ecclesiastical finances came from regular contributions, imperial donations, and pious bequests. In AD 321, Constantine allowed the church to acquire property and income (Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 172, cf. 215-16).

[120] *De sac.* 3.13 (SC 272, 210-18; § 17 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 97-99).

The emphasis on modesty is, as Leyerle notes, probably influenced by the cultural perception of gender roles. Respectable women, especially virgins, were expected to be "passive commodities" whose exchange cemented social ties, whereas prostitutes were "active sellers," and, having no shame to protect, were unconstrained by domestic enclosures. The latter circulated freely in the marketplace. Chrysostom therefore characterises true virgins, in contrast to these, as committed to seclusion and quiet contrition.[121] This indeed seems to have been the prevailing view, because Chrysostom notes that natural fathers (unlike the priest) have plenty of help (i.e., mother, nurse, maids) in protecting their daughters, and indeed represent them in all public capacities so they do not have to go out to the marketplace and be seen.[122]

An alternative that had arisen was for male and female ascetics to live together. Chrysostom's objection to cohabitation is evinced in his brief comment that a spiritual father cannot keep a virgin at home with himself. It is neither decent nor safe and might lead souls astray. On the other hand, if compelled to attend to her own needs, a virgin will have many excuses for going out if she chooses to misbehave. Chrysostom's solution is therefore to place her material provisions among the responsibilities of the church, including having a woman to attend to her so she has almost no need to leave the house. He acknowledges, however, that while this is ideal, it is not easy to accomplish and adds to the anxieties of the bishop.[123] Anticipating objections that "it is not the bishop's job to attend to any of this" (referring to the strict regulation of the virgins' affairs),[124] Chrysostom insists it is better for the bishop to manage everything himself. If he delegates the task, he could incur criticism for the faults of those to whom he entrusts the ministry. Moreover, he will be able to accomplish his business more quickly if he avoids the opposition and resistance that comes with delegation.[125]

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[121] Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 87, 151.

[122] *De sac.* 3.13 (SC 272, 210-18; § 17 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 99-100).

[123] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 100).

[124] Ibid. Chrysostom seems to recognise that some will see his view of episcopal work as being overly and unnecessarily concerned with the regulation of ascetics, hence his attempt to justify his recommendations. Indeed, Leyerle argues that Chrysostom's vehemence against cohabitation is not just about moral outrage but part of his political savvy in gaining ecclesiastical control over urban ascetics (see *Theatrical*, 193-99). See further discussion on Chrysostom's relationship with ascetics in chapter 3 of this thesis. Chrysostom's tendency to micromanage, hinted at here, also causes problems in his relationship with his clergy. See chapter 4.

[125] *De sac.* 3.13 (SC 272, 210-18; § 17 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 100).

5.2.5 Arbitration, Visitation, and Judgment

Chrysostom next covers the topic of arbitration. According to Claudia Rapp, the state first recognised episcopal courts in the time of Constantine, though specific legislation underwent changes over the years. At the time of *De sac.*'s writing, the *Codex Theodosianus* limited episcopal judgment and arbitration to non-criminal cases at the consent of both parties. Possible penalties per the *Const. App.* (ca. AD 380) included penance and excommunication.[126] John Lamoreaux's detailed study, meanwhile, shows that the kinds of cases brought before the bishop included, among others, rights to possession of estates and tombs, legal guardianship, division of inheritance, questions of personal status, and charges of sexual misconduct and abuse. Lamoreaux also notes that, at least in Augustine's time and locality, bishops could impose a penalty of corporal punishment but tended not to.[127] Whether this was the case in Chrysostom's Antioch is difficult to say, due to a lack of concrete examples. In any case, as Lochbrunner notes, Chrysostom seems more interested in the pastoral than in the legal aspect of the *audientia episcopalis*.[128]

Chrysostom remarks that the judicial function requires much expenditure of time, since it is difficult finding where justice lies and even harder not to pervert it when it is found. He finds this discussion especially tricky because he worries about the souls in his charge. Some people, for example, abandon the faith because the decision reached did not favour them. They come to hate not only the one who did them wrong but also the one who was unable to help them. "They don't take into account the complicated nature of the business or the difficulty of appointing a suitable time or the limitation of ecclesiastical authority…. They are merciless critics who recognize only one thing in the judge's favour—if these deliver them from their troubles."[129]

The accusation of partiality on the bishop's part does not just happen when there is a case involved. His slightest action could be misconstrued because people wrongfully view his attention as a sign of honour and distinction. So, for example, if a bishop neglects to visit certain people, even if they are healthy, they get offended. Or

[126] The pertinent articles in the *Cod. Theod.* are 16.2.23 (AD 376) and 16.11.1 (AD 399). See Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 243-52 for a review of the development of episcopal courts in Late Antiquity. She gives examples of how episcopal courts were managed in other localities or by other personalities. But care must be taken not to assume the practice in Chrysostom's Antioch was completely the same.

[127] See John C. Lamoreaux, "Episcopal Courts in Late Antiquity," *JECS* 3, no. 2 (1995): 143-167, esp. 161-65.

[128] Lochbrunner, *Priestertum*, 178.

[129] *De sac.* 3.14 (SC 272, 219-25; § 18 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 100-101).

if a bishop should visit one of the richer and more influential men, he gets accused of being a flatterer and of toadyism. People interpret every glance, every casual doing, every vocal inflection, every expression, and every laugh, thinking things like "He smiled affably at so-and-so … but he was less pleasant with me." [130]

Coming to the subject of excommunication, Chrysostom notes that people don't often realise the grief bishops feel over this. Great care must be taken not to punish too severely lest one overwhelm the penitent with greater sorrow and the opportunity to help becomes an occasion for greater loss.[131]

5.2.6 Conclusion

Beyond their role in the liturgy, priests are tasked with a number of weighty responsibilities. Chrysostom gives greatest attention to teaching and preaching, which, for him, involves contending for truth, exposing false doctrine, and rebuking moral failures. He portrays scripture as a protective wall surrounding the church, interpreting the doctrine of God that it presents according to Nicene theology. Thus, for Chrysostom, scripture and Nicene tradition together protect the church through the teaching and example of the priest. Laypeople are also expected to teach one another, and, at least in *De sac.*, Chrysostom does not differentiate between private and public teaching beyond the fact that public teaching exposes the priest to greater criticism.

On the subject of promotion, Chrysostom reveals the complexity of inter-clerical dynamics. His discussion of the realities in his time raises the question of why clerical office could be attractive for an individual as well as for a party. What did it add, especially, for one who comes from a distinguished family already? Moreover, if these were the types of people that were accepted into the clerical ranks, how should the bishop exercise authority over people either used to being in power themselves or to building partnerships with people in power?

Chrysostom also reveals the gap between rich and poor in a Christian community. He raises the concerns of the truly poor and the sick, particularly the need to procure funds for them from the wealthy. It is the priest's responsibility to persuade the wealthy to look at them with mercy not just because they are poor and despite their complaining attitude and brazenness, which can be consequences of their poverty.

Another area of concern for priests is the care of virgins. Chrysostom speaks

[130] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 101-102).
[131] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 102-103); cf. 2 Cor. 2:7.

of them as he does of monks in other writings, namely, that they live in seclusion, aim to display the behaviour of angels, and are committed to the highest philosophy. Unlike monks, however, virgins live in the city and are thus an important concern for the bishop of the city.

Finally, in the concept of arbitration, Chrysostom emphasises the priest's role in judgment and discipline, but also the reality that he is almost always being judged by the people as well. Although, or perhaps because, he is the one in authority, the priest needs to have the more magnanimous disposition, with a view toward correction and restoration.

In summary, the specific responsibilities of the priest or bishop include teaching, discipline, the procurement of material provision for the disadvantaged, and the management of internal and external ecclesiastical relationships (i.e., public image). The key themes of soul care, persuasion, and community overlap in each of these responsibilities.

5.3 The Requirements of the Priesthood

Given the nature of the priesthood and the weight of its responsibilities, what sort of character and skill must a priest possess? Chrysostom's discussion of the requirements of the priesthood is not isolated in one section. We find him returning to this topic several times, applying the same two qualities to different situations. These two requirements can be summarised as angelic virtue and many-sidedness.

5.3.1 Angelic Virtue

The most extensive treatment of angelic virtue (ἀγγελικῆς ἀρετῆς) is found in Book 6.[132] To illustrate his point, Chrysostom compares priests with monks. Since the monk is the standard of virtue which the priest aims to surpass, it is unsurprising that the virtues ascribed to the priest are also ascetic in nature.

Based on a theology of recapitulation, where the chief end of human beings is to return to a life of Adamic bliss, monks were known for attempting to live on earth as

[132] The word appears in *De sac*. 6.2.4-5 (SC 272, 306). But the idea of angelic virtue is already hinted at in Book 3, where Chrysostom writes that the priest "must be as pure as if he were standing in heaven itself, in the midst of those powers" (*De sac.* 3.4 [SC 272, 142; Neville, *Priesthood,* 70]). He has also used "angelic behaviour" in reference to Paul and to virgins.

though already in an angelic state.[133] Chrysostom attributes their success primarily to their solitude and to their distance from the city and the marketplace. They have little to tempt them to sin, having charge of only a few people, who may be people like themselves who are free from worldly anxieties. Their tasks are moreover shared between body and soul, i.e., so long as a monk keeps his body strong, he will succeed in his physical exercises.[134]

A priest does not have such luxury. He requires far greater purity and spiritual strength because of his public ministry. Priests, for example, have sometimes fallen for the beauty and charm of rich women. Surprisingly, some have even been tempted by neglected appearances and poverty—led to compassion first, then to downfall. Craving meanwhile the honours bestowed by men, priests could be led to toadyism and boastfulness and other evils.[135] Their patience, too, can be severely tested by their charges, because people with worldly concerns, rich or poor, are constantly unmindful of the things of God.[136] Dealing with such people, priests rely purely on strength of spirit, since bodily strength, at least Chrysostom thinks, cannot help them be less stubborn, hot-tempered, or reckless.[137]

Angelic virtue is especially needed in the ministry of preaching. Disproportionate fear and anxiety over unfounded criticisms will not make a priest a better speaker.[138] Neither will ambition, which will only bring him many cares. The reality, Chrysostom observes, is that gifted speakers must constantly meet the unfair expectations of the public, who will not care if their performance is strained because they might be suffering pain, anxiety, or anger. Moreover, gifted speakers are often hated and envied. Besides, most members of a speaker's community will probably be ignorant about what constitutes capability, so he might not receive the applause or approval he craves. The only thing he can do is pardon ignorant opinions and earnestly compose his sermons to please God.[139] The unskilled speaker must likewise despise praise because letting himself be dominated by popular opinion will only lead him to make more mistakes. Instead of working harder, he might even be tempted to criticise

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[133] Pak-Wah Lai, "The Monk as Christian Saint and Exemplar in St John Chrysostom's Writings," in *Saints and Sanctity*, ed. Peter Clarke and Tony Claydon (Suffolk, UK: Boydell & Brewer, 2011), 21; cf. Lai, "*Priesthood* as Dialogue," 230.

[134] *De sac.* 6.2-3, 5 (SC 272, 306-12, 320-22; § 1-3, 5 in Neville, *Priesthood,* 137, 139, 143).

[135] Ibid. 6.3, 8 (SC 272, 310-12, 330-34; Neville, *Priesthood*, 137-39, 147-48).

[136] Ibid. 6.4 (SC 272, 314-20; Neville, *Priesthood*, 139-40).

[137] Ibid. 6.5 (SC 272, 320-22; Neville, *Priesthood*, 143).

[138] Ibid. 5.4 (SC 272, 288-90; Neville, *Priesthood*, 129-30).

[139] Ibid. 5.5-7 (SC 272, 290-98; Neville, *Priesthood*, 130-33).

and plot against the better speakers. These realities of the preaching ministry are "enough to kill enthusiasm and paralyse spiritual energy unless a man dispossesses himself of all human passions and studies to live like the disembodied spirits who are not hounded by envy or vainglory or any other disease of that sort."[140]

The dangers of human passions are discussed at length in Book 3. At the top of Chrysostom's list of evils is vainglory, which gives rise to various other evils like anger, dejection, envy, strife, etc. Specific evils that might assail the priest include the temptation to speak imprecations against the innocent, the temptation to delight at the disgrace of fellow priests and to be sorrowful at their successes, the temptation to fawn over the rich and despise the poor, slavish wheedling, teaching to please, etc. The priest who acts in these ways is guilty of misusing God's gift, i.e., the priestly office.[141] The truly commendable virtue is to have no ambition for office, and to resign as soon as one commits a sin deserving deposition. Many will want to seize a priest's position, anyway, so he may as well not fear its loss.[142] But, of course, the ideal is that he guard his virtue, for enemies, even from among his fellow ministers and "friends," are constantly seeking a reason to depose him.[143] Fortunately, the well-intentioned priest can rely on God's grace to withstand all attacks to the soul, much as the bodies of Daniel's friends withstood the furnace.[144]

For these reasons and more, Chrysostom argues that priests must be chosen on the basis of piety,[145] but, aside from that, of intelligence. He claims to have known many people who progressed well in asceticism and philosophy. Unable, however, to cope with responsibility over others, they ended up abandoning their former high standards.[146]

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[140] Ibid. 5.8 (SC 272, 298-304; Neville, *Priesthood*, 133-35).
[141] Ibid. 3.7-9; 3.10 (SC 272, 156-64, 172-88; § 12-14 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 77-78, 83-88).
[142] Ibid. 3.10 (SC 272, 164-72; § 10-11 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 80-82).
[143] Ibid. 3.10 (SC 272, 182-86; § 14 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 86-87).
[144] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 86).
[145] At the time, there were those who believed that the imposition of hands at ordination has the same purifying effect as in baptism. Rapp notes Nazianzen among those who did not believe it and Nectarius of Constantinople among those who did (*Holy Bishops*, 94-98). The requirement for evidence of purity prior to being considered for office may put Chrysostom in the same camp as Nazianzen.
[146] *De sac.* 3.11 (SC 272, 190; § 15 in Neville, *Priesthood,* 89-90). This is not to say that no monks were ordained. Sterk notes that the monastic episcopate would become firmly ensconced during the middle Byzantine period (AD 641-1081) (*Renouncing*, 5). By the end of the fourth century, increasing numbers of clergy and bishops were being recruited from monastic communities (ibid., 5). Sterk also notes that Chrysostom himself ordained some monks as deacons and priests (e.g., Heraclides in Ephesus) (ibid.,154).

5.3.2 Many-Sidedness

Not only must the priest be steadfastly virtuous, but he must be so while guiding the ship (i.e., the church) to safety in the midst of the stormy sea.[147] This is where the skill of many-sidedness comes in.

A priest, Chrysostom writes, "must be many-sided (ποικίλον αὐτὸν εἶναι δεῖ)—not a charlatan, a flatterer, or a hypocrite; but absolutely open and frank of speech (παρρησίας ἀνάμεστον), able to condescend (συγκατιέναι) to good purpose, when the situation requires, and to be alike kindly or severe."[148] Ποικίλος means diversity, multiplicity, variegation.[149] It is here paired with παρρησία, which intimates that the idea of ποικίλος is neither servile nor deceitful. It comes from a place of authority and honesty. Meanwhile, to condescend is to be sensitive and adaptable, but not dishonest. Rylaarsdam argues that Chrysostom's inspiration for condescension comes from God's own example, since He cannot otherwise be comprehended by humanity's "creaturely finitude and sinfulness." In various other works, Chrysostom applies to God the same metaphors we have found here applied to the priest: doctor, father, teacher.[150]

The idea of adapting to situations is revisited elsewhere in the treatise. For instance, Chrysostom's argument in Book 1 about deception done from good motives involves a doctor tricking his patient to take medicine. This is not deception, he claims, but "good management" (οἰκονομια), tact (σοφία), and having the skill to "find many ways out of an impasse."[151] This highlights the doctor's understanding of the patient and his shrewd application of that knowledge to solve the problem.

The connection between knowledge of the patient and of the problem is more fully expounded in Book 2. As doctor to a sick soul, a priest may treat too leniently one who requires deep surgery and so miss the cancer, but he may also make an incision too deeply and cause the patient to refuse all further forms of treatment. Thus, Chrysostom argues, "It is not right simply to exact a penalty by the measure of the sins; some guess must be made about the disposition of the sinners." This requires "great wisdom and a thousand eyes, to examine the soul's condition from every angle."

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[147] *De sac.* 6.6-7 (SC 272, 322-30; Neville, *Priesthood*, 144).
[148] *De sac*. 6.4.75-78 (SC 272, 320; Neville, *Priesthood*, 142).
[149] LSJ, s.v. 'ποικίλος'; BDAG, s.v. 'ποικίλος'.
[150] Rylaarsdam, *Pedagogy*, 4-6.
[151] *De sac*. 1.7.52 (SC 272, 98; Neville, *Priesthood*, 49-51). Malingrey prefers foresight (prévoyance) for οἰκονομια (SC 272, 99).

Some people are arrogant and won't take bitter medicine, but there are others who must be made to pay for their sins or else they become negligent and sin more.[152] The bishop's flexibility should manifest, for example, in his management of his clergy. He should appear to be "dignified yet modest, impressive yet kindly, masterful yet approachable, impartial yet courteous, humble but not servile, vehement yet gentle." Only then can the bishop calmly resist all dangers when promoting a suitable man to office and rejecting an unsuitable one.[153]

Now the pursuit of virtue should not be a hindrance to many-sidedness. In fact, the priest must be "sober and clear-sighted" in addition to possessing "a thousand eyes looking in every direction." The myriad eyes are necessary since he is in charge of many others besides himself, but a "healthy and robust soul" is *especially* necessary in order not to be distracted by the huge multitude whose private cares he inherits.[154] This is why, for instance, great wisdom, plenty of energy, *and* forbearance are all equally needed in the ministry toward the poor and the sick.[155]

Virtue with many-sidedness is likewise indispensable in the priest's ministry to powerful women, who served as important patrons to the church. Mayer has highlighted the importance of these friendships or partnerships to Chrysostom even as a presbyter at Antioch.[156] Some of the dynamic is hinted at in *De sac.*, where Chrysostom asserts that the pastor must not neglect these women but must visit them in sickness, comfort them in sorrow, reprove them when indolent, and help them when overburdened.[157] On the other hand, priests must not allow such women to use them to exert influence in the church through proxy, for example, in the appointment and dismissal of clergy at will.[158] The ability of the priest to implore and rebuke persons in power depends a great deal on his moral superiority.

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[152] *De sac.* 2.4 (SC 272, 112-19; Neville, *Priesthood*, 57-58).
[153] Ibid. 3.11 (SC 272, 198-200; § 15 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 93).
[154] Ibid. 3.10 (SC 272, 172-74; § 12 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 82-83).
[155] Ibid. 3.12 (SC 272, 208-10; § 16 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 95)
[156] See Wendy Mayer, "John Chrysostom and Women Revisited," in *Men and Women in the Early Christian Centuries*, ed. Wendy Mayer and Ian J. Elmer (Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls, 2014), 211-25, esp. 220. This is based on letters written to seven of them during exile. None of them seemed to have been deacons or ascetics but likely moved among the wealthier circles at Antioch. Chrysostom had known four of them for a long time, most likely predating his episcopate at Constantinople. With Adolia he adopts an unusually familiar tone. With all, he shows familiarity of their households, health, and personal problems. This, Mayer claims, disproves the charges against Chrysostom of misogyny and exclusive interest in ascetic women.
[157] *De sac.* 6.8 (SC 272, 330-34; Neville, *Priesthood*, 147).
[158] Ibid. 3.9 (SC 272, 162-64; Neville, *Priesthood*, 78).

5.3.3 Conclusion

For Chrysostom, the priesthood requires men who have angelic virtue and are many-sided. The ascetic nature of angelic virtue is evident in Chrysostom's identification of sexual immorality, vainglory, and a quick temper as the three biggest pitfalls of priestly ministry. Ascetic virtues grant the priest clarity of eyes and mind to diagnose various kinds of people and situations, enabling him to condescend to good purpose. While useful, this also leaves the priest open to the charges of changeability and deceit. Hence, condescension must be paired with frankness of speech. Together, asceticism and many-sidedness therefore aid the priest in building networks for his ministry of pastoral care.

6. Conclusion

De sac. is fundamental to understanding Chrysostom's perception and exercise of ecclesiastical leadership. In *De sac.*, we see key themes emerge as Chrysostom discusses the nature, responsibilities, and requirements of priestly ministry. But what were the theological presuppositions behind his emphases? How did historical context impact the ideas he chose to pursue? And in what ways did his leadership commitments influence how he managed his ministries in Antioch and Constantinople? The next three chapters will focus on answering these questions, exploring other material in Chrysostom's corpus alongside *De sac*. for the purpose of better understanding the latter's themes, as well as the execution of Chrysostom's ideas in actual ministry.

We will begin, in chapter 2, with an expanded discussion of the responsibilities of priestly ministry, delving deeper into several interesting points that arise in *De sac*. First, despite Chrysostom's constant refrain about the superiority of the soul over the body, he displays uncanny insight into how the needs of the body affect the needs of the soul and vice versa. His concern for the soul is not limited to its eternal state but extends to its present disposition. Second, he emphasises the communal aspect of the church in his various assertions about the proper relationship and interaction between the rich and the poor, as well as the leaders and the various members of the church (i.e., ascetics, laity, fellow leaders). Finally, it is to strengthen these various communal ties that persuasion, in the form of orthodox teaching and action, becomes an indispensable part of leadership. We will therefore explore Chrysostom's definition

of soul and soul care, identify the various tools of persuasion he employed, and note their impact on community building.

In chapter 3, we will continue exploring the concepts of soul care and community-building, but this time in relation to the priestly requirements of angelic virtue and many-sidedness. We will delve deeper into the ascetic influences behind Chrysostom's vision of virtue and discover how his soteriology and eschatology informed the strategies he employed in his pastoral care of the wealthy and patronage of the poor.

Finally, in chapter 4, we will explore the substance behind Chrysostom's views of priestly ministry. In *De sac*., he only explicitly tackles the relationship between ministry and authority. However, reading his discussion in the context of the episcopal competition in Antioch reveals the intimate ties of authority with the concepts of legitimacy, unity, and apostolic succession. These interrelated ideas make a different but equally significant impact on how he handled episcopal relationships and political challenges in Constantinople. We will also discover the Christological reasons why ministry and authority are inseparable for Chrysostom, and how these became the bases for his ideas about priestly condescension and mediation.

Chapter 2: Persuasion, Soul Care, and Community Building

When it comes to the subject of scripture, modern research mainly recognises Chrysostom's contributions in two areas: hermeneutics and preaching. The two are almost inseparable in Chrysostom, whose prolific exegetical output has been preserved mostly in the form of homilies.[1] As an important representative of the Antiochene "school,"[2] his work is integral to understanding ancient approaches to the study and communication of scripture.

Some scholars have made use of Chrysostom only as an exegete. His insights might therefore be cited in the discussion of a key scriptural passage or theme, but usually as just one witness in an ecumenical consensus, and his exegesis is often not situated within the larger context of his theological presuppositions.[3] There are also those who study what made his preaching attractive and attempt to replicate his approach.[4]

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[1] According to Wendy Mayer, based on the CPG collection, the ratio of exegetical homilies to other genre of authentic homilies attributed to Chrysostom is 5:1. Additionally, he wrote commentaries on Galatians, Isaiah, Job, and Proverbs ("The Homiletic Audience as Embodied Hermeneutic: Scripture and Its Interpretation in the Exegetical Preaching of John Chrysostom," in *Hymns, Homilies and Hermeneutics in Byzantium*, ed. Sarah Gador-Whyte and Andrew Mellas [Leiden: Brill, 2021], 11).

[2] I put this in quotes because Antioch's schools were not scholastic institutions like in Alexandria, where there was "a succession of connected teachers organized and supervised by the local bishop." Rather, in Antioch, "individual exegetes and theologians tutored and supervised their own students" (Ashish J. Naidu, *Transformed in Christ: Christology and the Christian Life in John Chrysostom* [Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012], 29; cf. Stelian Tofana, "John Chrysostom's View on Reading and Interpreting the Scripture. A Critical Assessment," *Sacra Scripta* 6, no. 2 (2008): 166n1). Chrysostom himself was a member of Diodore's group.

[3] In such cases, the treatment of Chrysostom can only be brief and rather superficial. For example, Jean Daniélou, in *Bible and Liturgy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1956), cites Chrysostom's scriptural comments, among those of other Fathers, to explain some of the symbolic parts of the liturgy; David Raymond Smith includes Chrysostom in his broader study of *'Hand This Man Over to Satan': Curse, Exclusion and Salvation in 1 Corinthians 5* (London: T&T Clark, 2008).

Interestingly, there is more interest in Chrysostom's influence on the sixteenth century Protestant reformer, John Calvin. The consensus is that Calvin admired Chrysostom as an exegete (for favouring the plain meaning) and preacher (for his accessibility), but often did not agree with his interpretations because they had different theological priorities and perspectives. Despite Calvin regarding Chrysostom's exegesis as superior to Augustine, it is with Augustine that he finds doctrinal affinity. See the works of Peter C. Moore, "Gold Without Dross: Assessing the Debt of John Calvin to the Preaching of John Chrysostom," *Reformed Theological Review* 68, no. 2 (August 2009): 109-29 and "Plain Talk With a Gilt Edge: An Exploration of the Relationship Between 'Plain' Biblical Exposition and Persuasion in Chrysostom and Calvin," *Westminster Theological Journal* 73, no. 1 (2011): 157-72; and Paul Hartog, "Calvin's Preface to Chrysostom's Homilies as a Window into Calvin's Own Priorities and Perspectives," *Perichoresis* 17, no. 4 (2019): 57-71.

[4] For example, Paul Hartog, "John Chrysostom: Golden-Mouthed Preacher," in *A Legacy of Preaching*, ed. Benjamin K. Forrest et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2018). The historian, Chrysostomus Baur, also approached Chrysostom's preaching this way in *John Chrysostom and His Time*, vol. 1, trans. M. Gonzaga (Vaduz, Liechtenstein: Büchervertriebsanstalt, 1988), 206-26. The

Other scholars recognise his merit as a theologian or a Christian philosopher. The first type searches Chrysostom's corpus for his doctrinal position on traditional categories of systematic theology. Robert Hill, for example, finds, through Chrysostom's repeated use of *sugkatabasis* and *akribeia*, the importance of divine condescension and precision in exegetical method. He, and scholars that build on his work, then attempt to locate the theology behind Chrysostom's exegesis in the grand scheme of God's *oikonomia* or salvation history. Chrysostom is consulted for answers to questions such as, "What, then, is the purpose for revelation?" or "What is the relationship between Jesus as the Word of God with scripture as the word of God and how did this inform Chrysostom's preaching?"[5]

The second type examines Chrysostom's ideas in their historical and sociocultural contexts much more than the former group, then reconstruct his theology closer to his own terms. Mayer has, in particular, cogently argued that Chrysostom ought to be viewed as a Christian philosopher. Such a classification underscores his indebtedness to Greek *paideia*, which gives colour to the concept of the teaching priest as a physician of souls.[6] Another example is David Rylaarsdam, who has demonstrated how *paideia,* joined with *sugkatabasis*, allows Chrysostom to conceive of God as Divine Teacher, who gave scripture to aid the holistic development of virtuous citizens patterned after Jesus Christ.[7] Many studies have appeared, and are still appearing, exploring the use of emotions, imagination, imagery, and so on, in

approach is more descriptive and analysis is limited to what Chrysostom was like as a preacher, what he preached, and the general characteristics of his homilies (e.g., eloquent, orderly, practical).

[5] For instance, Robert Hill, "*Akribeia*: A Principle of Chrysostom's Exegesis," *Colloquium* 14, no. 1 (October 1981): 32-36; "St John Chrysostom's Teaching on Inspiration in Six Homilies on Isaiah," *VC* 22, no. 1 (April 1968): 19-37. Hill's ideas on this subject are pursued by Bradley Nassif, "John Chrysostom on the Nature of Revelation and Task of Exegesis," in *What is the Bible?: The Patristic Doctrine of Scripture*, ed. Matthew Baker and Mark Mourachian (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2016) and Naidu, *Transformed*. Other works that draw on Chrysostom in discussing more traditional categories of theology, such as revelation, soteriology, ecclesiology, and ministry, include Tofana, "Chrysostom's View"; Thomas C. Oden, *The Living God, Systematic Theology: Volume One* (1987; repr., Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 2001); Henri de Lubac, "The *Dialogue on the Priesthood* by Saint John Chrysostom," trans. Anne Englund Nash, in *Theology in History* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1996), 23-33; Edward Farrugia, "John Chrysostom and the Preachability of the Word," *Melita Theologica* 66, no. 2 (2016): 33-45.

[6] Wendy Mayer, "Shaping the Sick Soul: Reshaping the Identity of John Chrysostom," in *Christians Shaping Identity from the Roman Empire to Byzantium: Studies Inspired by Pauline Allen*, ed. Geoffrey Dunn and Wendy Mayer (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

[7] Rylaarsdam, *Pedagogy*, esp. 13-50.

Chrysostom's homilies, but with a greater consciousness for the Hellenistic ideas which he borrowed, reworked, or challenged in the service of Christianity.[8]

Both approaches are, of course, valid and complementary. Without the second approach, we cannot provide richer and more nuanced answers to the questions posed by the former. Without the first approach, we remove Chrysostom from important Christian conversations that he had a hand in shaping, if indeed the development of systematic theology owes significant debt to what was taught or emphasised by the early Church Fathers. Together, these two approaches provide abundant possibilities for *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. In this chapter, I therefore draw insights from both types to build on and expand my arguments.

The aim of this chapter is not to offer new insights into either Chrysostom's exegesis or preaching method. As a theological (not methodological) *ressourcement*, it grapples with Chrysostom's thoughts on revelation and its role and communication in the Christian community; in particular, how the teaching of scripture relates to persuasion and why this is necessary for soul care and community building. More importantly, I suggest how ecclesiastical leaders should allow these principles to widen their conception of the preaching ministry and of their role as preachers.

In chapter 1, I discussed some of the priest's responsibilities expounded in *De sac.* books 3-5. These included the ministry of preaching or teaching, the promotion of clergy, the management of the poor and ascetics, and the ministry of arbitration and judgment. I noted that 1) these obligations fell under the categories of soul care and community building, and 2) that persuasion was key for their accomplishment. I especially highlighted preaching as the central vehicle for persuasion.

In this chapter, I will further explore how persuasion affects soul care and

[8] *SP* dedicated a volume to "Emotions," in which the majority of the articles were on Chrysostom (Markus Vinzent, ed. *Studia Patristica*, vol. 83 [Leuven: Peeters, 2017]). Other examples include Carol Harrison, "The Typology of Listening: The Transformation of Scripture in Early Christian Preaching," in *Delivering the Word: Preaching and Exegesis in the Western Christian Tradition*, ed. William John Lyons and Isabella Sandwell (Sheffield, UK: Equinox, 2012), 62-79; Raymond Laird, "Mindset (γνώμη) in John Chrysostom," in *The Oxford Handbook of Maximus the Confessor*, ed. Pauline Allen and Bronwen Neil (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015), 194-211. Mitchell's *Trumpet* has, of course, been monumental for uncovering the Hellenistic influence behind Chrysostom's method of interpreting Paul. On the historical side, Pauline Allen provides some general information on what preaching would have been like in Chrysostom's day: type of liturgy, location, set-up, order of worship, themes, etc. ("Aspects of Preaching and Ministry in East and West AD 400-600," *Scrinium* 9, no. 1 [2013]: 6-25), while Wendy Mayer raises the many questions still remaining ("John Chrysostom: Extraordinary Preacher, Ordinary Audience," in *Preacher and Audience: Studies in Early Christianity and Byzantine Homiletics*, ed. Pauline Allen and Mary Cunningham [Leiden: Brill, 1998], 105-137).

community through Chrysostom's ministry as bishop of Constantinople. This will allow us to see his ideas at work and consider how his thoughts developed since his time in Antioch. I will focus specifically on the ministry of preaching and that of arbitration and judgment as persuasive tools. The bishop's role in the promotion of clergy will be discussed in chapter 4, and his management of the poor and the ascetics will be addressed in chapter 3.

Together with preaching, Chrysostom employed other means of persuasion, such as the use of holy places and liturgical processions, which will be discussed in this chapter as well. Additionally, the ministry of arbitration and judgment takes on a different character once situated within Chrysostom's community building strategies. It becomes better expressed as a ministry of exclusion and reconciliation. Finally, since homilies are largely situational, their historical context is crucial. To accommodate this, I have limited my exploration mostly to Chrysostom's conflict with Arian influences in Constantinople.

1. Preliminaries

Before exploring how persuasion works in preaching, we must first identify what preaching meant to Chrysostom. Is any form of teaching considered preaching? What is being taught? Is it a spiritual gift possessed only by certain people, namely, the ordained leaders of the church? Secondly, we must explore how Chrysostom understood human composition. What is the soul? And why does the spoken word have such great effect on it?

1.1 Defining Preaching

In *De sac.,* Chrysostom does not differentiate between preaching and teaching. He simply compares the priest to a doctor in charge of the health of the church and then argues that while doctors have discovered many kinds of treatment (e.g., drugs, diet, sleep) for bodily sickness, priests have only one thing they can rely on. "When all is said and done," Chrysostom writes, "there is only one means and only one method of treatment available [for the soul], and that is teaching by word of mouth (ἡ τοῦ λόγου

διδασκαλία)."[9] He identifies this with the "ministry of the word" to which the apostles devoted themselves in Acts 6:4.[10]

The church, for Chrysostom, cannot do without persuasive teaching. Neville translates ἡ τοῦ λόγου διδασκαλία as "teaching by word of mouth" to demonstrate Chrysostom's emphasis on the power of teaching besides the intrinsic power of the Word of God. This distinction becomes clear as Chrysostom builds his argument. First, he argues that when a soul is suffering from false doctrine, "πολλὴ τοῦ λόγου ἐνταῦθα ἡ χρεία, not only for the safety of the Church's members, but to meet the attacks of outsiders as well."[11] Τοῦ λόγου here could indeed be referring to the Word of God (i.e., scripture), but it must also pertain to speaking or discourse, particularly because of the qualification that it is greatly needed for "meeting the attacks of outsiders." Second, Chrysostom writes that τοῦ λόγου or τῆς ἀπὸ τοῦ λόγου βοηθείας is necessary even when one has a firm hold on the sword of the Spirit and on the shield of faith.[12] The imagery is borrowed from Eph. 6:16-17, which already refers to the sword of the Spirit as the Word of God. Describing one who has a firm hold on the Word as also needing the help of the Word is therefore redundant,[13] unless Chrysostom's intent is to exhort priests to have a firm grasp on the Word of God while also aiming for the power of speech. Indeed, he calls τοῦ λόγου a "power," noting that Peter urged believers to pay attention to "this power" when he wrote, "Be ready to give answer to everyone that asks you a reason concerning the hope that is in you" (1 Pet. 3:15).[14] This implies knowledge of God's Word, but the focus is more on the ability to give ready answers.

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[9] *De sac*. 4.3.10-13 (SC 272, 250; Neville, *Priesthood*, 115). By calling preaching "the one method," Chrysostom is specifically referring to what a priest can do for a sick soul. There are, of course, other remedies for the soul, such as the reception of the sacraments, almsgiving, prayer, and the remembrance of one's sins (Laird, "Mindset (γνώμη)," 207). These, however, are things that the sick soul must do. To convince the sick soul to willingly do them in the first place (i.e., to take the medicine), the priest must be a persuasive teacher. Furthermore, while these other medicines are useful for correcting moral failings, it is impossible to correct heretical beliefs other than through teaching.

[10] *De sac.* 4.3 (SC 272, 250-52; Neville, *Priesthood*, 115).

[11] *De sac*. 4.3.22-25 (SC 272, 250; Neville, *Priesthood*, 115).

[12] *De sac*. 4.3.25-29 (SC 272, 250). In a roundabout way, he first writes that if one had such firm hold on the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith that one could work miracles and stop the mouths of the impudent, one would not need the help of the word—but then "corrects" himself and says, actually, even then the word "would not be useless, but very necessary" (SC 272, 250-52; Neville, *Priesthood*, 115).

[13] *De sac.* 4.3 (SC 272, 250-52; Neville, *Priesthood*, 115). Chrysostom confirms this reading in another homily, where he interprets "sword of the Spirit" as the Word of God, a "spiritual sword" able to cut anything, even the serpent's head (*In Eph. hom.* 24.1 [PG 62.169; Gross Alexander, trans., NPNF 1/13:167]).

[14] *De sac.* 4.3 (SC 272, 250-52; Neville, *Priesthood*, 115).

Finally, Chrysostom describes the "ministry of the word" as something one would not be so eager for if one had recourse to miracles.[15] Hypothetically, Chrysostom might have dispensed with *teaching* in favour of signs and wonders, but he would not have dispensed with scripture itself. The pursuit of *learning* scripture, as a monk does even in isolation, and living it out, is for him the highest goal of Christian philosophy.[16]

Having said that, while I agree that Neville's translation of ἡ τοῦ λόγου διδασκαλία as "teaching by word of mouth" is contextually supportable, I would still prefer the more literal translation of "teaching of the [W]ord" in order not to efface Chrysostom's intention for the "Word of God" to be the object of the priest's teaching. Immediately after defending the importance of speech, especially in doctrinal warfare, Chrysostom exhorts, "We must take great care, therefore, that the word of Christ may dwell in us richly."[17] While he does not explain in detail exactly what the word of Christ is in this instance, he does so in his homily on Colossians 3, from which the phrase is borrowed. There, he states that the "word of Christ" pertains to scripture: "[G]et you at least the New Testament, the Apostolic Epistles, the Acts, the Gospels, for your constant teachers…. This is the cause of all evils, the not knowing the Scriptures."[18] To further strengthen my case, we must recall his explanation of Paul's lack of expertise in speech in *De sac.* According to Chrysostom, Paul was inept at the pedantry of "heathen rhetoric" (τὴν τῶν ἔξωθεν λόγων) but not in contending "for the doctrines of Truth" (τῆς ἀληθείας δογμάτων).[19] After this, Chrysostom recalls Paul's persuasive powers as demonstrated in the narratives in Galatians and Acts. Much of the attention is placed on *what* Paul did: e.g., he contended and disputed with the Jews in Antioch; his teaching converted an Areopagite and his wife; it engrossed Eutychus to sleep; he disputed with the Epicureans and Stoics, etc. Chrysostom only once clearly identifies the object of Paul's teaching: "Did he not spend whole days and nights continuously in expounding the Scriptures?"[20] This, again, confirms that Chrysostom believed the church cannot do without persuasive teaching, and, that the

[15] Ibid.

[16] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 2 (PG 47.389; David G. Hunter, trans., *A Comparison Between a King and a Monk/Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life: Two Treatises by John Chrysostom* [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1988], 71-72).

[17] *De sac.* 4.3 (SC 272, 252; Neville, *Priesthood*, 116).

[18] *In Col. hom.* 9.1 (PG 62.361-62; John Broadus, trans., NPNF 1/13:301).

[19] *De sac*. 4.6.61-68 (SC 272, 268; Neville, *Priesthood*, 121.

[20] *De sac.* 4.6-7 (SC 272, 262-74; § 6 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 122).

object of this teaching must be the Word of God. As we shall see later in his homilies, he embraced this principle with aplomb.

Outside *De sac.*, we find other proofs that Chrysostom saw teaching and preaching as essentially the same. In his 9th homily on 2 Timothy, Chrysostom comments on Paul's command for Timothy to preach. Paul writes in chapter 4 verse 2:

> κήρυξον τὸν λόγον, ἐπίστηθι εὐκαίρως ἀκαίρως, ἔλεγξον, ἐπιτίμησον, παρακάλεσον, ἐν πάσῃ μακροθυμίᾳ καὶ διδαχῇ.
>
> Preach the word, be prepared in season and out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all patience and instruction.[21]

Chrysostom interprets this as a command to teach at any and every situation "not only in peace and security, and when sitting in the Church" but also "in prison, in chains, or going to your death."[22] Moreover, encompassed in the command κήρυξον τὸν λόγον is to rebuke, exhort, and instruct in doctrine. Chrysostom likens rebuke to the incision a physician makes in a wound and exhortation to the plaster used to soothe it. "For conviction is intolerable in itself if consolation be not mingled with it."[23] We must not fail to note the implications of Chrysostom's interpretation. First, teaching even when not physically present in the pulpit can be regarded as preaching. Second, private teaching and teaching through writing may be conceived as extensions of preaching. This is suggested by Chrysostom's belief that κήρυξον τὸν λόγον can be accomplished in chains. It is probable that he had Paul's prison experience in mind. Paul taught visitors, fellow prisoners, and jail guards. He sent letters from prison to encourage the church. Thus, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom includes the epistles as proof of Paul's persuasive teaching (i.e., preaching) prowess: "By this he has helped and will help and, as long as the human race remains, will never stop helping the faithful…. For his writings fortify the churches all over the world like a wall of steel."[24] This is also most likely why, in his own exile, Chrysostom wrote "personal" letters (e.g., to

[21] The Greek is quoted by Chrysostom in PG 62.651.
[22] *In 2 Tim. hom.* 9.1 (PG 62.651; Philip Schaff, trans., NPNF 1/13:510).
[23] Ibid.
[24] *De sac.* 4.7.35-43 (SC 272, 272-74; Neville, *Priesthood,* 123).

Olympias) as though still preaching, his letters containing rebuke and exhortation and even exposition of scripture.[25]

Finally, Chrysostom's comments on Ephesians 4:11 are informative. In that passage, Paul discusses four types of offices in the early church: apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors-teachers. Chrysostom says that the apostles had all the gifts; the prophets prophesied (e.g., Agabus, which suggests that Chrysostom understood prophesying more as foretelling than as forthtelling); the evangelists preached the Gospel exclusively (e.g., Aquila and Priscilla); and the pastors and teachers (taken as a unit, which is a valid reading, since, in the Greek, they share one article), like Timothy and Titus, were "charged with a whole nation."[26] Evangelists and pastors-teachers were secondary to apostles but only because they stayed in one place and "did not go about everywhere."[27] Again, this is a valid reading, since the idea of "being sent" is inherent in the title "apostle," hence the emphasis that going to various places is part of the apostle's calling. It is significant that Chrysostom focuses on the difference in location only. He does not suggest that the ministry of instruction or proclamation performed by the other offices is in any way inferior. Even in the case of the evangelist, the limitation is only in subject matter, i.e., they exclusively teach or preach the Gospel.[28] This supports the idea that Chrysostom viewed the ministries of preaching and teaching as identical.

Since we have begun to talk about offices, it is now time to determine who should preach and teach, in what sense it is a spiritual gift, in what sense it is a natural ability, and whether it is a skill that can be learned or developed.

As noted in chapter 1, Chrysostom, in *De sac.*, recognises teaching as one of the essential responsibilities of the priest. However, he also acknowledges that some preachers are more gifted than others. "[T]he gifted," Chrysostom writes, "have even harder work than the unskilful."[29] The words for "gifted" and "unskilful" here are τοῖς σοφωτέροις and τοῖς ἀμαθεστέροις. Juxtaposed against each other, they highlight the superior qualities of wisdom and learnedness, which contribute to skill, in contrast with

[25] See David C. Ford, trans., introduction to *St. John Chrysostom. Letters to Saint Olympia* (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2016), 22-28.

[26] *In Eph. hom.* 11.2 (PG 62.83; NPNF 1/13:104).

[27] Ibid.

[28] Chrysostom suggests a second option, namely, that "evangelist" here pertains to those who wrote the Gospel, i.e., Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (ibid.).

[29] *De sac*. 5.5.8-9 (SC 272, 290; Neville, *Priesthood*, 130).

ignorance and stupidity, which detract from it.[30] This suggests that rather than natural ability, it is knowledge and learning that separate the skilful preachers from the unskilful ones. To obtain the power of persuasive teaching, therefore, requires much human effort.

Chrysostom demonstrates this position further where he describes the problems preachers face depending on their level of skill. For the gifted, the demand is greater. Chrysostom argues that while people are used to the unskilful being unremarkable, the gifted must "continually surpass the expectation which everyone has of them." It does not matter if, being only human, he is sometimes emotionally compromised (e.g., depressed, in pain, anxious, or angry) or "cannot invariably reach the same standard or always be successful." If he falters, people will focus on his fault.[31] So, Chrysostom advises the gifted to compose his sermons to please God, making this the sole standard of good oratory. "If he should be approved by men too, let him not spurn their praise."[32] Likewise, the unskilful should not crave human praise, since this leads to envying, criticising, and plotting against the better ones. Chrysostom moreover worries that when a preacher receives less than a positive response from the audience, he "will give up the sweat of hard work, because a kind of numbness has stolen over his spirit."[33] This is unfortunate, since it is the unskilful that needs to keep honing his skill through practice and experience.[34] While there is no doubt some subjectivity as to determining when a sermon is good enough to "please God," what Chrysostom wishes to highlight is that one must always do one's best and aim to improve or maintain a level of excellence. This becomes impossible when one worries too much about audience expectation. The safest approach is still to rely on one's own conscience.

If preaching requires much human effort, in what sense, then, is it a spiritual gift? The answer is in Chrysostom's discussion of 1 Corinthians 12. Commenting on vv. 4-7 which reads,

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[30] See G. W. H. Lampe, ed. *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1961), 1246-47 and *LS*, 76.

[31] *De sac.* 5.5 (SC 272, 290-94; Neville, *Priesthood*, 130-31).

[32] Ibid. 5.7 (SC 272, 296-98; § 6 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 133).

[33] Ibid. 5.8 (SC 272, 298-304; Neville, *Priesthood*, 133-34).

[34] Ibid. (Neville, *Priesthood*, 134).

> Now there are varieties of χαρισμάτων, but the same Spirit; there are varieties of διακονιῶν, but the same Lord; there are varieties of ἐνεργημάτων, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone,

Chrysostom explains that ἐνέργημα ("working"),[35] χάρισμα ("gift"), and διακονία ("ministration") are different names pertaining to the same thing. To support this view he harmonises references in Paul's epistles so that the same "working" in Peter for his apostolic ministry to the Jews (Gal. 2:8) is the same "gift" of God to Timothy received through the laying on of hands (2 Tim. 1:6) and is the same "ministry" Paul charges Timothy to fulfill (2 Tim. 4:5) and which he himself fulfilled (Rom. 11:13), so that gift, working, and ministration are in these passages interchangeable.[36]

Chrysostom's understanding of spiritual gift seems therefore to integrate the assignment to a human being of a ministry by the Triune God. That the person is required to fulfill his ministry, and that he is promised empowerment, suggest that God dispenses ability as necessary. On the other hand, the *commands* to Timothy to "fan the flame" of the gift and to "fulfill the ministry" implies that it is possible to use or misuse this spiritual gift. Indeed, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom states that some priests misuse the office entrusted to them, which he counts among the "gifts of God."[37] This supports the idea that he viewed the priestly office as much part of the spiritual gift as the ability to accomplish its responsibilities. Thus, the promise of empowerment does not necessarily mean that all priests are successful teachers, since not all of them make use of this power, which is harnessed and improved through experience and training.

Going into the subject of gift in terms of abilities, Chrysostom, continuing his commentary on 1 Cor. 12, argues, concerning v. 7, that those who receive "less" gifts should be consoled by the fact that, whether one has much or little, the Spirit is equally manifest in all (all are baptised, are they not?). Some have been given the miraculous gifts (e.g., healing, discernment of spirits, tongues) for the sake of the unbelievers, so that the Spirit may be made manifest to them through these people. "For not to dishonor you has God [given you lesser gifts], nor to declare you inferior to another, but … with a view to your welfare. To receive more than one has ability to bear, this

[35] And its cognate, ἐνέργειαν ("operation").
[36] *In 1 Cor. hom.* 29.4 (PG 61.243-44; Talbot Chambers, trans., NPNF 1/12:171).
[37] *De sac.* 3.10 (SC 272, 164-66; § 9 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 78).

rather is unprofitable, and injurious, and a fit cause of dejection."[38] However, those who do not receive such a surplus are in no way spiritually inferior to those who do.

Chrysostom afterwards interprets the gifts that Paul lists. Of interest in our discussion are his comments on "the word of wisdom" (λόγος σοφίας) and the "word of knowledge" (λόγος γνώσεως). The former was that which, he claims without further elaboration, Paul and John possessed. The latter was "that which most of the faithful had," which he then explains as the possession of knowledge without necessarily having the ability to convey it.[39] The juxtaposition suggests that "what Paul and John had" was both the knowledge and capability to teach. This interesting distinction confirms our earlier contention that Chrysostom viewed the teaching and knowing of scripture as two different things. And of all the gifts of the Spirit (miracles, prophecies, tongues, etc.), Chrysostom states that none is equal to the word of teaching (διδασκαλίας λόγος)—and this he seemingly uses synonymously with λόγος σοφίας—for other gifts rest on the accomplishment of teaching. Hence Paul commanded elders be counted worthy of double honour who labour in the word and in teaching, and also commanded Timothy: "Give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to teaching; neglect not the gift that is in you (1 Tim. 4:13-14)."[40] Since teaching falls in the category of spiritual gifts, Chrysostom's distinction between skill in pagan oratory and skill in doctrine in *De sac.* (which we noted earlier) makes sense. The content and power of what is being taught have different sources.

The only question that remains is who should teach, or who is able to teach? Chrysostom names John and Paul as examples but does not limit the power to apostles or to those that inherit the apostolic ministry (i.e., priests). Is "the word of wisdom" (i.e., teaching) given only by the leaders of the church? Chrysostom's integrated view of spiritual gifts (i.e., that empowerment comes with office) seems to suggest this. In fact, in *De sac.*, Basil makes this very suggestion: "But this charge is given to the priests." However, Chrysostom responds,

> Well, our argument just now is about priests. But to learn that *he gives it also to those who are under authority* [ital. mine], listen to some advice he gives to

[38] *In. 1 Cor. hom.* 29.3 (PG 61.244; § 5 in NPNF 1/12:171). For Chrysostom, as David Ford rightly observes, thanks to the work of the Spirit who sanctifies all, baptism is thus the sacramental basis of lay priesthood ("The Interrelationship of Clergy and Laity Within the Church According to St John Chrysostom," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (1992): 339.

[39] *In. 1 Cor. hom.* 29.3 (PG 61.244-45; §5 in NPNF 1/12:172).

[40] Ibid. 29.3-4 (PG 61.245; § 5 in NPNF 1/12:172).

> others in another epistle : “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom”; and again, “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer each one”. And the command to be ready to give an answer was given to all alike. Writing to the Thessalonians, Paul says, “Build each other up, even as also ye do.” But when he speaks of priests, he says, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially those who labour in the word and in teaching.” For this is the ultimate aim of their teaching : to lead their disciples, both by what they do and what they say, into the way of that blessed life which Christ commanded.[41]

Based on the scripture he quotes, Chrysostom imagines laypeople to be imitators of their presbyters, knowledgeable about scripture and able to teach, edify, and persuade others.[42] But besides the fact that scripture exhorted it, there was probably a more practical reason why Chrysostom encouraged laypeople to teach each other. At the time, many people could not have afforded to purchase a full Bible and literacy rates in Late Antiquity were low. Much of what Christians knew about scripture must have come from the reading and preaching of scripture during the service.[43] Teaching each other would have been a way for Christians to recall, circulate, and perpetuate what they heard and learned in church. Having said that, Chrysostom assumes there were members of his congregation who *could* obtain physical copies of scripture. *In Col. hom.* 9, he exhorts his congregation to read scripture with much earnestness, to get themselves “at least the New Testament, the Apostolic Epistles, the Acts, the Gospels, for [their] constant teachers.”[44] He even

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[41] *De sac* 4.8 (SC 272, 276-78; Neville, *Priesthood*, 124-25).

[42] Chrysostom advocates lay teaching on other occasions, too, such as in his comment on Heb. 12:15, where he highlights that there is more freedom of speech, love, and intimacy among the members, and there are many more of them “teachers” to reprove and exhort each other. See also passages from *In Gen. hom.* 8.1 (PG 53.70) and *In Act. apost. hom.* 47.3 (PG 60.331) all quoted in Ford, “Clergy and Laity,” 344-45).

[43] See Lucy Grig, “The Bible in Popular and Non-Literary Culture,” in *The New Cambridge History of the Bible*, vol. 1, ed. James Carleton Paget and Joachim Schaper (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 844-46. The rest of the article discusses how the Bible was also communicated in other ways, among elite and non-elite members of society, in visual culture and through magic texts. But these, especially the latter, were not always sanctioned by the leaders of the church. Jerome, for example, branded them as superstitious, while Chrysostom reminded those who carried pieces of Bible texts like amulets that it was better to carry the Word internally (ibid., 868).

[44] *In Col. hom.* 9.1 (PG 62.361-62; NPNF 1/13:300-301). As Robert Carter notes, Antioch and Constantinople did not produce official canons, so Chrysostom likely brought what he used in Antioch over to Constantinople. For a reconstruction of a possible Antiochene canon, based on scripture passages used by Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Severian of Gabala, see “The Antiochene Biblical Canon 400 A.D.,” *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 72, no. 2 (2006): 417-31, esp.

reproaches the heads of families for leaving the teaching to the priests, when they should be learning from the priests but teaching their wives and children.[45] While there are not enough details in the homily to ascertain where it was delivered, we do know from Chrysostom's various letters that he had wealthy connections in both Antioch and Constantinople, so he could have made such exhortations in either location.[46]

1.2 Defining Soul and Soul Care

Having determined the meaning of preaching to Chrysostom, we must now explore why he thought it such an important aspect of soul care. This requires delving into Chrysostom's anthropology, which *De sac.* fortunately provides plenty of insights into, as most of Chrysostom's arguments on the weight and glory of the priesthood are founded on anthropological presuppositions.

To begin with, human composition is essentially bipartite, consisting of body and soul. This is nowhere more evident than at the point of death, when the soul separates from the body and goes to its eternal destination.[47] Because of its immortal nature, the soul exceeds the body in value. Thus, Chrysostom can argue that the care of souls surpasses all other good works.[48] But also because souls are so precious, eternal punishment awaits those who cause their ruin.[49]

But what is the care of souls? Before answering that, it must be noted that soul and body, though distinct from each other, are *bonded* in such a way that what affects the body can affect the disposition of the soul. As Mayer demonstrates, this belief in the embodied soul is at the centre of Chrysostom's use of medical imagery, especially his understanding of himself as a psychagogue, a doctor of the soul. Chrysostom's homiletical exhortations are a Christianised version of "the philosophical-oratorical mode directed toward psychogagy," which simply means teaching with the goal of producing good and virtuous citizens. This sort of therapy developed from the assumption that the boundaries between body and soul, and so also of their state of

417, 429-30. Notable absences in Chrysostom's canon are the books of Revelation, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John, and Jude (cf. Naidu, *Transformed*, 77).

[45] *In Col. hom.* 9.2 (PG 62.362; NPNF 1/13:301); Stefalian Tofana argues that Chrysostom only wanted laypeople to "read scripture and announce it" but not to interpret it ("Chrysostom's View," 180). However, Chrysostom must have known that when one reads, one cannot help but engage in interpretation. Of course, Chrysostom's insistence that laypeople learn from priests suggests he wanted them to confirm that their interpretation aligned with that of the leaders of the church.

[46] See chapter 3, p. 151-52.

[47] *De sac.* 3.8 (SC 272, 160; § 7 in Neville, *Priesthood,* 77).

[48] Ibid. 2.4 (SC 272, 118; Neville, *Priesthood*, 59).

[49] Ibid. 6.1 (SC 272, 304-306; Neville, *Priesthood*, 136).

sickness and health, are blurred. The Christian concept of sin can therefore be characterised as "mental illness," since the mind or intellect is the central faculty of the soul. However, "mental illness" as an *imbalance of the soul*, which was what Chrysostom meant, should not be equated with mental illnesses that, in modern times, have been determined to have physiological causes.[50]

Imbalances of the soul, however, can and do have a material cause. Chrysostom writes, "There are so many things in society which can enervate the soul and baulk its straight course."[51] Likewise, a person's *spirit*—a word Chrysostom uses interchangeably with soul when referring to the immaterial component of the human being—can be "disturbed" or "upset."[52] For the priest, a look from a woman may unsettle the soul, as may flattery, continual cares, abuse, and criticism. All of these are apprehended through the senses, i.e., experienced by the body, and can result in strong emotions in the soul.[53] As another example, Chrysostom finds that a person's age, sex, experience of poverty or physical illness can cause brazenness, despondency, and discontentment, all of which are conditions of the soul.[54] In the case of the priest, public ministry exposes the true condition of his soul, since he is forced to interact with such people and more.[55]

It is possible, however, to overcome the passions incited by physical and biological conditions. For Chrysostom, this ability rests in the intellect, which is a faculty of the soul.[56] That the intellect belongs to the soul and not to the body is obvious

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[50] Mayer, "Shaping," 146-47.

[51] *De sac.* 6.8 (SC 272, 330-34; Neville, *Priesthood*, 147-48).

[52] See ibid. 6.1.9-10 (SC 272, 304; Neville, *Priesthood*, 136-37).

[53] Ibid. 6.8 (SC 272, 330-34; Neville, *Priesthood*, 147-48).

[54] Ibid. 3.12 (SC 272, 200-10; § 16 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 95-97).

[55] Ibid. 6.8 (SC 272, 330-34; Neville, *Priesthood*, 147).

[56] Raymond Laird, in recent studies, has suggested that Chrysostom's theological anthropology makes use of the concept of γνώμη to define that faculty of the soul responsible for controlling all other faculties of the human being: the body (otherwise neutral), the conscience (in the sense of agreement with the law), the will (in the sense of desire and moral choice), and the passions. It is not, however, synonymous with mind or reason. Rather, when reason is not functioning as it should, due to the soul being dominated by the passions, the γνώμη usurps the place of reason as the critical faculty of a *distorted* soul. Nonetheless, it has the capacity to combine reason and passion in appropriate balance. It is not φύσις (nature, which is unchanging). It is capable of making the right, moral choice with the aid of the Holy Spirit. As the seat of autonomy, it is, as such, constantly under divine appraisal (See "Mindset (γνώμη)," 194, 197-99, 202-205, 209; *Mindset, Moral Choice, and Sin in the Anthropology of John Chrysostom* [Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls Publications, 2012], esp. 247-51). Laird's study of the γνώμη is based on over 800 times that Chrysostom uses it, spread out in his various homilies, many of which are in Matthew and Genesis. He also compares Chrysostom's usage with that of other Hellenic authors (e.g., Aristotle, Thucydides, Demosthenes, and Chrysostom's teacher, Libanius) and Christian theologians (e.g., Irenaeus, Justin Martyr, Gregory of Nyssa, Nazianzen, Diodore, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Theodoret) (See "Mindset (γνώμη)," 195). While

in Chrysostom's Eucharistic description: "having expelled every carnal thought (σαρκικὴν διάνοιαν ἐκβαλλων), do you not with soul naked (γυμνῇ τῇ ψυχῇ) and mind pure (τῷ νῷ καθαρῷ) look around upon heavenly things?"[57] Another evidence can be found in his speech about anger: "Nothing muddies the purity of the mind (καθαρότητα νοῦ) and the perspicacity of the wits (τὸ διειδὲς τῶν φρενῶν) as much as an ungovernable temper…. For the soul's eye is darkened, as in a night battle, and cannot distinguish friend from foe or worthless from worthy."[58] Here we see Chrysostom refer to the intellect metaphorically as the soul's eye. The passions (in this case, anger) cause the intellect to lose discernment and control, so that human beings are more easily incited to "insolence, to ill-timed enmities and *unreasonable* hatred (μῖσος ἄλογον) [emphasis mine]."[59] Although painted in a very negative light, Chrysostom here affirms the soul's capacity for emotions and how an overly emotional (i.e., compromised) intellect leads to wilful wrongdoing.

Chrysostom calls human beings the rational (τὸ λογικὸς) flock of Christ.[60] To be rational is to possess the ability to discern, will, and even argue. Indeed, Chrysostom

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Laird presents a well-argued case, I am reluctant to accept it. Chrysostom, not having written a treatise on anthropology, provides no explicit definition of the γνώμη. Thus, aside from mindset, it is variously translated in Chrysostom's corpus and those of other authors as opinion, intention, deep desire etc. (see BDAG, s.v. γνώμη). Moore, taking note of Laird's work, has even suggested "chosen life's orientation" (see "Chrysostom's Concept of γνώμη: How '*Chosen* Life's Orientation' Undergirds Chrysostom's Strategy in Preaching," *SP* 67 [2013]: 351-58). The more than 800 occurrences studied by Laird do not necessarily support the whole of his thesis, since many of them are either not explained in context or might support only one of Laird's points about the γνώμη. Just because they *could* be understood in the way Laird proposes does not mean they have to be (see examples in *Mindset, Moral Choice*, 25-51).

Also, I still question whether γνώμη should not rather be seen as a sub-ability of the intellect. I believe Laird accentuates the importance of γνώμη in order to be able to answer the question, "When the intellect is not in control, then what is?" This is necessary to explain why "irrational" human beings can still recover (i.e., make right choices), despite their depraved state of mind. Moreover, for Laird, Chrysostom understands reason to be purely cerebral versus γνώμη, which is an attitude of the mind and heart ("Mindset (γνώμη)," 196). The most convincing indication of this difference between mind and γνώμη is in *1 Cor. hom.* 3, where Laird astutely points out that Chrysostom differentiates between unity of mind (ideas) and unity of γνώμη (mind and heart) to explain the tension in the church at Corinth (*Mindset, Moral Choice*, 36-38). But is it necessary to assume that Chrysostom always understood mind so rigidly? As I discuss in the main text above, Chrysostom is able to write extensively about the relationships between soul and body, reason and passion, autonomy and accountability, without having to even use the term γνώμη. Emotions affect the soul, the intellect, and the will. This suggests that his conception of the intellect/mind is not purely one of reason without passion.

[57] *De sac*. 3.4.23-24 (SC 272, 144; Neville, *Priesthood*, 70). I have changed the translation of the first phrase to more closely follow the Greek. The rest of the translation is Neville's.

[58] *De sac*. 3.10.156-58 (SC 272, 176; Neville, *Priesthood*, 84).

[59] *De sac*. 3.10.166-67 (SC 272, 178; Neville, *Priesthood*, 84).

[60] *De sac*. 2.2.20-21 (SC 272, 106).

highlights how human beings are more autonomous than animals, making human beings more difficult to manage.[61] In the first place, citing 1 Corinthians 2:11, Chrysostom argues that no one can know the infirmity of one's own soul better than oneself.[62] Moreover, church leaders are forbidden to correct sinners by force, since "God gives the crown to those who are kept from evil, not by force, but by choice."[63] Chrysostom, therefore, understands individuality in terms of action and choice, which explains his stress on personal accountability. Hence, for example, the severe warning to examine one's own soul before accepting the office of the priesthood.[64]

In light of Chrysostom's understanding of the soul, it becomes easier to understand why persuasive teaching is indispensable to soul care. It is founded upon a fundamental understanding of how God designed human beings and intended them to interact with the world.[65] Robert Hill situates Chrysostom's emphasis on preaching in Chrysostom's understanding of salvation history (οἰκονομία). As both Hill and Bradley Nassif, who builds upon Hill's work, note, the providential characteristic of God is prominent in Chrysostom's corpus. That is, Chrysostom's God is a God with a salvific plan—a plan which culminates in the communion of creation with their Creator. Human beings, because of their natural limitations and sin, cannot bridge this gap. So, it is left to God to accommodate to them. The apex of this plan is the incarnation of Jesus, the pinnacle of God's condescension. Inasmuch as Christ is the incarnate Word, so scripture is the "linguistically incarnate Word." Scripture is God's linguistic accommodation to human discourse. The proclamation of scripture, i.e., the apostolic ministry of preaching, is therefore the manifestation of God's sympathetic accommodation to human beings.[66]

To conceive of God as a God with a plan is to recognise that the operations of the natural world and the spiritual world are in His providential care. Herein lies the beauty of persuasive teaching. It engages the body, creating experience through hearing (and, as we shall argue below, seeing and participating) in order to touch the

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[61] *De sac.* 2.2-3 (SC 272, 104-12; § 2 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 55-56): sheep can be compelled to accept treatment if they do not submit—but not human beings.

[62] Ibid. 2.3.42-44 (SC 272, 110; Neville, *Priesthood*, 56).

[63] Ibid. 2.2.60-66 (SC 272, 110-12; Neville, *Priesthood*, 56).

[64] Ibid. 3.10 (SC 272, 166-68; Neville, *Priesthood*, 79).

[65] More on the nature and purpose of human beings in chapter 3, pp. 116-19.

[66] Nassif, "Revelation," 50-51. As Oden also observes, "Since God cannot be seen in his essence, but his purpose can be discerned through his works … it became increasingly important to the earliest Christian teachers to consider the range, means, and ends of God's providential ordering or … God's *oikonomia*" (*Living God*, 273).

soul.[67] But persuasive teaching is more than experience. It offers content, i.e., knowledge or teaching, that can reinforce, challenge, or even replace a person's existing beliefs and ethics. Most importantly, persuasive teaching respects the human being, since it acknowledges his intellect: his capability to discern, his autonomy to choose, and his responsibility for his choice.

2. Linking the Three: Preaching, Soul Care, and Community Building

We find examples of Chrysostom's persuasive teaching in *Contra Anomoeos hom*. 11 and its sequel, *De Christi divinitate*, two of the first three homilies he delivered as bishop of Constantinople. His very first episcopal homily is lost,[68] but *C. anom. hom. 11* and *De christ. div.* together provide enough material evincing how this new bishop, who had come from another city, chose to address the expectations of his new congregation. His doctrine, skills, and vision for the local church would have been under scrutiny, especially in the competitive religious sphere of the Eastern capital.

2.1 Contextual Background: Chrysostom and the Arians

In AD 380, Theodosius had declared Nicene Christianity to be the religion of the empire. By AD 381, he had forbidden the assembly of heretics, Arians included, within Constantinople.[69] Despite this, tensions between pro-Nicene Christians and Arian groups in the capital continued even after AD 398, when Chrysostom ascended to Constantinople's see. There are two evidences of such tensions in the ancient sources. As we will discuss in greater detail later, the first was a conflict about liturgical processions between the Arians and Chrysostom. The second was Gainas's request

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[67] Carol Harrison is right, therefore, that "the creative and imaginative re-interpretation of the text of Scripture lends itself uniquely to the homily rather than the written treatise." This is because the homily works by means of participation and response. In fact, there was an expectation for the preacher to use rhetorical flair to add to scripture's eloquence ("Typology," 68-69).

[68] On the timing of these homilies and the likelihood of a lost first episcopal homily, see discussion in Paul Harkins, introduction to *St. John Chrysostom. On the Incomprehensible Nature of God* (Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press, 1984), 33-35. The difference between Harkins's position and my own, as will be evident, is that I do not think Chrysostom was necessarily targeting only *anomoean* Arians in these sermons.

[69] In AD 380, *Cunctos Populos* declared to the people of Constantinople that the religion of the empire was that which Peter the Apostle transmitted to the Romans and was being followed by Damasus of Rome and Peter of Alexandria: "the single Deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, under the concept of equal majesty and of the Holy Trinity" (*Cod. Theod.* 16.1.2 [*The Theodosian Code*, trans. Clyde Pharr, in *The Theodosian Code and Novels and the Sirmondian Constitutions*, ed. Clyde Pharr et al. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1952), 440]). In AD 381, *Nullus haereticus* forbade the assembly of heretics within Constantinople. This was aimed at those who denied the Nicene faith, with Arians, Eunomians, and Photinians being specifically named among other sectarians (*Cod. Theod.* 16.5.6 [*Theodosian Code*, 451]).

for an Arian church in the city. Outside the historical accounts, however, we have these homilies which Chrysostom delivered at the start of his episcopal career. *Cont. anom. hom.* 11 and *De christ. div*. do not issue a direct challenge to Arians. Chrysostom seems, instead, to have been aiming to instruct his congregation in pro-Nicene doctrine and perhaps presenting his own as proof of his orthodox beliefs.

Indeed, the ancient sources do not tell us if Chrysostom had any personal or meaningful interaction with any specific Arian church leader. What we do know is that Chrysostom had been combating forms of Arianism even in Antioch. We see this in a series of homilies he delivered there, where he sometimes even challenges unnamed people to a debate. This may have simply been a general challenge (i.e., he may have known them by reputation but not closely), and his challenge may have gone unanswered. What is certain is that he often returns to the theme of the divinity of Christ in his exegetical homilies, whether delivered in Antioch or Constantinople. Chrysostom's aim seems not to have been to seek out Arian leaders for extensive theological debate. Rather, he is concerned that Arian thinking should not seep into his church through his congregation's association with their Arian acquaintances and friends. Indeed, he would instruct his congregation to either teach them with what they learn from him or bring them to church to listen to his homilies themselves. Moreover, as we shall see, when countering "Arianism," he does not display a deep or detailed understanding of the arguments of their theologians but seems to be addressing only the broad strokes of their theologies. He is more concerned about proving that scripture teaches the divinity of Christ than he is about understanding their perspectives and proving them wrong. If we consider that not all in Chrysostom's congregation would have understood or cared to learn the nuances of Arian doctrines anyway, it makes sense that the pastor in Chrysostom would prioritise correcting his congregations' misconceptions over wrestling with Arian theology. Chrysostom likely feared that members of his congregation in Antioch and Constantinople would be lured to join the Arian communities. For, despite having been outlawed, such communities, having had brilliant and charismatic founders, evidently retained quite a devoted following.

2.1.1 The Arian and Pro-Nicene Parties in Antioch and Constantinople

In Antioch, Chrysostom himself was connected to the Meletian party. We know he was baptised by Meletius as a young man and then later ordained to the priesthood

by Meletius's successor, Flavian. Diodore of Tarsus, who took care of Meletius's flock with Flavian when Meletius was in exile, was also a teacher of his at one time.[70] Meletius seemed to have initially been a member of the *homoian* Arian party, who held the doctrine that Christ is like the Father. In AD 360, he was appointed by Acacius of Caesarea (a signatory of the *homoian* Seleucian formula of 359) to the see of Antioch to replace Eudoxius, who had been translated to Constantinople. However, when Meletius betrayed leanings towards non-*homoian* Christology, he was exiled after just a few weeks.[71] Due to the emperor Julian's amnesty, he was recalled in 362 and remained until 371, during which he was exiled again because Valens (another *homoian* emperor) came to power. He returned for a third and final time in 378 under the reign of the *homoousian* emperor Theodosius and stayed until he died in 381.[72] It was only in the year 363 that Meletius, along with Acacius of Caesarea and other previous signatories of the Seleucian formula, "explicitly endorsed the Nicene homoousion in a synodal letter to Jovian."[73] Understandably, therefore, he found a powerful rival for the see of Antioch in another *homoousian*, Paulinus, who led the Eustathian party. We will say more about Paulinus and the Eustathian party, and their significance to Chrysostom, in chapter 4.[74] For the purposes of this chapter, suffice to say that the conflict between the two pro-Nicene parties was not about doctrine but about legitimacy. Meletius was ordained before Paulinus, but his early association with Arians prevented the Eustathians from accepting him.

What about the Arians? Two groups are significant to our study of Chrysostom. The first group was, as just discussed, the *homoians* under Eudoxius, who had been Antioch's bishop before Meletius, and who became Constantinople's bishop in 360 and ruled for 19 years. Upon his death, he was succeeded by Demophilus, who was

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[70] Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 16-18, 38; Thdt., *Hist. eccl*. 4.25 (SC 530, 294-300; § 22 in NPNF 2/3:126-27).

[71] There is some debate as to whether Meletius, at this time, expressed *homoousion* or *homoiousion* beliefs. Both groups used *ousios* to compare Christ with the Father. However, the former group preferred to say that Christ is "of the same nature" as the Father, while the latter claimed Christ has a "similar nature to the Father." For a discussion of Meletius's early career and unclear allegiances due to the conflicting evidences of ancient sources (Philostorgius, Epiphanius, Sozomen, and Socrates), see Kelley Spoerl, "The Schism at Antioch Since Cavallera," in *Arianism After Arius: Essays on the Development of the Fourth Century Trinitarian Conflicts*, ed. Michel R. Barnes and Daniel H. Williams (Edinburgh, UK: T&T Clark, 1993), 104-26. Spoerl concludes, based on a study of Meletius's homily on Prov. 8:22, delivered soon after his election to Antioch, that he was removed for *homoiousian* and not *homoousian* leanings.

[72] Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 12, 24, 36-38.

[73] Spoerl, "Schism," 107. This is according to Philostorgius.

[74] See chapter 4, esp. pp. 168-69.

the bishop during the time that Theodosius forced the Arians to vacate the city churches. After Demophilus's death, the *homoians* were divided into two factions, those that followed Marinus and the majority that followed Dorotheus. Like Eudoxius, Dorotheus served as bishop of Antioch (though only of the *homoian* party) before he was called to lead the *homoians* at Constantinople.[75] Dorotheus was Chrysostom's contemporary, and their shared Antiochene roots may have contributed to the rivalry and hostility that later erupted concerning the liturgical processions.

A second group of Arians were the *anomoeans*, who held that Christ was not like the Father. The founders of this group were Eunomius and Aetius, who had been friends with Eudoxius. Aetius founded *anomoeanism* in Antioch, and Eunomius was an Antiochene Arian in league with him before becoming bishop of Cyzicus in 360. Even after that, Eunomius went on writing letters to Antioch to propagate his *anomoean* doctrines.[76] According to Socrates, after Eunomius was driven out from Cyzicus, he fled to Eudoxius in Constantinople.[77] But the relations between them soured when Eudoxius would not receive Aetius into communion, for while Eudoxius himself agreed with Aetius's teachings, many of the *homoian* party did not.[78] Eunomius continued teaching in private houses in Constantinople before he was banished by Theodosius.[79]

By the time Chrysostom ascended to the see of Constantinople, he was the third *homoousian* bishop to officially occupy the aforementioned see since Demophilus's eviction. He was preceded by Gregory of Nazianzus and Nectarius of Constantinople. Gregory, however, shepherded the *homoousian* community there for only about two years altogether, and he lacked imperial backing for most of this period. Thus, he was unable to grow the *homoousian* community, which had been battered by years of rivalry with Arians, where the Arians had been winning. Not to mention that the *homoousian* community would have also faced competition from other Christian factions like the Novatians and from non-Christian faiths.[80] Nectarius reigned longer

[75] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 7.2, 5, 14, 17 (SC 516, 74-158; NPNF 2/2:377-88); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 4.1, 14, 35; 5.3, 7, 12 (SC 505, 22-140, 154-86; NPNF 2/2:96-124).

[76] Harkins, introduction to *Incomprehensible*, 19-20.

[77] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 4.7 (SC 505, 36-38; NPNF 2/2:98).

[78] Ibid. 4.13 (SC 505, 62; NPNF 2/2:103).

[79] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 7.17 (SC 516, 150-58; NPNF 2/2:387-88); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 5.20 (SC 505, 208-10; NPNF 2/2:128-29).

[80] For Nazianzen's tenure in Constantinople, see Christopher Beeley, *Gregory of Nazianzus on the Trinity and the Knowledge of God: In Your Light We Shall See Light* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 34-54.

at seventeen years. Justin Pigott attributes this to his mild character and to his background as an imperially backed city prefect, a popular senator and urban praetor. But he did not grow the Nicene community either, ostensibly due to his lack of eloquence in the pulpit.[81] In addition, it is probable that Nectarius's diplomacy meant he was not as preoccupied about "quashing" the competition as Chrysostom was. Could it be that his preaching was regarded as weak partly because he was more tolerant of the Arians, for example, than Chrysostom? This is suggested by the possibility that the Arian processions were already ongoing before Chrysostom's time. After all, the Arians had been meeting outside the city for a long time before Chrysostom. The processions they were making were supposed to have been from the city to their churches outside. Yet there is no report of Nectarius competing with them as Chrysostom did. Chrysostom's celebrated preaching ability and his stance against Arianism may have been attractive to his Antiochene and Constantinopolitan backers, who likely hoped his persuasive powers would do much to grow the church and strengthen people's loyalty to the emperor and to Nicene Christianity.

2.1.2 Chrysostom's Trinitarian Doctrine

Chrysostom explicitly and clearly professes the *homoousian* trinitarian formula in *De sac.*, asserting that while the Godhead (θεότητα) of the Father, Son, and Spirit is one (μίαν), there are three hypostases (τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις).[82] The Father is different (ἕτερον), the Son is different (ἕτερον), and the Holy Spirit is different (ἕτερον), but this is a difference in persons (τοις προσώποις), which Arians distort into a difference in substance (οὐσίας διαφοραν). It is clear, therefore, that Chrysostom viewed the three hypostases as a difference in persons, while the oneness of the Godhead is a oneness of substance.[83] Anything that diverges from this understanding is considered

[81] See Justin Pigott, "Capital Crimes: Deconstructing John's 'Unnecessary Severity' in Managing the Clergy of Constantinople," in De Wet and Mayer, *Revisioning*, 757-59.

[82] *De sac*. 4.4.78-80 (SC 272, 260; Neville, *Priesthood*, 118).

[83] *De sac*. 4.4.73-76 (SC 272, 258; Neville, *Priesthood*, 118). Pak-Wah Lai makes a similar type of investigation as I do here about Chrysostom's Trinitarian views, except that Lai investigates Chrysostom's statements in *Cat*. 1.21 (Antoine Wenger, ed., SC 50, 119). In the catechetical homily, Chrysostom refers to the Son as *homoousios* with the Father in His own hypostasis. But he also says that Christ is in all ways "like" and equal to the Father with a "likeness" to Him which is precisely similar ("The Eusebian and Meletian Roots of John Chrysostom's Trinitarian Theology," *Scrinium* 14, no. 1 [September 2018]: 56). Lai argues that Chrysostom, at least in this instance, was comfortable using *homoian* language, which he might have inherited from Meletius's reconciling stance. But Chrysostom always qualifies these (note the addition of "equal" and "precise") to make sure they indicate equivalence and not only similarity. The mention of hypostasis is to guard against

heretical.[84] Lai argues that Chrysostom's affirmation of the distinct divine hypostases and the one nature of God demonstrates that he was not only a Nicene theologian, but, at least in this respect, a successor to the Cappadocians and Athanasius. Indeed, the case for a connection with Basil of Caesarea can be made on account of Basil's close friendship with Meletius. Basil had not only regarded Meletius as one of his teachers but also supported him as the rightful bishop of Antioch. Basil had also exchanged letters discussing theology and dialogues with Diodore. It is possible, therefore, that Chrysostom had access to Basil's writings. While Lai concedes that more research is needed (and so he is careful not to attribute to Basil too great an influence on Chrysostom's thought), he does find distinct theological ideas developed by Basil in Chrysostom's homilies. Of relevance to our discussion in this chapter are: 1) the careful distinction between God's *ousia* and *hypostasis*, whereby the latter is taken as representing *ousia* in its particular properties or idiomata; and 2) the defence of the Son's full divinity by underscoring the fact that He shares the same knowledge, authority, and power with the Father.[85] As we shall see in *C. anom. hom. 11* and *De christ. div.*, Chrysostom especially employs the latter in his defence. For him, if equality of authority can be proven, it follows that there is equality of substance.[86]

Chrysostom's refusal to delve into discussions of divine essence is characteristic of his attitude toward the Arians, especially the *anomoeans*. His main accusation against them was arrogance and "meddlesome" inquisitiveness, because they apparently claimed it is possible to know "God as God knows Himself."[87] Edward Farrugia perfectly summarises Chrysostom's understanding of their position: God is simple, therefore ingenerate; "simplicity guaranteed the exhaustive character of our

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Sabellianism, to ensure that equivalence does not erase the different personalities of Father and Son (ibid., 57).

[84] Another heresy against which this formula proved particularly potent is that of modalistic Sabellianism. Harkins explains how Antioch tended to Adoptionism because of its strong Jewish centre, which led to speculations on the humanity of Jesus. Paul of Samosata, in the latter half of the third century, was excommunicated for teaching that Christ was a mere man united to God through God's Logos for the good of humanity. The Logos was not a person but a power, periodically distinct from God when uttered, and who from time to time dwelt in prophets (and finally in Jesus) (Harkins, introduction to *Incomprehensible*, 13-14).

[85] Pak-Wah Lai, "John Chrysostom's Reception of Basil of Caesarea's Trinitarian Theology," *Scrinium* 15, no. 1 (July 2019): 64, 71-72.

[86] See also ibid., 74-77 for how Basil and Chrysostom use this concept of equivalence. Among Chrysostom's more convincing arguments that Lai notes is the argument that no one can absolutely know God except God (cf. Lk. 10:22; Jn. 6:46).

[87] This claim of the *anomoeans* is hinted at throughout *C. anom. hom.* 1-5 (A. M. Malingrey, ed., SC 28bis) and explicitly stated in 2.149-59 (SC 28bis, 154; § 17 in Harkins, trans., *Incomprehensible*, 77).

knowledge of God."[88] Since it is possible to know God exhaustively, they build their argument against Christ's equality with the Father on speculations such as, since God is unbegotten and the Son is begotten, they cannot share the same essence or even be alike.[89] Chrysostom believes that, rather than simply affirming what scripture teaches, they make a lot of assumptions to connect the two ideas. That is to say, if scripture already demonstrates that the Son and Father are equal in honour, authority, and power, why bring in speculations about essence, which scripture does not do, to prove otherwise? Chrysostom's response is not, therefore, to respond to their arguments about essence. He instead emphasises what scripture teaches about the incomprehensibility of God. Using, for example, 1 Cor. 13:9 to demonstrate that human knowledge is partial and incomplete, he maintains:

> I, too, know many things but I do not know how to explain them. I know that God is everywhere and I know that he is everywhere in his whole being. But I do not know how he is everywhere. I know that he is eternal and has no beginning. But I do not know how. My reason fails to grasp how it is possible for an essence to exist when that essence has received its existence neither from itself nor from another. I know that he begot a Son. But I do not know how. I know that the Spirit is from him. But I do not know how the Spirit is from him.[90]

This reticence on Chrysostom's part to discourse on divine essence, even to defend his own *homoousion* position, is perhaps proof that he cared more about upholding the Godhead's equality in authority than their equality of essence. The purpose of upholding the *homoousion* formula against the Arians was to ensure that Christ's authority by reason of His divinity was not, even unintentionally, compromised. If his understanding of *anomoean* doctrine was therefore simplistic, as Richard Vaggione suggests,[91] it is because he did not find philosophising about essence pastorally significant. Moreover, his pastoral concern extended beyond the extremely educated, and he was possibly intentionally learning these misconceptions about Christ's divinity

[88] Farrugia, "Preachability," 37.

[89] Raymond Laird, "John Chrysostom and the Anomoeans: Shaping an Antiochene Perspective on Christology," in *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, ed. Wendy Mayer and Bronwen Neil (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 136-37; Harkins, introduction to *Incomprehensible*, 18.

[90] *C. anom. hom.* 1.156-67 (SC 28bis, 110-12; § 19 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 57-58).

[91] Richard Paul Vaggione, *Eunomius of Cyzicus and the Nicene Revolution* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2000), 261-62. He suggests that Chrysostom's hostile eyes caused him to miss the point.

on the level of the ordinary churchgoer and curbing ideas that led to them on that level, too. Using only scripture, Chrysostom wanted to defend the divinity of Christ as uncompromisable fact. In the discussion that follows, I demonstrate why this is absolutely essential in soul care and community building.

2.2 *Contra Anomoeos* homily 11

Cont. anom. *hom.* 11, delivered about a decade after *De sac.*, demonstrates no change in Chrysostom's views on the following matters:

> 1. The definition of persuasive teaching is still the teaching of scripture. Before presenting doctrine, Chrysostom quotes from 2 Cor. 10:4-5, promising not to make reasoned arguments (λογισμῶν) but only arguments from scripture.[92] Chrysostom is here enforcing a distinction between mere sophistry and Christian philosophy. As Rylaarsdam notes, Chrysostom, influenced by *paideia*, regards "philosophy" as leading people to the truth about what he speaks: "A philosopher who knows the truth can make people wise by speaking persuasively about reality, whereas an orator who lacks concern for truth offers the appearance of wisdom but not the reality."[93] Applied to Christian doctrine, Chrysostom is fighting for the truth *that* Christ is equal with the Father. What Chrysostom rejects is not reason *per se* but reason apart from biblical revelation, since he concedes that even if logic could prove something to be true, they "do not provide an assurance which is full enough nor a faith which is sufficient for the soul."[94] Hence, the rational man is inferior to the man whose faith rests in God's Word. Put another way, one cannot be completely complacent about truth arrived at by logic (even if it is intellectually satisfying), but one can be about biblical revelation. Raymond Laird picks up on the dubitability of reason in another homily of Chrysostom, where he argues reason without faith becomes a "hindrance to itself" and leads to "extreme absurdities."[95] A faith sufficient for the soul, however, rests in evidence not just of the intellectual

[92] *C. anom. hom.* 11.48-52 (A. M. Malingrey, ed., SC 396, 290-92; § 6 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 272-73). He is imitating Paul's declaration in 2 Cor. 10:4-5 which says, "We destroy arguments (λογισμοὺς) and every exaltation raised against the knowledge of God."

[93] Rylaarsdam, *Pedagogy*, 31.

[94] *C. anom. hom.* 11.52-58 (SC 396, 292;§ 7 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 273).

[95] Laird, *Mindset, Moral Choice*, 248-49. This is based on passages from *In 1 Cor. hom.* 7. For instance: "Even so, therefore, if a soul should desire to see apart from the Spirit, he/she becomes even an obstacle to his/her self" (PG 61.60; trans. Laird in p. 248n109).

nature but also in the generation of Christ-like virtue in the hearer.[96] The Word of God, in short, speaks truth and effects faith which produces virtue.

2. The standard of a healthy soul is still right belief and right action. These that pertain to "our salvation," Chrysostom claims, must remain undivided.[97]

3. Soul care is still accomplished primarily through preaching. Chrysostom argues, based on Matthew 4:4, "What food is to the body, the teaching of God's word is to the soul."[98] Because of this, time spent in church outweighs any other occupation and concern.[99]

4. The soul's health is still more important than the body's. Pointing to Amos 8:11, Chrysostom reminds his congregation that bodily hunger is nothing compared to "a famine for hearing the word of the Lord," which is a famine of soul, involving the loss and damage of greater things.[100] For material possessions are transient but spiritual treasure can never be taken away and gives one great confidence at God's tribunal.[101]

In *C. anom. hom.* 11, the interconnection of these four ideas becomes clearer. Eschewing any attempt to explain how the Father and the Son are equal in substance, Chrysostom instead focuses on how the Old and New Testaments harmoniously witness to the Father and the Son being equal in honour, power, and glory.[102] His arguments can be summarised as follows:

Argument #1: In creating human beings, God proclaims to unidentified celestial being(s), "Let us make man in our image and likeness" (Gen. 1:26). This is not a command but a consultation, so God could not have been speaking to angels but to one equal to Himself. But why would God need to consult with anyone?

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[96] As Rylaarsdam similarly observes in Chrysostom's thought. See *Pedagogy*, 32-35. This was not an exclusively Christian position. Some pagans also taught that true philosophy should effect virtue (Maxwell, *Christianization*, 14-15, 16-18).

[97] *C. anom. hom.* 11.220-27 (SC 396, 306; § 28 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 280).

[98] Ibid. 11.228-35 (SC 396, 306; § 29 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 280).

[99] Ibid. 11.242-50 (SC 396, 308; § 31 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 281).

[100] Ibid. 11.235-42 (SC 396, 306-308; § 30 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 280-81).

[101] Ibid. 11.242-59 (SC 396; 308; § 31-32 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 281).

[102] Harmonising the two Testaments based on the belief that the Old points to and is superseded by the New, is a technique that can be traced to Justin Martyr, who used it against the Gnostics (Naidu, *Transformed*, 24). This approach theologically fits in as well with the concept of God's *oikonomia*, since the two covenants are parts of a single metanarrative (Nassif, "Revelation," 50-51).

Chrysostom harmonises scripture. In Isaiah, God is said to have no counsellor (Is. 40:13; cf. Rom. 11:34), but it also calls the promised messiah (therefore, the Son) counsellor (Is. 9:6). From this Chrysostom concludes that the Father has *no need* of any one to counsel Him, but the Son is called "counsellor" to show their equal honour.[103] *Then*, Jesus accepts this honour in Matthew 8:6-10 by receiving a centurion's insight that Jesus has only to say the word and the man's servant would be healed, showing that Jesus is as much master to all as the centurion was to his own soldiers. Thus, in the creation of humans, Christ did *not* act merely as the Father's subordinate, but human beings were made in their single image.[104]

Argument #2: Scripture describes the messiah or the resurrected Christ as sitting at the right hand of the Father, which indicates equal honour and power (e.g., Mk. 16:19; Heb. 1:3; Ps. 110:1). In the Old Testament, when angels are before God, they always stand (e.g., Dan. 7:9-10; Is. 6:1-2; 1 Kings 22:19). The book of Hebrews, especially, highlights the difference between angels, who minister, and the Son, who sits on the throne in kingly power (Heb. 1:7-8).[105]

Why the preoccupation with the equality of Father and Son in honour, authority, and power? What does this have to do with soul care? The answer can be found in Chrysostom's transition from doctrine to moral exhortation. He writes,

> Therefore, since our discourse has proved by all these texts that the Son is not valued as one who ministers but has the dignity of a master, let us worship him as our master because he is equal in honor to the Father.[106]

Proving that the Son is equal to the Father in the trifecta of honour, power, and authority is therefore the basis of worshiping Him. And what is worship? Chrysostom exhorts,

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[103] *C. anom. hom.* 11.112-143 (SC 396, 296-300; § 13-17 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 275-76).

[104] Ibid. 11.144-190 (SC 396, 300-304; § 18-23 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 276-78).

[105] Ibid. 11.190-20 (SC 396, 304-306; § 24-27 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 278-80)

[106] Ibid. 11.220-27 (SC 396, 306; § 28 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 280).

> Let us join the rightness of our way of life and the deeds we do to the correctness of the teachings we embrace so that what pertains to our salvation may not be divided in two.[107]

When we analyse Chrysostom's reasoning, we see how orthodoxy, preaching, and soul care come together. If Christ is not master, equal to the Father, then the worth of His words is diminished. They become open to challenge. This is destructive, since rightness of life and correctness of teaching cannot be achieved without Christ's words, i.e., scripture. The Gospels are recordings of Christ's teachings. The rest of the New Testament is Christ's teaching through the apostles. Even the validity of the Old Testament rests on Christ pointing to it and fulfilling it.[108] Scripture is the basis for preaching, necessary for the doctrinal and moral health of the soul. Everything therefore depends on the divinity of Christ. This may seem to be circular reasoning, but it does have a starting point, which is that Christ claimed to be worthy of worship. To believe Christ's claim is a decision that must be done by faith.[109] But if one accepts it, then one must accept the full testimony of His words and strive to live by them. For Chrysostom, it is crucial that Christians do not teach anything that might cast doubt upon the divinity of Christ; otherwise, the whole Christian philosophy (i.e., the totality of its doctrinal and moral teachings) falls apart.[110]

The goal of Chrysostom's inaugural homilies was to strengthen the church of

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[107] Ibid.

[108] This hinges on Jesus's words in Jn. 5:46, "If you believed Moses you would believe me, for he wrote about me," which Chrysostom notes in *C. anom. hom.* 11.95-98 (SC 396, 294-96; § 11 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 274). Also, Chrysostom, in *De christ*. *div*. 34-43 argues, "Christ sent the Jews back to Moses so that, through Moses, he might draw them to himself. In the same way, Moses hands over his disciples to his teacher and commands them to believe him in all things" (SC 396, 322; § 5 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 287).

[109] Hill points out that Chrysostom's confidence regarding scripture's "accuracy and total truthfulness" is due to his understanding of scripture as divine accommodation. In *Vid. dom. hom.* 2.2 Chrysostom claims: "The mouths of the inspired authors are the mouth of God. Such a mouth would say nothing idle. Accordingly, let there be nothing idle in our attention" (Jean Dumortier, ed., SC 277, 92). This has been the basis for invoking him in modern debates on inerrancy. But Hill observes that Chrysostom was content with scripture containing saving truths for, even if he affirmed that the Bible is without error, he limited his exegetical efforts to expounding teachings that pertain to salvation. See this discussion in Nassif, "Revelation," 51-54.

[110] Lai notes that Chrysostom distinguished between knowing God by faith and comprehending God's substance. Like Meletius and Basil, he did not believe the latter was possible. "Human knowledge will always be partial and a grasping after God through 'different forms and figures' and 'multiple vision'." However, unlike them, this partial knowledge is God's accommodation to human limitation. Chrysostom thus differed from Basil in his readiness to use "down-to earth rhetorical motifs" in presenting complex theology (Lai, "Reception," 67-70). Meletius and Basil were different in that Meletius believed we can imagine what God is like through things we know, while Basil believed the things we know are real but fragmentary referents to God's nature (ibid., 66).

Constantinople. This is obvious in his opening paragraphs, where he invites the church to see itself, amid other heretical communities, as a sheep among wolves, a David amongst surrounding Goliaths.[111] He bolsters the members' confidence in Christ's divinity, and in the Nicene faith, believing this will lead to healthy souls that will in turn strengthen their community. Envisioning the church as the frontline of battle, he remarks that the presence of every person, even those who cannot preach long discourses or instruct, provides encouragement and comfort to the group and disgraces the enemy.[112] In discussing *De sac*., we said that bodily experiences affect the soul. In *C. anom. hom.* 11, Chrysostom applies this principle at the community level:

> 1. Unlike in *De sac*. where sight is said to upset the soul, here, sight is used positively. Seeing others eager to do good spurs one's soul to do good also. Mutual encouragement occurs, as "souls which are rubbed together [like stones] … become inflamed with the fire of the Spirit."[113] This argument, too, is based on the example of scripture, where the growth of the church after Christ's ascension is attributed to their constant meeting for prayers and sacred readings. By these fervent acts "they drew the whole world to them."[114]
>
> 2. To build the spiritual community, Chrysostom invigorates the ties of flesh and blood. For instance, he remarks on the willingness of women to help cover the poverty of one of their own who was being betrothed and how much more they should be willing to cover the church of Constantinople's "poverty" by their presence. He exhorts whole families to attend church: husband and wife are one body, and a child is like a new plant rising up from a man's roots. In the same manner that Paul was eager to spread the Gospel in places where Christ's name was not yet known, so parents should bring their children to church—since children are essentially new converts who have yet to be taught and nurtured in the faith. "Let us imitate Paul so that we may both advance the Church and help ourselves."[115]

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[111] See *C. anom. hom.* 11.18-52 (SC 396, 288-92; § 3-6 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 271-73).

[112] Ibid. 11.260-73 (SC 396, 310; § 33-34 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 282).

[113] Ibid. 11.273-86 (SC 396, 310-12; § 35-36 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 282-83).

[114] Ibid. 11.286-99 (SC 396, 312; § 37 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 283).

[115] Ibid. 11.300-331 (SC 396; 312-14; § 38-41 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 283-85).

3. Finally, he explains how even the sight of the church building can have spiritual impact. “If lustful desire burns in your heart, the mere sight of this house of prayer will easily enable you to quench the flames.” Fits of rage will be laid to rest and other passions quelled. Calm and peace will be brought to the soul.[116] Given the discussion thus far, the house of prayer should connote for them the glory of the Son of God and the fellowship of the church.

2.3 *De Christi divinitate*

The majority of the content of *De christ. div.* is an exposition of the healing Jesus performed at Bethesda recorded in John 5:1-18. An angel used to come to stir the waters of a pool there, healing the first sick person to jump into it after the water was stirred. Jesus healed a paralytic who had no one to help him get into the water. Since Jesus performed the healing on a Sabbath, and no work was allowed on the Sabbath according to the Law of Moses, he was criticised by the Jewish leaders. Jesus responded by claiming that He was only doing the same work as His Father, which the Jews understood as Him audaciously claiming equality with God.

Following this theme, Chrysostom explains in what sense Jesus was doing His Father’s work, thereby justifying their equality. For, Chrysostom stresses, it would be “a mark of haughtiness and arrogance” for a mere subordinate to attempt things “which transcend one’s dignity and true worth.”[117] After all, a common person would not dare wear a king’s adornment nor a judge release prisoners only the emperor has the right to release. Indeed, Jesus, when his disciples broke the Sabbath, merely compared them to King David, a servant of God (Matt. 12:2-8). But when He Himself broke the Sabbath by healing a man, He compared Himself to the Father.[118]

How, then, was Jesus doing His Father’s work? Chrysostom notes, firstly, that just as the Father gave the Law, so the Son can free people from the Law. Thus, when Jesus broke the Sabbath by healing the paralytic and commanding him to pick up his mat and walk, he was freeing the Jews for the future from observing the Law.[119]

Second, through His words, Jesus could free people from disease and restore them to health. “For if God’s words made man when man did not exist,” Chrysostom argues, “much more will they make him whole again … even though he has grown

[116] Ibid. 11.331-40 (SC 396, 314; § 42 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 285).
[117] *De christ. div.* 357-67 (SC 396, 346; § 43 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 302).
[118] Ibid. 367-421 (SC 396, 346-50; § 44-50 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 302-305).
[119] Ibid. 203-11 (SC 396, 334; § 24 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 294-95).

feeble and weak with disease."[120] For the paralytic, Jesus performed physical and spiritual healing (as we shall see shortly). But Chrysostom also wishes to show that Jesus's words still heal after His ascension. Thinking of healing in a spiritual sense, Chrysostom specifically distinguishes between the consecratory words of the sacrament and the word of preaching.

Chrysostom compares the healings in the paralytic's story with the healing of baptism.[121] Baptism, like the angel's healing, is through water, but baptism is superior because it is healing performed by the Master. Whereas the angel could heal only the body and one person at a time, baptismal waters could cure the wickedness of the whole world. Whereas the angel had to come down to stir the waters of Bethesda, invoking Christ's name over the baptismal waters is enough to "bestow on them the entire cause of their power to cure."[122] The efficacy of Christ's spiritual healing finds parallel in the way He healed the physical ailment of the paralytic; namely, "in a single moment of time…. As soon as the sacred word was uttered by his holy tongue, the sickness fled, the word became deed, and the whole illness was completely cured."[123]

The paralytic's healing did not end there, however. Chrysostom relates how Jesus later found the man and exhorted him: "See, you are cured. Sin no more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." This, Chrysostom says, was Christ not only freeing the man from his ailment but protecting him from future disease. This is the word of preaching. Christ waited to do this when the man had already been restored to health, when "Christ had already shown by the very things he did that he now deserved to be believed."[124] Chrysostom had already broached this ministry of Christ early on, claiming Jesus went among great crowds not just to give physical healing but to "show them the truths that bring salvation to their souls."[125] Jesus thus healed the paralytic body and soul.

Through his exposition of this story, Chrysostom demonstrates to the congregation that they need the word of Christ in the sacraments and the word of Christ in preaching. They can find both in the church. Nothing, he claims, contributes to a virtuous way of life more than the time they spend in church, where they can

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[120] Ibid. 243-53 (SC 396, 336-38; § 29 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 297).

[121] This is an example of Chrysostom using allegorical as opposed to literal interpretation of scripture, which Tofana notes ("Chrysostom's View," 180).

[122] *De christ. div.* 62-87 (SC 396, 324-26; § 8-10 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 288-90).

[123] Ibid. 233-43 (SC 396, 336; § 28 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 296-97).

[124] Ibid. 328-40 (SC 396, 344; § 39-40 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 301).

[125] Ibid. 53-62 (SC 396, 322-24; § 7 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 288).

continue to be healed and beautified by preaching.[126] While baptism washes away sin, "the apostles and prophets wipe clean and beautify the face … strip away the marks of senility left by sin … apply the bloom of youth … get rid of every wrinkle, stain, blemish from our souls."[127] Preaching can produce chastity and sobriety, a spiritual beauty "not marred by time, disease, old age, and death." This has a practical effect on home life, rejuvenating, for example, the marital bonds of husband and wife, who cannot but find each other more worthy and desirable.[128]

Since the members of the congregation are like land which must be watered and cultivated by the farmer to produce an abundance,[129] Chrysostom sees the labour he puts into his preaching as his way of rewarding the obedience and enthusiasm of his congregation. It is God who brings in the number and makes the obedience of the congregation fruitful, but preachers are "those who cultivate this earth" who "must work with great diligence and must put up with long delays."[130] Chrysostom's goal is to make every member like the healed paralytic. The healed man, when asked by the Jewish leaders about his healer, testified and became to them an *evangelist* and a *physician*—"his cured body being indisputable proof of his testimony."[131] The health of the community therefore depends on the health of individual souls. Moreover, what they learn in church can be developed daily at home, which is why Chrysostom finishes the sermon with an exhortation to "wipe every stain by reading Scriptures, praying and almsgiving, peace and concord with one another."[132]

2.4 Summary and Conclusion

C. anom. hom. 11 and *De christ. div.* demonstrate the interplay of preaching, soul care, and community building as follows: The leader must teach the right

[126] Ibid. 434-55 (SC 396, 352; § 53-55 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 305-306).
[127] Ibid. 460-67 (SC 396, 354 ; § 57 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 307).
[128] Ibid. 455-78 (SC 396, 352-54; § 56-58 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 306-307).
[129] Ibid. 442-48(SC 396, 352; § 54 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 306).
[130] Ibid. 1-33 (SC 396, 318-20; § 1-4 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 286-87). Wendy Mayer notes, based on remarks in *In illud: pater meus usque modo operator* (PG 63.511-16) and *In illud: Filius ex se nihil facit* (PG 56.247-56), that Chrysostom reached peak popularity within twelve months of those first few homilies ("At Constantinople, How Often Did John Chrysostom Preach? Addressing Assumptions About the Workload of a Bishop," *Sacris Erudiri* 40 [2001]: 104).
[131] *De christ. div.* 321-28 (SC 396, 342-44; § 38 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 300-301). The man's statement was "He who made me well said to me, 'take up your mattress and walk.'" Chrysostom interprets this to mean that the man acknowledged who the physician was and that the lawgiver who commanded him was worthy of his trust [ibid. 267-71 (SC 396, 338; § 32 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 298)].
[132] Ibid. 479-82 (SC 396, 354-56; § 59 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 307).

understanding of Christ, which leads to a right regard for scripture. This is the basis of preaching, which brings healing to souls who can also then bring healing to others. As preacher, the threefold role of the presbyter is therefore as: 1) defender of Christ's divinity; 2) defender of scripture's validity; and 3) guardian of the Christian community.

The key to fulfilling these obligations is to develop the skill of persuasive teaching, for this engages human beings in the unique way God designed them. Persuasive teaching engages the body to touch the soul through hearing the Word and seeing the enthusiasm of fellow believers in the house of prayer. It offers the content of scripture as truth claims to either reinforce or challenge previously held beliefs. It acknowledges a person's capacity for discernment and autonomy by insisting that the arguments of scripture be presented with skill and to the best of one's ability. Finally, it encourages the participation of every member of the congregation by making their presence and testimony, in church or at home, through speech and in action, crucial to the Christian mission.

3. Other Persuasive Strategies for Soul Care and Community Building

In the previous section we defended the importance of teaching in soul care and community building. But teaching comes in other forms than the Word. In this section, we will discuss three other methods Chrysostom used to teach, and, therefore, care for souls and community. The first two, the use of holy places and of liturgical processions, were especially important in the rivalry between the Nicene and Arian factions. The third method, exclusion and reconciliation, applies to internal conflicts among members of the same church.

3.1 Holy Places

A little over two years after Chrysostom's arrival in Constantinople, the Goth general, Gainas, who was an Arian, managed to occupy the city for three months.[133] At the height of his power, he demanded that Arcadius assign one of the city churches to him, reasoning that a general of the Roman troops should not have to go outside the city when he wished to engage in prayer. According to Sozomen, when Chrysostom heard about this, he assembled all the bishops presently in the city and went to the palace:

[133] Jonathan Stanfill, "Embracing the Barbarian: John Chrysostom's Pastoral Care of the Goths" (PhD diss., Fordham University, 2015), 146.

> He spoke at great length in the presence of the emperor and of Gaïnas, reproached the latter with being a stranger and a fugitive, and reminded him that his life had been saved by the father of the emperor, to whom he had sworn fidelity, as likewise to his children, to the Romans, and to the laws which he was striving to make powerless. When he had made this speech he showed the law which Theodosius had established, forbidding the heterodox to hold a church within the walls.[134]

While Chrysostom's response to Gainas was based purely on the law and on appeals for fidelity toward the emperor and the city (essentially acknowledging Gainas's political status but ignoring his claims to piety), Chrysostom exhorted the emperor "to maintain the laws which had been established against heretics ; and told him that it would be better to be deprived of the empire, than to be guilty of impiety by becoming a traitor to the house of God."[135] A speech to Arcadius, prior to the showdown with Gainas, is reported by Theodoret. Undeterred by Arcadius's anxieties about Gainas's power and the brewing possibility of usurpation, Chrysostom, echoing Christ's words that what is holy should not be given to dogs, decreed that the orthodox ("the worshippers and praisers of the Divine Word") should not be expelled and their church given to blasphemers. The next day, Chrysostom spoke to Gainas himself, saying that the emperor, "who professed the true religion, had no right to venture on any act against it." If Gainas wished to pray, every church was open to him. When Gainas appealed that he belonged to another sect and deserved to have a church with them based on the many toils he had undergone in war for the Romans, Chrysostom countered that his position as general was reward enough. He challenged Gainas to consider how much more prosperous he was now than before, and, with these words, successfully silenced the general.[136]

Chrysostom's reported confrontations with Gainas and Arcadius over a house of worship demonstrate the significance of controlling sacred spaces in his episcopal strategy. As there are no references to this event in his extant homilies, we lack direct evidence of how he viewed this refusal in the context of soul care. That he did, however,

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[134] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.4 (SC 516, 250-52; NPNF 2/2:401). Other possible reasons Sozomen gives: 1) Gainas lacked moderation, and, spurred by success, wanted to undermine the peace of the Catholic Church; 2) He was urged by the presidents of the Arian party.

[135] Ibid.

[136] Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.33 (SC 530, 462-66; NPNF 2/3:153§32).

is a suggestion I will make based on the link between holy spaces and soul care that are emphatic in his other homilies, albeit concerning different events. Chrysostom was exercising in Constantinople a strategy already familiar to him since his days as a presbyter in Antioch. As Christine Shephardson has excellently suggested and demonstrated in her book, *Controlling Contested Spaces*, Chrysostom used his rhetorical gifts in the service of Meletius's and Flavian's physical manipulations of the topography of the city and the surrounding countryside. Chrysostom's rhetoric in relation to these physical manipulations aimed to "define and influence perceptions of Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxy."[137] In this spirit, I have chosen to study one of Chrysostom's works relating to the martyr, Babylas, as well as a brief passage in his homily, *In ascensionem d. n. Iesu Christi.* In them, Chrysostom gives a theological defence of the appropriation of holy places executed by Meletius and Flavian. His arguments, as we shall see, are oriented toward soul care and community building.

3.1.1 *De s. Babyla contra Iulianum*

De Bab. c. Iul. et gent. briefly relates the story of Babylas, an Antiochene bishop martyred in the third century. According to the story passed down in Antioch, Babylas was killed for boldly expelling a murderous emperor who attempted to enter his church. Historians have not ascertained the identity of this emperor and the crime he committed; suffice to say that Babylas's martyrdom made him a patron saint of Antioch. It was what happened some hundred years after Babylas's death that was of special concern to Chrysostom. Babylas's remains were buried in a cemetery outside Antioch's wall. In the early AD 350s, the emperor Julian's half brother, Gallus, built a martyrium in Daphne in the precinct of Apollo's temple to house Babylas's relics. In 362, because the presence of the relics was apparently impeding the powers of Apollo's oracle, Julian had Babylas's remains moved out of the temple precinct. Soon after, a fire broke out and burned down the temple's roof and the idol of Apollo.[138] Libanius wrote an oration memorialising this event from a pagan perspective,[139] a

[137] Christine Shephardson, *Controlling Contested Places: Late Antique Antioch and the Spatial Politics of Religious Controversy* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2014), 28. For extensive discussions on how Chrysostom redefined theatres, synagogues, urban, and rural landscapes to advance his view of orthodoxy and orthopraxy, see, especially, chapters 3 and 4 (ibid., 92-128; 129-62).

[138] Ibid., 58-59.

[139] Libanius, *Or.* 60 (Richardus Foerster, ed. *Libanii Opera*, 12 vols. [Leipzig: Teubner, 1903-27], 4:298-321; John Duncombe, trans., *A Monody, by Libanius, on the Daphnean Temple of Apollo,*

lament which Chrysostom, in *De Bab. c. Iul. et gent.*, harshly refutes.

Chrysostom's description of Babylas's boldness before the emperor is similar to the historians' description of him before Gainas and Arcadius. Chrysostom highlights the man's lack of fear and his temperate scolding of the wicked emperor, whom he desired to "cure." This act, Chrysostom stresses, was inspired by his fear of God, whose power and judgment are above all earthly kings.[140] Chrysostom, therefore, would not have objected to the way Sozomen and Theodoret described his interaction with Gainas and the king. But Chrysostom's main concern was not Babylas when he was living. The greater feat happened after his death.

There are two "holy places" in Chrysostom's story. The first is the place of Babylas's rest, wherever his body and relics went. The second is the destroyed temple of Apollo.

Babylas's remains originally lay in a cemetery outside Antioch. Chrysostom claims it caught the attention of Gallus, who had it moved to Daphne as "a physician to the ailing," for Daphne was infamous for being a haunt for debauched behaviour.[141] How could a dead man be a physician to the living? Chrysostom reasons that unlike the Greeks, whose hope is limited to the present life, Christians possess the promise of eternal life and a future resurrection. Although "dead," Babylas could therefore continue his "well-doing and valor."[142]

First, like a living holy man, Babylas could still make demons flee. In Daphne, Chrysostom claims, the martyr "was able to destroy the power of the demon" (i.e., Apollo) and so "to restrain the merriment of the youths."[143] And later, after Julian revived the cult of Apollo there, its oracle failed to make predictions, for the martyr rendered the demon ineffective and made it flee. Chrysostom believes Julian grudgingly recognised the martyr's power, for, despite claiming it was the presence of corpses (plural) that defiled the temple and offended Apollo, he had only Babylas's

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Destroyed by Fire, in *Select Works of the Emperor Julian, and Some Pieces of the Sophist Libanius, Translated from the Greek*, vol. 2 [London: J. Nichols, 1784], 243-51).

[140] *De Bab. c. Iul. et gent.* 34-38 (Margaret Schatkin et al., eds., SC 362, 134-38; Margaret Schatkin, trans., *St. John Chrysostom. Apologist* [Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press, 1985], 95-97). The passage is beautiful: "The spectacle which he beheld directed his mind to the king above, who sits upon the cherubim and gazes at abysses, to the glorious and sublime throne, to the heavenly host, to the myriads of angels, to the thousands of archangels, to the terrible tribunal, to the impartial judgment, to the river of fire, to the judge himself."

[141] Ibid. 69 (SC 362, 182-84; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 115).

[142] Ibid. 64 (SC 362, 172; Schatkin, *Apologist*,111).

[143] Ibid. 69 (SC 362, 182-84; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 115).

body moved away. While mocking Apollo for recoiling from mere bodies, Chrysostom elevates the prestige of Christian prophets for being truly energised by divine power, seeing as they prophesied events fourteen hundred years in advance and never gave orders to dig up graves for fear of being hindered by corpses.[144]

Second, as in life, the martyr was still praying, conversing with God. Chrysostom attributes the destruction of Apollo's temple to Babylas, who "beseeched God to release fire onto the temple."[145] He points out the timing as well—Apollo was expelled from the place dearest to him at a time when his cult was experiencing a revival. Apollo was therefore not silent of his own accord, but helpless against the judgment of God.[146]

Finally, the martyr still performed the most important kind of healing—the healing of souls. Chrysostom describes the relics, which here include the martyr's shrine, his coffin, and his burial site, as "a powerful inducement to virtue," second place only to the Word "in the power that they have to excite a similar zeal in the souls of those who behold them."[147] The sight of holy places once again engages positive emotions. And beyond viewing humans as merely rational beings, holy places engage their creative side, since these make their impact through remembrance and imagination.[148] Thus, Chrysostom writes that "the sight of the coffin, entering the soul, acts upon it and affects it in such a way that it feels as if it sees the one who lies there joining in prayer and drawing nigh. Afterwards, one who has had this experience returns from there filled with great zeal and is a changed person."[149] Chrysostom likewise makes the incisive observation that humans receive some consolation from the sight of a monument or are moved to remember the dead through a garment or even a recollection of their word. This, he claims, proves that "the vision of the dead enters the souls of the living at their burial sites."[150]

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[144] Ibid. 80-85 (SC 362, 200-206; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 122-25).
[145] Ibid. 93 (SC 362, 218; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 130).
[146] Ibid. 100 (SC 362, 228-30; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 134).
[147] Ibid. 65 (SC 362, 174; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 112).
[148] Harrison gives the best explanation for the connection between perception, remembrance, and imagination: The Church Fathers believed that sights and sounds are impressed upon the mind like the impression of a seal on wax "which could then be recollected by the memory, and represented … for inward contemplation." Such a process "involved reason," and, "in the subsequent representation, recapitulation, ordering and patterning of what was originally impressed, also involved the imagination (phantasia), working in relation to the complex echoes, resonances and sound patterns already established in the mind/memory." This is why homilies are full of illustrations and images ("Typology," 64).
[149] *De Bab. c. Iul. et gent.* 65 (SC 362, 174; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 112).
[150] Ibid. 66 (SC 362, 176; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 112).

This was why Babylas proved so effective in Daphne. The sight of the martyr's shrine brought the blessed one to the visitors' imagination, chastened them, and attracted them to the coffin:

> The beauty of Daphne draws the more sluggish to herself; the martyr, as if sitting in a cave and laying a trap for those who enter, detains them and only releases them after teaching them henceforth to treat the beloved not wantonly but with respect.… God arranged for them to be caught in this net and to receive spiritual healing.[151]

From these descriptions, Chrysostom clearly viewed holy places as significant instruments of persuasive teaching. Here they are used to reinforce the idea that no power on earth, physical or spiritual, can thwart God. It is also used to reinforce and give meaning to human sensitivity toward the finality of death, but proposes an alternate truth claim where death is not the end.

Perpetuation and remembrance are key features of holy places as teaching tools. This was why, according to Chrysostom, God struck down the temple of Apollo and not the emperor who challenged Him:

> For if the punishment extended only to men, the occurrence would be doubted later on. Therefore the place, which is able to exist for a long time, receives the blow and reminds each succeeding generation that those who do such things are ordained by law to suffer such things even if they do not pay the penalty at once.[152]

Once again, sight and imagination play an important role for the person viewing the ruined temple:

> For, seeing the columns from a distance, then coming and crossing the threshold, he pictures to himself the malignity, deceit, and intrigues of the demon and departs in amazement at the strength of God's anger.[153]

True enough, twenty years after the temple fire, when Chrysostom wrote his apology, the ruined façade was still standing.[154] Thus Chrysostom could claim: "Even

[151] Ibid. 71 (SC 362, 186; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 116-17).
[152] Ibid. 116 (SC 362, 252-54; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 144-45).
[153] Ibid. 115 (SC 362, 252; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 143).
[154] Ibid. 117 (SC 362, 254-56; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 145).

now the walls of the temple are standing, proclaiming to all the shame, ridicule, and weakness of the demon; the crowns, victory, and strength of the martyr."[155] Naturally, places do not speak for themselves. But Chrysostom argues, in an even later homily, when Babylas's remains had been relocated in a martyrium outside Antioch and during Babylas's feast day, that the sight of the empty martyrium in Daphne and the missing roof of Apollo's temple will cause people to ask questions about the event and thereby learn the story behind it.[156]

The care of souls through physical places is thus valuable because it keeps the link between the material and the spiritual intact. It is a useful instrument in engaging the whole person, who is made of body and soul. In preaching, faith comes through hearing. In holy places, more senses are engaged and heightened, making holy places useful supplements to the teaching of the Word.

3.1.2. *In ascensionem*

In ascen. was a homily that Chrysostom delivered on a day commemorating Christ's ascension. On this particular occasion, the festival was celebrated outside the city to honour the martyrs.[157] The specific location, according to the title, was the martyrium of Romanesia, which Flavian had recently "purified." Chrysostom tells us that orthodox and heterodox martyrs had been buried there together and that Flavian had separated them without disturbing the bodies. Precisely how he had done it, Chrysostom does not say.[158]

Chrysostom again uses a holy place to teach about the resurrection, but this

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[155] Ibid. 127 (SC 362, 274; Schatkin, *Apologist*, 152).

[156] *De Bab. hom.* 9 (SC 362, 308-10; Wendy Mayer, trans., *A Homily on the Martyr Babylas*, in *'Let Us Die That We May Live': Greek Homilies on Christian Martyrs from Asia Minor, Palestine and Syria c. 350-450 AD*, ed. John Leemans et al. [London: Routledge, 2003], 147). The date when this homily was delivered is not specifiable at the moment, but definitely after Babylas had been laid to his final rest in the martyrium Meletius built for him sometime before Meletius's death in AD 381 (cf. ibid. 141).

[157] *In ascen.* 1.1-14 (Nathalie Rambault, ed., SC 562, 148-50).

[158] Ibid. 1.19-60 (SC 562, 150-54). Wendy Mayer makes an interesting speculation in her article, "The Late Antique Church at Quasîyeh Reconsidered: Memory and Martyr-Burial in Syrian Antioch," in *Martyrdom and Persecution in Late Antique Christanity: Festschrift Boudewijn Dehandschutter*, ed. J. Leemans (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 168-71. In it, she discusses the possibility that the martyrium of Romanesia is the same late antique church that was discovered at Quasiyeh in 1935. If correct, Flavian's strategy was likely "to leave the unapproved tomb in its current location, but open it up, lower the height of the brick walls to the point where the original cover of the tomb would now sit below the pavement level, seal it back up, cement over the top and repair the mosaic paving. In this way the covers of tombs visible in the pavement would be only those whose occupants were approved, while the location of the unapproved martyrs would rapidly be lost to memory." Meanwhile, the bones of approved martyrs were disinterred and relocated to specially prepared receptacles on the same but elevated spot.

time with a stronger focus on the communion between the living and the dead. He stresses, for example, that he had brought the people to the martyrium for a more radiant assembly and a more brilliant spectacle, "since not only humans, but also martyrs are assembled; not only martyrs, but also angels."[159] Not that the martyrs could not have been present away from their graves. Rather, much like in *De Bab. c. Iul. et gent.*, where a coffin could conjure the martyr in the imagination of the people, Christians who have passed away are more present *to the people* wherever their monuments and relics are assembled. We know Chrysostom believes this to be the case since he states that, even before Flavian purified the martyrium, the martyrs were not harmed in any way by being buried next to heretics. Their spirits *were already in the heavens*, in the hand of God. It was for the sake of the people who came to visit that the location needed to be purified. Flavian's actions came under his responsibility as "the wise pastor," "the teacher of the community who directs everything for the edification of the church."[160]

Chrysostom describes the experience of orthodox Christians as that of sheep going towards pure springs but having to turn back because of a foul, fetid odour coming from a nearby place. The pure springs represented the martyrs; the fetid odour was the smell the heresy gave off. For Chrysostom, the presence of orthodox and heretical saints "honoured" together, as a shared martyrium would suggest, caused the faithful to hesitate in their prayers, and was the reason they stopped coming.[161] This assumption may or may not have been accurate—perhaps the martyrium was just not attracting as much interest as it used to, but Flavian's renovation and Chrysostom's rhetoric sought to correct that. Chrysostom wanted people to come to the martyrium in order to be reminded that they were part of a community that transcends life and should live their lives in anticipation of Christ's return. Thus Chrysostom begins the homily by strongly defending the leaders' decision to bring the Christians there for that important celebration. He even puts speech in the martyrs' mouths in a way that suggests they were being taken for granted: "We were counted worthy to die for him! But not worthy enough to welcome Him in our tents!"[162] Besides

[159] *In ascen.* 1.61-74 (SC 562, 154-56). The presence of angels in the church is suggested by scripture—Chrysostom's interpretation of Paul's command for women to wear veils on their heads "because of the angels" (1 Cor. 11:10).

[160] *In ascen.* 1.25-48 (SC 562, 150-52).

[161] Ibid.

[162] Ibid. 1.11-14 (SC 562, 148-50).

orthopraxy, therefore, Chrysostom was reinforcing the concept of ecclesial unity under Christ. In the martyrium, surrounded by their saints and with Chrysostom's words echoing in their ears, the aim was for the congregants to more deeply sense the spiritual realm of which they were part.

Given the importance of holy places to Chrysostom and the role that they can take in teaching the faithful, it is no wonder that he stood firmly against Gainas's request for an Arian church inside Constantinople. With Gainas at the height of his power and the Arian factions still going strong, to have an Arian church in the midst of the city might have suggested, symbolised, and validated one or all of the following: 1) that Arianism was a proper expression of Christianity; 2) that Gainas, representing political power, could overturn Christian convictions (for Arcadius was a Christian emperor and the law of Theodosius was in force); 3) that Arcadius feared Gainas more than he did Christ. Seeing as Chrysostom's main concern in each of the homilies we discussed was for the people, the real struggle for him was how these would have confused or disheartened his congregation. Of course, if it happened that Arcadius acquiesced to Gainas regardless of the church's objections, there would have been little else that Chrysostom could do. But, as leader of the flock, he had to make his position clear and persuade the emperor against that course of action as best as he could.

3.2 Liturgical Processions

Another defining mark of Chrysostom's Constantinopolitan tenure were his pro-Nicene liturgical processions. According to Sozomen and Socrates, he was provoked by the Arians (probably *homoians*), who had been meeting outside the city ever since Theodosius, as we noted earlier, had deprived them of their churches. They met at night at public porticoes during solemn festivals, on Saturdays, and on Sundays, and then made their way to their churches singing antiphonally about their dogma. But they also attacked the doctrines of the pro-Nicenes, saying things like, "Where are those who say that the Three Persons constitute one Power?" Anxious to obscure the efforts of the Arians, Chrysostom won the support of the empress to hold similar processions for the Nicene congregation. The empress's eunuch, Briso, was appointed to regulate these processions, pay the cost, and prepare hymns. Silver crosses and lighted wax tapers were even provided to make the occasions more spectacular. This earned the ire of the Arians, who then attacked their rivals. Briso was wounded, people from both

sides were killed, and Arcadius put a stop to the Arian processions. The Nicene processions, however, went on as before.[163]

The processions were an important factor in Chrysostom's programme for soul care and community building. Socrates and Sozomen both recognise this, reporting that Chrysostom's motivation for the processions was to keep his flock from straying from the faith.[164] This general idea has been studied more intimately by modern scholars. Jonathan Stanfill, for example, probes deeper into Chrysostom's goals and the statement he was making. He starts by observing that, in the streets of Constantinople, walking was a profoundly performative affair. Various processions held throughout the year, such as those overseen by the state (e.g., the Kalendae Ianuarie, the emperor's birthday, military victories) and those related to ordinary life (e.g., weddings, funerals, religious parades), were opportunities for Roman citizens to convey their status and their relationship to, or membership of, a particular community.[165] Stanfill observes that, for Chrysostom, the processions had several important functions. First, they visibly established what, for him, was the true ecclesial body or community of faith. The homilies Chrysostom delivered alongside these processions are therefore filled with descriptions depicting the Nicene community in opposition to heretics: for example, as sheep and wolves, vines and thistles, grain and weeds. In *De s. Phoca*, in particular, Chrysostom imagines the faithful being led forth "in a line of battle against the heretics." Second, Chrysostom, emphasising the inclusive nature of his processions and how communal devotion fosters positive interactions among social classes, sought to destabilise social boundaries within his ecclesial body. Finally, Chrysostom saw the processions as witnessing to the triumph of Nicene Christianity. Thus he recognised the visibility which the processions afforded, the message of social equality they expressed, and the danger of having that message undermined by any misconduct on the participants' part after the processions, which would provoke the scorn of their rivals.[166] Stanfill succeeds in concretising the

[163] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.8 (SC 516, 270-72; NPNF 2/2:404); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.8 (SC 505, 294-98; NPNF 2/2:144). Because Sozomen and Socrates refer to the Arians as Arians rather than as Eunomians (which they use for *anomoeans* in other places), I am inclined to think they are referring to *homoians* and not, as Laird assumes, *anomoeans* ("Anomoeans," 145).

[164] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.8 (SC 516, 272; NPNF 2/2:404); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.8 (SC 505, 297; NPNF 2/2:144)

[165] Stanfill, "The Body of Christ's Barbarian Limb: John Chrysostom's Processions and the Embodied Performance of Nicene Christianity," in De Wet and Mayer, *Revisioning*, 674-76.

[166] Stanfill, "Limb," 680-82. Among the homilies Stanfill examines are *In mart. omn.* (no critical edition available; Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 239-55), *Post. reliq. mart.* (PG 63.467-72), *De Bab. hom.*

significance of these processions by relating them to Chrysostom's pastoral programme for the Goths. Gothic participation in the processions is indicated in Chrysostom's homilies by references to the language of the barbarians and the presence of slaves, for many slaves in the Roman empire at the time were Gothic. Building on Judith Butler's theory of performative assembly, which argues that public assemblies make discursive claims to be the embodiment of "the people," Stanfill argues that Chrysostom's rhetorical use of the "body of Christ" in relation to these processions makes similar discursive claims for the Nicene faith. By including Gothic Christians in the assembly, Chrysostom was challenging Roman Christians to recognise Goths as legitimate members of the Nicene church regardless of their ethnicity. Moreover, Goths played an important role in the public demonstration of Nicene Christianity's triumph over all humanity. They would have brought to mind the Roman triumphal procession, with the Goths performing "the crucial role of enslaved barbarian captives." But there was a radical difference. The bishop publicly embraced the Goths, asserting through the performative act that "the body of Christ could not be made whole without every part, including its barbarian limb."[167]

Nathanael Andrade, meanwhile, focuses on what Chrysostom's processions signified through their occupation of urban spaces. Much as in our discussion of holy spaces, Chrysostom "occupied" urban spaces by using rhetoric to reinvent what happened during processions and what they meant. In the past, emperors had, for example, used public gatherings at the hippodrome to reinforce communal expressions among Constantinople's residents while reaffirming the authority of the imperial family and the civic elite. Through his liturgical processions and preaching, Chrysostom shifted the priority to Christian bonds of solidarity. He impressed on Christians the idea that when they gathered together, they, in Andrade's words, "invited angels and became like them, thereby transforming civic spaces into the gathering places of 'angels'." In the process, though, Chrysostom offered what Andrade thinks were unnecessarily limited choices: unity under the auspices of the Holy Spirit or fragmentation into socially disparate groups through demonic coercion

(SC 362, 279-313), *De stud. praes.* (PG 63.485-92), *De Pelag.* (PG 50.579-85), and *C. Iud. et theat.* (PG 56.263-70). On the visibility of these processions through the routes used, see Albrecht Berger, "Imperial and Ecclesiastical Processions in Constantinople," in *Byzantine Constantinople: Monuments, Topography and Everyday Life*, ed. Nevra Necipoğlu (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 73-88.

[167] Stanfill, "Limb," 687-93.

and vice.[168]

As Stanfill's and Andrade's examples show, Chrysostom's homilies, delivered in relation to his liturgical processions, are therefore important sources for the link between persuasive teaching and community building. Two of these homilies are *Homilia dicta postquam reliquiae martyrum* and *De s. Phoca*. I have also included *In martyres omnes*. Although internal evidence does not suggest that *In mart. omn.* was delivered as part of a liturgical procession, it was delivered during a holy vigil with an unusually large gathering. It echoes and supports the following themes in *Post. reliq. mart.* and *De s. Phoca*:

1. Participation *in* holy things; in this case, the remains of martyrs

2. Participation *by* large and socially diverse crowds

3. Preaching against Arian doctrines

3.2.1 Participation in Holy Things

Post. Reliq. Mart. Is replete with descriptions of the melding of the physical and spiritual worlds. At the crux of it are the martyr bones, which function as a channel for the grace of the Holy Spirit. They effect the defeat of demons and sanctify those who approach.

As in *De Bab. c. Iul. Et gent.*, the foundation of the martyr's ability to work miracles even after death is the Christian belief in the resurrection. Chrysostom exhorts the people to take martyrs as partners in their prayers, indicating that the martyrs are in a spiritual sense *with* the devotees.[169] Their role in the Christian community, in death as in life, remains unchanged. They intercede; they vanquish demons; they bring spiritual blessings to all who come and ask. The spiritual reality is simply rendered visible by the physical presence of the bones. The objects are not mere symbols, however. They channel grace in a very real way. Chrysostom writes that the power is not in the bones themselves, but in the grace of the Spirit that accompanies the bones and dwells with the saints.[170] He makes this claim based on 2 Kings 13:21, which recounts the story of a dead man who fell into Elisha's grave and

[168] Nathanael Andrade, "The Processions of John Chrysostom and the Contested Spaces of Constantinople," *JECS* 18, no. 2 (2010): 166-67.

[169] *Post. reliq. mart.* 3 (PG 63.472; Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, trans., *John Chrysostom* [London: Routledge, 2000], 91).

[170] Ibid. 1 (PG 63.469-70; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 87-88).

was brought back to life. Other passages in scripture support the idea that at least the objects belonging to holy men could channel grace. So, for instance, handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched Paul healed the sick, as did Peter's shadow (Acts 19:12; Acts 5:15); Elijah's cloak allowed Elisha to perform similar miracles (1 Kngs. 19:19; 2 Kngs. 2:13-14); and Daniel's three friends came out of the furnace with even their cloaks unharmed. Building on these scriptural precedents, Chrysostom thus imagines the Spirit's grace extending "towards others who follow it with faith and flows from mind into body, and from body into clothing, and from clothing into shoes, and from shoes into a person's shadow."[171]

In *De s. Phoca*, Chrysostom marvels at how people can continue to draw blessings from martyrs even after their bones are consumed, for the memory of them can grow fresher every day.[172] Remembrance, which was important in our discussion of holy places, is explained more clearly and expressed more poetically in *In mart. omn*. Chrysostom does not describe it as a mere recalling of the past. One can remember the living as much as the dead, which is remembrance in the sense of calling someone to mind. But, for Chrysostom, the martyr must be remembered for the life he lived, the death he died, and the life he *continues* living. Chrysostom explains that the "martyr's fire" overwhelms and brings people to the gatherings, and that this "fire" pertains to "the sight of his wrestling matches, the miracle of his competitive bouts, and the magnitude of his prizes." [173] In these activities Chrysostom includes both the martyr's triumph in life through death and the martyr's ongoing victories in the afterlife. He writes, "After their flesh was destroyed, the souls of the holy martyrs looked around for other flesh to put on in turn and to reveal their courage in other contests."[174] That is to say, by inspiring people and imparting grace through his "presence," the martyr helps living people become athletes of virtue like himself.[175]

For these reasons, Chrysostom, in *De s. Phoca*, summarises the relationship between relic and devotees as follows: "[W]hile no glory will attach to the martyr from

[171] Ibid. 1 (PG 63.470; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 88).

[172] *De Phoca* 1 (PG 50.699-700; § 2 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *The Cult of the Saints* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2006], 78).

[173] *In mart. omn*. 1-2 (Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 241-42).

[174] Ibid. 7 (246).

[175] Ibid.

the attendance of large numbers, the blessing to you from being in the martyr's presence will be substantial."[176]

3.2.2 Participation and Diversity

The people who attend are just as important as the martyrs they celebrate. It is true that Chrysostom's descriptions of the processions are somewhat idealised. We know from his other homilies, both in Antioch and Constantinople, that large gatherings could be problematic. People jostled or stole; some departed from the liturgical festivities to then go drinking, attend chariot races, etc. This was an object of great frustration for Chrysostom.[177] But when the processions worked, if only for their duration, Christian harmony and solidarity seemed achievable goals. For this reason, processions were powerful persuasive tools for teaching both Christians and the watching world.

The processions aimed to show that the enthusiastic participation of the faithful is the wealth of the church.[178] In all three homilies, Chrysostom stresses how people from all walks of life came out to these gatherings: clergy and lay, rich and poor, men and women, young and old, free people and slaves, learned and ignorant, people of different tongues. Significant barriers were broken down. For instance, women were not hindered by weakness of gender, slaves were not hindered by ties to their masters, the poor were not hindered by poverty, and the rich were not hindered from rubbing shoulders with the common people.[179] In *Post. Reliq. Mart.*, particularly, Eudoxia serves as the pinnacle of the type of devotion Chrysostom means—she, being empress, nonetheless mingled with the crowd; being a woman, she nonetheless allowed herself to be seen amid the vast spectacle. This thing was made possible because she kept her attention on the martyr, demonstrating her attentiveness to spiritual things.[180]

Attentiveness is an important part of participation. One's presence may add to the numbers, but attentiveness is required to receive the blessings. In *In mart. omn*., Chrysostom tells the people that their enthusiasm is exhibited by performing holy vigils

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[176] *De Phoca* 1 (PG 50.700; § 2 Mayer, *Cult*, 78).

[177] See Mayer, "Extraordinary," 132-33; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 38-39; *C. Iud. et theat.* (PG 56.263-70).

[178] *Post. reliq. mart.* 2 (PG 63.470; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom,* 88).

[179] Ibid. 1 (PG 63.468-69; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 86-87); *In mart. omn.* 1 (Mayer, *Cult*, 241); *De Phoca* 1 (PG 50.699; § 2 in Mayer, *Cult*, 78).

[180] *Post. reliq. mart.* 2 (PG 63.470-71; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom,* 89-90).

and "*careful listening*, warm and genuine attentiveness [ital. mine]."[181] And in *De s. Phoca*, he specifically mentions that the celebrations were scheduled over two days, so that those too lazy to come on the first day could come on the second and be healed by the preaching.[182]

In *Post. reliq. mart.*, by bringing attention to Eudoxia's devotion, Chrysostom is not just delivering a panegyric. He is directing people to her, using her actions to direct them to scripture. Chrysostom compares her to two biblical figures, David and Miriam, so that Eudoxia becomes a living embodiment of what *their* stories teach, except that she represents the new covenant and the church. Eudoxia is like David, who welcomed the ark of the covenant into his city with humility and dancing. Chrysostom uses this comparison to teach that the ark is a shadow and a type of the martyr casket. Whereas the ark contained only stone tablets, the martyr casket contains spiritual ones. He is here echoing a Pauline concept, where Paul refers to human hearts as tablets upon which the Spirit writes (2 Cor. 3:3). Eudoxia is also like Miriam, who led the Israelites in a victory procession after their exodus from Egypt. Just as the Israelites celebrated their enemies' defeat, Christians are celebrating the defeat of demons. Miriam wielded cymbals, but Eudoxia's mind and soul resounds louder than any instrument. The Israelites celebrated freedom; the church is celebrating triumph. Miriam led "a single nation of like tongue," but Eudoxia is leading forth many nations of different tongues (because, in the processions, psalms of David were being sung in Roman, Syriac, Gothic, and Greek).[183]

For Chrysostom, the processions were a snapshot of the social transformation Christian doctrine was bringing to society. He argues in *In mart. omn*. that the Christian communities around the empire were the visible proof of the validity of the Christian faith. He exclaims,

> Speak! Surely what is both present and visible doesn't seem to be a fairy tale. For instance, the Churches everywhere in the world that multiply the sea of piety; the choruses of virgins; the ranks of monks; the diverse and perfected social group within the Church of people who conspicuously practice moderation in marriage, of people who practice patience in widowhood; the

[181] *In mart. omn*. 1 (Mayer, *Cult*, 241).
[182] *De Phoca* 1 (PG 50.699; Mayer, *Cult*, 77).
[183] *Post. reliq. mart*. 1, 2-3 (PG 63.469, 471-72; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom,* 87, 90-91).

patronage focused on the poor; the ranks of priests; the obedience of the emperors; the philosophy of foreign people.[184]

These made Christ's miracles, resurrection, promised return, and judgment powerful and present realities. Chrysostom claims that if one wanted to see the dead being raised, one needed only to recognise how the world was brought to life through true religion and led to precision of doctrine. And if one wanted to see the leper cleansed, one needed only to consider the countless sins forgiven through Christ's words through baptism and the transformation of life.[185] This is just a reiteration of Chrysostom's favourite assertion that spiritual healing is greater than even physical healing.

3.2.3 Preaching Against Arian Doctrines

There is no dedicated teaching against Nicene opponents in *Post. reliq. mart.* The Trinity receives only a passing mention, and Chrysostom only alludes to the exclusion of heresy in his vision.[186] On the other hand, overt preaching against Arian doctrines is the subject of *In mart. omn*. and *De s. Phoca*. In *In mart. omn*., Chrysostom explicitly issues a challenge: "Where now are those who claim that the Son is lesser?"[187] As in *Post. reliq. mart.*, he shows the new covenant to be better than the old; therefore, Christ is better than Moses; therefore, Christ cannot be lesser than the Father because His deeds are greater than even those performed in the Old Testament. For example, he compares Moses's deeds with Christ's deeds through the apostle Paul. The present gathering, Chrysostom argues, is visible proof of the latter. Moses did not convert a single race, but Paul "caught in his net the entire world by bringing with him the Saviour."[188] It was not Paul that effected everything throughout the world but Christ (cf. Matt. 28:20; 2 Cor. 13:3). It was Christ who performed all Paul's miracles, thus Christ is not any less God than the God who called Moses.[189]

In *De s. Phoca*, Chrysostom also addresses *how* to respond to heretics. Paying

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[184] *In mart. omn*. 14 (Mayer, *Cult*, 251).
[185] See ibid. 15-17 (251-55).
[186] *Post. reliq. mart.* 1 (PG 63.467-68; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom,* 86). "See how many sheep are here and not a wolf in sight; how many grape vines, and no thistles anywhere; how many ears of grains and no weeds about" (ibid. 2 [PG 63.470; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 88]).
[187] *In mart. omn*. 12 (Mayer, *Cult*, 250).
[188] Ibid.
[189] Ibid.

attention to preaching will equip the congregation against the heretics—to battle them but not to harm them. Their goal is to raise their enemies "up from their fallen state." More importantly, the battle is not physical but verbal. And Chrysostom claims he aims not to (verbally) pursue the heretic but the heresy. "I don't reject the person," he says, "but hate the error and want it overturned." He differentiates between accepting the substance (i.e., the human being), which he does not seek to fight because it is "the work of God," and correcting "the thinking which the Devil destroyed." He argues that a doctor does not fight the body of a sick person but rather relieves the body of impurity. Combating heresies does not mean fighting the people themselves but throwing out the error.[190] In saying this, Chrysostom provides a theological basis against hate and violence in the name of opposing beliefs. If we are right about our understanding of his anthropology, he is not saying this as a compromise or concession. He truly and rightly acknowledges the capacity of human beings to think and decide for themselves. Thus, persuasive teaching is not coercion. In fact, to desist from it is damaging to people, since there would be nothing to challenge them if they were truly thinking and living in error.

Having said that, as bishop, Chrysostom's priority is still his flock. He claims, therefore, to not be in the habit of pursuing debates with heretics, which suggests he sees his promotion of Nicene doctrines as always defensive. This is his approach because it was also in this way that Christ succeeded, not by crucifying but by being crucified, not by striking but by being struck. For example, in Jn. 18:23, instead of raining judgment on those that struck him, Jesus instead defended himself "with mildness, teaching you, who are a human being, never to fight back."[191]

Chrysostom next gives a colourful retelling of Jeroboam's story in 1 Kings 13:2. He concludes that the prophet addressed the altar and not the king because the king had become even more insensate than a stone. "The prophet dismissed the being with reason and addressed the one without reason so that through its obedience he might correct [that man's] insensibility and wickedness." [192] When the king stretched out his hand to order the prophet's arrest, his hand dried up. Yet, ironically, the drying up of the king's hand yielded fruit. Chrysostom sagely remarks on a similar principle elsewhere in scripture: that the first tree (in reference to the tree of the knowledge of

[190] *De Phoca* 2 (PG 50.700-701; § 4 in Mayer, *Cult*, 79).
[191] Ibid. 2 (PG 50.701; § 4 in Mayer, *Cult*, 79-80).
[192] Ibid. 2 (PG 50.701; § 5 in Mayer, *Cult*,80).

good and evil), though green, bore death; but the wood of the cross, though dry, gave birth to life. Likewise, the king's hand bore impiety when it was healthy, but, when dry, employed obedience.[193]

Comparing Christ's actions in the initial story and God's judgment on Jeroboam in the second story, Chrysostom argues that Christ let transgression against himself pass but did not accept transgression against God's affairs. Likewise, believers should let offences against themselves pass but act when it comes to Christ's affairs. He instructs his audience to carefully heed how he, Chrysostom, "imprisons," "wrestles," and "strikes" the adversary through sound arguments. Later, Chrysostom tasks his congregation to teach the topic he pursued to whomever asks them. This again assigns considerable responsibility to the participants, who are to correct and help heretical acquaintances, friends, and even an incorrigible wife.[194]

De s. Phoca deals with one error that was then circulating among the Arians, namely that the label "God" is for the Father and "Lord" is for the Son. This teaching seems to have arisen from 1 Corinthians 8:6, where Paul writes, "we have one God the Father from whom all things exist and one Lord Jesus Christ through whom all things exist." Chrysostom counters that while "God" is here applied to the Father and "Lord" to the Son, it is clear in various places in the Bible that "Lord" and "God" may refer to either.[195] The main verse he cites is Psalm 142:1, which, according to the Greek translation he uses, reads: "With my voice I cried out to the Lord, with my voice I made supplication to God." Chrysostom argues that, here, "Lord" and "God" both refer to the Father, a meaning that should have been plain if heretics did not twist the meaning of scripture.[196] His other "support" verses include Isaiah 45:18, "This is the Lord who made heaven, this is God who constructed the earth" and Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, Israel, the Lord your God is one Lord." Chrysostom points out that Lord is used in the latter verse twice, and Lord is used ahead of God. If that label were inferior, it wouldn't have been used first to address great substance and greater divine rationality. Chrysostom further argues that "Lord" is not insignificant because it imparts knowledge of God. Psalm 83:19, for example, says, "Let it be known your name is Lord." The prophet did not say "God". The point is that "Lord" has the same force as "God".[197]

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Ibid. 3, 4 (PG 50.703, 705-706; § 6, 12 in Mayer, *Cult*, 81-82, 86-87).
[195] Ibid. 3 (PG 50.703-704; § 8 in Mayer, *Cult*, 83-84).
[196] Ibid. 3 (PG 50.703-704; § 8 in Mayer, *Cult*, 83).
[197] Ibid. 3 (PG 50.704-705; § 9-10 in Mayer, *Cult*, 84-86).

Keeping to the Old Testament, Chrysostom cites Baruch 3:36-38 to show Jesus is also addressed as "God": "This is our God. No other [God] will be considered in addition to him. He discovered every path of knowledge. After these events he appeared on earth, and lived among human beings."[198]

Chrysostom's support verses are not unassailable. While it would not have been a problem in his time and locality to use a translation, those who can read Hebrew could point out that "Lord" and "God" in Psalm 142:1 have actually been translated from the personal name, יְהוָה. This is not a verse about titles, therefore. It could just as well have read "Lord" and "Lord" than "Lord" and "God". The same thing could be applied to the other verses. Isaiah 45:18 and Deuteronomy 6:4 also have יְהוָה, not אֲדֹנָי, and therefore only prove that יְהוָה is God. This is not to say that the Arians were right, since there are other passages in scripture that Chrysostom could have used to better effect to show that both "Lord" and "God" could refer to either the Father or the Son. Moreover, this quibbling over titles does not invalidate stronger proofs about the divinity of the Son. What it reinforces, however, is that there is no need to assume that persuasive teaching means that the teacher is always without error or that his interpretation is not open to being challenged. The only certainty is that scripture must be central to the conversation.

Notwithstanding the weakness of his defence in this instance, Chrysostom asserts that scripture holds the truth about the Son of God. Neither acclamation nor defamation in any way affects the reality of the "bodiless substance", i.e., the Son of God. Much as the sun's brilliance is not subject to public opinion, and the person who says it is dark therefore has impaired vision, likewise, the person who says the Son of God is "not Son, but a created being" provides demonstration of their own mental impairment.[199] I would disagree with Chrysostom, however, about applying this only to those considered heretics. If mental impairment is understood as impairment of the soul (and not physiological impairment), all human beings are guilty of this at one time or another. This applies not only to the denial of the divinity of the Son, but to every time humans fail to accept God's truth. This, as I have earlier stressed, is why humans have constant need of healing and why they are both sick yet culpable before God for their lack of understanding. But without Christ, it is, indeed, impossible to be saved.

[198] Ibid. 4 (PG 50.705-706; § 11 in Mayer, *Cult*, 86).
[199] Ibid. 3 (PG 50.703; § 8 in Mayer, *Cult*, 83-84).

3.3 Exclusion

A third tool of Chrysostom's persuasive teaching, exclusion, demonstrates in further detail the relationship between individual and community. Exclusion is a method of discipline in the church, antithetical to participation yet equally important in soul care and community building. It was used as a last resort on unrepentant offenders, but always, at least in principle, with reconciliation in mind.[200] The idea of exclusion may seem harsh, but it was seen as a necessary measure to "promote individual sanctification as well as to maintain the holiness of the church."[201]

Even as a presbyter in Antioch, Chrysostom understood this well. He emphasises in *De statuis hom. 20* that exclusion is exclusion from participation in the *holiest of things*: the Eucharist. In *De sac.*, the Eucharist is depicted as an event of utmost sacredness because, in it, the believer stands in the presence of God. The priest must be pure to handle the body of Christ.[202] By the same logic, those who receive the body must also be clean. In *hom. 20*, therefore, Chrysostom urges the Antiochene congregation to more earnestly devote themselves to holiness as the end of the Lenten fast draws near. The solemn assemblies, auditories, prayers, and teaching have all been for the cleansing of their sin so that they could partake of the "unbloody Sacrifice" with spiritual boldness. However, those activities are useless if they do not cast off the spiritual defects in themselves and attain to good work. Chrysostom says of such a person: "Let him remain outside."[203]

Church discipline in the fourth century, as James Dallen observes, could be a complicated affair. Although penitents were already viewed as a distinct class and defined both officially and liturgically, there was still considerable variation in how the process of repentance was regulated by law. Synodal regulations varied over which sins required formal penance, and did not seem to follow a consistent, logical pattern in terms of the amount of time set for doing them. Aside from synodal legislations (e.g., from those of the synod of Elvira, Arles, and Nicaea), regulations for penance were sourced from penitential letters and sets of decrees from individual bishops (e.g., documents of Innocent I, Leo I, and Basil of Caesarea). Moreover, if canonical

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[200] Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 93.

[201] Tim Grass, "Church Discipline," in *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic*, ed. Martin Davie et al., 2nd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2016), 184.

[202] See previous discussion in chapter 1, p. 24.

[203] *De stat.* 20.1 (PG 49.197; W. R. W. Stephens, trans., NPNF 1/9:472).

penance was deemed too severe, it could be mitigated by pastoral practice.[204] Of Chrysostom specifically, Dallen remarks that he knew canonical discipline and respected its requirements but did not always follow its prescriptions. He was, for example, lax in his willingness to allow repeated penance, having been quoted by Socrates as offering healing to those doing penance for the thousandth time.[205] In Constantinople, Chrysostom seems also to have followed a precedent by Nectarius, where the first course of action was to leave dealing with sin to the conscience of the sinner. According to Socrates and Sozomen, Nectarius, in AD 391, had abolished the office of the penitential presbyter because a deacon had taken advantage of an aristocratic lady who was performing the penance appointed by the penitentiary priest. To prevent further scandal, the church leaders thought it best to leave the decision about whether to participate in the sacred mysteries to individual conscience.[206] In his homily *Peccata fratrum non evulganda*, Chrysostom presents a similar view, explaining that the church does not publicly expose sins "but after putting forth our teaching, as common to all, we leave it entirely to the conscience of the hearers; so that each may draw to himself from what is said the suitable medicine for his own wound."[207] But what is under discussion here seems to have been sins of a private nature or private conflicts, so Chrysostom beseeches the congregation to let their own consciences rebuke them. In any case, Dallen is right that if Chrysostom is lax, it is due to his view of the church not as a courtroom but as a physician's office.[208]

There was another way that Chrysostom could be "gracious" and this was in purposefully exhorting, and even requiring, the laity to participate in the integral ministry of reconciliation. His strong censure in *De stat. hom.* 20, to which we earlier referred, interestingly focuses on one particular sin: the failure to reconcile with one's enemy. This, Chrysostom claims, is as terrible a sin as fornication and blasphemy, since "he who is resentful works the same iniquity every day," i.e., of hatred and envy. Chrysostom writes, "Let no one who has an enemy draw near the sacred Table, or receive the Lord's Body…. Will you draw near? Be reconciled, and then draw near,

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[204] For the full discussion of canonical penance during this period, including what we know of its liturgy, see James Dallen, *The Reconciling Community: The Rite of Penance* (1986; repr., Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 56-74.

[205] Ibid., 75; cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.*, 6.21 (SC 505, 346; NPNF 2/2:152).

[206] Rapp, *Holy Bishops*, 94; cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.*, 5.19 (SC 505, 206-208; NPNF 2/2:128); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.*, 7.16 (SC 516, 144-50; NPNF 2/2:386-87).

[207] *Pecc. fratr. non evulg.* 3-4 (PG 51.356-57; R. Blackburn, trans., NPNF 1/9:236-37).

[208] Dallen, *Reconciling*, 75.

and touch the Holy Thing!" [209]

When exclusion is understood as exclusion from *holy things*, it becomes, first of all, a matter of an individual's standing before God. Despite, therefore, emphasising reconciliation, Chrysostom keeps returning to the health and security of the individual soul. Thus, building his case on Jesus's teaching that people are to forgive their neighbours to be forgiven by God, he reminds the congregation that though they have been mistreated by fellow human beings, they themselves have often treated God with contempt despite God's patience and blessings. They often disrespect his solemn assemblies and the preaching of his word through listlessness and talking. They judge their neighbours rashly, are deceitful, and make oaths they do not keep. Chrysostom attributes these evils to their lack of reverence and fear of God, and reminds them of "the river of fire, the envenomed worm, and the fearful judgment when all their sins shall be exposed in public." Only if they forgive might they purge away their own offenses in the last day. [210] Based on this, as Paul Hartog rightly observes, the seriousness of worship was a pastoral concern for Chrysostom. [211]

Reconciliation with one's neighbour, therefore, is an important condition for the health of souls as this leads, for all parties, to proper reconciliation with God. One must not fail to make the effort even if one is rejected, for the offender refusing to be reconciled stands personally accountable to God. Chrysostom reminds his congregants of the story of Miriam, who became leprous after slandering her brother, Moses. It was for Moses (i.e., the offended party) to beg for her healing, though God refused his request knowing how long she must undergo rebuke. [212]

By making every individual responsible for the ministry of reconciliation, even for correcting their servants, apprentices, and friends, Chrysostom is thereby giving them accountability for their own souls and for the souls of each other. [213] In his

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[209] *De stat.* 20.1, 5 (PG 49.198, 204; § 2, 12 in NPNF 1/9:472, 476). Although Chrysostom's emphatic censure may sound harsh, toward the end of the homily, he tells the congregation that he would meet an offender in private first to "put the matter to proof." Only when he detects that they have not corrected their vice will he exclude them from the Holy Mysteries, but so that they can reform themselves and with a pure conscience enjoy the Holy Table (ibid., 20.24 [NPNF 1/9:481]). Calvin hails Chrysostom for putting Christ's honour above all things but also tempering severity with gentleness in his view on church discipline. As a commentary of the Catholic church of his day, with its all too strict implementation of penance, Calvin remarks: "If God is so kind, why is his priest determined to be so austere?" (*Institutes* 12.5, 12.8 [Henry Beveridge, trans., *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2008), 507, 511]).

[210] *De stat.* 20.1-2 (PG 49.199-200; § 3-5 in NPNF 1/9:472-73).

[211] Hartog, "Golden-Mouthed," 130-31.

[212] *De stat.* 20.4 (PG 49.203; § 10 in NPNF 1/9:475-76).

[213] Ibid. 20.8 (PG 49.210; § 23 in NPNF 1/9:481).

discussion of Matthew 18:15-20, where Jesus teaches that conflict should first be privately resolved between the parties concerned, then in front of one or two witnesses, then before the assembly, Chrysostom gives descriptions of the private person's role that parallel his description of the priest's responsibilities in *De sac.*, which we discussed in chapter 1. First, Chrysostom teaches that the one who enjoys health should tell his comrade of his fault because the comrade, intoxicated with anger and shame, might be in a kind of stupor and cannot make the first move. The tribunal must be private, and the remedy such as may be readily received. Second, he notes that a physician does not give up in the face of an obstinate malady. As such, neither should the aggrieved party when his comrade initially refuses to listen.[214] Thus, much like the priest in *De sac.*, a lay person can serve as a physician of the soul to his brethren through the ministry of reconciliation. Likewise, he is expected to display many-sidedness in applying the appropriate remedy. Third, Chrysostom points out that Christ's instruction to his disciples in verse 18, which begins "Whatsoever you shall bind" is the layperson's version of the command given to Peter (and, therefore, to priests) in Matthew 16:19. He interprets it as follows: When the aggrieved party has done his part, but the wrongdoer still refuses to listen, the latter is indissolubly bound. That is, the wrongdoer will suffer the utmost ills but not because of the one who brought him to account. It is his own fault since he was not willing to be persuaded. Thus, the binding is a vengeance here and a punishment hereafter that Jesus threatens *precisely* so that these circumstances may not arise, and the wrongdoer may quickly repent. Finally, as in *De sac.*, the motivation to reconcile must be for more than fear of punishment or desire for the great rewards of concord. All must be done out of love for Christ.[215]

Exclusion from the community is an important part of how God wants His people to deal with sin. Chrysostom observes that God's injunctions against "those outside" are noticeably different. Toward those not of the Christian community, the faithful are to turn the other cheek.[216] This idea is broached further in his comments on 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, where Paul says, "What have I to do with judging them that are without?" Chrysostom explains that here, as in 1 Timothy 3:7 and 2 Thessalonians 3:14, Paul is making a distinction between his responsibilities to believers and

[214] *In Matt. hom.* 60.1 (PG 58.585; George Prevost and M. B. Riddle, trans., NPNF 1/10:372).
[215] Ibid. 60.2-3 (PG 58.586-88; NPNF 1/10:373-74).
[216] Ibid. 60.1 (PG 58.585; NPNF 1/10:373).

unbelievers. This does not mean that Paul did not care for those without, but that they had first to receive the Gospel and submit to the doctrine of Christ before he could lay down laws for them. For it is superfluous to speak of Christ's precepts to those who do not know Him. This does not mean, however, that those outside of the Christian community go unpunished, for God Himself judges all (1 Cor. 11:32).[217]

Returning to Matthew 18, the final tribunal in the believers' community is for the offense to be told to the church, which Chrysostom understands to refer to its rulers.[218] Chrysostom's exposition of 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 also seems, in the absence of the bishop, to empower other leaders of the local church. In that passage, Paul berates the Corinthians for not having expelled from church a man committing sexual immorality with his stepmother. Paul writes, "When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." Chrysostom determines that such a tribunal is therefore done on behalf of the Lord with Paul setting himself as their head, so that they might do things as though he were present. The power of the Lord Jesus does not just refer to His authority but to the grace He will impart so that they can carry out the sentence.[219]

Chrysostom is especially keen to clarify that "delivering" the sinner to Satan is not the same as "giving him up." The former connotes opening the doors of repentance to the sinner, in the same way that one might deliver a delinquent to a schoolmaster for correction. The "destruction of the flesh" is similar to what Job suffered, although Job's suffering was given for a different purpose. In the case of the innocent Job, it was for brighter crowns. But, for the sinner, it was so that the devil might scourge him with a grievous sore or with some other disease for the loosing of sins. God chastises the flesh (cf. 1 Cor. 11:32) because inordinate eating and carnal luxuriousness are the parents of sinful desires.[220] Regarding Paul's explanation that it is better to be disciplined now "that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus," Chrysostom adds that it is not the spirit alone that will be saved. Rather, if the soul is saved, the body will partake in salvation too, for, in the same way, the body became mortal because of the soul's sinning.[221]

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[217] *In 1 Cor. hom.* 16.1 (PG 61.131; § 2 in NPNF 1/12:90).
[218] *In Matt. Hom.* 60.2 (PG 58.586; NPNF 1/10:373).
[219] *In 1 Cor. hom.* 15.2 (PG 61.123; § 3-4 in NPNF 1/12:84-85).
[220] Ibid. 15.2 (PG 61.123-24; § 4 in NPNF 1/12:85).
[221] Ibid. (PG 61.124; § 4 in NPNF 1/12:85).

Chrysostom stresses, therefore, that exclusion is not about punishing rashly or at random. In *1 Cor. hom.* 16, he even hearkens back to Deuteronomy 17:7 to show that exclusion as a form of discipline is not an innovation: "Put away from among yourselves the wicked person." But if people were treated with more severity in the past, it is so that people today will see that such sins did not go unpunished. Nonetheless, one sees both in the Old and New Testaments that certain punishments are more severe and others gentler so that the two covenants are akin to each other. For example, David's adultery and murder were pardoned by repentance, but Ananias, lying to Peter and to the Holy Spirit, perished with his wife.[222]

It is likely that Chrysostom's emphasis on reconciliation was partly to ease the bishop's task of arbitrating cases, which, as noted in our discussion of *De sac.* in chapter 1,[223] brought the bishop untold troubles. In Chrysostom's mind, these can be unnecessary troubles, since scripture shows that the task of reconciliation begins with every individual. Christians must learn to resolve small troubles on their own through love and forgiveness, rather than assert rights and privileges as in secular law courts. Rather than resolving every problem for them, church leaders are tasked to show them the way of repentance and reconciliation through an accurate pondering of how one's relationship with God should affect one's relationship with others.

4. Conclusion: Building on Chrysostom's Views on Persuasive Teaching, Soul Care, and Community Building

In this chapter we have demonstrated how Chrysostom valued the persuasive teaching of scripture as the indispensable tool for soul care and community building. Through scripture God condescended to our humanity in order to communicate His person and plan to us. Everything *that* we ought to know about God and our salvation is essentially expressed in scripture, even if it does not contain everything there *is* to know. With regard to what *is* revealed, the theologian, Tom Oden, points out that classical Christian teachers, Chrysostom included, recognised human responsibility to humbly but rigorously and critically reflect on God's self-disclosure "and its relevance for everything human" in order "to avoid Christians becoming 'slaves to passions and pleasures.'"[224] The discussion in this chapter expands on this important observation,

[222] *In 1 Cor. hom.* 16.1-2 (PG 61.131-32; § 3 in NPNF 1/12:90).
[223] See pp. 35-37.
[224] Oden, *Living God*, 381.

namely, by recognising that we are interacting with God's self-disclosure when we engage in the act of persuading with scripture. This involves the conscientious examining, interpreting, and public or private teaching of it with the aid of the Holy Spirit. God opted to meet us in this way knowing full well, as our providential Creator, how we are built and what is the complex nature of our relationship with the material world. Teaching and being taught therefore makes us more fully aware of what it means to be a human being. It engages us in our ability to perceive, rationalise, judge, and argue—and holds us accountable for the choices we make. Because we are embodied souls, the material world can engender in us positive or negative emotions, but what we do with those is an exercise of humanity. We are more human when we think before we act than when we act based simply on the impulses of our bodies. To merely yield to desire is not as *humanising* as when we struggle with the choices leading up to it, especially where an ethical question is involved, and especially when we are confronted or helped in our decisions by God's divine words. When we communicate our decisions through physical acts, in this, too, we are reminded of our *being*. It is not about the choices we make *per se*, but about the recognition that we have the capacity to make choices and to impose (or not to impose) them. This is not to say that a person is *more* or *less* human depending on whether they can or cannot engage in this process—for Chrysostom, nature is unchanging.[225] The capacity, potentially, is there for everyone. We are only talking of being more or less able to *exercise* one's humanity, which is good for one's soul. And because the focus is on personal responsibility, there is no comparison between human beings. Each one walks at one's own speed, judged ultimately by God. Naturally, to simply exercise humanity is not in itself moral. God judges whether the choices one makes conform to the goal He set for humanity as set forth in scripture.

As we have shown in Chrysostom's thought, orthodoxy and orthopraxy are based on the rule of Jesus Christ, where He, through His Word, is the standard of right belief and right living. This requires acknowledging His divinity, since the goal of humanity must be determined by someone who surpasses our limitations. Whereas the exercise of human autonomy is limited, sometimes marred by disability or short-sightedness or affected by the actions of others, Christ's is boundless. Whereas we

[225] Laird, "Mindset (γνώμη)," 205; cf. *In Matt. hom.* 59.2 Chrysostom argues that good and evil in human beings do not come from nature: "For the things of nature are neither changed, nor do they need diligence for their acquisition" (PG 58.576; NPNF 1/10:366).

cannot fully comprehend Him in His essence or how He could perform miracles or why He shaped us and the world the way He did, He fully comprehends us. Whereas He thinks, feels, and wills like us (or we like Him), in His divinity He has no need of learning or growth, for He is already deity. He is what we aim to be. Or, rather, we can never be exactly like Him, so He became like us that we may be like Him. The Son took on humanity, so that He could learn obedience through suffering and death, thereby perfecting humanity, and becoming the source for our salvation (Heb. 5:7-9; Phil. 2:8). In this sense, salvation can be conceived as coming to us through *Christ the teacher*. His teachings are therefore indispensable to our deification.

The sense of rightness involved in orthodoxy and orthopraxy is not just in terms of what is proper but of what is true. The sick soul rejects the rule of Christ, and, therefore, the truth of Christ's words. Such a soul might perceive the material world normally (being in every way of sound body), but, as he processes these things through memory and imagination, his interpretation might misalign with God's truth. This situation is even worse for those who, as a result of the wickedness of others, are forced to inhabit a mutilated material environment. Their bodies are subjected to evil (e.g., violence, injustice, immorality), which also damage the soul. Whatever the reason, they reject God's treatment and seek healing in other avenues. Perceiving God's medicine to be bitter, long, and useless (not necessarily as a whole; it is possible to like some of His teachings and hate others), even Christians are prone to self-medicate. They may take solace in illusions of their own making, for example, through various kinds of material indulgences, to relieve the soul and cope with the world. But these only hide the damage and are in fact symptoms that the soul is still sick. So long as human beings, even many who are otherwise devout, exist in this body, they stand always in need of their Healer. For humans to neglect the fact that they are in constant need of correction and to trust too much that they can take care of themselves is dangerous, as this will surely lead, if not to sin that harms others, then at least to sin that harms themselves. Everything necessary for our healing is contained in scripture, for the whole purpose of God's condescension to our language is to get this message across. Since our sickness is lack of understanding (failure of perception, of logic, and of acceptance of God's truth) and is aggravated by a distorted material world of our making, our healing must be, firstly, that which corrects our thinking and redeems our material environment. When Henri de Lubac was asked about the Second Vatican

Council giving priority to preaching among the priests' functions (which Chrysostom would have appreciated), he responded by saying:

> [T]his is true: it is through this that one begins. In order to be able to bring together a Christian people around the Eucharist, it is indeed necessary that there be Christians, it is indeed necessary for the Word of God to have been proclaimed to them, for them to have been baptized; it is consequently normal for one to begin by preaching the Word. But immediately after, and in an even more emphatic way, the Council describes for us the sacramental functions, and particularly that of the Eucharist; it tells us that the source and the summit of all evangelization are there. Thus, very far from opposing these two functions or from neglecting one in favor of the other, it unites them perfectly.[226]

The emphasis on proclamation being the "beginning" is very important. Carrying this insight into the context of our discussion and extending it, I suggest that if the transformation of the sacramental objects represent *what could be* in terms of the redemption of the material world, this must be preceded by the reformation of human souls through preaching, so that the sacramental participation of God's people in His *oikonomia* becomes even more a concrete participation in the healing of the world.

The emphasis on "beginning" should not, however, cause us to assume that preaching ceases being useful after evangelisation. It is true that Chrysostom emphasises the priest's role as father in *De sac.*, in terms of *engendering* believers into divine life through directing the church, celebrating the mysteries, and teaching. De Lubac identifies this in his discussion of *De sac.*[227] But, of course, outside *De sac.*, as discussed above,[228] Chrysostom also emphasises how preaching sustains us in our faith like daily food. Echoing Chrysostom, *Lumen Gentium* remarks that parents ought to "train their children … in christian doctrine and evangelical virtues" in order that they may "build up the community of charity" and so "stand as witnesses to and cooperators in the fruitfulness of mother church."[229] In spiritual matters, we must see

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[226] Interview with Gwendoline Jarczyk in appendix to De Lubac, *The Motherhood of the Church Followed by Particular Churches in the Universal Church and an Interview Conducted by Gwendoline Jarczyk*, trans. Sergia Englund (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press), 347-48.

[227] De Lubac, "*Dialogue*," 26-30. *Lum. Gen.* 21 likewise focuses on engendering (i.e., bishops, assisted by priests, have a "paternal role" through which Christ, the "supreme high priest … preaches the word of God to all peoples and administers unceasingly to believers the sacraments of faith" and "incorporates, by a supernatural rebirth, new members into his body" (Flannery, *Vatican*, 28).

[228] See p. 69.

[229] *Lum. Gen.* 41 (Flannery, *Vatican*, 62).

preachers doing the same for us. Preachers ought to take as their responsibility not only the strict *proclamation* of the Word, but also consider how they can create opportunities for the Word to permeate the lives of their congregants.

This congregational thrust in Chrysostom's theology and preaching has been well noted by Edward Farrugia. He calls it *communitarian*, after Antonio Quacquarelli's definition of the theology of the Fathers, in the sense that, for Chrysostom, theology and preaching are in the service of the community to lead them in and towards faith.[230] Farrugia calls it a popular theology, because it is biblical, performed within the ambience of the liturgy, and aimed at deification. Moreover, it is expansive in that Chrysostom held monks and laypeople to the same moral standard.[231] Farrugia, using a homily delivered by Chrysostom to instruct catechumens, demonstrates how Chrysostom aimed to communicate God's message in a way that preserved the tension of God's mystery (the incomprehensibility of God which, as we have seen, Chrysostom stringently attempted to teach the *anomoeans*) and also the nearness of Christ (God's condescension through the incarnation).[232] Chrysostom accomplished this, Farrugia points out, 1) through his use of images (because these, more than concepts, more precisely communicate mystery), and 2) by strengthening the connection between sacramental word and symbolical words (i.e., of the baptismal and eucharistic event and of the homily preached beforehand), paralleling the relationship between the eternal Word and human words. Drawing inspiration from this, Farrugia asserts that preaching ought, first, to cause listeners to abandon their resistance to the liberating Word of God by "evoking the nostalgia of paradise lost and regained in baptism"; and, second, to "prepare them for a renewed visit of the Logos in their hearts" by creating an experience of "hunger for the Eucharist … heralded by the homily." As Farrugia puts it, "the effective word of the homily participating in the

[230] Farrugia, "Preachability," 36. Prioritising the faith of the community as the object of theology is an observation Catholic kerygmatic theology makes concerning the theology of the Fathers (ibid., 39); likewise De Lubac, who notes that, for Chrysostom, the priesthood is service to God first, but then to lead human beings to God ("*Dialogue*," 26). Oden, too, finds that Chrysostom mixed aptitude based on a pattern of education (*paideia*) and charismata engendered by the Holy Spirit as necessary for pastoral service defined as teaching "faith … made known in Scripture … to lead sinners from idolatry, through doubt, to faith, hope and love in Christ" (*Living God*, 364-65); also, Rylaarsdam, who stresses Chrysostom's Christian philosophy, and therefore the persuasive task of the priest, focuses on making virtuous persons (i.e., people of a heavenly way of life, characterised by faith and love) so as to make earth a heaven (*Pedagogy*, 49-50).

[231] Farrugia, "Preachability," 40.

[232] Ibid., 37-39.

consecratory force of the Word of God is not simply a conventional sign, but a real symbol of God at work transforming the world from inside, from within the heart."[233]

While I agree with Farrugia, his application is still too focused within the domain of traditional liturgy in the context of a church service. How can we bring the preacher out to the streets, so-to-speak, as Chrysostom did in his liturgical processions and his rhetorical creation of sacred spaces out of ordinary things? Moreover, the use of the term *communitarian* should include Chrysostom's emphasis on social ties within the church in the context of persuasive teaching. Earlier in this chapter we showed that Chrysostom gave spiritual meaning to urban and holy places through his preaching and processions and by inviting people, regardless of their social status, to disrupt the routine of their lives for a God-glorifying encounter. He walked with them, encouraged their interaction, and celebrated their attentiveness to heavenly things. In his homilies, he also highly encouraged that they teach one another, elevating natural social ties (i.e., family, friendship) to foster ecclesial ones. In what other sense, then, can we conceive of the priest as teacher to his flock and of the members as teachers to each other?

To answer this question, it is necessary that we expand our conception of preaching in the way previously mentioned, so that we regard teaching as a ministry that causes Christians to be more in touch with their humanity. The various use of mediums in teaching, such as the preacher himself, the martyrs, and the holy spaces, are not to widen the gap between God and humans. Rather, we need many mediums because of our diversity. Viewed from this angle, it becomes possible to find other means to create the experience of God's Word or even temporarily set aside old experiences, should these do more harm than good. A recent example that comes to mind is the nearly worldwide closure of church buildings during the 2020 coronavirus crisis. Scripture claims no medium, apart from itself, to be ultimately indispensable (Christ Himself, of course, is no mere medium, but the pure message). And no wonder—since, as Chrysostom's homilies demonstrate, words are indispensable in creating discourse and interpreting our material surroundings. The book of Hebrews, therefore, emphasises that God spoke to us through the prophets (i.e., scripture) and, finally, through His Son. Similarly, the Torah, in Matthew 5:18, lasts forever ("until heaven and earth disappear"). To prove that nothing else is ultimately indispensable,

[233] Ibid., 40-45.

we must recall how God, in the past, used the tabernacle and the temple to communicate His presence, holiness, and grace to His people, but we know He had no qualms about demolishing these when they became a source of pride to Israel. The Old Testament priesthood likewise only paved the way for that of Christ, and although the priesthood of the church is based on Christ's, there will come a time when even this will be unnecessary, since we will be living in the presence of God. All this is to say that the priest should feel freedom in applying this concept of persuasive teaching. It is not about the bells and smells of processions or liturgy or the devotion to the saints *per se*, nor is it merely dictating or instructing people in the faith. Rather, it is engaging them with God's truth and guiding them to discourse with God's self-disclosure (hence, to theologise) in their own right.

Oden, appreciating Chrysostom's inclusion of the laity in the task of teaching, nonetheless differentiates between lay theology and formal (i.e., systematic) theology in this way: while the content and subject matter of lay theology are the same, lay theology is elementary in comparison. This is because systematic theology is preparation for ordained public ministry, and, as such, "pursues more deliberately, intentionally, critically and intensely the ground, roots, consequences, and practical effects of that same faith."[234] *Contra*-Oden, therefore, I contend that lay theology must be pursued with a similar intensity and with a similar intent for public service. If there is a difference, it is only in the diversity of outlooks, areas of pursuit, and, perhaps, verbal expression. When God condescended to the writers of scripture, He did not merely dictate. They were not empty vessels. He engaged them in their humanity and expressed Himself through their humanity.[235] This is the example leaders must follow. Guiding and being with the members in their process of theologising is one way to fulfil and broaden the application of Chrysostom's call for lay members to imitate their leaders in the ministry of teaching. Arduous though this task may be, it is necessary to build a community with strong social ties: between leader and flock and members with each other. It is, after all, becoming increasingly significant to see the church as a community of communities. Throughout Christian history, groups within the church have been identified by common denominators: the rich, the poor, the widows, the

[234] Oden, *Living God*, 365.

[235] Hill makes a similar observation based on his study of Chrysostom's homilies in Isaiah. Hill concludes that Chrysostom saw God's Word as God's friendly conversation with human beings at the oral level ("Inspiration," 22-26).

women, parents, children, etc. The multicultural churches recognise ethnicity. The modern churches, especially with the popularity of small groups, acknowledge differences in age (e.g., youth, young professional, senior citizens), occupation (e.g., lawyers, doctors, celebrities), civil status (e.g., singles, couples), and special needs. For the leaders to journey with each of these types of people, bearing in mind their different concerns, will require much time to be spent in discourse and togetherness. It also requires learning their "language" (including content and means of communication) and helping them verbally articulate their theology to the wider church. The aim is both to improve their spiritual health and truly recognise their contribution to "the wealth of the church." Drawing from Chrysostom among other Fathers, the Second Vatican Council rightly recognised that the Holy Spirit is the soul of the church, and that each member of the laity is as a soul to the world. The laity are therefore exhorted to "diffuse in the world the spirit which animates the poor, the meek and the peace-makers" through witnessing to the resurrection and life of Jesus Christ.[236] Out in the world this means doing their work with excellence, guided by their Christian conscience, so as to reconcile their duties to Christ and human society. Within the church, they are encouraged to respectfully voice their opinions and "to take on work on their own initiative," while spiritual shepherds are encouraged to listen to their needs and advice and "assign offices to them in the service of the church."[237] This counsel rightly stresses the laity's responsibility to contribute to the fulfilment of the church's mission in pragmatic ways. But I suggest there is a greater need to encourage them to *discourse* according to their faith—I mean not only the lay members who have immersed themselves in formal theology, but also the ordinary members. Chrysostom, in his processions, journeyed with the people, pointed out to them what was worthy of attention, and repeatedly reminded them of the purpose of the assemblies and processions in which they took part. But, ultimately, the priest could not do the "walk" for them. The people had to go out of their houses, take time off from the routine of their lives, rub shoulders with those from other walks of life, and heed the priest's instructions. What I am suggesting is to invite them into greater participation not just in the *service* or in the *life* or in the *witness* of the church but in the *discourses* of the church. In Chrysostom's time, fewer members of the congregation were educated and

[236] *Lum. Gen.* 38 (Flannery, *Vatican*, 57).
[237] Ibid. 36-37 (54-57).

that, perhaps, is partly why he encouraged simple attendance at settings and events and asked listeners to repeat what they heard in his homilies. Times have changed indeed, and leaders today must recognise that many more are equipped to test what is being taught, speak their mind, and defend their perspectives. To recognise the "other" as human beings is to recognise their capability to reason (with feeling) and to discourse. It is to encourage and interact with these voices so as to engage in the process. It is to exercise and to be in touch with one's humanity. Merely parroting the words of others, engaging one's lips, is not quite as effective as engaging one's mind and heart. Indeed, leaders and lay members alike become better teachers when they are challenged, such as when others point out the incongruences in their belief and actions, and so force them to refine either their lifestyle or thinking. The social aspect of community is thus incredibly important in the context of persuasive teaching.

While liturgical assemblies serve as a reminder of the importance of community, the ministry of exclusion, where Chrysostom stresses a person's standing before God, is a reminder that individuality should not be swallowed up by the community. In this ministry, as we have demonstrated, Chrysostom emphasised personal reflection (searching one's conscience), personal confession to God, personal efforts toward reconciliation—all before one even dared to approach the Eucharistic table. One concrete way to apply this is to consider that, subsumed as we are under the greater goals of the glory of God and the edification of the church, each person must be encouraged to respond to God's self-disclosure in a personal way. The leader who recognises the significance of individuality will be keener to help his members recognise God's personal vision for them, respective of their spiritual gifts, spiritual journey, and unique opportunities. Rather than seeing this as a threat to unity or, consumed by his own vision, ignoring it altogether, he would ask about and nurture these "particular discourses" between God and church members. The leader's role is to encourage people to find the theology in what they have been given to do and to think of how to "grow" in it, and, most importantly, to integrate it in the life of the church.

An objection that may arise concerning this emphasis on individuality and service is that worship may become too much a mode of self-expression. Robert Taft rightly warns that liturgy, being an epiphany of God, should not be exploited as a medium of self-expression or self-fulfilment but recognised as constituting acts of worship whose object is God. He draws this conclusion from Chrysostom's strong

censure against unruly and unbecoming behavior in worship.[238] To that extent, I agree with it, but would add the clarification that epiphany requires an audience and a response. When we receive God's self-disclosure or epiphany, whether in Word or sacrament, we must concede that we naturally express our humanity and our creativity by our responsive worship, and that we are fulfilled (as both individuals and community) by this encounter. And there is no fear in calling this "right glorifying, right worship." Having said that, this principle of individuality as expressed in the ministry of exclusion, is as much a strong reminder for the leader about his responsibility to exercise wisdom and judgment concerning the discipline of his members. To apply this in the context of persuasive teaching: it is only natural and necessary that the leader discourage and teach against dangerous ideas and sinful practices, and, indeed, exercise exclusion against obstinate offenders, and use the pulpit to do it. Ultimately, his own conscience, confronted by his own intimacy with scripture and through the grace of the Holy Spirit, will guide his decisions and actions. He will be under the judgment of God, but his decision stands. What he owes to his congregation is to defend and persuade them to his point of view, as often as necessary, by proving that he has *heard* them and his decisions have sound grounding in scripture.

Leadership built on discourse can be a laborious process. Yet it need not be viewed as a necessary evil, a sign of disunity or a mere by-product of a fallen world. Rather, it should be viewed as God's grace with regard to human limitations and an opportunity for redemption with regard to sin. For in this process of persuasive teaching, sick souls find invigoration. They are healed not once but daily, as individuals and as a community, so long as they allow the Word of Christ to dwell in them richly. Leadership built on discourse is, ultimately, an activity of worship and a celebration of the Triune God. When theology is conceived as celebration rather than as competition, it continually invokes generosity of spirit. We build on, more than we tear down, each other's ideas. Persuasive teaching becomes less a debate and more a collaboration. Even if different conclusions are reached, we cannot but recognise the part we have played in each other's journeys. Chrysostom, certainly, recognised the significance of the spirit of celebration in forging unity in his liturgical processions.

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[238] Robert Taft, "St. John Chrysostom, Preacher Committed to the Seriousness of Worship," in *The Serious Business of Worship: Essays in Honour of Bryan D. Spinks*, ed. Melanie C. Ross and Simon Jones (London: T&T Clark International, 2010), 13-14. This volume is in honour of Bryan Spinks, and so Taft relates Spinks's emphasis on liturgy as the epiphany of God to Chrysostom's own understanding and practice.

To conceive of persuasive teaching in the way I have described in this chapter is not to detract from the plain teaching of the Word. In fact, more than ever, the preacher must be an able teacher who knows scripture deeply and is able to communicate it both in and out of the pulpit. For persuasive teaching, as we have repeatedly emphasised, is not merely teaching people to think and reason. Rather, its aim is to encourage them to *exercise their humanity*—intellectually, emotionally, autonomously—through allowing their thoughts and judgments to be continually confronted by the Word of God.

Chapter 3: Asceticism, Patronage, and Soul Care

John Chrysostom, besides being a skilful teacher, was praised by ancient historians as a man of virtue who, as a result of his ascetic lifestyle, boldly spoke out against injustices, even if it earned him the ire of very powerful people.[1] Only Socrates diverges, reporting that Chrysostom could be overly stern, supercilious, and intemperate in speech.[2] Notwithstanding these criticisms of Chrysostom's personal character, Socrates concedes that his discourses are valuable, and that much could be derived from them for both pleasure and profit.[3]

Indeed, Chrysostom's clout as a moral theologian is well established. Various aspects of his moral philosophy continue to intrigue scholars because there is a wealth of insight to unpack. Some studies focus on the overt content of his exhortations, which can be summarised in two essential points: 1) a censure of love of wealth to the neglect of the poor; and 2) a calling for deeper commitment to the Christian faith. Digging deeper, other scholars see his exhortations as specifically challenging the moral philosophy of the Greeks, or at least critiquing cherished values in the Greco-Roman world, seeking, for instance, to transform the meaning and object of *philotimia* (love of honour) as a civic virtue, criticising asceticism without charity as *kenodoxia* (vainglory), and transforming ideas on gender and households using Christian principles.[4] Besides the what and the why, various studies in recent years have paid close attention to Chrysostom's promotion of Christian moral philosophy, exploring, for instance, his use

[1] See Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 5 (SC 341, 116-26; Meyer, *Life*, 36-38, 40); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 6, 10, 31 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 48-50, 52, 82-84; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 41, 43, 56-57); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2-3 (SC 516, 234-46; NPNF 2/2:400); Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.29 (SC 530, 456-58; NPNF 2/3:152§28).

[2] E.g., Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.4-5 (SC 505, 268-74; NPNF 2/2:139-40). The other sources also report that Chrysostom's enemies thought him a hard, morose, and arrogant man. However, they explain that this was a misconception, while Socrates does not. Sozomen, Socrates, and Theodoret were contemporaries, and would have been very young men when Chrysostom was bishop of Constantinople. Out of the three, Socrates gets some important details of Chrysostom's early life incorrect: 1) that the Basil in *De sac.* was Basil of Caesarea; 2) that Chrysostom was appointed reader by a bishop named Zeno; and 3) that he was ordained presbyter by Evagrius, the successor of Paulinus. Actually, 1) Basil was at least 15 years older than Chrysostom; 2) Chrysostom was appointed reader by Meletius; and 3) Chrysostom was ordained priest by Flavian. *Cum presb. ord.* (A. M. Malingrey, ed., SC 272, 364-419), the sermon he delivered on the day of his ordination, attests to his ordination by Flavian.

[3] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.4 (SC 505, 270-72; NPNF 2/2:140).

[4] E.g., see Hunter, introduction to *Two Treatises*, 25-66; Leyerle, "John Chrysostom on Almsgiving and the Use of Money," *Harvard Theological Review* 87, no. 1 (1994): 30-34; Paschalis Gkortsilas, "Dogs Priced at Three Obols: Reception of Cynicism in John Chrysostom," in De Wet and Mayer, *Revisioning*, 525-62; De Wet, "Old Age, Masculinity, and Martyrdom in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and the Maccabean Martyrs," *JECH* 8, no. 1 (2018): 43-67; Brown, *Body and Society*, 305-322.

of rhetoric and exemplars; the role of liturgy in forming and sustaining virtues; and, the role that pastoral care played in how he managed, staffed, and funded church ministries.[5] His demonology, particularly his views on the nature of demonic influences on the city and on the human will, has also recently garnered attention.[6]

What is lacking at present, and the gap which this chapter seeks to fill, is an analysis of how these various aspects of Chrysostom's moral philosophy combine. As I will endeavour to show, Chrysostom's views on virtue are founded upon a comprehensive worldview that takes into account the nature and destiny of human beings, as well as the problem of sin and evil. He furthermore provides insight into the significance of the church for human beings living in a corrupt world. Only by emphasising the cohesiveness of Chrysostom's moral philosophy can we fully appreciate what he means and what is implied by angelic virtue and many-sidedness, which, as I argued in chapter 1, were for him the essential characteristics of a priest. As an exercise in *aggiornamento*, I will then suggest ways that Chrysostom's moral philosophy can spur our thinking on the impact of holy living in contemporary times, particularly in terms of a revival of how we ought to think about virtue in relation to mortality, the resurrection, and rewards.

Because Chrysostom's constant praise of ascetic virtues and exemplars is a key feature of his Christian moral philosophy, it is important at the outset that we define more clearly the kind of asceticism in which he engaged. While ancient sources unanimously report that Chrysostom experienced some type of monastic living before becoming a priest in Antioch, they differ on the details. Palladius reports a six-year sojourn in the mountains: four years with an old Syrian and two years alone in a cave. While he mentions Chrysostom assisting Meletius for three years and then becoming a reader before this sojourn, he does not mention at all that Chrysostom was, at the same time, likely attending the *asketerion* of Diodore and Carterius.[7] Sozomen and Socrates do not mention any mountain experience but do talk about the *asketerion*. Both he and Socrates consider this as Chrysostom's entrance into the philosophic or

[5] Such works as Leyerle's *Theatrical*, Lai's "Christian Saint," and Allen and Mayer's "Bishop's Eyes."

[6] Samantha L. Miller, *Chrysostom's Devil: Demons, the Will, and Virtue in Patristic Soteriology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020); Dayna S. Kalleres, *City of Demons: Violence, Ritual, and Christian Power in Late Antiquity* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2015).

[7] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 106-108; Meyer, *Life*, 35).

ascetic life.[8] Theodoret, who is silent on Chrysostom's early life, does not comment on his ascetic experiences. However, he notes in passing that two bishops, Maximus of Seleucia ad Taurum and Theodore of Mopsuestia, had been companions of "the great John." These two men are noted by Sozomen and Socrates as having entered the *asketerion* with Chrysostom.[9] Finally, the *Funerary Speech* vaguely reports an ascetic experience prior to Chrysostom's baptism where he raged against the flesh and memorised scripture to the last syllable, then later notes that he was "hiding in the desert" when Meletius called him back to make him a deacon.[10] Despite the discrepancies in the sources, as Kelly has shown, a three-tier monastic experience plausibly fits into Chrysostom's timeline. That is, Chrysostom could indeed have had 1) an *asketerion* experience; 2) a probably cenobitic experience under an unidentified Syrian monk; and, finally, 3) an eremitic experience in a cave. It fits because we know that Diodore was exiled from Antioch after Chrysostom was only four years in the *asketerion* in AD 372. What was Chrysostom doing between then and early AD 381, when Meletius (who had also been exiled in AD 371 and restored in AD 378) finally ordained him a deacon? Chrysostom may have indeed had the mountain and cave experience reported by Palladius and suggested by the *Funerary Speech*. After this, he could have returned to the city to recuperate before eventually being called by Meletius.[11]

Having said that, of the two monastic experiences (i.e., the *asketerion* and the mountain), it seems the *asketerion* made the more important and lasting impact on Chrysostom. Why was this? Kelly and Sterk observe striking similarities between what we know of the *asketerion* and of the practices of the *Bnay* and *Bnat Qyama* or sons and daughters of the covenant.[12] This latter type of Syrian and Mesopotamian monasticism, as represented by Ephrem the Syrian (AD 306-373) and Aphrahat "the

[8] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 236; NPNF 2/2:399); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 264-66; NPNF 2/2:139).

[9] Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.28 (SC 530, 454-56; NPNF 2/3:151§27); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 236-37; NPNF 2/2:399); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 264-66; NPNF 2/2:139).

[10] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 6-9 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 48-52; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 41-42). Ps-Martyrius seems to be conflating two separate monastic experiences and ignoring the gap of many years between Chrysostom's baptism and his ordination to the diaconate.

[11] See Kelly's version of events in *Golden Mouth*, 24-36. Some possible references to a more dedicated but communal type of asceticism than the *asketerion* may be found in *Compunct. Dem.* (PG 47.393-410) and *Compunct. Stelech*. (PG 47.411-22). As for the cave experience, the only thing from Chrysostom's writings that I can think of to support it is his passing remark in *De sac.* 6.3.37-52 (SC 272, 312; Neville, *Priesthood*, 139) that the worst enemy of the monk in the mountain is his imagination. He may have been speaking from experience.

[12] Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 19-20; Sterk, *Renouncing*, 142-43.

Persian Sage" (fl. AD 336-345), is notable for promoting close relations between ascetics and church officials. Those who took a vow of celibacy often lived at home or in small informal groups and ministered within the church community as members of the *Qyama*. Ephrem, himself a deacon, notes that bishops in Nisibis exercised many of their pastoral duties through, or were themselves members of, the *Qyama*.[13] There are several reasons to believe that Diodore's *asketerion* operated similarly. First, Diodore himself was a presbyter at Antioch, and, together with Flavian, took charge of Meletius's congregation during the latter's exiles.[14] Second, Chrysostom's time in the *asketerion* must have coincided, or at least have overlapped, with his assistance of Meletius and his appointment as lector, since all three could only have happened after he left the school of Libanius (at about 18 years of age) and before Meletius's and Diodore's respective exiles only about four years later. In addition, if the autobiographical portion of *De sac.* is meant to be fact, Chrysostom was still living as an urban ascetic in his mother's home when he was initially considered for the priesthood. He escaped, allegedly not because he had a superior love for the contemplative life but because, at the time, he believed he was unworthy of the superior ministry of shepherding the church. Chrysostom would have far more likely been considered for the priesthood despite his young age if he had already been rendering some service to the church. Third, and as we shall see in greater detail later, Chrysostom, throughout his career, consistently tried to involve monks in service to the church and to people living in the city, showing that he found church service and asceticism to be naturally compatible. In fact, Chrysostom firmly believed that the ideal priest, without being isolated, should nevertheless exemplify ascetic virtues. He evinced this in his own life by serving the church tirelessly despite his ruined stomach and by counselling Olympias and many suffering others in letters, even when it was *he* who was undergoing the harshest exile.[15] Besides this, in separate panegyrics delivered for Diodore and Meletius, and in a panegyrical passage for Flavian incorporated in the sermon he preached during his presbyterial ordination, he

[13] Sterk, *Renouncing*, 20-22.

[14] Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 4.25 (SC 530, 294-300; § 4.22 in NPNF 2/3:126-27). Theodoret refers to Flavian and Diodore as pastors and shepherds.

[15] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 12 (SC 341, 230-32; Meyer, *Life*, 74). He sometimes forgot to eat because he was busy with ecclesiastical matters and the study of scripture. See a collection of Chrysostom's extraordinary letters in exile in *To Olympia*, trans. Ford.

exuberantly praised the asceticism of his three mentors.[16]

All this is to say that Chrysostom's observation and experience of asceticism and church service intertwined very early in his life, and he would consistently maintain their unity throughout his career. This was why he felt that the ascetic ideal should not solely be for monks or priests. The pursuit of ascetic virtues is a necessary part of every Christian's soteriological journey.

1. Angelic Virtue and the Nature and Destiny of Human Beings

As we pointed out in chapter 1, Chrysostom, in *De sac.*, argues that priests must have angelic virtue (ἀγγελικῆς ἀρετῆς) to cope with the demands of the priesthood. Then, in various places within the treatise, he illustrates how virtues associated with asceticism—like having a moderate disposition, a lack of worldly ambition, and an indifference to worldly honour—help priests sidestep moral pitfalls that could lead to their own or their congregation's destruction.[17] Without understanding what Chrysostom means by *angelic*, it is tempting to assume that he is simply using angelic virtue and ascetic virtues identically. This, however, cannot be the case, for, in the same treatise, Chrysostom says that monks, who are the primary practitioners of ascetic virtues, would not make good priests, since their perfection is maintained through isolation and many bodily disciplines.[18] Angelic virtue, therefore, must be something greater than ascetic virtues.

In this section, we seek to understand the significance of "angelic" as a descriptive term for Chrysostom's view of virtue. I contend that angelic virtue can be expressed through ascetic virtues, but that they are not quite the same thing. Angelic virtue signifies more than discipline and detachment. Chrysostom had specific ideas about the "angelic" that are tied to the nature, purpose, and destiny of human beings as put forth in scripture. A natural starting point for our investigation is his 16th and 17th homilies on the book of Genesis. There, Chrysostom discusses in detail his interpretation of the prelapsarian state of human beings, the events surrounding their

[16] Only Diodore was a true monk known to have harmed himself physically through excessive rigour (as observed, for example, by Emperor Julian in his *ep.* 55 to Photinus). See Sterk, *Renouncing*, 143. Flavian was not a monk but was also known to have pursued an ascetic life before being elevated to ecclesiastical office. In *Cum. presb. ord.* 159-99, Chrysostom praises him for exercising self-control, mastering his appetite, scorning an easy life, and embracing poverty (ibid., 153; cf. SC 272, 404-408). For Meletius, see *De s. Meletio* (PG 50.515-20; Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 39-48). For Diodore, see *Laus Diodori* (PG 52.761-66).

[17] See the discussion we had in chapter 1, pp. 38-40.

[18] *De sac.* 6.7 (SC 272, 326-30; Neville, *Priesthood*, 145-46).

Fall, the enduring consequences of their actions, and the connection of all these to God's specific plan of redemption through Jesus Christ.

1.1 Humans and Creation

In Chrysostom's thought, there is a close affinity between the angelic life and the ascetic life. Monks are especially commended for aiming to embody the angelic existence that was humanity's original condition and the condition to which they are destined to return.[19] But what exactly did Chrysostom mean by the angelic life?

In his 16th homily on Genesis, Chrysostom points out that the first humans lived "as if they were in heaven," their angelic life (ἀγγελικὴς βίος) being one free of care (ἄλυπος) and free of troubles (ἀνώδυνος).[20] They were clothed in ineffable glory, so that they had no need of material shelter and clothing, and they were immortal.[21]

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[19] Lai, "Christian Saint," 21.

[20] The exact phrase in the Greek that contains the descriptive "angelic" is καὶ τον ἀνώδυδον βίον, καὶ τὴν ἀγγελικὴν (*In Gen. hom.* 16.1 [PG 53.126; § 2 in Robert C. Hill, trans., *St. John Chrysostom. Homilies on Genesis 1-17* (Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press), 207-208]).

[21] *In Gen. hom.* 16.1 (PG 53.126; § 3 in Hill, *Genesis*, 208). Chrysostom, in multiple other places, asserts that Adam had an immortal body. For example, *In Gen. hom.* 18.2, he argues that God did not give Adam instructions about the tree of life because, being immortal, he could partake of it any time he wanted (PG 53.151; § 7 in Robert Hill, trans., *St. John Chrysostom. Homilies on Genesis 18-45* [Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press, 1990], 7-8). Also, *In 1 Cor. hom.* 17.4, to prove that having a mortal body is not a hindrance to virtue, he says of Adam, "[H]ad he a mortal body when he sinned? Surely not…." Chrysostom then points out that if Adam had already been immortal, God could not have later punished him with mortality (PG 61.144; § 5 in NPNF 1/12:99). However, in at least two instances, Chrysostom also seems to suggest that the body was not immortal in the beginning. The first instance appears immediately after the passage I just quoted. Chrysostom notes Adam was already puffed up by "the expectation of immortality alone" and that he would have been more so if he had "immortality in reality" (ibid.). In another place, he says that the soul, "endowed with a mortal body … expected greater things from the false promise of the Devil … to what extent would she not have cast herself away, had she received her body also, from the beginning, immortal" (*In 1 Cor. hom.* 7.5 [PG 61.60-61; § 9 in NPNF 1/12:38).

George Kalantzis attempts to resolve the issue by arguing that Chrysostom, like Theodore of Mopsuestia (whose position is expressed more clearly), believed God created humans with a natural though not yet punitive mortality. The potential for immortality was there from the beginning, but unrealised ("*Creatio ex Terrae*: Immortality and the Fall in Theodore, Chrysostom, and Theodoret," *SP* 67 [2013]: 404-406, esp. note 11). This, however, does not adequately explain Chrysostom's contradictory claims that Adam had an immortal *body* and also a mortal *body*. I suggest, therefore, that Kalantzis is right that Chrysostom probably did not think of Adam's body as innately immortal. However, *contra*-Kalantzis, neither was Adam's body only potentially immortal. Instead, Adam's immortality, like his glory, *was already realised*. However, his immortality was an immortality external to his nature, which was why God could take it away. God could have also extended his immortality had Adam not sinned. Thus, in the beginning, Adam was both immortal and had an expectation of immortality (since his immortality was not yet eternal and could be lost). The resurrected body, as we shall see in the course of this chapter, is the fulfilment of that expectation. It is the eternal, innately immortal body.

Although they had bodies, they were "free of any bodily needs."[22] The mention of bodies is important, as it is that which separates humans from angels. Chrysostom never delves too deeply into the nature of angels or demons. However, it is possible to identify some of his presuppositions about them based on how he describes them in relation to human beings. For example, in his treatise on virginity, he argues that angels have a superior nature to human beings. However, the practice of virginity allows human beings to surpass even angels, because angels are not troubled by the passions. The implication is that virgins perform a greater act of virtue since they overcome their natural weaknesses. Angels, Chrysostom claims, are not "a mixture of flesh and blood" and "do not pass time on earth and endure trouble from the passions." They have neither need of food nor are they tempted by a beautiful face.[23] This is not to say that angels do not have their own type of form. Chrysostom suggests that they possess some type of form by saying their nature is "transparent and brilliant."[24] The thing to note about Chrysostom's description, however, is that human beings alone naturally have the type of body that could meaningfully interact with material creation. Why is this important?

Back to his 8th homily on Genesis, Chrysostom insists that God does not have a physical form.[25] Thus, he interprets the *imago Dei*, which human beings possess, as dominion. He points out that immediately after scripture states that God created human beings in His image, it follows with God pronouncing, "Let them have control of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, and all the reptiles creeping on the earth." Also, to be more precise, following Paul, Chrysostom states *man* was made in the image of God and *woman* technically in the image of man (1 Cor. 11:7), which means even woman is subservient to man's authority. However, in later castigating the woman for listening to the serpent who should have been under *her* authority, Chrysostom clarifies that man and woman both have dominion over creation.[26]

When we consider that God has no physical form and did not give dominion over the earth to angels but to creatures that *do* have physical form, we arrive at a

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[22] *In Gen. hom.* 16.4 (PG 53.130; § 12 in Hill, *Genesis*, 215).

[23] *De virg.* 10.3 (Herbert Musurillo, ed., SC 125, 124; Sally Rieger Shore, trans., *On Virginity; Against Remarriage* [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1983], 14).

[24] Ibid. A very good, very recent summary of Chrysostom's demonology is Miller's *Devil*. Chrysostom does not speculate much on the nature of demons, preferring to discuss their role in human sin and salvation.

[25] *In Gen. hom.* 8.3 (PG 53.71-72; § 8 in Hill, *Genesis*, 109).

[26] Ibid. 8.3-4 (PG 53.72-73; § 9-10 in Hill, *Genesis*, 110-111); 16.4 (PG 53.130; § 11 in Hill, *Genesis*, 214).

significant realisation. Implicit in Chrysostom's theology is the idea that the body expresses humanity's unique ties with material creation. The point of humanity's unique composition and unique responsibility is to reduce the gap between the material world and God's transcendence.

As we discussed in chapter 2, in Chrysostom's anthropology, the body, through its senses, is the gateway through which the physical environment can spark positive or negative emotions in the soul. The threat of the passions is the threat of excessive and inappropriate emotions. In giving human beings bodies, one might say that God took a risk (though it is not a real risk, since Chrysostom's providential God knows and directs the *telos* of all things). An excess of positive emotions directed to the right object, with one's ultimate goal being love for God and love for neighbours, allows human beings to skilfully manage and fashion the world in the manner God intended. For example, Chrysostom was not unappreciative of music, and, in his discussion of the Psalms, enthuses about how "nothing so arouses the soul" to worship "as concordant melody and sacred song composed in rhythm."[27] But such a feat, as musicians and lyricists would know (and as David and other psalmists indeed exhibited), comes from a place of deep emotions. Indeed, Chrysostom's own masterful homilies, especially when he pleads with his congregations, are effective because they bleed with passion.[28] The negative side, of course, is when human passion is directed toward the wrong ends; for instance, through the staging of theatrical performances that celebrate immoral themes, thus ridiculing God by ridiculing His creation.[29] Hence also why Socrates, and, in modern times, Ivor Moody, could speak of Chrysostom, despite his asceticism, as a passionate man in both a positive way (e.g., having zeal for orthodoxy, high moral standards for clergy) but also in a negative way (e.g., having a quick temper, an acid tongue).[30]

Human intellect, which we also previously argued is a faculty of the soul and

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[27] *Exp. in ps.* 41.1 (PG 55.156; James McKinnon, trans., *Music in Early Christian Literature* [New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987], 80).

[28] See p. 191.

[29] See examples of Chrysostom's tirade against the theatre in chapter 3 of Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 42-74.

[30] Ivor Moody, "Catching Chrysostom: An Ancient Ministry for a Modern World," *Modern Believing* 43, no. 4 (October 2002): 22-23. In another example, Chrysostom, *In Rom. hom.* 13.1, asserts that desire is not sin, except "when it has run into extravagance, being not minded to keep within the laws of marriage, but spring even upon other men's wives; then the thing henceforward becomes adultery, yet not by reason of the desire, but by reason of its exorbitancy" (PG 60.508; J.B. Morris et al., trans., NPNF 1/11:427-28).

the seat of knowledge and choice, was given by God to manage the risks. Only when the soul acts on excessive and inappropriate emotions does the human being sin. The more the intellect succumbs to the passions, the cloudier its judgment becomes. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve had perfectly sound intellects. Chrysostom argues that there is no reason to assume that Adam was somehow proficient in technical knowledge (e.g., naming animals and even his own wife with foresight and prophetic gift; knowing which vegetation was suitable for food) but deficient in moral intelligence. That is to say, Adam (and also Eve) must have perfectly understood that obedience to God's injunction about the forbidden tree is good and disobedience is evil. This was why God later held them accountable.[31] To be sure, they had no *experiential* knowledge yet of sin and death, and so perhaps no *fear* of it or of the sufferings to which these give rise. But having sound intellects and living as they did in a perfect environment, there should have been no stimulus to sin. In fact, in carrying out their duties, they must have passed by the forbidden tree many times and felt no compulsion to touch it.[32] What changed?

1.2 Human and Demonic Conspiracy

In the biblical story, the peaceful existence of human beings is shattered through the machinations of the devil. Chrysostom describes the devil as a creature who "had once enjoyed a place among the powers above but had been cast down … on account of his depravity of will and excess of wickedness." Afterwards, seeing the esteem that human beings enjoyed, he was "consumed by envy."[33] The devil's envy is mentioned in Wisdom 2:24, but of exactly what he was envious is not stated. Chrysostom infers he was envious of the prelapsarian superiority of humans, arguing that Psalm 8:5, which states that human beings are made a little lower than the angels, was uttered after the Fall.[34] If the devil was an angel before his own fall, as Chrysostom's use of Psalm 8:5 suggests, then angels are clearly not immune to *all* kinds of passions. The temptations of material creation may not trouble them, but they can feel things like envy and love of honour.

More important than the devil's motive is his malevolent strategies against human beings. He demonstrates an intimate knowledge of their weakness. Using the

[31] *In Gen. hom.* 16.5-6 (PG 53.132-33; § 16-18 in Hill, *Genesis*, 218-20).
[32] Ibid. 16.3 (PG 53.129; § 10 in Hill, *Genesis*, 213).
[33] Ibid. 16.1, 12 (PG 53.126, 130; Hill, *Genesis*, 208§3, 215§4).
[34] Ibid. 16.1 (PG 53.126; § 3 in Hill, *Genesis*, 208).

serpent, a creature of flesh and blood, "like an instrument," the demonic spirit made himself seen and heard. By means of conversation he attacked the woman's intellect with lies. The devil introduced words not spoken by God ("Do not eat of any tree"), offered advice at odds with God's ("You will not truly die"), and misrepresented God's goodwill toward human beings as jealousy ("God knows on the day you eat of it you will be like him, knowing good and evil").[35] Pretending to care, he instead offered the woman a harmful drug meant to handicap her reasoning. With empty hopes he caused her to set her thoughts on goals beyond her real capabilities.[36]

The word "offer" here is important. Eve and Adam were not forced to sin.[37] Chrysostom identifies three points at which they could have thwarted the devil's plan. In the first place, the woman should not have entertained the serpent, much less discussed with it "the whole secret of the Lord's direction," and so cast pearls before swine. Chrysostom thus cautions his congregation of the evil of idly and casually exposing the divine mysteries to just anyone, paralleling his warning elsewhere of the dangers of engaging in speculative and heretical talk.[38] Secondly, the woman should not have been so greedy to equal God. This was what made her consider "the enemy of her salvation" more trustworthy than God.[39] Finally, Adam should not have acted with indifference. He should have trusted in God's law and kept it intact, instead of giving preference to his wife's improper greed. As such, man and woman subverted God's designated order: she listened to a creature supposedly under her control, and the man submitted to her.[40]

As we shall see, for Chrysostom, all subsequent human sin follows the dynamic of this first one, making sin the product of demonic malice and the wilful complicity of human beings. The devil introduced human beings to a personal acquaintance with sin through lies inclining their thoughts to question God, but *they* received his advice and partook of the forbidden fruit. While the act of eating is important, Chrysostom believes the tree itself was not. It did not actually supply knowledge but gained the

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[35] Ibid. 16.1-2, 3 (PG 53.126-27, 129; Hill, *Genesis*, 208-209§3-4, 212§9).
[36] Ibid. 16.3, 4 (PG 53.129, 130; Hill, *Genesis*, 212§9, 214§11).
[37] Ibid. 17.5 (PG 53.140; § 20-21 in Hill, *Genesis*, 232-33).
[38] Ibid. 16.2 (PG 53.127-28; §5-6 in Hill, *Genesis*, 210-11); cf. pp. 28-29 of this thesis.
[39] *In Gen. hom.* 16.3 (PG 53.129; § 10 in Hill, *Genesis*, 213).
[40] Ibid. 16.4; 17.4-5 (PG 53.130-31, 139-40; Hill, *Genesis*, 215-16§13, 230-33§17-20). In other works, Chrysostom also accuses Adam of laziness (ῥαθυμία) and a lack of temperance and vigilance (*Quod nem. laed.* 4.1-3 [SC 103, 74; quoted in Miller, "The Devil Did Not Make You Do It: Chrysostom's Refutation of Modern Deliverance Theology," in De Wet and Mayer, *Revisioning*, 627n46).

name because human transgression against God happened to concern the tree. Scripture, he observes, tends to name places from things that happen in them. In the case of the forbidden tree, when scripture says that, upon eating its fruit, the eyes of the man and woman were opened and they knew they were naked, scripture means that in that moment "knowledge of sin entered the scene, and shame as well."[41] Based on Chrysostom's earlier claim that humans could already discriminate between good and evil before the Fall, "knowledge of sin" here likely pertains to deep personal acquaintance, meaning sin was no longer just a possibility or someone else's (i.e., the devil's) idea. Humans had made it their own. With their hands they reached out and with their mouths they tasted, engaging in evil body and soul. "Shame", meanwhile, refers to an increased mental and experiential awareness of what they had and what they lost.[42]

1.3 Loss and Aim

The devil's cunning alone does not satisfactorily explain why Adam and Eve were tempted to seize equality with God. Improper greed arises from dissatisfaction, but they had everything they needed. What else could have been the problem?

Simply put, human beings did not appreciate their privileged position until they lost it. Chrysostom writes, "through their guilt they consequently divested themselves of the glory surrounding them, rendering themselves unworthy of such wonderful esteem…. they were stripped of grace from above." Instead of the confidence they previously enjoyed, "transgression … made them aware of their nakedness and clad them in unspeakable shame."[43] In addition, human beings lost their carefree life. Where God's intention had been for humans to live without pain and grief and to have no sense of bodily needs despite having bodies, the woman must now suffer painful childbearing.[44] God likewise cursed the soil specifically to impair the relaxation and tranquillity of human life, so that through great labour and unremitting pain, human beings may be reminded to keep to their limits and to recognise their own make-up,

[41] *In Gen. hom.* 16.6 (PG 53.132-33; § 17 in Hill, *Genesis*, 218-19).

[42] Ibid. 16.5 (PG 53.131-32; § 15 in Hill, *Genesis*, 217). Chrysostom believes scripture could not have been referring to physical perception since human beings were not blind to begin with. This is similar to Gen. 21:19, when God opened Hagar's eyes in the sense that He awakened her mind to the presence of a well nearby.

[43] Ibid. 16.5 (PG 53.131; § 14 in Hill, *Genesis*, 216); cf. 16.4 (PG 53.130; §12 in Hill, *Genesis*, 215).

[44] Ibid. 17.7 (PG 53.143; § 30-31 in Hill, *Genesis*, 238-39).

until (with the loss of eternal life) they revert to the dust of the earth.[45]

The consequences of Adam and Eve's sin are the reality into which their progeny are born. Douglas Edward Finn and Anthony Dupont, comparing how Chrysostom and another prominent church father, Augustine, discuss Adam in their homilies, conclude that Chrysostom saw Adam only as a bad example for human beings. Meanwhile, Augustine saw human beings as having an ontological solidarity with Adam in his fallen nature (i.e., Adam's progeny are born with a sinful nature).[46] While they are correct that Chrysostom indeed uses Adam as a negative exemplar, Chrysostom also indicates an ontological solidarity between Adam and his progeny, though not in the same way Augustine does since Chrysostom does not believe in the concept of a "fallen" nature. Rather, Adam and his descendants have an ontological solidarity in the sense that, sharing the same nature, they are prone to the same weaknesses (hence why Adam is such a useful anti-exemplar). For Chrysostom, the inherited consequences of sin (pain, mortality, grievous labour) are a constant reminder of this solidarity, since the lesson God wished to teach Adam is the same lesson He is still teaching all human beings. Indeed, Chrysostom depicts God, in setting rules and consequences, as simultaneously exercising the roles of teacher, king, and father. God is *teaching* human beings that they have a creator and craftsman who shapes them and produces all visible realities. They should neither regard these visible things as self-sufficient nor get inflated ideas about their own importance. For though God, out of His grace and generosity, wants human beings to enjoy His dominion, they must not forget that they are also under *His dominion*.[47] God exercises His authority not like an oppressive despot but as a *father* who acts out of lovingkindness. Even after the Fall, Chrysostom points out that God did not cease to love human beings but desired to extricate them gradually from their abasement and return them to their previous position of dignity.[48]

The great reversal of human destiny happens with the coming of Jesus into the world. Chrysostom writes that Christ's cross endows immortality, leads to heaven, grants freedom from sins, and restores human beings to confidence in God's sight.[49]

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[45] Ibid. 17.9 (PG 53.146-47; § 39-42 in Hill, *Genesis*, 242-45).

[46] See Douglas Finn and Anthony Dupont, "Preaching Adam in John Chrysostom and Augustine of Hippo," *VC* 73, no. 2 (2019): 190-217.

[47] *In Gen. hom.* 16.6 (PG 53.133; § 18 in Hill, *Genesis*, 219-20).

[48] Ibid. 17.1 (PG 53.134; § 2 in Hill, *Genesis*, 222).

[49] Ibid. 16.6 (PG 53.134; § 20 in Hill, *Genesis*, 220).

The concept of this great reversal is based on Romans 5:17, which states, “For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.” Commenting on this verse in another homily, Chrysostom states that the “superabundance of grace” pertains to freedom from sin and punishment, spiritual rebirth, redemption, justification, sanctification, adoption, integration to Christ’s body (commonplaces in Pauline soteriology); besides these, health, comeliness, honour, glory, dignities far transcending our *natural* state. “Christ,” Chrysostom claims, “paid more than we owe.”[50] For Chrysostom this means that although the earth is still under the effects of the curse, demons still roam about, and human beings still endure trouble from passions, Christians can and should recognise that Christ has given them power to triumph over these obstacles. But just as the first humans had to perform the act of disobedience (i.e., took and ate of the forbidden tree) before their fates were sealed and they reaped the consequence of sin (i.e., death), every human must make use of the power of the cross to enjoy its benefits. They must make righteousness their own. Quoting Galatians 5:24, which says, “Those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts,” Chrysostom enjoins, “Let us arm ourselves with the armour of the lifegiving tree and in its power let us do to death deadly passions.” He further exhorts his congregation to *put their bodies on alert* against the devil’s tyrannous activity if they wish to pass the present life serenely in “the calm haven of God’s love … and be deemed worthy to attain the good things promised to those who love Him.”[51]

In all this, we must not fail to note that the *telos* of humanity will not therefore be a mere recapitulation of the angelic life. Human beings will be entering eternal life with a maturity not previously enjoyed, which is the result of God’s teaching. Because of what they have suffered, never again will they take the angelic life for granted. Never again will they try to look for their greatest good beyond the limits set by God.

1.4 Summary and Conclusion

In this section, we demonstrated how Chrysostom understood the description “angelic” in relation to human beings. Humans are not angelic in an ontological sense, primarily because, unlike angels, they are stewards of a physical creation and must

[50] *In Rom. hom.* 10.2 (PG 60.477; NPNF 1/11:403).
[51] *In Gen. hom.* 16.6 (PG 53.134; § 20 in Hill, *Genesis*, 220-21).

have physical bodies. As embodied spirits, humans are neither naturally good nor innately inclined to evil. In their prelapsarian condition, however, they were protected from evil. God gave them immortality and put them in a perfect environment where their every need was met. He clothed them with ineffable glory, and so gave them an invulnerability to shame. This carefree life of free association with God is the *angelic life*. Human beings lost this life through sin. God withdrew His gifts but still intended to restore human beings to their former glory. Through the cross, Jesus Christ won back God's grace for the human race and made it available to willing humans, His victory being proven by His subsequent resurrection. Through God's supernatural help, Christians are thus able to progress to the angelic life. They enter it fully after death, when they go to heaven; then, on Christ's return, when they receive their resurrected bodies. In the meantime, Christians must eagerly apply themselves to the pursuit of virtue in the power of the cross. *Angelic virtue*, then, pertains to a Christian's synergistic cooperation with supernatural grace to progress in virtue despite living in an imperfect world and in a mortal body. In the next section, we explore precisely how training for angelic virtue works. What are the natural and supernatural aspects of it and what is the usefulness of such a combination, especially for church leaders?

2. The Desert, The City, and The Church

Chrysostom's soteriological views impacted his perception and depiction of the society in which he lived, the kind of virtues he found commendable, and how he believed these virtues could be successfully cultivated. In humanity's present, fallen reality, the monastic life, for Chrysostom, is the closest proximation to the angelic *life*, while, as previously noted, priests are in direst need of angelic *virtue*. Interestingly, this is because monks are generally more detached from city life than anyone, while priests are pastorally responsible for many citizens. The desert (or mountain), the city, and the church thus feature prominently in Chrysostom's articulation of his moral philosophy, both as rhetorical imageries and as real places that can have an impact on the human psyche.

2.1 The Desert and the City in Chrysostom's Monastic Treatises

Chrysostom wrote two treatises on monasticism, namely, *Comparatio regis et monachi* and *Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae*. The scholarly consensus is that, due to style, structure, and themes, these are two of his earliest surviving works,

composed prior to his ordination to the priesthood (likely when he was a layman in the case of *Comp. reg. et mon.* and when he was a deacon in the case of *Adv. opp. vit. mon.*).[52] In his high praise of monks as the ideal Christians, some scholars believe Chrysostom expressed an enthusiasm and naivete about monasticism that would later wane. This perceived change is based on: 1) a comment he later makes in *De sac.* that monks would make poor priests; 2) a comment he makes in *Compunct. Dem.* against monks who prefer the contemplative life to serving in church; 3) instances when his rhetoric aimed to subject monastics to ecclesiastical control (e.g., by sharply criticising the practice of spiritual marriage); 4) his conflict with the monk, Isaac, in Constantinople.[53]

However, what Chrysostom says and praises about monasticism in *Comp. reg. et mon.* and *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* are consistent with his later view of the monastic life and his prioritising of church authority over ascetics. First, *Comp. reg. et mon.* and *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* do not diverge from the pattern that asceticism and service are compatible. Yes, they present isolation as a significant part of the monastic life (due to the time needed to concentrate on worship and scripture), but, in both cases, Chrysostom emphasises the social relevance of the monks—not only in an abstract or distant way, as in praying for the city, but also in providing spiritual counsel through moral exhortations and encouraging the wealthy to give alms to the poor.[54] Second, as I mentioned in the introduction, Chrysostom's earliest experience of asceticism was simultaneously in service to the church, so it is likely that Chrysostom regarded monks from very early on, like all other Christians, to be subjects of the church. If the church is not mentioned in his monastic treatises, it is because the treatises are specifically addressing attacks against the monastic life. Moreover, as Sterk points out, even after Chrysostom became a priest, he repeatedly directed people's attention toward monks,

[52] For an extensive discussion, see Hunter, introduction to *Two Treatises*, 36-41. Hunter dates *Comp. reg. et mon.* to shortly after Chrysostom's monastic period, convincingly arguing that the treatise was likely a polemic against Libanius because Chrysostom borrowed five quotations from Libanius's *Apologia Socratis* and orations 12 and 13 to Julian but then used these to promote Christian monasticism. Per Hunter, Libanius's oration 12 was written in AD 363, when Chrysostom would have still been studying under him, making it unlikely that he would antagonise Libanius so openly. The next most likely date where Chrysostom had cause to write against him was in AD 379, when Libanius composed oration 24 praising Julian upon Theodosius's accession to the imperial throne. *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* is believed to be a slightly later work than *Comparatio* (perhaps written during Chrysostom's diaconate) due to its more sophisticated style and handling of themes.

[53] See Hunter, intro to *Two Treatises*, 15-16.

[54] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 3 (PG 47.389-90; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 72-73); *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 2.4 (PG 47.336; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 101-102).

calling them “beacons who give light to the entire world,” and continued to encourage his congregation in Antioch to visit monks in the nearby wilderness.[55] Moreover, Chrysostom’s criticism of the practice of spiritual marriage, wherein a male and a female ascetic would live together platonically, was not a criticism of the monastic life but of what he felt was a malpractice of it. Likewise, in Constantinople, where monasticism was even more an urban phenomenon, his conflict with Isaac was a conflict with a man reportedly antagonistic to his episcopal authority.[56] Chrysostom had friendly relations with other monks and ascetics and involved some of them in his ministries. For example, he ordained three of Olympias’s female relatives to the diaconate and taught the inmates of her monastery, numbering about 250 women.[57] He deployed monks on missions to Phoenicia.[58] And, he seemed to have worked closely with Gothic monks to reach out to the Gothic Christian communities.[59]

Despite being early works, the central themes of *Comp. reg. et mon.* and *Adv. opp. vit. mon.*, expounding the role of the monastic life in the pursuit of virtue, therefore deserve attention, not only as Chrysostom’s sentiments before he became a priest but also as ideas he carried into his mature reflections when he had more responsibility over guiding the moral life of the church. That is to say, if we want to know why Chrysostom highly prized ascetic virtues and encouraged his congregation to do the same, we have to understand why he loved the monastic life. What attracted Chrysostom to it?

While *Comp. reg. et mon.* is a more general exhortation to imitate the monk’s simplicity and humility (as opposed to the more often admired ostentatious display of one’s wealth and power),[60] and *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* more specifically addresses

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[55] *In Matt. hom.* 72.4 (PG 58.672; trans. Kelly in *Golden Mouth*, 85 and quoted in Sterk, *Renouncing*, 152). Sterk also cites *In Matt. hom.* 68.4 (PG 58.644-46) and 69.4 (PG 58.653-54); *Inan. glor. et ed. lib.* 78 (A. M. Malingrey, ed., SC 188, 180.931-32).

[56] Unfortunately, ancient sources do not tell us much about Isaac other than that Chrysostom had disputes with him because he was “a street idler, a guide of false monks who wandered about saying bad things about the bishop” (Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 6 [SC 341, 126-28; Meyer, *Life*, 41]; cf. Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.9 [SC 516, 276; NPNF 2/2:405]). Mayer points out that, based on *Vita Isaaci* (an admittedly late work—sixth or seventh century), Isaac had considerable status, attracting the patronage of two men of senatorial rank, Victor and Saturninus, and other prominent members of the imperial administration (“Poverty and Generosity,” 156-57). His allegedly disrespectful attitude and independence may explain the conflict with Chrysostom.

[57] *Vit. Olymp.* (SC 13bis, 420; § 7 in Elizabeth A. Clark, trans., *Jerome, Chrysostom, and Friends: Essays and Translations* [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1979], 131-32).

[58] Thdt., *Hist. eccl.*, 5.30 (SC 530, 458-60; NPNF 2/3:152§29).

[59] Stanfill, “Embracing, 183-86.

[60] This is the opening argument of *Comp. reg. et mon.* 1 (PG 47.387; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 69).

concerns of pagan and Christian parents incensed about the recruitment of young people into the monastic life,[61] Chrysostom builds his arguments on identical premises. In Chrysostom's diagnosis, the problem did not lie with the monks, who had chosen that which was "beneficial and truly good,"[62] but with those who lodged complaints, since they judged based on inferior values (i.e., values contrary to God's will).[63]

Chrysostom, as many scholars have noted, greatly disdained elements of city life. As a pastor, he was concerned that city-living forced activities and offered opportunities that distracted Christians from utter devotion to God and caused them to live immoral lives. Across homilies and treatises, he objects to theatres, baths, and hippodromes for luring worshippers away, as well as, in the case of the theatre's racy themes and display, inciting lust and adulterous thoughts in its spectators. He lambasts the celebration of *Kalends* and of many weddings for encouraging drunkenness and the singing of lewd songs.[64] But it was not only special occasions and entertainment venues that posed a problem. To provide for one's family, one had to conduct business in the marketplace, a place which Chrysostom associated with prostitutes selling their "wares" and with wealthy people parading their status through pompous retinues of eunuchs and slaves while the poor "formed in their pathetic misery an antispectacle."[65] Chrysostom also solemnly laments how, in the city, young males fell prey to pederastic practices while their parents bore it in silence,[66] and men

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[61] Chrysostom essentially presents their complaint as follows: "persons who are free, well-born and able to live in luxury [are] being led to this harsh life" (*Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 1.2 [PG 47.320-21; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 79-80]).

[62] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 1 (PG 47.387; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 69).

[63] Chrysostom contrasts the "goods of philosophy," which he identifies with the fear of God versus "the apparent benefits of power and glory in this life," which he identifies with the passions (*Comp. reg. et mon.* 1 [PG 47.388; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 70]); Monks enjoy the greatest goods (*Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 2.3 [PG 47.334; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 99]).

[64] See Kalleres, *Demons*, 57, 60-64.

[65] Leyerle, "Almsgiving," 30-34.

[66] *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 3.8 (PG 47.360-63; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 139-43). Hunter thinks that the pederastic practice Chrysostom is referring to is the "vice intimately associated with Greek *paideia*," suggesting (though Hunter does not explicitly say) teachers who preyed on their students. However, there is good reason to believe Chrysostom is here referring to other powerful male acquaintances and not primarily teachers and not in relation to education. In this instance, the only fault Chrysostom lays on "law courts or laws or pedagogues or parents or attendants or teachers" was that they failed to protect their young men, since they were indifferent to the needs of their charges or were easily bribed or fooled or had "fear [of] the power of the unchaste" (ibid. [Hunter, *Two Treatises*,140]). This distinction is important to mention since Chrysostom's own teacher, Libanius, was against pederasty. Notably, in *Or.* 53.6-8 (Foerster, *Libanii Opera*, 4:57-58; Raffaella Cribiore, trans., *Between City and School: Selected Orations of Libanius* [Liverpool, UK: Liverpool University Press, 2015], 105-107), he spoke against fathers who brought their sons to Olympic banquets in Daphne because older males used this venue to initiate contact with young boys. They used intimate meal conversations "to make requests and great promises, to convince, bind with oaths," thereby laying the foundation that would later lead to immoral relationships. Libanius noted that on these

and women wishing to aid themselves in business ventures or to cure themselves from illnesses faced constant temptation to turn to pagan magic and Jewish rituals for help.[67]

For all these reasons, Chrysostom viewed living in the city as a kind of entrapment into a hateful and burdensome way of life, where one is tempted or forced to do something abominable to one's conscience (even if pleasurable at first) in order to succeed and survive. Indeed, for Chrysostom, to live in the city is to be caught in the midst of the devil's troops.[68] While Chrysostom's rhetoric may be exaggerated, and calculated to produce a reaction from his audience, I believe he could not have been so committed to it if he had not been truly sensitive to the negative impact of civilisation on Christian morality. It is difficult to determine if this sensitivity was innate—if it led to his espousal of ascetic Christian theology, or, alternatively, if ascetic theology made him more critical of his environment. However, he clearly wanted to temper his audience's enthusiasm for aspects of the city that put human pleasure, opinion, ingenuity, and achievement above God. Nowhere is this more evident than in his arguments for virginity, one of the main features of monasticism. Peter Brown correctly observes that Chrysostom intended for virginity to pose a challenge to civic loyalty. He essentially taught people that "they had a more sacred duty than contributing to the continued glory of Antioch by marrying."[69] Indeed, Chrysostom addressed concerns against virginity—that it threatened the existence of the human race, and so of cities, households, cultivated fields, crafts, animals, plants, and the "security and good order of this world"—by claiming that paradise could be had without marriage. In the beginning, the woman was first man's helper before she was his wife. They lived as if in heaven and enjoyed God's company.[70] Chrysostom's view of the

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occasions, the child was isolated from "the pedagogue, the attendant, and the servants," who were not allowed entrance, to be preyed upon by drinking men. The kind of pederasty Chrysostom talks about also sounds similar to Libanius's description of a scandal that happened in his school, where one of his students (a son of a certain Silvanus) prostituted himself and acted as a go-between for men in search of youthful lovers from amongst Libanius's students. Libanius blamed the father for not correcting his son's misdeeds, though he also conceded people would think he (Libanius) was at fault since he was the teacher (and should have known about it and put a stop to it) (*Or.* 38.8-10 [Foerster, *Libanii Opera*, 3:256-57; Cribiore, trans., *Between City*, 239-41]). This demonstrates an example of Chrysostom's observation that, often, neither fathers nor teachers could protect these youths.

[67] See Kalleres, *Demons*, 67-73.

[68] *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 3.6 (PG 47.357-59; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 135-37). This is especially true of children, who were often being directed by their parents toward imperial ambitions instead of being taught virtue. Kalleres's study, which we have referred to a number of times in this section, emphasises the diabolising rhetoric Chrysostom uses against these practices (see *Demons*, 25-112).

[69] Brown, *Body and Society*, 306-307.

[70] *De virg.* 14.1, 3-4 (SC 125, 136-38, 140; Shore, *Virginity*, 19-21).

imperfection of contemporary society rests on the premise that all its progress has been achieved as a result of God's "concession" to human weakness, since marriage, cities, crafts, houses, and clothes arose only after the Fall. The lack of these did not hinder their happy life. The thing that destroyed their happiness, and their virginity, was disobedience.[71] Thus Chrysostom challenges Christians to stop worrying about descendants as the pagans do. They are supposed to be believers in the resurrection who are anyway "hastening to depart to another place."[72]

If city life is an entrapment, then there are only two ways to be free: either to flee from it or to change it. In *Adv. opp. vit. mon.*, Chrysostom advocates a principle of flight for reform. But this is in the context of helping parents decide whether to send their children to train first in oratory or in Christian philosophy. Chrysostom concedes that training children in oratory is important. It is a skill useful for succeeding in the city, if only it were paired with Christian philosophy and not Hellenistic values. If urban success could be had without sacrificing Christian values, he writes, "I would not praise those who urge [the children] to take flight. Rather, I would turn them away like common enemies of society, since by hiding the lamps and leading the saviors away from the city into the desert they deprive of the greatest goods those who dwell therein."[73] Since this was impossible, for lack of willing and able teachers, he prioritises the desert over the schoolroom as the better choice.[74] Even so, Chrysostom does not promote the permanent abandonment of the city. He claims to long for "the day when the cities would be free enough from tyranny for city-dwellers not to have to flee to the mountains, and for desert-dwellers to return to their native cities."[75]

Either way, the monastic ideal provides the picture of the utopic end goal to which one must flee or for which one must strive. Indeed, in contrast to the city, Chrysostom describes the mountain or desert as the monk's heaven,[76] a place blossoming "with abundant fruit of philosophy,"[77] where one "may flee evil and choose virtue."[78] Chrysostom finds a precedent for such a flight, and also for the harsh yet

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[71] Ibid. 14.5-15.2 (SC 125, 140-46; Shore, *Virginity*, 21-23).
[72] *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 3.16 (PG 47.376-77; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 162).
[73] Ibid. 3.11 (PG 47.366-67; Hunter, *Two Treatises*,148).
[74] Ibid. 3.13 (PG 47.371; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 155).
[75] Ibid. 1.7-8 (PG 47.328-332; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 90-92).
[76] In the monasteries, Chrysostom claims, monks live in tranquillity "observing the shipwrecks of others, as if from heaven" (ibid. 3.11 [PG 47.366; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 147]).
[77] Ibid. 3.7 (PG 47.359; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 90).
[78] Ibid. 3.15 (PG 47.375-76; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 161). Not, Chrysostom says, just to put on sackcloth, wear a collar, lie among ashes.

satisfying nature of monastic training, in scripture: God took the Hebrews to the desert to remove from them the old habit of vices they learned in Egypt. The desert was their monastery, where God moulded their souls with both harsh and gentle healing.[79] The angelic life, so central to Chrysostom's soteriology, is given present and bodily reality in the monk's flight from the city. Away from the city, the monk is able to enjoy the company of God, saints, and angels through the uninterrupted study of scripture, worship, and prayers.[80] Lai correctly emphasises that, for Chrysostom, the monk's ascetic struggle is motivated by more than a wish for simplicity and dependence. The monk learns to take great *pleasure* in God's provision.[81] As the virtues of simplicity and contentment become rooted in monks, and as their favour with God increases, they become "a profit shared by father, mother, home, city and nation," able to "heal people suffering with incurable diseases" and able to serve as benefactor, patron, and saviour to all, living "like angels among people on earth."[82]

By sharply contrasting desert and city and heaven and earth, Chrysostom is thus able to underline that Christian salvation offers the possibility of breaking free from the human and demonic manipulations of the created world. This ideal carries into Chrysostom's view of the church.

2.2 The Church and the Household in Chrysostom's Monastic Ideal

In reality, few in Chrysostom's time could have flown to the mountains, especially for long enough to train their bodies and permanently change their habits.[83] After all, heads of households had to work to provide for their families. These, in turn, needed the marital companionship and partnership of their wives in the management of the home. The alms of these households helped with the upkeep of the church and its ministries to the disadvantaged. Virgins, widows, and monks were the workforce of the church. If everybody left, where would the reformation of the city begin? The daily lives of most Christians were therefore centred around the church (or, at least, Chrysostom hoped they would be). It was the church that received people, whatever their station in life and however multifaceted their problems. It was the church that

[79] Ibid. 3.6 (PG 47.358; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 136).
[80] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 2 (PG 47.388-89; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 71-72).
[81] Lai, "Christian Saint," 22.
[82] *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 3.18 (PG 47.379-81; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 166-68).
[83] Chrysostom concedes this could take decades, which is why it is a good idea to train young people—if need be, away from parents in whom the values of the world are already entrenched (ibid. 3.18 [PG 47.380; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 167]).

trained them, through teaching and liturgy, in the path of Christian virtue.

Though training in the church was less intense in terms of time and austerity than training in the monastery, its aim was also to reform habits. In chapter 2, we explored the effect of church attendance and preaching on the human soul through sensory experience from the angle of persuasion. Directing a person's will and desire toward God is just the first stage, however. Coming after this is the reformation of habits. Rebecca Falcasantos, studying Chrysostom's *De inani gloria et de educandis liberis*, concludes that he shared with Stoic and middle Platonic psychology an anthropological belief in the soul's compulsion to copy. More than by even sensory experience, the soul is open to being shaped by μίμησις and performative acts. It is based on this anthropological assumption that children undergoing oratorical training were first instructed to mimic the technique of classical authors. On the same assumption, Chrysostom was vehemently against performative culture that imparted bad morals, such as the theatre, but highly encouraged participation in "communal religious rituals," such as that which unfolded in the celebration of a martyr's festival or in a liturgical procession, which "called to the spectator and pulled him into their drama."[84] To add to Falcasantos's observation, Chrysostom saw and pointed out to his audience the link between ritual acts and ascetic virtues, namely by emphasising the participants' efforts—choosing to be there, mixing in with crowds of people, soldiering up under the heat of the sun and the long walk—all for one's devotion to God and the martyrs. Such liturgical acts became even more meaningful since Chrysostom often finished his sermons with exhortations on overcoming the passions.

Besides dealing with the human problem, the church also equipped the Christian to deal with the demonic dimension of sin. As noted in the previous section, for Chrysostom, participation in anti-Christian activity was participation in demonic activity. Monks could vanquish demons,[85] but the church also provided training for *all* Christians to withstand demonic power in the public sphere. Dayna Kalleres has studied this process in depth from a collection of Chrysostom's works, including his baptismal instructions and early homilies in Antioch. Included in the church's provisions are pre-baptismal exorcism rites, the sign of the cross, the seal of baptism,

[84] Rebecca Falcasantos, "A School for the Soul: John Chrysostom on Mimēsis and the Force of Ritual Habit," in *The Garb of Being: Embodiment and the Pursuit of Holiness in Late Ancient Christianity*, ed. Georgia Frank et al. (New York: Fordham University Press, 2020), 101-17.

[85] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 2, 4 (PG 47.389, 390-91; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 71, 73-74).

the Creed, and communal prayers that can cast out demons. Besides turning demons away, these rituals, paired with instruction, were done and taught to cleanse the minds of the believers (especially those who were still baptisands) from demonic corruptions acquired through their participation in immoral civic activities, again, like the theatres and hippodromes.[86]

The integration of the monastic ideal with the ecclesial reality notably carries into Chrysostom's views on the household. In *In Eph. hom.* 20, Chrysostom famously calls the household a "little church," [87] but the way he depicts this "church", both in this homily and in his other works, is remarkably ascetic. For example, as Brown observes, Chrysostom tasks the husband to mould "wife and children to the same inward-looking austerity as himself" (*In Matt. hom.* 89.4). This includes cutting the wife off from "the alluring 'vainglory' of civic life" (*In Eph. hom.* 20.8-9), and suggesting, as in Jewish practice, to put a box beside the marriage bed where money saved on public extravagance can be collected for the poor instead (*In 1 Cor. hom.* 43).[88] Vigen Guroian, meanwhile, correctly notes that Chrysostom wanted familial ties to be characterised by "kenotic and agapeic love," with the husband's love for and headship over his wife and children being as sacrificial as Christ's for the church, and the wife's obedience to her husband given as part of her service to the Lord.[89] Putting one party in charge over another may not seem very kenotic, but seeing as the husband has to rule by example, he has to be the first to make the sacrifice of keeping away from the corrupting influences of the city, a challenge that, if he will not do for his own good, he must do for his family.[90] When the husband learns moderation, then he can direct his children toward virtue, instead of, as Chrysostom laments elsewhere, "overshadow[ing] [his] children's souls" by building splendid houses, buying very expensive fields, and surrounding them in all kinds of luxury. [91] And much like

[86] See Kalleres, *Demons*, 77-79.

[87] *In Eph. hom.* 20.6 (PG 62.143; Catherine [*sic*] P. Roth and David Anderson, trans., *St. John Chrysostom. On Marriage and Family Life* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1986], 57).

[88] Brown, *Body and Society*, 312-313.

[89] Vigen Guroian, "Family and Christian Virtue in a Post-Christendom World: Reflections on the Ecclesial Vision of John Chrysostom," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (1991): 339-41. Another excellent study of Chrysostom's views on the relation of men and women is David Ford's *Women and Men in the Early Church: The Full Views of St. John Chrysostom* (South Canaan, PA: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1996). His conclusions—that Chrysostom was not misogynistic; that he saw women as capable of attaining to the same virtue as men; that women are valuable and equal members of households and churches; that male headship is nonetheless part of the proper expression of genders—are consistent with this thesis's findings.

[90] See *In Eph. hom.* 20.6-8 (PG 62.143-50; Roth and Anderson, *Marriage*, 58-64).

[91] *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 3.7 (PG 47.360; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 139).

Chrysostom's views on both the church and the monastery, the formation of virtue in the household has an important social dimension. A household of virtue will be a blessing to the community, as indeed Abraham's household was. As Demetrios Tonias puts it, Chrysostom saw Abraham's tent as "a beehive of Christian philanthropic activity and Christian virtue." Abraham, an example for the wealthiest members of Chrysostom's Christian community, was "a father to all of his servants and a friend of the poor.… a dedicated husband and devoted servant of God."[92]

2.3 Summary and Conclusion:

The angelic life is a reminder of the supernatural protection human beings enjoyed in their prelapsarian state. With the loss of their perfect environment, they became prone to their natural weaknesses and to the influence of demons. Rejecting God's rule, they unwittingly created a society that is ironically more restrictive, where they are slaves to demons and to their own passions.

Chrysostom depicts the Christian path of virtue as a life that is freer than the one which human beings have created for themselves. It is a path that is unapologetically ascetic. Thus, Chrysostom emphasises the monk's lack of anxiety as a lack of anxiety about a world run on demonic and worldly principles. To be rooted in the Word of God, to know right and wrong as God determines, to learn to live without the excesses of human civilisation—all these are remonstrations against human pride and folly. Chrysostom's teaching on virtue is therefore an offer of emancipation to those whose consciences are stirred against entrenched civic structures. Chrysostom was both raising awareness of problems in society (for those that cared only about their own status but overlooked the suffering of others) and contending that these problems could not be resolved by human ingenuity alone (for those that disregarded God).

In claiming that civilisation is God's concession to human sin, Chrysostom is not, however, advocating an abandonment of the world. God's dominion is

[92] Tonias, "What Does America Have to Do with Antioch?: John Chrysostom and the Contemporary Relevance of Patristics," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 43, no. 4 (October 2016): 18. Guroian helpfully identifies three other instances where Chrysostom compares the household to a church: *In Act. hom.* 45, where he exhorts his congregation to surpass the church in liberality by setting aside a room into which Christ may come; *In Act. hom.* 26 where he calls the house a church, since, in Matt. 18:20, Christ promised to be in the midst of two or three; and *In 1 Cor. hom.* 44, where he cites Aquila and Priscilla as an example of a couple who made their household into a church due to their hospitality ("Family," 332-34).

incontestable, so it is desirable for Christians to live out the angelic life so far as is possible in the midst of civilisation. To do this, they require supernatural help, which they have been given through Christ. Understanding the significance of environment, Chrysostom concretises the concept of Christian salvation or supernatural help in terms of domains. His views on the desert/mountain, the church, the household, and the body emphasise dissociation, guardedness, discipline, and control. The training provided by the monastic life and the church, a training involving the transformation of one's thinking and habits, is training in angelic virtue. Through scripture and liturgy, Christians are being made aware of the supernatural protection provided by God through Christ and how they may make use of this in everyday life. In such a schema, the line between the spheres of the natural and the supernatural is not clear cut. Nonetheless, it is possible to determine how they can work together. Certainly, the intellect, as the seat of the will, is an integral part of a human being's natural ability, as we have also argued in chapter 2.[93] It is the intellect that makes choices, that directs the body, regardless of its inclinations, to undergo the training offered by the church—for instance, to choose to pray when one would rather sleep; to listen to the homily when one would rather go to the games. Likewise, God's help is at once mysterious and intangible and yet also expressed through the natural. For instance, there is forgiveness of sin in the sacrament of bread and wine; there is the adoption of sons in the community of believers; there is heaven in the church. So, then, when we talk of synergistic cooperation with God's grace, there must be a conscious effort to interact with the natural whilst recognising the presence and the power of the supernatural. For, of course, without Christ's sacrifice, bread is just bread, wine is just wine, the church is just a building, Christians have not got the Holy Spirit, and there is no resurrection. God's natural gifts are, of course, wonderful. But unless His supernatural gifts are real and recognised as real, human beings cannot attain to the angelic life.

The concept of angelic virtue as synergistic cooperation with God's grace takes on an even greater significance for the priest. In the narrative of *De sac.*, Chrysostom's main argument for fleeing the priesthood and tricking his friend into it is based on the belief that he had a "puny and feeble" soul,[94] whereas Basil had an upright character

[93] See pp. 57-61.
[94] *De sac.* 3.12.1-38 (SC 272, 342-44; § 8 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 77).

and a soul teeming with love.[95] Yet, later, he encourages Basil in the task by assuring him that God's grace will endow him with the power he needs—as God did for Daniel's friends while they were in the furnace.[96] They were both feeling inadequate, yet Chrysostom seemingly gives Basil advice that he does not himself follow. If God will help Basil, why would He not help Chrysostom? Understanding Chrysostom's view of angelic virtue gives us the answer. It was not that he doubted the availability of God's grace for him, but he felt he was not sufficiently trained in it to be qualified for the priesthood. Unlike monks, the public nature of the priest's ministry meant he could not isolate himself from the problems and temptations presented by living in the city and pastoring people of different dispositions. Not that Chrysostom denigrated the monk's training, but so different are the environments of the priest and the monk that the kind of moral fortitude required of the priest must be developed in the midst of ministry, not away from it. If Chrysostom was still in the *asketerion* at the time described, perhaps he had *planned* to stay in the role of lector a little longer, to then join a monastic community, and then to take up the office of a deacon first. He could thus train himself in angelic virtue in the monastery and the church before eventually taking on the role of priest.

3. Christians as Practitioners of Ascetic Ideals

As priest, Chrysostom believed it his duty not only to set an example of angelic virtue but to direct his congregations' attention to how this is lived out. Because angelic virtue is synergistic, the connection must be made explicit between the supernatural grace God provides and how the Christian can use this to transform his thinking and his actions, thereby benefitting himself and the people around him. In particular, Chrysostom emphasises the life-changing power of Christ over death, shame, and destitution, the three threats that sin introduced into the world and with which his late antique audience especially struggled.

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[95] Ibid. 2.6 (SC 272, 124-28; § 5-6 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 63-64). Chrysostom does not go into depth about Basil's character and wisdom because Basil stops him, but it is heavily implied that Basil's ability to love sacrificially is the greatest evidence of his upright character. In addition, Chrysostom says he would not have tricked Basil into the priesthood if he did not believe Basil had the qualities required of a priest, and, as we have seen, piety is one of Chrysostom's greatest requirements.

[96] Ibid. 3.10 (SC 272, 182; § 14 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 86).

3.1 Mortality, Resurrection, and Overcoming Nature

Central to the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the promise of a future resurrection for his followers. To be sure, the resurrection is Christianity's answer to the ever-present threat of mortality, but it served another purpose, too. As previously noted, Chrysostom believed that it was fear of this mortality that caused human beings to act contrary to their own good and the good of their neighbour: for instance, by being more anxious about the perpetuation of the human race than about one's relationship with God; by desperately seeking physical and material wellbeing outside the church even if it meant dabbling with "demonic" forces; by loving temporal wealth and pleasure above eternal goods. Chrysostom sought to correct this dissonance in his congregation's beliefs and actions by nuancing how mortality and natural weaknesses resulting from the passions relate to each other in view of Christ's victory over death and His promise of eternal life.

The effect of the resurrection on one's struggle against the passions is especially evident in the life of the monk. By definition, a monk is "[a] person who has given himself to God and who has chosen the solitary life."[97] This solitary life involves the call to renounce marriage, a calling shared by widows and virgins who have made an oath of virginity. Chrysostom believes that virginity is one characteristic of human *perfection*, based on Jesus's remark in Matthew 22:30 that, in the resurrection, human beings will be like angels, who neither marry nor are given in marriage. However, in Matthew 19:11, Jesus, responding to his disciples' comment that it is better not to marry (because of the strict bonds of marriage), pronounces, "Let him accept this teaching who can." This indicates to Chrysostom that virginity in the present life is a choice.[98] Still, Chrysostom believes that those who are able should pursue virginity, his point being that if perfection (i.e., virginity) is attainable, concession (i.e., marriage) is not preferable. He extends this principle to other things as well, asserting that Christians should not prefer wealth to voluntary poverty, luxury to moderation, or revenge to the noble endurance of injustice.[99] The extension of this principle is

[97] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 1 (PG 47.388; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 70).

[98] *De virg.* 2.2 (SC 125, 98-100; Shore, *Virginity*, 4-5). Chrysostom does not wish to deny that marriage is good, for if marriage is not good, nothing produced through marriage, such as human beings, is good. But marriage is only acceptable if an oath of virginity has not yet been made (ibid. 38.2 [SC 125, 226; Shore, *Virginity*, 56-57]). The inviolability of the virgin pledge comes from the apostle Paul, who condemned women who chose widowhood but did not abide by their decision (ibid. 38.3 [SC 125, 226; Shore, *Virginity*, 57]).

[99] Ibid. 15.2 (SC 125, 146; Shore, *Virginity*, 23).

important to note because, for Chrysostom, virginity is only a demonstration of a greater possibility for Christians to supernaturally resist fleshly cares. In a colourful passage, Chrysostom describes the difference between the married and the virgins in terms of flight (as with that of birds):

> Those who are more plodding in nature and are in a deep sleep still haunt the nest and are attached to worldly things. The truly noble, the lovers of light, however, quit the nest with great ease and fly high in the air and skim the heavens. Everything is left behind … marriage, money, cares and all else that customarily drags us down to earth.[100]

Chrysostom invites his readers to imagine a city where citizens abided by the philosophy of the monks. It would be angelic—in the sense that, among angels, there is no inequality where only some enjoy prosperity while others experience misery. Among monks, he argues, there is: 1) a common possession of material needs (i.e., food, house, clothing) and of the true wealth of philosophy and of sorrows and burdens; 2) a common status, where all are nobles yet servants yet free; and 3) a common vision, where all have the same pleasure, desire, and hope—a "deep exact agreement" leading to perfect order and harmony.[101]

It is difficult to say how seriously Chrysostom thought such an ideal to be achievable. Seeking to persuade people that monks were no enemies of humanity, he may simply have succumbed to the temptation to overclaim. In fact it may be unfair to claim, on the one hand, that monks had an easier life due to not being married,[102] then proffer hope to all people (including the married) that they can aspire to the virtue of monks and the society that such virtue can create. Faint though the hope may be, what is clear is that Chrysostom believed a truly fair and equal world cannot be had if there is no supernatural help to overcome one's natural weakness toward material things. At the same time, Chrysostom refuses to minimise the role of human choice and effort. In fact, although Paul only calls virginity a divine gift, Chrysostom insists it

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[100] Ibid. 17.1-2 (SC 125, 150; Shore, *Virginity*, 24-25).

[101] *Adv. opp. vit. mon.* 3.11 (PG 47.366; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 147-48).

[102] *De virg.* 45.1 (SC 125, 254-56; Shore, *Virginity*, 69). Chrysostom even suggests that although marriage is permissible, the hardships that go along with it might not even be worth it. There is no reward for marriage. What will be rewarded is victory against the devil and over evil. It is possible perhaps to achieve this through marriage, but if God's *telos* for human beings is one "free of all human concerns," virginity and asceticism—not marriage and luxurious living—is the path most conducive.

doubles as a gift and a "virtuous act." Paul was being modest by ascribing the ability to be continent only to God's grace. In fact, like the gifts of administration, almsgiving, and charity in Romans 12:7-8, continence is a gift that requires effort on the part of the beneficiary. Otherwise, Christ would not have said of continence: "Let him accept this teaching who can" (Matt. 19:12). Moreover, as a virtue, it is different from purely divine gifts like miracle-working, which, having nothing to do with living an upright life, received neither praise nor punishment from Christ. Thus, Christ said, "Do not rejoice … that the devils are subject to you" (Lk. 10:20). But He called the compassionate and humble blessed (Matt. 5:5, 7).[103]

More so than monks, martyrs are the quintessential overcomers of nature.[104] In martyrdom, sacrificial death for one's faith or to keep oneself from sin demonstrates ultimate triumph over the hostile coalition of Satanic and worldly powers, since death is the worst thing they can inflict on the Christian. In his homily on the martyr, Berenike, who drowned herself and her willing daughters to escape sexual defilement,[105] Chrysostom stresses that such bravery was possible because of the resurrection. Prior to the resurrection, even heroes of faith like Abraham (Gen. 12:11, 12-13), Jacob (Gen. 32:11), and Elijah (2 Kngs. 19:2,3) feared death. But Paul longed for death and could rejoice even when he was "being poured out as a libation" for the sake of the believers (Phil. 1:23; 2:17-18).[106] Martyrs scorn other natural limitations besides death, namely, age and gender. In *De Macabeis hom.* 1, Chrysostom marvels at how God brought into the contest between humans and demons the unlikeliest of people: immature youths, an old man, and an elderly woman.[107] In the arena of virtue, the qualification is not strength of body but of faith. The martyrs had trained their thoughts to desire piety and had souls that were in prime condition. But more importantly, the grace that sustained them was powerful.[108] Chrysostom particularly praises female martyrs, saying, "the weaker the vessel, the greater the grace … the more famous the

[103] Ibid. 36.1-3 (SC 125, 212-16; Shore, *Virginity*, 51-53).

[104] Chrysostom claims martyrs are teachers for all, even for the monks whom he paints as the Christian ideal (*De Macab. hom.* 2.2 [PG 50.626; § 6 Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 152-53]).

[105] *De Bern. et Prosd.* (PG 50.629-40; Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, esp. 172-73, 175).

[106] Ibid. 1-3 (PG 50.629-633; § 1-9 in Mayer, *Cult*, 158-65).

[107] *De Macab. hom.* 1.1 (PG 50.618-19; § 2 in Mayer, *Cult*, 138). Chrysostom considers the Maccabean martyrs, like the Hebrew patriarchs, to be believers who lived prior to Christ's resurrection. Faced with the contradiction that these people bravely faced martyrdom even without hope of the resurrection, Chrysostom could only claim that they presaged the even greater triumph of believers who would later have that hope.

[108] Ibid. 1.1-2 (PG 50.619; § 3 in Mayer, *Cult*,138-39).

victory."[109] When praising the mother of the Maccabean martyrs, therefore, he emphasises how her zeal for piety should have been weakened by her bond to her children, yet she scorned the tyranny of nature by raising pious children who became martyrs. She demonstrated that motherhood's defining feature is not giving birth (which is a matter of nature) but raising a child (which is a matter of choice).[110] Again, this is something she could not have done without God's supernatural intervention: whereas the devil introduced death to destroy people and cut them off from the hope of salvation, Christ took death and converted it and through it is leading His people back up to heaven.[111] In addition, Chrysostom enjoys pointing out the irony that woman, the devil's own ancient weapon, has become the cause of his defeat. Despite being naturally weak and fragile vessels, female martyrs demonstrated themselves to be unassailable weapons challenging death.[112] It must be emphasised that it was not just in dying for the faith that Chrysostom found women capable—it was in all manner of virtue. He specifically says, for instance, that women have the capacity not just for martyrdom "but wherever bold speech is required."[113] And he exhorted Olympias to endure her difficulties with "manly courage."[114]

Notwithstanding his exalted view of martyrs, Chrysostom interestingly argues that one need not die a martyr to be considered a martyr.[115] Martyrdom is a disposition, a willingness to die to sin or to die literally if need be. Hence, the apostle Paul could make the claim, "I die every day" (1 Cor. 15:31), and Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac was counted by God as him not having spared his son although Isaac did not

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[109] *De Dros.* 3 (PG 50.687; § 7 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 199).

[110] *De Macab. hom.* 1.3 (PG 50.621; § 6 in Mayer, *Cult*, 140-42).

[111] *De sanct. mart*. 1 (PG 50.707; Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 219-20). See also *In Romanum* 3.35-39 (Nathalie Rambault and Pauline Allen, eds., SC 595, 236; § 9 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 234): the devil "expelled humankind from Paradise, and God opened up heaven to them. He drove them from governing on earth, and God gave them the kingdom of heaven, and set [their] nature firmly on the royal throne."

[112] *De Bern. et Prosd.* 1 (PG 50.629-30; Mayer, *Cult*, 158). See also *De Dros.* 3 (PG 50.688; § 7 in Mayer, *Cult*, 199): "The first woman sinned and died; this one died, so that she wouldn't sin. The first trampled at that time on God's laws, puffed up by expectation raised by an empty promise; the second despised even the present life, so that she wouldn't deny upon oath her faith in her patron."

[113] *In Barlaam* 4.59-62 (SC 595, 324; § 11 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 187).

[114] *Ep. ad Olymp.* 3.1a (A. M. Malingrey, ed., SC 13bis, 114; Ford, *To Olympia*, 35); cf. *De Bern. et Prosd.* 4 (PG 50.635; §.11 Mayer, *Cult*, 166), where the virtue of female martyrs is associated with displaying "a male mind."

[115] As noted by Mayer, two people whom he hailed as martyrs for their asceticism though they died naturally were Meletius and Eustathius, both previous Antiochene bishops. For Meletius, see Chrysostom's comments in *De Bab. hom.* 10.12-11.1-6 (SC 362, 310-12; Mayer, *Babylas*, 147-48). For Eustathius, see *In Eusth*. 2 (PG 50.601; § 5 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 55-56).

die (Gen. 22:12).[116] The supporters of the martyred soldiers, Juventinus and Maximinus, were also, for Chrysostom, martyrs because they were willing to associate with them even at the risk of death.[117] These examples help Chrysostom to exhort his congregation, who faced the challenges of mortality but not of religious martyrdom, to follow the example of the martyr. The "martyr disposition", which Chrysostom encourages his congregation to have, is expressed in such things as: speaking boldly, conquering the passions, and living moderately. In a sermon on Lucian, who was martyred through starvation, Chrysostom exhorts his congregation to despise overeating, stating this will be good exercise for them should a time come that they, too, suffer persecution. Furthermore, like Lucian's boldness in addressing prefects and emperors, they are to confess their faith boldly, even if seated among the meetings of rich and illustrious Greeks.[118] In another sermon, on Barlaam, he advises his congregation to contemplate the martyrs so as to let these rebuke them against conceit, if they are wealthy, and to comfort them in their poverty, if they are poor.[119] Like martyrs, this is their substantial and constant battle against the Devil.[120] In *De sanct. mart.*, he tells them that just as the martyrs despised life, so they should despise luxury. As martyrs threw their bodies in the fire, so they should throw their money in the hands of the poor. As martyrs trampled on burning coals, so should they extinguish the flames of desire.[121] If this life seems too difficult, Chrysostom, in *In mart. aegypt.*, directs them to Hebrews 11, the famous passage detailing the troubles of God's faithful followers from the Old and New Testaments, concluding "both now and long ago, since humans came into existence, all those dear to God have been allotted a life that's gloomy and toilsome and full of countless troubles. So let's not pursue the life that's soft and dissolute and full of idleness, but rather the toilsome (life), the laborious (life), the (life) that has trials and tribulations."[122]

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[116] Ibid. (55).

[117] *In Iuv. et Max.* 2.54-57 (SC 595, 194; § 6 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 96).

[118] *In Lucian.* 3 (PG 50.525-26; § 9 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 72). His second sermon on the Maccabean martyrs ends with a similar exhortation: to imitate the martyrs by offering one's all along with the martyrs' holy prayers and by conquering one's passions in the time of peace, in readiness should God effect the same contest for them (*De Macab. hom.* 2.2, [PG 50.626; § 6 in Mayer, *Cult*, 152-53]).

[119] *In Barlaam* 4.93-99 (SC 595, 328-30; § 12 in Mayer, *Cult*, 188). See also *De Dros.* 1-2 (PG 50.684, 686; § 2, 6 in Mayer, *Cult*, esp. 193, 198). *De sanct. mart.* 3 (PG 50.712; § 8 Mayer, *Cult*, 226): "[L]et us paint the martyrs' tortures on the walls of our mind."

[120] *In Barlaam* 4.35-36 (SC 595, 322; § 10 in Mayer, *Cult*, 187).

[121] *De sanct. mart.* 2-3 (PG 50.710-11; § 7 in Mayer, *Cult*, 224-25).

[122] *In mart. aegypt.* 2.76-81 (SC 595, 350; § 5 in Wendy Mayer, trans., *Cult*, 215).

One final thing to note is that when Chrysostom wishes to emphasise the Christians' ability to overcome nature, he likens them to angels. Thus, in virginity, humankind "strains beyond its capacity and vies eagerly to equal angels,"[123] even surpassing the angelic state since angels "don't pass time on earth and endure trouble from the passions."[124] Martyrs are equal to angels in works and immortality.[125] In *In Matt. hom.* 90.3, as De Wet observes, Chrysostom also gives the poor angelic status because of "the disciplinary and pedagogical nature of poverty."[126] This demonstrates that angelic virtue belongs to all Christians, even though, as we have earlier contended, it is the priest that needs it most.

3.2 Public Opinion, Christian Conscience, and the Unsleeping Eye

A second susceptibility that Chrysostom recognises in human beings is susceptibility to feelings of shame. The concept of shame is associated with being seen and being judged, as indeed happened with Adam and Eve when, with eyes opened, they saw they were naked and instinctively desired to cover themselves. But Chrysostom recognises there are three types of "eyes" looking and making judgments about human actions: the eyes of the public, the eyes of the self (i.e., the conscience), and the unsleeping eye of God. Instead of letting his audience be crippled by the effects of shame, Chrysostom sought to help them deal with it constructively, so that shame may usefully serve as a mental constraint against destructive thoughts and behaviours.

Now the first set of eyes, the eyes of the public, are connected to what we have already discussed concerning Chrysostom's view of the city. In Chrysostom's rhetoric, the eyes of the public are eyes in love with spectacles. These eyes have been acclimated to crave and judge performance. As with the eyes of theatregoers, they stand at a distance, making them prone to misjudgements. They are used to being entertained, and so tend to be critical. So, for example, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom highlights how public opinion can cause a lot of grief to the priest, when his every movement and glance is interpreted with malice. Likewise, people criticise preaching as though he were an orator and they were spectators.[127] Chrysostom's response

[123] *De virg.* 11.1 (SC 125, 126; Shore, *Virginity*, 14-15).
[124] Ibid. 10.3 (SC 125, 124; Shore, *Virginity*, 14).
[125] *De sanct. mart.* 1 (PG 50.706-707; Mayer, *Cult*, 218-19).
[126] De Wet, "Priestly Body," 356.
[127] See previous discussion in chapter 2, pp. 52-53.

when dealing with the public eye is twofold, aimed at motivating both parties (i.e., the one looking and the one being watched) to virtue. In *De sac.*, he therefore reminds priests that the public is looking in order to motivate them to have an unassailable character or to clear themselves of accusations and misconceptions (e.g., of mishandling finances) as soon as they arise.[128] On the other hand, he acknowledges that the way the public judges is not always right. We see hints of this in *De sac.*, but, since this work was written for priests, it focuses more on how priests ought to react to public opinion than it does on correcting public judgment. Elsewhere in Chrysostom's homilies and writings, however, he constantly attempts to manage the public eye not by discouraging public scrutiny but by telling people where they ought to be looking and what they should be seeing and judging as good. So, as we have pointed out previously, he repeatedly exhorts the Christian public to contemplate martyrs, so that the public would learn to judge based on faith and virtue. When he delivers his panegyrics on priests (e.g., Eustathius, Meletius, Flavian, Diodore), he highlights the qualities he wants his audience to look for in a priest, namely, the practice of ascetic virtues and the bold teaching of orthodox doctrine. Finally, he directs their eyes toward the monks—making monks into "icon[s] of virtue," as Lai aptly puts it—and then exhorts them to *show themselves* to be imitators of the monk's philosophy,[129] making them participants and not just spectators.

Blake Leyerle, in her in-depth study of Chrysostom's rhetoric against spiritual marriage, shows in detail another example of how adept he was in managing the public eye to promote his view of virtue. She emphasises how Chrysostom, understanding the public's love of theatre, used theatrical characters and commonplaces to ridicule those engaged in the practice of spiritual marriage (e.g., the man is a henpecked husband; the virgin is a heroine of tragedy mixing poison for her partner).[130] Chrysostom did this because he believed the motivations of the *subintroductae* were status-related. Either they wanted to present an appearance of holiness, or one ascetic wanted to be intimately associated with another of higher social status.[131] Chrysostom

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[128] *De sac.* 3.10 ; 6.9 (SC 272, 178-82, 334-36; Neville, *Priesthood*, 85-86§14, 148-49).

[129] Lai, " Christian Saint," 24. *In Matt. hom.* 72.4, Chrysostom says that even the illiterate who are unable to read or benefit from scripture could go to the hills to see examples of supreme virtue (PG 58.672; Hunter, intro to *Two Treatises*, 13-14).

[130] Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 211.

[131] *C. eos qui subintr.* 1.38-44 (Jean Dumortier, ed., *Saint Jean Chrysostome. Les Cohabitations suspectes. Comment observer la Virginité* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1955), 80-81; § 10 in Elizabeth Clark, trans., *Jerome*, 194); cf. Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 206-207.

was intensifying the public gaze on the *subintroductae* so as to arouse in them a sense of shame. This does not mean that Chrysostom accurately presented how the *subintroductae* lived their lives,[132] but his tactics operated on the belief that even where no actual sin is committed, the suggestion that there could be blights the reputation of the ascetics and of the church.[133] Chrysostom could, of course, have been wrong about the motivations of some of the *subintroductae*, but his fear that they were putting themselves in a precarious situation of sexual temptation is valid. The spotless reputation of the church is not maintained by fooling the eyes of the onlookers but by letting the eyes of onlookers assess behaviour.

More intimate than the public eye, and a better judge in Chrysostom's estimation, is the conscience. Even if ascetic life emancipates from anxieties related to attachment to worldly things and relations, as long as the ascetic is enfleshed,[134] such a life cannot be totally carefree. The anxiety, however, comes from a different place. One of the features of Christian asceticism is how it is a life of constant penitence. Chrysostom finds in Adam and Eve's attempt to hide from God the first manifestation of self-accusation. After they ate the forbidden fruit, their God-given consciences accused them in order to teach them the magnitude of their sins.[135] Chrysostom tells us not to miss the irony. They *gained knowledge* of transgression, but their subsequent futile act (i.e., attempting to hide from God) showed an impairment of sense and intelligence.[136] Disobedience made Adam and Eve irrational. The conscience was a sliver of rationality prodding them to acknowledge one small but important truth: that they had sinned.

Conscience, according to Chrysostom, works with God's Word to bring people to repentance: the scripture because it is most trustworthy; the conscience because it is a continuously watchful and sober judge, a vehement accuser, before, during and

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[132] A warning by Leyerle, *Theatrical*, 208.

[133] Chris De Wet comes to a similar conclusion but with a focus on the themes of sex and slavery. He notes how Chrysostom's rhetoric intentionally characterises the *subintroductae* as though enslaved to each other. The men were essentially serving as eunuchs for the women by conducting their business for them, while the women kept house for the men. Chrysostom implies the inevitability of sexual misconduct since the sexual use and abuse of slaves were legal. By being literal and moral slaves to each other, the *subintroductae* were rejecting the more important slavery—slavery to God (see "Revisiting the *Subintroductae*: Slavery, Asceticism, and 'Syneisaktism' in the Exegesis of John Chrysostom," *Biblical Interpretation* 25, no. 1 [2017]: 58-80).

[134] Chrysostom says of virgins that the flesh holds them back from ascending to heaven (*De virg.* 11.1 [SC 125, 126; Shore, *Virginity*, 14-15]).

[135] *In Gen. hom.* 17.2 (PG 53.135-36; § 6; Hill, *Genesis*, 224-25).

[136] Ibid. 17.2 (PG 53.136; § 7 in 225).

especially after the commission of sin, when sin's pleasurable effects have worn off.[137] Chrysostom argues that his preaching, even if it does not immediately inspire the hearer to action, may cause him to change his attitude or else to condemn himself for not acting. "This self-accusation," Chrysostom boasts, "is the fruit of my words."[138] For this reason, Chrysostom does not hesitate to use discourses on heaven and hell to correct sinful action. He employs this tactic, for example, in letters to two close friends. In Antioch, when a certain friend was close to breaking an oath of virginity, Chrysostom urged him to reconsider and repent, stressing that it is better to mourn now than on judgment day.[139] God's offer of repeated forgiveness is only available in the present world, "but when once we have departed to the other world, even if we display the most earnest repentance it will be of no avail … but we shall only hear those words which the rich man heard in the parable, 'Between us and you a great gulf has been fixed' (Lk. 16:26)."[140] After describing the horrible nature of hell (undying worm, unquenchable fire, gnashing of teeth, and darkness), he asks, "Is there anyone who, for the sake of seeing a good dream (i.e., the present life), would elect to be perpetually punished?"[141] Decades later, when in exile, Chrysostom encourages another friend, Olympias, with similar words, telling her to contemplate the rewards of heaven and the judgments of hell to keep from despairing.[142]

Chrysostom's fearless discourse on heaven and hell is due to his confidence in God's lovingkindness. In the first place, the anxiety produced by the conscience is well-regulated by God, so that its accusation is "continual but not continuous": continual so people do not lapse into carelessness, but not continuous so that they can recover their breath in periods of relief and consolation.[143] Secondly, a person can

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[137] *De Laz. conc.* 4.4 (PG 48.1011-12; Catharine Roth, trans., *On Wealth and Poverty. St. John Chrysostom* [Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1981], 88).

[138] Ibid. 6.2 (PG 48.1029; Roth, *Wealth*, 100).

[139] *Ad Theod.* 1.3.1-15 (Jean Dumortier, ed., SC 117, 90; W. R. W. Stephens, trans., NPNF 1/9:92-93). This is the first part of two letters purportedly addressed to a young Theodore of Mopsuestia. However, some scholars argue that it reads more like a treatise than a letter and seems far too theologically mature to have been the work of a young Chrysostom. See Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 22. I, however, am still inclined to think of it as a letter despite its length, since Chrysostom 1) writes in the second person; 2) mentions he is mourning for the reader; 3) mentions a person named Hermione whom the reader admires; and 4) ends the letter by saying he will not cease repeating his exhortations when he sees the reader in person. Whether it was written to Theodore, and whether it is a later work, requires further study.

[140] *Ad Theod.* 1.8.60-68 (SC 117, 120; § 9 in NPNF 1/9:97).

[141] Ibid. 1.9.24-10.56 (SC 117, 124-132; § 9-10 in NPNF 1/9:98-99).

[142] For instance, *ep. ad Olymp*. 5; 8.3b-d (SC 13bis, 122-24, 166-70; Ford, *To Olympia*, 40, 61-62).

[143] *De Laz. conc.* 4.5 (PG 48.1013; Roth, *Wealth*, 90).

have confidence that he will be forgiven because the wrath of God is not a passion. Chrysostom views the divine nature as passionless. He does not mean that God is without feeling. After all, God takes offense. But when He punishes and takes vengeance, it is never with excessive wrath. He is not personally hurt by sin, "for no harm can traverse that divine nature," but He does care that we hurt ourselves, so He punishes us with a view to our advantage, to prevent our perverseness becoming worse "by our making a practice of despising and neglecting Him."[144] God's actions are therefore motivated by pure love. Chrysostom therefore exhorts his congregation to pray unceasingly, saying, "When you stand fast, He will not turn away from you, but will forgive your sins and grant your requests."[145]

When, therefore, the opposite happens and there is excessive self-accusation that drives one to despair or to giving up, one can be certain this is no longer the work of a sound conscience but of the devil. Whereas repentance is supposed to become easier once one has the will to start,[146] despair is the devil's weapon, since it cuts off a person's hope in God, and "by hope we are saved" (Rom. 8:24).[147] Despair leads to greater rebellion, since a soul that has abandoned its own salvation will no longer perceive its downward plunge and will choose to do and say things adverse to its own salvation.[148] Chrysostom is against anyone despairing of repentance—no matter how bad the sin, whether a man was formerly a believer who afterwards fell, or even if he got old in sin.[149] Time is not an issue. It took one day for the Ninevites to whom the prophet Jonah preached and a brief moment for the robber crucified with Christ to repent. Martyrs, too, obtain glorious crowns in the course of a few days or even a single day.[150] As proof, Chrysostom cites the case of Nebuchadnezzar, who became so proud God punished him to become no more than beast, yet God still drew him to repentance.[151]

In correcting public opinion and the consciences of his congregation with the teaching of scripture, Chrysostom was essentially attempting to align human

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[144] *Ad Theod.* 1.4.9-19 (SC 117, 94-96; NPNF 1/9:93).

[145] *De paen. hom.* 3.4 (PG 49.297; § 15 in Gus George Christo, trans., *St. John Chrysostom. On Repentance and Almsgiving* [Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press, 1998], 37); cf. Lk. 11:5-8.

[146] *Ad Theod.* 1.3.40-46 (SC 117, 92-94; NPNF 1/9:93).

[147] Ibid. 1.2.1-6 (SC 117, 86; NPNF 1/9:92).

[148] Ibid. 1.17.56-59 (SC 117, 188; § 16 in NPNF 1/9:107).

[149] Ibid. 1.4.1-9 (SC 117, 94; NPNF 1/9:93).

[150] Ibid. 1.6.57-71 (SC 117, 108-10; NPNF 1/9:95).

[151] Ibid. 1.5-6.21 (SC 117, 98-106; NPNF 1/9:94-95), cf. Dan. 4.

perception with God's perception. The unsleeping eye of God is the eye that sees clearly and impartially. It is the eyes of Christ the judge. On Christ's second coming, the scales will fall from humanity's eyes and all will see as God sees. Thus, Chrysostom invites his congregation to imagine how, in the last day, those who suffered injustices in the present life will stand before their tormentors. There will be no need of witnesses, accusers, evidence, or proof. The deeds that one has done will appear before one's eyes.[152] Moreover, the masks of status (rich or poor) will fall off and each person will be judged only according to their virtue.[153]

3.3 Almsgiving and the Patronage of the Poor

Thus far we have emphasised Chrysostom's teachings on overcoming the passions. Now we must highlight the connection to his teachings on almsgiving. One of Chrysostom's favourite passages on this topic is the parable Jesus told of the ten virgins (Matt. 25). In the story, five of the virgins had enough oil in their lamps and were therefore ready to welcome the bridegroom even though he arrived late to his wedding. The other five had no more oil and had to leave to buy some. They returned too late and were not allowed into the banquet. In Chrysostom's interpretation, the ten virgins were not simply maidens but ascetics who trained in virginity. The five without oil were those "without almsgiving." Though triumphant against concupiscence, they fell short by not overcoming the love of money. Thus, just as the light of a lamp is extinguished when there is no oil, so the labours and victories of virginity, Chrysostom asserts, are as nothing when virginity lacks almsgiving. The virgins that lacked almsgiving were still banished.[154]

Various scholars have noted that Chrysostom sought to correct a fundamental problem in his society where the public generally had a dismissive, sometimes even cruel, attitude towards those most in need of their help. Mayer notes that while respect is extended towards the "voluntary poor", i.e., the ascetics who gave up the personal use of wealth and instead spent it on the church, on ascetic communities, or on provisions for the needy (e.g., Flavian and Olympias), people turned away from true beggars. On the one hand, this should not have been a problem. Chrysostom himself praised the role of the monk as a patron who could redirect the wealth given to him for

[152] *De Laz. conc.* 2.4 (PG 48.987; Roth, *Wealth*, 49).
[153] Ibid. 2.3 (PG 48.986; 46-47).
[154] *De paen. hom.* 3.3 (PG.295-96; § 11-13 in Christo, *Repentance*, 34-36).

the care of the poor, but this strategy was evidently not enough to meet the needs of the "economic poor." For example, in a homily in Antioch (*In 1 Cor. hom.* 21.11), Chrysostom, explaining why the church had considerable assets, points out that it was because the church was responsible for "crowds of poor," including virgins, widows, foreigners, the maimed and the sick. And the reason the church had to fulfil this responsibility was the stinginess of Antioch's rich citizens, who should have been providing for the revenue of these people out of their goodwill.[155] Most troubling to Chrysostom was that the economic poor, particularly beggars, provoked a strong, negative reaction from many members of the public, so that they were avoided or accused of being lazy and fraudulent, and were only given attention when they resorted to street theatre.[156] Such attitudes are understandable, given that members of late antique society were constantly threatened by destitution. In Chrysostom's case specifically, Brown points out that his Antiochene congregation was likely made of the "middling" sort who, although they did not think of themselves as members of the "poor that have nothing at all," lived under a permanent threat of impoverishment. For reasons such as ill-health, death in the family, economic and fiscal oppression, and violence of every kind, impoverishment could come at any time.[157] Even the wealthier members of Chrysostom's Constantinopolitan congregation knew that resources were finite and so believed that generosity was only desirable if one received something else in return.[158]

Besides providing for the poor, Chrysostom wanted to correct people's attitude toward them. In a series of sermons on the Rich Man and Lazarus, he dwells on the latter's suffering in great detail, pointing out that Lazarus suffered not only poverty but also excessive illness, loneliness, the sight of the wicked flourishing, not having the hope of the resurrection (since this happened before Christ's resurrection), and being slandered that he suffered because he was wicked.[159] In turning away from him, the Rich Man therefore demonstrated "an inhumanity without rival." [160] Indeed, if Chrysostom had cared only about raising money, he would have been content to let the wealthy give through the church. But he also points out to them the poor man on

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[155] Mayer, "Poverty and Generosity," 156.
[156] Ibid., 150.
[157] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 2002), 14-16.
[158] Mayer, "Poverty and Generosity," 150.
[159] *De Laz. conc.* 1.9-11 (PG 48.975-78; Roth, *Wealth*, 29-33).
[160] Ibid. 1.7 (PG 48.971; Roth, *Wealth*, 22).

the street, whom they can see with their own eyes to be in real need, whose hunger they can relieve. He tells them to give, even without knowing the background of recipients. As God causes His sun to rise on the righteous and the wicked (Matt. 5:45), the almsgiver, too, must be a sheltering harbour to all that encounter shipwreck. "Why do you make trouble for yourself?" he writes. "God has excused you from all officiousness and meddlesomeness. How much most of us would complain, if God had bidden us first to examine each person's life exactly, to interfere with his behaviour and his deeds, and only then to give alms?"[161]

Besides teaching that giving indiscriminately to the truly poor is God's will, Chrysostom attempts to change the attitude of his congregation by arguing that benefits *are* received when one gives to those that seemingly have nothing to give back. He makes these benefits intelligible to his late antique audience through the language of patronage, but also incorporates a spiritual dimension. Patronage, as Brown tells us, was a fact of life in the fourth century. A patron was someone who used his power and connections to perform important functions for his clients, who had fewer privileges. An example of a rural patron was Libanius, who, as a wealthy landowner, could help villages in matters like forwarding their lawsuits, resolving their feuds with other villages, providing for and distributing their water supply, and arranging for them to meet tax demands. Proximity to clients was important in this task, something landowners sometimes neglected, preferring to spend time in their villas. This opened the opportunity for some of the tasks (and therefore prestige) of the rural patron to be undertaken by other people, particularly by 1) the military, who Brown notes were present in garrisons in the neighbourhoods and possessed power in the form of having exceptional facilities for transport, and 2) the holy man.[162] As we have noted earlier in this chapter, Chrysostom depicts the Christian monk as a patron to great effect in *Comp. reg. et mon.* and *Adv. opp. vit. mon.*, emphasising that the monk's social and spiritual status is because of his devotion to the highest power, i.e., God.

Similar to monks, the poor, Chrysostom teaches, enjoy a special connection with Christ. Whatever mercy one extends to the poor, as long as the will is there to give according to what one has,[163] the deed is done for Christ and will be rewarded.

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[161] Ibid. 2.5 (PG 48.989-90; Roth, *Wealth*, 52).

[162] See Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity, 1971-1997," *JECS* 6, no. 3 (Fall 1998): 353-76, esp. 385-91.

[163] This is based on Chrysostom's interpretation of Matt. 25:40 where "the least of these" pertains to the poor (*De paen. hom.* 3.1, 2 [PG 49.293, 294-95; Christo, *Repentance*, 30-31§6, 32-

Chrysostom therefore imagines Jesus, on the last day, inviting the almsgiver before His angels and before every heavenly power and saying of the almsgiver, "He granted me hospitality, performed myriads of good services, sheltered me when I was a stranger."[164] In another place, Chrysostom, employing personification, says that almsgiving "surmounts heaven and overtakes the multitude of angels … and all the higher powers, and she stands next to the royal throne," so that, having no higher power to oppose it, even if one has many sins, almsgiving can bring forgiveness.[165] George Kalantzis and Michael Sherwin observe that spiritual patronage of the poor is also apparent in some of Chrysostom's discussions on the Eucharist. It was during Jesus's supper with His disciples that He changed their status from followers to friends. Since He opens this table indiscriminately to all who will come, including and especially the poor,[166] Christians have no excuse for despising the poor. Kalantzis and Sherwin both note that, in the Eucharist, Christ acts as a countercultural patron. Instead of being pursued by His clients, *He* pursues them, becoming food and garment for them.[167]

Chrysostom's purpose in all this is to elevate the status of the poor to demonstrate that they have a valuable contribution to make within the body of Christ. This is not for the welfare of the poor alone. Chrysostom recognises that members of the Christian community have to depend on each other. Each one could be a patron to others materially or spiritually, provided they adhere to a strict code of virtue that guarantees their free association with God. So, for example, the poor are not privileged just because of their poverty. They must be persevering, moderate, and reasonable—not blaspheming. Lazarus was rewarded, Chrysostom surmises, because he endured poverty patiently and did not blaspheme.[168] The wealthy, meanwhile, are to give alms as part of a lifestyle of moderation, doing so not for the esteem of people but because

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33§9]). Even if a person has nothing to give but bread, obol (low-value coin), water, or even sympathy, he has a reward to collect because "reward is not proportionate to [one's] necessity but to [one's] free will" (ibid. 3.3 [PG 49.295; Christo, *Repentance*, 34§10]).

[164] Ibid. (Christo, *Repentance*, 33-34).

[165] Ibid. 3.1 (PG 49.293; Christo, *Repentance*, 30-31). Based on Acts 10:4, where the Gentile God-fearer Cornelius is told by an angel, "your prayers and alms have ascended before God."

[166] Based on the parable of the king who invited all kinds of people to his son's wedding feast (Matt. 22:1-14).

[167] See George Kalantzis, "Crumbs from the Table: Lazarus, the Eucharist and the Banquet of the Poor in the Homilies of John Chrysostom," in *Ancient Faith for the Church's Future*, ed. Mark Husbands and Jeffrey P. Greenman (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 156-68; Michael Sherwin, "Friends at the Table of the Lord: Friendship with God and the Transformation of Patronage in the Thought of John Chrysostom," *New Blackfriars* 85, no. 998 (July 2004): 387-98.

[168] *De Laz. conc.* 1.7, 9 (PG 48.972, 975; Roth, *Wealth*, 23, 28).

"it is the right thing to do" and "a mark of solidarity with our fellows."[169] Even martyrs, through their relics, are able to work miracles on account that their "battle wounds," which Chrysostom also calls "marks of Christ," win them greater power and friendship with God, so much so that they can converse boldly with Him and persuade Him of anything.[170] Virgins are privileged to receive the holy bridegroom (again a mark of intimacy), but only if they are pure in body *and* soul.[171] By this he means that if they truly have a soul in continual communion with God,[172] this would manifest in other outward ways besides actual virginity. Chrysostom writes, "the body of a soul so practiced in virtue must harmonize its own impulses with the movement of that soul. For her glance, her language, her demeanor, her walk … is defined by the discipline within."[173] The virgin is the image of *a philosophy of restraint*: tranquil (tongue utters nothing discordant), humble (glance does not stray impudently), chaste (ears deaf to improper song), modest (gait unaffected), even austere (serious, unsmiling).[174] And monks, of course, are powerful because they do not fear loss of status or life. This is due not only to their detachment but because God favours them. Not cowed by fear nor tempted by self-gratification, they are able to address God *and* people fearlessly, and are able to instruct people and expose sin because of their credibility.[175]

The patronage of the monk carries into Chrysostom's ideal of the priest, magnified because of the priest's responsibility to more people and actualised in Chrysostom's own ministry. Like the monk, the priest (and, to a greater extent, the bishop), as we see in *De sac.*, 1) interceded on behalf of Christians before God, particularly in leading the Eucharist; 2) provided materially for the disadvantaged (i.e., widows, the sick, and the poor); and 3) provided pastoral care in the form of spiritual instruction to the flock.[176] Chrysostom performed all these when bishop of Constantinople. He was said, for example, to have reorganised hospitals and even

[169] *In Gen. hom.* 8.6 (PG 53.75; § 16 in Hill, *Genesis*, 114).

[170] *In Iuv. et Max.* 3.60-65 (SC 595, 208-10; § 10 in Mayer, *Cult*, 99); *De Bern. et Prosd.* 7 (PG 50.640; § 24 in Mayer, *Cult*, 175-76). Finally, in his homily on the Egyptian martyrs, he writes, if "our common Master were to get angry because of the multitude of our sins, we'll swiftly be able to make him merciful towards the city by throwing up these bodies as a shield." Chrysostom finds this principle similar to Moses throwing up the names of holy men (i.e., Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) when beseeching God (Exod. 32; cf. Bar. 2) (*In mart. aegypt.* 1.46-54 [SC 595, 336-38; § 2 in Mayer, *Cult*, 211]).

[171] *De virg.* 5.2-6.1 (SC 125, 106-10; Shore, *Virginity*, 7-8).

[172] Ibid. 6.1; 68.1 (SC 125, 108-10, 338; Shore, *Virginity*, 8, 104).

[173] Ibid. 63.2 (SC 125, 326-28; Shore, *Virginity*, 99-100).

[174] Ibid. 63.3 (SC 125, 328; Shore, *Virginity*, 100).

[175] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 4 (PG 47.390-92; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 73-76).

[176] See previous discussion in chapter 1, pp. 27-34.

attempted to build a house for lepers.[177] He bolstered pro-Nicene faith, as we discussed in detail in chapter 2, through extravagant liturgical processions. He organised mission work, including the destruction of pagan temples in Phoenicia. He was said to have sent aid to poor bishops and bishoprics, and he even went on a trip to Asia Minor to help settle some ecclesiastical issues. Even in exile he undertook the task of ransoming captives and restoring them to their families.[178] All these activities naturally required money to accomplish. While Chrysostom was said to have taken some of the funding for feeding the poor from selling church assets and must have also received money from the state,[179] he had to otherwise rely on the patronage of the wealthy.

While the wealthy served as material patrons to the church, Chrysostom, in his role as bishop, served as spiritual patron to the wealthy. Obviously, he provided spiritual instruction through preaching. But, besides this, there is evidence that he exercised more intimate forms of pastoral care toward patrons, many of whom were women. For example, at one point, he seems to have had a positive relationship with the Empress Eudoxia, who funded many of his processions. Moreover, being the bishop at the time of the births of her first three children, Chrysostom most likely even baptised them. Although his role as baptiser of her fourth child and only son, Theodosius II, is contested,[180] a famous story is nevertheless told of how she placed him on his knee to prevail upon him to reconcile with Severian of Gabala, another favoured bishop with whom Chrysostom was in conflict.[181] Despite this, Chrysostom's relationship with Eudoxia later degenerated, suggesting their relationship perhaps lacked an emotional attachment and demonstrating a patron-pastor relationship did not always include true friendship. This is starkly different from Chrysostom's relationship with a second famous woman, Olympias. Olympias was said to have been so wealthy that, besides supplying Chrysostom's daily needs while he was in office,

[177] Ps-Mart., *Or*. 61-64 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 114-20; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 74-77).

[178] These activities, reported by Sozomen, Socrates, Theodoret, and Ps.-Martyrius, are collated in Mayer, "Patronage, Pastoral Care," 61-62. Mayer notes these activities were common to late antique bishops.

[179] Brown, *Poverty and Leadership*, 32.

[180] According to *Vit. Porph.*, Chrysostom baptised Theodosius II. But *Vit. Porph.* is a late account with proven fictitious elements. An earlier and more reliable account, Gennadius of Massilia's *De viri illustribus* 21, calls Theodosius II the "son in baptism" of Severian of Gabala. See discussion in Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, *25*-26.

[181] Socr. 6.11 (SC 505, 304-14; NPNF 2/2:146-47); cf. Sozom. 8.10 (SC 516, 278-80; NPNF 2/2:405). More on the conflict between Chrysostom and Severian in the next chapter, pp. 190-91, 207-208.

she also provided hospitality, independent from Chrysostom's authority, for many visiting bishops and clergy. But Chrysostom was the only male allowed into her monastery to instruct her and her virgins.[182] And, even after Chrysostom's exile, she was loyal to him and continued to fund his necessities. As a result, she was also slandered by his enemies, made to appear before the city prefect for interrogation, and eventually exiled in Nicomedia.[183] Besides Eudoxia and Olympias, we know of other Constantinopolitans that served as Chrysostom's patrons at some point: for example, Marsa and Promotus, who supported his mission to the orthodox Gothic community; and, in exile, another Constantinopolitan aristocrat, Theodora, whom he reproaches for failing to have his place of exile changed to somewhere more comfortable and closer to Constantinople.[184]

Interestingly, Chrysostom's exilic letters reveal he sustained a patron–pastor relationship with Antiochene aristocrats, too. As Mayer notes, this is remarkable because it shows that, even as a presbyter, he had been comfortable moving in aristocratic circles, and was perhaps not as wholly unprepared for the episcopacy of Constantinople as some ancient sources suggest. Among these supporters were, for example, Harmatius and Dioscorus, who each had properties near Cucusus and was able to instruct servants to attend to Chrysostom's needs.[185] There was also Carteria, who sent gifts, including medication, and wrote to him frequently in October 404.[186] He was also visited in exile by a deacon, Theodotus, and a presbyter, Constantius, who had intimate connections with many of his elite Antiochene correspondents.[187] Since these evidences come from exilic letters, many of them are personal appeals for help, but they show that Chrysostom had many patrons he could have approached for ministry expenses, as in fact Theodoret reports he did when he sent monks and craftsmen to Phoenicia to engage in works of destruction against idols' shrines.[188]

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[182] *Vit. Olymp.* (A. M. Malingrey, ed., SC 13bis, 421-22; § 7-8 in Clark, trans., *Jerome*, 133); cf. Wendy Mayer, "Constantinopolitan Women in Chrysostom's Circle," *VC* 53, no. 3 (1999): 268-69.

[183] *Vit. Olymp.* (SC 13bis, 423-26; § 9-10 in Clark, *Jerome*, 134).

[184] Mayer provides excellent and comprehensive detail and conjectures regarding the possible nature of Chrysostom's relationship with Constantinopolitan women gleaned from ancient biographers of Chrysostom and his minor letters, many of which are still untranslated. For Theodora, see "Constantinopolitan," 277-78; for Marsa, see 276. Chrysostom writes to a community of Gothic monks living in the "estate of Promotus," Marsa's husband, showing that Marsa and Promotus at one point supported Chrysostom's ministry.

[185] Mayer, "Patronage, Pastoral Care," 66.

[186] Mayer, "Chrysostom and Women," 219.

[187] Mayer, "Patronage, Pastoral Care," 67.

[188] Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.30 (SC 530, 458-60; NPNF 2/3:152§29).

Mayer's study is also striking for noting the pastoral tone of Chrysostom's letters. Chrysostom showed knowledge of his correspondents' households, asked about their health, and promised advice should they come to see him in person.[189]

Seeing, then, Chrysostom's intimate acquaintance with the responsibilities that a priest faced in raising and handling money, as well as in providing pastoral care for many women, it is no wonder that the concept of overcoming the passions expressed through angelic virtue was at the heart of his moral philosophy.

4. Conclusion and Contemporary Reflections

In this chapter, we have demonstrated that Chrysostom's moral exhortations, summed up in the call 1) to overcome the passions, 2) to be in a constant attitude of repentance, and 3) to love the poor, must be placed within the context of his Christian views on the nature and destiny of human beings and the problem of sin. Divorced from this context, Chrysostom's teachings could be misunderstood as requiring human beings to pursue unrealistic goals, joyless existence, and unwise generosity. Instead, Chrysostom persuasively contends that the ascetic life can lead to a happier and less troubled existence, if pursued with sincerity and God-ward, neighbour-loving motives. This kind of life is what Chrysostom terms "angelic", attainable in this life through synergistic cooperation with supernatural grace, the answer to creating a less excessive, more compassionate society.

In Chrysostom's moral philosophy, the priest takes on an indispensable role in the formation of angelic virtue. This is because the church serves as the training ground for the formation of angelic virtue, preparing Christians to exercise that virtue as they live out their lives in the public sphere. The priest, as the leader of the church, strives both to be the example of angelic virtue and to direct his congregation's attention to how angelic virtue can be lived out. The priest carries out this latter task through the ministries of teaching, the administration of the sacraments, and the management of the household of God. By these acts, he concretises God's grace for

[189] Mayer, "Patronage, Pastoral Care," 65-66. Mayer is right to note as probable evidence of a pastoral relationship an interesting story by Sozomen about a semi-Arian woman (married to an orthodox husband) who, on discovering that her eucharistic bread had turned to stone, found it perfectly proper to run straight to Chrysostom to make a confession. See also *In Act. apost. hom.* 3.5 (PG 60.41; Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, trans., *John Chrysostom*, 181*)*, where Chrysostom talks as if visiting the houses of women and of the elite and visiting the palace is normal for a bishop.

his congregation. In effect, the priest is engaged in creating an environment that is conducive for the formation of habits attuned to the angelic life.

In contemporary times, some Christian leaders have found an ally in Chrysostom in calling on churches to unabashedly embrace ecclesial language, function, and identity. For example, Kenneth Stevenson, speaking in an Anglican context, argues that the description, "leader of mission," would sound foreign to Chrysostom and other Church Fathers. It must be clarified that Christian "mission" entails baptising, preaching, pastoral care, and so on. Indeed, bishops today can sometimes act too much like their secular counterparts—for example, treating their congregation like "consumers to be kept happy, rather than disciples who are to be challenged." Bishops must allow the Church Fathers to remind them that they are "primarily expected to be people of prayer, centred firmly on baptism and the eucharist—the essential starting point for everything else, teaching, pastoring, and encouraging included. They are not regional managers of Anglicanism plc."[190] Vigen Gurioan, speaking to the Orthodox context, makes a similar call to the church but in terms of how they think of "family". He laments how some influential Christian denominations, making sociology the starting point of reflection when it comes to the family, end up promoting hardly distinctive principles, such as that well-functioning families are good for society and that the keys to a well-functioning family are intimacy, shared decision-making, peace-making, etc. Guroian recommends that the Orthodox church set itself apart by following Chrysostom's teaching, i.e., embracing the family as an ecclesial entity and a mission of God's kingdom, focusing on the formation of monastic virtues among its members.[191] These are certainly faithful appropriations of Chrysostom, in the sense that they prioritise the very things which we said Chrysostom did. However, carrying Chrysostom's ideals into the present requires an additional step, which is that we reflect on why the counsel of a fourth century bishop should be relevant to our times. What is so attractive about Chrysostom's way of holy living, i.e., of an ascetically inclined but carefree life? In the following paragraphs, I will suggest a positive appropriation of Chrysostom's view of Christian morality, especially as it applies to Christian ministers. Afterwards, I will provide a criticism and a suggested solution.

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[190] Kenneth Stevenson, "Patristics and Bishops: What Four Fathers Might Say About Episcopacy Today," *Theology* 114, no. 2 (March 2011): 96-98.

[191] Guroian, "Family," 341-50.

As we have seen, the impact of human insecurity on moral actions is taken seriously by Chrysostom. His solution to it is to emphasise that virtue is rewarded, if not in this life, then in the life to come. Such emphasis on "heavenly" rewards has often been the subject of criticism. Is virtue truly virtue if performed for reward and not for virtue's own sake? By emphasising rewards, could we be encouraging people to perform good works, such as ministry, only when there is benefit to themselves? While such questions may seem reasonable enough, they in fact suggest a misunderstanding of the function of rewards and the resurrection in Christian morality. Rewards are not given by God to define virtue. God's Word alone defines right and wrong. Chrysostom was adamant that when the first human beings sinned, they knew they were sinning even if they did not fully understand what their sin would cost them. Neither are rewards compensation. For the first human beings already had God's gracious gifts before they had ever even committed an act of good. God's rewards through Christ are greater than the gifts received initially. But the principle is the same—grace is freely given. It is not a case of "Do good today, be rewarded later." It is a case of the rewards already being here (perhaps increased after Christ's return, but essentially already here)—faith being the sole requirement to receive them. One *must* then take the grace God provides and use it to progress to the promised end. Therefore, the angelic life begins in the here and now and extends to the life to come for the one who continues in a life of faith. We can grasp this in a more concrete manner by concentrating on the "reward" that Chrysostom most frequently emphasises, i.e., the resurrection. The martyrs had no need to fear death because they were already immortal, as evinced by their ability to intercede after death and by the grace that their relics continue to impart. Similarly, Christians, whom Chrysostom counts as martyrs if they have the same disposition, are immortal now, and, thus, always secure, even though the resurrection of the body happens later. Rewards and resurrection should not, therefore, be used to encourage a *quid pro quo* morality. Indeed, the person who assumes that Christian morality is all about *quid pro quo* cannot live the anxiety-less life that Chrysostom envisions. Instead, he is burdened. He fails to recognise and take the supernatural help available in the here and now. The way of the world oppresses him, and he cannot find the strength to overcome his natural weaknesses. Of course, when we downplay anxiety, we do not mean that a person is never troubled. The earth and its way of life are not yet transformed, so the environment is not yet perfect. Christ has not yet returned. Christian ministers,

especially, have more anxieties to face because of their pastoral responsibility to many people. However, some of their burdens can be alleviated if they have the right mindset about God's rewards. It will help them make the decisions that are healthy to their souls rather than decisions made from insecurity.

Before I identify specific examples of how this might work, I must first raise a criticism about the general idea. What if the promises of supernatural help do not match a Christian's lived experience? Stories of Christian ministers that fall short of angelic virtue, despite displaying immense knowledge of scripture, especially come to mind, and may shake our confidence in the Christian way. If Chrysostom were here to address the issue, he would put the blame squarely on the person that commits the sin. He would say that this person sinned not out of any lack of grace from God but because of his own evil intent, his refusal to accept the help available to him. That Chrysostom would probably have held this view is based on two things: first, when he deals with sin in the context of priests, it is always with the warning that they are without excuse and will be judged far more harshly if they lead souls astray. Chrysostom never questions the grace of God but only the dispositions of priests; for example, when, in *De sac.*, he describes himself as unfit because of natural weaknesses. Second, as we have noted, one of Chrysostom's favourite arguments is that neither wealth nor poverty is intrinsically evil, but only the act of sin, which is why persons of either status can sin. If sin is not, therefore, excusable based on what one has or does not have, this must apply to spiritual and natural gifts as well as material possessions. God is not to be blamed. However, assigning blame does not resolve the issue, especially because every person's struggle is different, and there are times when we simply cannot know what caused them to act in the way that they did. But just as Chrysostom would not let a human being starve regardless of their perceived righteousness or unrighteousness, so the best thing we can do is not to let people starve spiritually. That is to say, the church must be made a place that, as much as possible, helps its ministers and members share the lived experience promised in scripture. Based on our particular argument just now about rewards and resurrection, how can this be done?

Drawing on Chrysostom's moral philosophy, the answer is to place, as he did, a healthy and needed emphasis on individuality. Before we delve into what this means, we must first note that modern reflection on Chrysostom's theology often side-lines his view of individuality. It is noticed, to be sure, but not engaged with as constructively or

creatively as his views on community and solidarity. Controlling one's own body and listening to one's own conscience, for example, should provide opportunities to explore individuality but are instead subsumed under reflections on unity and community. Brown, for example, finds that Chrysostom placed unusual weight on the human body, and on the related themes of sexuality and poverty. But he notes that Chrysostom did this as a way to highlight a shared solidarity—a "brotherhood of bodies at risk"—that a divided city like Antioch could aspire to, thus offering a more noble and all-embracing unity than some sought to have in *apolausis* or the enjoyment of good things.[192] Nicu Dumitraşcu, meanwhile, discusses some of Chrysostom's views on the free conscience, but his emphasis soon turns to the significance of conscience (since free conscience is a guarantor of spiritual progress) to collective salvation. His most insightful remark is the observation that Chrysostom believed sin to be a personal act but salvation to be a collective community act, in that every Christian is saved to the extent of the contribution he or she makes to the salvation of others. That is, salvation is not earned in isolation, but in communion and cooperation with others.[193] Not that we are denying the astuteness of Brown's and Dumitraşcu's observations. Like them, we noted in this chapter the material and soteriological interdependence that Chrysostom wanted Christians to have. But the focus on community is just half of the story. For Chrysostom, the individual's pursuit of virtue is worthy in itself. This may encourage Christians to strive after angelic virtue even if they see others around them fail.

We must pay attention to how Chrysostom helps his congregation arrive at a richer understanding of the implications of the resurrection for their present life. He emphasises individuality, so much so that the preservation and progress of the human race takes a back seat to a person's pursuit of virtue. We see this exemplified in how Chrysostom promotes virginity (representing Christianity's eschatological hopes) at the cost, if need be, of civilisation. John Zizioulas is correct to recognise among the Eastern Fathers, including Chrysostom, a differentiation between the general (i.e., human nature) and the particular (i.e., the person). Zizioulas, however, builds on this principle by arguing that the general should have priority over the particular in theological considerations, his reason being that human beings are born as particular

[192] Brown, *Body and Society*, 316.

[193] Nicu Dumitraşcu, "St. John Chrysostom and the Responsibility of a Free Conscience," *Theology Today* 73, no. 3 (October 2016): 232-35.

entities (i.e., as persons) only as a result of pre-existing natural laws which are common to all human beings. Life and death, which have to do with *nature*, are ontological facts, and are true regardless of a *person's* thoughts and feelings about them. The world itself is not a mere product of human consciousness.[194] While Zizioulas certainly makes an important point, I would have to argue that Chrysostom was at least one Eastern Father who, in some instances of theological reflection, saw that the particular must have precedence. We saw this earlier in his emphasis on choice over nature when it comes to martyrdom; again, in his argument that individuals should not become a means to the ultimate preservation of the human race. Those who do not believe in the resurrection content themselves with "living on" in their progeny or in their civic contribution. But, for Chrysostom, this is unsatisfactory. The particular is not just a part of a whole. The individual is valuable, privileged, and eternal. In Christian doctrine, the particularities of a person extend beyond death and into either eternal life or eternal damnation. In the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which Chrysostom took as fact since he did not interpret any aspect of it allegorically, both men retained their memories and their personalities in the afterlife.

As such, the eternality of the individual could be the greatest incentive to pursue personal holiness and avoid self-destructive acts and feelings. This takes on an even greater significance when we consider the resurrection of the body, because the thought of having a future resurrected body should give purpose to the way we relate to our present bodies. In his early asceticism, Chrysostom ruined his stomach, a mistake we should learn from, since he probably would have been able to fulfil his duties as bishop better if his health had been good. We should remember that Palladius's excuse for his being seen as cold and unhospitable was that he could not eat anything but simple fare.[195] We should learn from Chrysostom's mistake, then, to argue that the present body, is not a throwaway, something to be used and abused until the better one comes along. But Chrysostom is right that neither is the body to be enjoyed and indulged without thought. Rather, the present body is to be used to train the soul to virtue, so that the soul will be worthy of the resurrection body. I suggest three ways that this concept could be of use to Christian ministers.

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[194] John Zizioulas, *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, ed. Paul McPartlan (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 56-59.

[195] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 12 (SC 341, 230-32; Meyer, *Life*, 74).

First, Christian ministers would have a more balanced perspective toward work if they saw the present body as having a far greater purpose than to be sacrificed at the altar of ministry. Put another way, Christian ministers should not neglect their health and wellbeing for the sake of ministry because ministry is not the sole reason for their bodies. Of course, they should not also love their present bodies so much that they would be unwilling to make sacrifices for the wellbeing of their charges. But the point is to ensure that when one ministers, one does so with one's virtue intact. Neglecting the wellbeing of the body will not help with the latter task. What, then, is the right mindset when preparing for the resurrection body? It is to use the body for the pursuit of virtue. Living healthily, taking periodic rests, seeking medical help when necessary—these must be undertaken as disciplinary exercises, with an eye toward having the best health and forming the best habits to aid the pursuit of virtue. The Christian minister must constantly assess himself. For example, if the rigorous life of service is giving him a bad temperament, making him irritable toward people, stingy, ungrateful, and complaining, then he must pull back and seek help. On the other hand, if he is spending too much time and money on leisure to the neglect and abuse of his flock, he must introduce some rigour into his lifestyle. For if he keeps on working but ends up harming his own soul and the souls of others, then all the "service" he has rendered the world cannot save him when the resurrection comes.

Second, attaching importance to the continuity between the present body and the resurrected body can help Christian ministers avoid envy, which is a pitfall Chrysostom emphasises. Chrysostom himself does not give a salve to envy between priests, other than stating it must be overcome.[196] But an answer may be available if we reflect again on the individuality of the human being based on one's progress in virtue. For while it is true that the possession of bodies and souls is a common feature of all human beings, the specific shape that the body takes, the original disposition of one's soul, and the combination thereof, are unique. If the original body is unique, and there is a continuity between this body and the resurrection body, then the resurrection body must also be unique. When we think of the resurrection body, we think only of the complete elimination of sin. The resurrection body may very well be without sin, but does that mean it is the same with all other resurrection bodies in the exact same way? We do not progress in virtue in the exact same way. We may have the same

[196] See chapter 1, p. 39.

goals, for example, but there are differences in how we train our souls to arrive at them, seeing that we were born with different skills and dispositions. For example, two Christian ministers may be aiming to train themselves in humility. Both are skilled preachers, but one finds he is more sensitive to the applause, more prone to be proud of his popularity. The other is more sensitive to criticism and finds he is humbled the more he speaks. The first one decides it is best for his soul to speak less, the other to speak more. In the resurrection, both will have progressed in virtue, but one (due to experience) ends up honing his skill more than the other. So, then, how do we encourage these two types of persons to discern what is best for their souls? Counselling the second person is easy enough, since his service and his pursuit of virtue coincide. But what of the first person? Should we insist that merely because he has the skill, he must necessarily practice it for the good of the community? Or, perhaps, we can put the individual's pursuit of virtue first? Not that we should shield him completely from the ministry, but give him less, give him other things, until such a time as he is ready to take on more without sacrificing his virtue. Once again, Chrysostom does not explicitly prescribe this. And yet, we see echoes of it in *De sac.*, when he insists to Basil that he (Chrysostom) was not yet ready to be ordained as he was still struggling with many passions.[197] Of course, we are not saying that one must be perfect before one can serve—only that one does not sacrifice one's pursuit of virtue for service. By helping Christian ministers focus on their progress in virtue, on readying their souls for their resurrection body, we reduce the motive to envy. For acting on envy through subterfuge, making snide remarks, taking down a more worthy candidate—these are all useless, since one does not gain anything of eternal worth by it. Yet a person who lays down his natural advantages for the moment, for the sake of virtue, can easily pick it up again in the resurrection body. And if he is fearful of losing acclaim, he will have these and more in the resurrection. No effort of the Christian is wasted, therefore, no time or opportunity truly lost, except if he *departs* from virtue.

The emphasis on individuality anchored in the body helps the Christian minister in a third way, and this is by changing how he views his responsibility of "soul care". If the present body is indispensably instrumental in the soul's progress in virtue, then the Christian minister must also help his congregation have a healthy relationship with

[197] *De sac.* 3.7-8 (SC 272, 156-60; Neville, *Priesthood*, 76-77).

their bodies. On the one hand, this provides a greater incentive for the church to either expand its own ministries or to support research and ministries dedicated to helping the disadvantaged in society— for example, the homeless, the refugees, and those with substance abuse disorders. For, without a healthy, well-fed, well-rested body, it would be much harder for souls to progress in virtue. On the other, the Christian minister's preaching and counselling will have to reflect the struggles that people have with their bodies—a recent example that comes to mind, in view of the current COVID-19 pandemic, concerns the issue of inoculation. The public has had varied reactions. Some invoke social responsibility to reduce the issue to either taking the vaccine or not taking it; others make it a matter of "listening to the science" or following government guidance. Yet a Christian minister might acknowledge the fears of his congregation whilst manoeuvring them onto a path more conscious of their heavenly citizenship. For example, he could acknowledge and discuss their research with them instead of outrightly dismissing their fears as being anchored in biased or fake news. After all, there are other choices besides taking or not taking the vaccine, such as which vaccine? Could one wait? Might a person have certain medical histories that would make it better or worse if they took the vaccine? What are their real motives for denying or wanting the vaccine? Could there be an issue of pride there or of anxiety due to someone's past or a crippling fear of the future? The Christian minister has an opportunity here to help his congregation see the decisions they make concerning their bodies as exercises in discipline, to encourage them to do what they are doing but to make it with the aim of becoming persons who are careful, discerning, and charitable. This is preferable to allowing them to approach an issue with only either extreme passion or cold apathy. Throughout the process, however, the Christian minister must direct his congregation to the *resurrected* body, the purpose of which is to provide Christians with the sense of security God intended. Whatever they end up choosing, the point is that they must make their choice not out of fear but with prayerful trust in the Lord.

Ultimately, in the same spirit that Chrysostom intended, focusing on one's virtue should thus have a positive impact on the community to which one belongs. The Christian minister pilots this aircraft soaring into the angelic life. But he does not panic at the first sign of trouble. When the plane is in danger, he puts on his oxygen mask first, knowing he needs to be alive and in full control of his faculties to steer his passengers to safety. Chrysostom's advice to the Christian minister to watch out for

his virtue remains as relevant today as it did more than a millennium ago. For, when virtue is compromised, so is point two of Christ's Greatest Commandment—to love one's neighbour as oneself.

Chapter 4: Authority, Unity, and the Nature of Priestly Ministry

In the previous two chapters, we discussed the theological ideas behind Chrysostom's views of the priest as preacher and as Christian moral philosopher. As we move into Chrysostom's later years as bishop of Constantinople, and the events that led to his deposition and exile, the political side of his role as bishop must take centre stage.

Ancient historians attribute Chrysostom's deposition to his conflicts with two types of powers. His main conflict was with rival ecclesiastical authorities, of which his most powerful enemy was Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria. But complicit with Theophilus was a small coalition of bishops who, at one time or another, resided in Constantinople and found fault with Chrysostom and his episcopal management. These rallied together others who had reasons to oppose Chrysostom, including clergy he deposed in Constantinople and in Asia Minor. Chrysostom also fell foul of imperial and civic authorities. His scathing sermons against wealth and power were said to have offended the empress and many other wealthy and powerful people, who later supported Theophilus's plan to oust him. In addition, despite the sources' attempts to exonerate the emperor, Arcadius, of any responsibility,[1] Chrysostom's deposition, exile, and execution could not have transpired without his command and approval. Furthermore, it was civic authorities (Constantinople's prefects and soldiers) that carried out the persecution of Johannites.

This chapter has two aims. On the one hand, it will explore the theological commitments that influenced Chrysostom's interactions with ecclesiastical and imperial/civic powers. On the other, its analysis will be grounded on a nuanced reading of the events of history. It is important to try to understand how Chrysostom's enemies perceived his offenses and to question if the motivations attributed to them have solid grounding. Modern scholarship has noted how the accuracy of our assessment could be impaired if we fail to recognise the characteristics of our ancient sources. In the case of Chrysostom's career and subsequent deposition in Constantinople, the narrative could be coloured by a particular historian's apologetic and/or hagiographical

[1] For example, Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.35 (SC 530, 469-70; NPNF 2/3:153§34) and Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 (SC 341, 190-92; Meyer, *Life*, 61) claim that Arcadius was tricked by Chrysostom's enemies as he had great confidence in bishops. In his first letter to Innocent, Chrysostom himself tries to depict as though the emperor was on his side, mentioning only the instances when Arcadius called on him to judge Theophilus and claiming the Johannites were persecuted against the emperor's desires (*ep.* 1 *ad Innoc*. 1, 3 [PG 52.531, 533-34; Robert Meyer, trans., *Life*, 20-22).

intent.[2] Indeed, we must recognise that some bias must be present in the existing historical sources, since the earliest two were written by an unnamed disciple of Chrysostom and by Palladius of Helenopolis, who was also a Johannite.[3] Afterwards, in AD 418, Chrysostom's memory was rehabilitated as evinced by the restoration of his name to the diptychs in Constantinople. As Mayer points out, this was at least a decade or more before Socrates, Sozomen, and Theodoret wrote their accounts (i.e., c. 430-50), by which time less sanguine accounts of Chrysostom may have been suppressed.[4] Still, as we shall see, criticisms against Chrysostom and the Johannites do seep into the work of Socrates. Likewise, and unsurprisingly, the pagan historian, Zosimus (who largely draws on the work of Eunapius of Sardis, a pagan contemporary of Chrysostom), and the *anomoean* historian, Philostorgius, were very critical.[5] Though they were not as knowledgeable about the complexities of Chrysostom's conflict with Theophilus (this being a conflict between Christian, pro-Nicene bishops), they provide a helpful outsider's perspective on the Johannite crisis, and help us assess the impact this had on the wider populace. Besides the historical sources, we have, through letters, glimpses of Chrysostom's and Theophilus's interpretation of certain episodes. But even using these we must take care, as scholars have analysed how both bishops used rhetoric and literary *topoi* to accomplish their respective goals.[6]

Another important matter to clarify at the outset is whether it is correct to associate Chrysostom's episcopacy with politics at all. Some modern historians, influenced by Palladius's presentation of the man, noting his eremitical background,

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[2] As noted, for example, by Liebeschuetz, "The Fall of John Chrysostom," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 29 (1985): 1-2.

[3] These works are Ps-Martyrius's *Or.* and Palladius's *Vit. Chrys*.

[4] Wendy Mayer, "Media Manipulation as a Tool in Religious Conflict: Controlling the Narrative Surrounding the Deposition of John Chrysostom," in *Religious Conflict from Early Christianity to the Rise of Islam*, ed. Wendy Mayer and Bronwen Neil (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013), 151-53.

[5] Zos., *Hist. nov.* (François Paschoud, ed., *Zosime. Histoire Nouvelle*, 3 vols. [Paris: Les Belles Lettres], 1971-1989 ; Ronald T. Ridley, trans., *Zosimus. New History* [Canberra, Australia: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1982]); Philost., *Hist. eccl.* (Joseph Bidez and Friedhelm Winkelmann, eds., *Philostorgius. Kirchengeschichte*, GCS [Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1981]; Philip R. Amidon, trans., *Philostorgius. Church History*, ed. William Adler and Everett Ferguson [Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007]). See also David F. Buck, "The Reign of Arcadius in Eunapius' *Histories*," *Byzantion* 68, no. 1 (1998): 15-46.

[6] For example, Wendy Mayer, "John Chrysostom: Deconstructing the Construction of an Exile," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 62, no. 2 (September 2006): 248-58. Building on Mayer's work, see also Jennifer Barry, "John Chrysostom in Flight," in *Bishops in Flight: Exile and Displacement in Late Antiquity* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2019), esp. 94-100; and Dragoş Boicu, "'Let None Desert the Church on My Account': Some Inconsistencies Regarding the Chrysostomic Vision on the Unity of the Church," *Review of Ecumenical Studies, Sibiu* 11, no. 1 (April 2019): esp. 40-45. For Theophilus, see Krastu Banev, *Theophilus of Alexandria and the First Origenist Controversy: Rhetoric and Power* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015).

and perhaps comparing him to the more politically shrewd Theophilus, have emphasised his preoccupation with the spiritual and view him as either politically naïve or uninterested in politics.[7] To be sure, as we have seen in previous chapters and will continue to see here, Chrysostom's teachings highlight the superiority of the spiritual over the earthly (i.e., of soul over body; heaven over earth; philosophy based on Spirit-inspired scripture over human intellect). But Chrysostom also knew, because there is no true separation between soul and body except in death, that the bishop could not look after peoples' souls without similarly caring about their bodies and the society in which they lived. For the sake of religion, the bishop had to be embroiled in political matters. Major examples of this happening in Chrysostom's episcopal career that we will touch on in this chapter include:

1. Compelling the emperor to refuse the demand of the rebel, Gainas, for an Arian church inside the city of Constantinople.

2. Upholding the church's right to grant sanctuary, even for political figures that have attracted the emperor's displeasure.

3. Mobilising ecclesiastical and political connections from both Eastern and Western empires to influence aspects of his exile and ultimately secure his rehabilitation.

4. Negotiating for hostages and captives even as an exile in Armenia.

5. Criticising love of public office, which may be misunderstood as criticising public office itself.

6. The formation of a dissident group, the Johannites, whose actions out of loyalty toward him were thought to have endangered civic unity and peace.

These examples show how intertwined religion and politics were in Chrysostom's day. The way a bishop governed his church, and how he perceived his duties and authority in relation to other divinely mandated powers, inevitably affected civic life.

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[7] For example, Kelly thinks Chrysostom could have had an advantage over Theophilus had he been a "political realist" (*Golden Mouth*, 215); Liebeschuetz notes Chrysostom was "careful to keep out of political controversy" ("Fall," 1); Similar sentiments by other modern scholars like Chrysostomus Baur, Norman Baynes, James Butler, and Frederick Farrar are noted by Justin Stephens in "Ecclesiastical and Imperial Authority in the Writings of John Chrysostom: A Reinterpretation of His Political Philosophy" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2001), 7-13.

Chrysostom's interaction with ecclesiastical and imperial powers produced rich reflections on the themes of authority, unity, and the nature of priestly ministry. Besides examining the important Christological foundations behind these ideas, we will also show that Chrysostom's preoccupation with these themes was influenced by the episcopal issues in Antioch and the challenges he later faced as bishop of Constantinople. As noted, I will build on the works of recent scholars who have challenged the Johannite narratives through a more comprehensive analysis of Chrysostom's (and his biographers') motives. I will thus be discussing not only Chrysostom's direct thoughts but hypothesising on his thought processes based on how he presents key political events or acts in them. Likewise, it is important to analyse how his actions were perceived by others, including his supporters, his enemies, and the public at large. In this way, we will gain fresh insight into the events of his deposition and exile alongside his understanding of episcopal ministry. Because Chrysostom's views are rooted in a socio-political context very different from ours, this chapter, in the final portion, will reflect on ways that Chrysostom's ideas can be appropriated to speak to a society post-Christendom.

1. Authority

Inasmuch as Chrysostom's success as bishop can be attributed to his skilful preaching and dedicated asceticism, so his shortcomings, which resulted in two depositions, were arguably due to his mishandling of episcopal authority. On the matter of episcopal management, he was accused of being overly harsh on his clergy. More grievously, he reportedly impinged on the episcopal jurisdictions of others, particularly 1) by deposing and ordaining bishops in areas of Asia Minor which at the time were not yet under the official jurisdiction of Constantinople's bishop; 2) by interfering in the conflict between Theophilus of Alexandria and the Monks of Scetis, otherwise known as the Tall Brothers, and 3) after his first deposition, by resuming his duties as bishop without first being cleared by a synod.[8] Moreover, as bishop, he

[8] The mistreatment of clergy and interference in others' jurisdictions were specific charges against him in the Synod of the Oak (Barnes and Bevan, trans., *Funerary*, 154, 158). The second item was not a formal charge but, in a letter, Theophilus reportedly tells Chrysostom that the canons declare that a bishop should not judge beyond his own boundaries. This is likely a paraphrase of canon 2 of Constantinople 381 and not the canons of Nicaea as Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 7 reports (SC 341, 154; Meyer, *Life*, 49), unless he is viewing the canons of Constantinople as an extension of Nicaea's. The third point is likewise reported by historians, e.g., Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.20 (SC 516, 320-22; NPNF 2/2:412).

reportedly criticised the empress with impudence and refused to obey various imperial directions, signs that he had too exalted a view of his power. Whether these accusations are fair will become evident in the course of this chapter. First, however, we must examine how Chrysostom perceived episcopal authority.

1.1 Legitimacy, Priestly Authority, and Apostolic Succession

Chrysostom discusses priestly authority in two areas in *De sac*. In book 2, he uses Peter's commissioning in John 21 to teach that pastoral ministry (i.e., the care and feeding of Christ's sheep) is linked to governance. Peter and the priests who take on his ministry are the wise and faithful servants whom their Lord "shall set over his household (Matt. 24:45)."[9] In book 3, Chrysostom reiterates the link between ministry and authority, quoting Matthew 18:18, "What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and what things soever ye shall loose, shall be loosed." This, he claims, is the greatest authority, "the whole authority of heaven," for "[w]hat priests *do*, God ratifies above [ital. mine]." He further explains the source of this authority, "'The Father hath given all judgement unto the Son (Jn. 5:22).' But I see that the Son has placed it all in [the priests'] hands."[10]

The emphasis on Peter's commissioning, in connection with ministry and authority, is significant. We must recall that Chrysostom wrote this treatise when he was still a priest in Antioch. At the time, Chrysostom's bishop, Flavian, was just one of at least three bishops vying for legitimacy.[11] Given this background, Chrysostom's use of Peter's commissioning in John 21 to defend the nature and purpose of the priesthood is especially meaningful. By using it to describe his own ministry (feeding Christ's sheep) and motive (love for Christ), and by encouraging his readers to join him in that ministry,[12] the story doubles as an implied claim to legitimacy for Chrysostom's bishop and faction. To wit, Chrysostom is claiming his faction's ministry and authority to be that ministry and authority which was first entrusted to Peter.

Legitimacy is at the heart of how Chrysostom, therefore, interprets Christ's command that Peter feed and take care of His sheep. As we have argued in chapter

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[9] *De sac.* 2.1 (SC 272, 100-104; Neville, *Priesthood*, 52-54). Also, Ἐπὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ὑπάρχουσιν αὐτοῦ καταστήσει ἀυτόν (Matt. 24:47; *De sac*. 2.1.55-56 [SC 272, 104]).

[10] *De sac.* 3.5 (SC 272, 148; Neville, *Priesthood*, 72).

[11] See our discussion in chapter 1, p.11.

[12] Although within *De sac.'s* narrative, Chrysostom was not yet a priest, he was already a priest when he wrote this.

2, both in *De sac.* and elsewhere, the care of Christ's sheep is, for Chrysostom, the care of the soul. And an important part of soul care is orthodox teaching.[13] By interpreting Christ's commission in this way, Chrysostom is thus disqualifying from legitimate priesthood those who are not of *homoousian* persuasion. The relationship between legitimacy and orthodoxy is supported by Chrysostom's interpretation of Timothy's "ordination" in 1 Timothy 4:11-14. There, Paul writes to Timothy: "Neglect not the gift that is in you, which was given you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbyter (τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου)." Because of the reference to the laying on of hands, Chrysostom interprets the event Paul describes here as an episcopal ordination, arguing that though Paul used πρεσβυτερίου, he must mean bishops since mere presbyters cannot be supposed to have ordained a bishop (i.e., Timothy).[14] Despite being an anachronistic interpretation (we cannot presume Timothy held the office of bishop or that the office of bishop already existed separate from the presbyters), it is useful in revealing Chrysostom's thoughts on the episcopacy of his day. In particular, he interprets "prophecy" (προφητείας) here as "teaching" (διδασκαλίας),[15] signifying that the legitimacy of an election rested on the authority of bishops who were themselves legitimate and who evinced it by the teaching they handed down. To ministry and motive Chrysostom thus adds orthodoxy as a prerequisite for legitimate apostolic succession.

Although Chrysostom uses the word "succession" (ἀκολουθία) to refer to the priesthood only once in *De sac.*,[16] the concept is inherent in the claim that Peter's commission is a priestly commission. Succession emphasises continuity, not only with the ministry of Peter but of Christ, whose sheep Peter feeds. It is a notion present in Chrysostom's other works. For example, *In Matt. hom.* 32, Chrysostom discusses the continuity of Christ's earthly ministry with the ministry of the Twelve and then with the work of a priest. Chrysostom points out that, just as Christ taught the Jews and healed their sick, so He sent out his disciples on His authority to be teachers and physicians to the Jews. Though this sending out was prior to the giving of the Holy Spirit, Chrysostom notes that the Twelve were able to perform the ministry through Christ's

[13] See our conclusion in chapter 2, p. 76.

[14] *In 1 Tim. hom.* 13 (PG 62.565; NPNF 1/13:449). I.e., Chrysostom is taking τοῦ πρεσβυτερίου as a singular collective but specifically of bishops (PG 62.565).

[15] τὴν διδασκαλίαν ἐνταῦθα προφητείαν λέγει (PG 62.565; *In 1 Tim. hom.* 13 [NPNF 1/13:449]).

[16] *De sac*. 3.4.6-7 (SC 272, 142; Neville, *Priesthood*, 70), in the context that the Paraclete (i.e., the Holy Spirit) ordained this "succession."

authority and grace.[17] Toward the end of the homily, he exhorts his congregation to receive their priests as though receiving the Twelve, specifically by listening to them when they teach in church.[18] The emphasis on *teaching* is again important. We know in *De sac.* that the priest "heals" through the sacraments as well, and, indeed, that Chrysostom, in some homilies, identifies Christ's healing ministry with baptism.[19] Yet, it is *teaching* he constantly stresses. This is no doubt to imprint on his audience's mind that the orthodox bishop—not the Arian candidate (for example)—is the legitimate bishop.

However, despite having ministry, motive, and orthodoxy as categories to meet, it is still possible to dispute the episcopacy, as shown by the rivalry between Paulinus, and Meletius and Flavian. Herein comes the significance of the endorsement of other legitimate bishops, as we argued Chrysostom taught in relation to Timothy's "ordination". Paulinus, we must recall, had a strong claim because he was the bishop of the Eustathian party. Even many years after his death, Eustathius had retained a devoted following in Antioch because of how he had fought for orthodoxy. Theodoret even associates him with Athanasius as a "fellow combatant."[20] After Meletius died, Paulinus gained the unequivocal support of Rome and Alexandria. This was ostensibly because Flavian had broken his oath not to go after the episcopacy but to let the survivor, Paulinus, become sole shepherd of the pro-Nicene parties.[21] It is possible, however, that Alexandria and Rome may have simply preferred the Eustathian party due to Eustathius's connection with Athanasius. Meletius did not have such a pedigree. He had been ordained by a *homoian* bishop and had initially been called to Antioch by

[17] *In Matt. hom.* 32.2-3 (PG 57.378-81; § 2-5 in NPNF 1/10:212-14).

[18] Ibid. 32.6 (PG 57.384-85; § 9 in NPNF 1/10:216-17). The continuity exists not only with the apostles and priests but with the prophets of the old covenant, for Christ also is "master and owner of the prophets" (ibid. 32.3 [PG 57.380; § 4 in NPNF 1/10:213]). Chrysostom always speaks with deference to the holy men of scripture, putting apostles first (because of the Holy Spirit and because of their superior message), the Old Testament prophets second, and the Christian priest last. For example, he says, "[T]here is no comparison between the apostles and us … nevertheless, let your part be done…. For when even to unworthy persons ye show so much love and obedience, then shall you receive the greater reward" (ibid. 32.7 [PG 57.386; § 10 in NPNF 1/10:217-18]). I only say that he puts OT prophets second because he frequently uses them as exemplars for Christians.

[19] See chapter 1, p. 25 and chapter 2, p. 74.

[20] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 1.24 (SC 477, 212-14; NPNF 2/2: 27); 4.14-15 (SC 505, 64-66; NPNF 2/2: 103); Thdt., *Hist eccl.* 1.8 (SC 501, 210-18; NPNF 2/3:44§7).

[21] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 5.5, 15 (SC 505, 156-58, 192-94; NPNF 2/2:119-20, 125-26); Sozom. *Hist. eccl.* 7.3, 11 (SC 516, 78-80, 112-14; NPNF 2/2: 378, 382). This is a story Theodoret does not relate. His narratives of Flavian's various noble deeds and wisdom, which Socrates and Sozomen in turn do not relate, demonstrate his preference for the Meletian-Flavian party. However, he mentions that the Romans and Egyptians were pro-Paulinus, while many Eastern provinces supported Flavian (*Hist. eccl.* 5.24 [SC 530, 436-42; NPNF 2/3:148-49§23]).

the Arian party.[22] In a study of Chrysostom's funeral oration for Meletius, Jennifer Barry therefore highlights Chrysostom's defence of Meletius's orthodoxy. First, Chrysostom avoids mentioning Meletius's election by a heretical community, referring to it as a celebratory experience and a correction to heretical divisions present in Antioch. Second, he only mentions Meletius's first exile, from which he returned after only thirty days, to signify persecution and triumph. Third, he highlights Meletius's participation in Constantinople 381 to emphasise Meletius's orthodox identity. He portrays Meletius's unexpected death there as a "trial by fire" (though Meletius died of natural causes), in order to forge a link between Meletius and the three friends of Daniel. The "three boys" did not die, of course, but were tried in a foreign land (Babylon) and had their virtue confirmed there. Meletius similarly died in a foreign land and his virtue (i.e., his orthodoxy) was confirmed by "the most holy council members in that most holy city."[23]

In addition to what he did for the memory of Meletius, Chrysostom made an effort, after the deaths of Paulinus and Evagrius, to strengthen Flavian's candidacy for legitimacy by reconciling the Eustathian party with the Meletian-Flavian party.[24] In an encomium celebrating Eustathius's contribution to the Nicene faith and his great concern for the church in Antioch, Chrysostom forges a link between Eustathius and Flavian. He claims Flavian had been imitating Eustathius's teaching and example back when he had taken care of the orthodox flock in Meletius's stead (when Meletius had been in exile).[25] A succession is thus implied. Flavian was continuing Eustathius's legacy. Despite claiming Eustathius's memory for his faction, as far as we know, Chrysostom never spoke ill of Paulinus and Evagrius. That Socrates, in the fifth century, incorrectly thought Evagrius ordained Chrysostom as a presbyter perhaps indicates that Chrysostom's relationship with the Paulinian faction was amicable. This may have been an additional reason why he faced no notable opposition (by this time, Evagrius also had died) when, as bishop of Constantinople, he secured the legitimacy of Flavian's episcopacy with Alexandria and Rome.[26]

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[22] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 2.44 (SC 493, 230-32; NPNF 2/2:73). Theodoret attempts to defend Meletius by saying the Arian faction "imagined" him to be of the same opinion as them, but the orthodox knew Meletius's doctrine was sound (*Hist. eccl.* 2.32 [SC 501, 486-94; NPNF 2/3:92§27]).

[23] Barry, "Flight," 81-84.

[24] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.3 (SC 505, 267-68; NPNF 2/2:139).

[25] *In Eustath*. (PG 50.597-606; Mayer, *Cult*, 49-62).

[26] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.3 (SC 516, 242-46; NPNF 2/2:400-401). Socrates reports Flavian himself sought to appease Alexandria and Rome (SC 505, 192-94; *Hist. eccl.* 5.15 [NPNF 2/2:125-

Chrysostom also had a pastoral reason for stressing a bishop's legitimacy in relation to authority. It stems from his belief that authority must be requited with obedience. We see this frequently in his homiletical exhortations, where he plays up the love supposedly existing between the pastor and his flock to motivate the latter to respond with obedience.[27] Furthermore, a soft type of coercion is at play in the use of ecclesiastical discipline, namely, through the threat of exclusion (in case of the laity) and deposition and exclusion (in case of erring clergy). The threat of exclusion only works alongside legitimate authority. Otherwise, what is to stop a rejected member from simply pledging allegiance to another faction? Finally, by highlighting the continuity present in apostolic teaching, Chrysostom magnifies his congregations' obligation to obey not just the Word of God but the priest, through whom, in ordinary life, the interpretation and teaching of God's Word primarily comes.

The stakes are higher because Chrysostom's flock included people of power, including the king. Justin Stephens helpfully points out the many occasions when Chrysostom appealed to the bishop's role as interpreter of the divine law (νόμος) in order to teach or assert the church's authority over emperors. For example, in his discourse on Babylas, he praises the bishop for refusing to allow a murderous emperor entrance to church. According to legend, the unnamed emperor had executed the child of another foreign king, but the child was supposed to have been protected as it was a hostage. Chrysostom cast Babylas's act as the bishop defending "the outraged laws of God."[28] Similarly, when Flavian left on an embassy to beseech the emperor to spare Antioch from harsh punishment, because some of its citizens had thrown down imperial statues in protest of increased taxes, Chrysostom assures his congregation by saying of Flavian: "The sacred laws take and place under his hands even the royal head."[29] Chrysostom's speech to Arcadius on the event of Gainas's request for an Arian church in the city also came with an appeal to the emperor to respect the sacred laws.[30] Since the bishop presents himself as the interpreter of divine laws, Stephens suggests that the bishop has almost limitless power, since the limits to his authority

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26]). These two reports are not, of course, mutually exclusive. Being members of the same party, Chrysostom and Flavian laboured for the same outcome.

[27] We will expand on this concept of love and obedience, and why it is necessary, when we come to the discussion of unity, see below pp. 189-92.

[28] *De Bab. c. Iul. et gent.* 34, quoted in Justin Stephens, "Religion and Power in the Early Thought of Chrysostom," in *The Power of Religion in Late Antiquity*, ed. Andrew Cain and Noel Lenski (2009; repr., London: Routledge, 2016), 184.

[29] *De stat.* 3.2 (PG 49.50; quoted in Stephens, "Religion," 186).

[30] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.4 (SC 516, 246-58; NPNF 2/2:401).

are self-imposed.[31] Of course, civil laws and canon law can serve as checks and balances to a bishop's power. But Stephens is referring to self-perception, and, as we will see in various instances in Chrysostom's episcopal career, a bishop's perception of his calling, of the limits of his episcopal authority, and of his own righteousness in the face of criticism can motivate him to *resist* such "checks." Such resistance is not always successful. But because of the bishop's political influence, resistance can have major consequences for civic life. In the following section, we will nuance Chrysostom's presentation and application of the limits of episcopal authority in relation to imperial/civic powers.

1.2 The Bishop and Imperial/Civic Powers

In chapter 3, we discussed how Chrysostom, out of pastoral concern for the souls of his congregation, pushed them toward Christian virtue by pulling them away from what he perceived were corrupting influences in the city. Although the final goal was to transform the city, he at times had to pit the church against the city, contrasting the best of the former with the worst of the latter. Not only was this to show how much more attractive Christianity was over other philosophies, but it also served to motivate professing Christians to live according to Christian philosophy, sacrificing, if necessary, some of the advantages afforded by their social or civic status. Because Chrysostom encouraged Christians to change the way they participated in civic life, he inevitably disturbed existing political structures. For example, he directed Christians to spend their money differently, counselling them to give to the poor and to the building of hospitals and churches.[32] This must have diverted resources from other objects, such as funding military campaigns and traditional places and activities for cultivating civic unity (e.g., baths, hippodromes, games), as well as from politicians who relied on patronage. Meanwhile, Chrysostom's teachings on virginity and against remarriage challenged the political use of marriage and bearing children. Chrysostom even discouraged people from seeking public office and advised them to instead pursue Christian philosophy, either by living as a monk, becoming a cleric, or staying a

[31] Stephens, "Religion," 183-87.

[32] We noted, in the previous chapter, Chrysostom's efforts for the poor and for the building and maintenance of hospitals and a leper house, p. 150. See also p. 193. For an example of his exhortation to build churches, see *In hom. Acts* 18.5: "And here now it is a palace of Christ, the Church which thou buildest. Look not at the cost, but calculate the profit. Thy people yonder cultivate thy field: cultivate thou their souls" [PG 60.147-48; NPNF 1/11:118]. I only quote one line but he makes an extended appeal.

layperson but without becoming focused on gaining political power.[33] Chrysostom also used rhetoric to pit bishop against king. For example, *In Acts hom.* 8.3, he threatens to bar from Church, if necessary, even a "prince" or a "crowned head" if they sin with impudence,[34] and, in *De sac.*, he explicitly teaches that priestly work is both more noble and more demanding than kingly work, since priests care for souls.[35]

When reading all this, in addition to what we have already said about the bishop as interpreter of the divine νόμος, it may seem natural to conclude that imperial authority plays second fiddle to ecclesiastical authority in Chrysostom's thought. Chrysostom certainly associates the bishop more closely with Christ, scripture, church, and heaven, and explicitly claims an authority for bishops greater than any earthly power. Yet we must be careful. The relationship between the two is not always hierarchical.

In the first place, Chrysostom believed that imperial power was also divinely appointed. As such, commenting on Romans 13:1, where Paul writes, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," he stresses that these regulations apply to all, including monks, priests, men of secular occupation, " … if thou be an Apostle even, or an Evangelist, or a Prophet … inasmuch as this subjection is not subversive of religion."[36] For Chrysostom, Paul was not teaching that *every ruler* is ordained (κεχειροτόνηται) by God. God instituted only that there should be rulers, i.e., that some should rule, and others be ruled. Hence, Chrysostom claims, "[Paul] does not say, 'for there is no ruler (ἄρχων) but of God;' but it is the thing he speaks of, and says, 'there is no power (ἐξουσια) but of God. And the powers that be, are ordained by God (ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι).'"[37] In saying this, Chrysostom likely did not wish God to be blamed for the actions of tyrants. He moreover left open the possibility of resisting tyrants, as the qualification "inasmuch as this subjection is not subversive of religion" suggests.

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[33] For example, *In Col. Hom.* 7.3 (PG 62.347; Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, trans., *John Chrysostom*, 78).

[34] Stephens, "Authority," 113.

[35] *De sac.* 3.5 (SC 272, 146-50; Neville, *Priesthood*, 72). See also Stephen Black's "*Paideia*, Power and Episcopacy: John Chrysostom and the Formation of the Late Antique Bishop" (PhD diss., Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA, 2005) which points out parallels between Chrysostom's ideal bishop in *De sac.* and the "good king" of Greco-Roman political theory, as seen, for example, in Plato's *Republic*. If Chrysostom's more educated readers noticed the parallels, then they could not have helped but view the bishop as a challenger of sorts to the king's claim to, among other things, moral fortitude, and the role of defender of the people.

[36] *In Rom. hom.* 23.1 (PG 60.615; NPNF 1/11:511).

[37] Ibid. Chrysostom compares it with what is said about marriage in Prov. 19:14 that it is by the Lord that a man is matched with a woman. He believes it means God made marriage, not that God joins together every man that comes to be with a woman.

But he also desired to emphasise that the ruling powers have a purpose in God's *oikonomia*. What is this purpose?

Chrysostom argues that God instituted ruling powers to resolve the fighting that comes when there is equality of honour. He points out how rule and submission are (or must be) present in any relationship: man and wife; father and son; master and disciples; amongst the parts of the human body; and even with beasts and sea animals. Favouring order over ἀναρχία, he calls the latter an evil and cause for confusion.[38] All this is a prelude to Chrysostom's main argument, namely that the purpose of imperial power is to maintain the peace of the city so that the Christian religion can flourish. Because God instituted this power, the king may be carrying out God's law even if he does not realise it (i.e., even if he were a non-Christian). God did it this way, Chrysostom argues, because there are people who need the fear of God as a motivation to practice virtue. It is for them that the king, "the minister of God," by fear and rewards, prepares souls to become more suited for the word of doctrine.[39] In *1 Tim*. *hom.* 6, Chrysostom returns to the topic, explaining why, in the daily evening and morning services, the Church (led by the priest, the "common father … of all the world") prays for "the whole world, for kings, and all that are in authority."[40] Chrysostom assumes that this practice of praying for kings was already in place during the celebration of the holy mysteries in Paul's time. He surmises that Paul anticipated that some would object to praying for a heathen king during the celebration of the mysteries, so Paul added the advantage that, if they pray for these, "we may lead a quiet and peaceable life."[41] Chrysostom expands on this thought, noting that God appointed government for the public good. He writes, "When therefore they make war for this end, and stand on guard for our security, were it not unreasonable that we should not offer prayers for their safety in wars and dangers?"[42] This is interesting because, in another work, *Comp. reg. et mon.*, he notes only that kings go to war out of greed for power, but here concedes that war, if waged for security, could be "agreeable to the rules of justice." Here he concedes that if kings were not "preserved, and prospered in their wars," the church's affairs "must necessarily be involved in confusion and

[38] *In Rom. hom.* 23.1 (PG 60.615; NPNF 1/11:511-12).
[39] *In Rom. hom.* 23.2 (PG 60.617; NPNF 1/11:512-13).
[40] *In 1 Tim. hom.* 6 (PG 62.529; NPNF 1/13:426).
[41] Ibid. (PG 62.531; NPNF 1/13:426).
[42] Ibid. (PG 62.531; NPNF 1/13:426).

trouble."[43]

Going back to *In Rom. hom.* 23, Chrysostom did not wish Christians to use their heavenly citizenship as a reason to ignore the ruling powers. He thus argues that Paul taught the concept that obedience to rulers is obedience to God for two reasons. Firstly, so that Christians, who are supposedly enjoying the kingdom of heaven will not say, in being made subject to earthly rulers, Ἐξευτελίζεις ἡμᾶς καὶ εὐκαταφρονήτους ποιεῖς.[44] Later, he adds that, though Christians have been entrusted with greater things,[45] in the present, they are still strangers and sojourners on earth (in language borrowed from the epistle to the Hebrews), and in fact lower themselves when they dishonour the ruler.[46] Chrysostom claims that Paul wrote about this to combat reports in those days that the apostles were guilty of sedition and revolutionary scheming.[47] Interestingly, as we shall see in a while, the problem of Christians becoming seditious (or being accused of it) remained an issue in Chrysostom's time, even with the emperor sharing the same orthodox faith.

In most cases, however, it is not surprising that bishops would encourage obedience to imperial authority, since civil disobedience could invite the emperor's wrath and make the practice of religion more difficult. Indeed, Chrysostom tells his congregation that if Paul commanded believers to obey an emperor who was an unbeliever, much more should they (i.e., Chrysostom and his congregation) obey their emperor, who *is* a believer.[48] The challenge for the bishop is to recognise when it is proper to speak out against, or even oppose, an imperial decision. This requires both knowledge of the divine law and the ability to gauge the risks of one's words and actions toward oneself and toward one's community. The bishop's self-imposed limits are therefore not as arbitrary as might first be assumed. The constraints of scripture, pastoral concern, and conscience can be even more crippling than having no claim

[43] *Comp. reg. et mon.* 2 (PG 47.389; Hunter, *Two Treatises*, 71); *In 1 Tim. hom.* 6 (PG 62.531; NPNF 1/13:426).

[44] *In Rom. hom.* 23.1 (PG 60.615; NPNF 1/11:512). You greatly disparage us and make us contemptible (my translation).

[45] Μείζονα ἐμπεπίστευσαι (*In Rom. hom.* 23.3 [PG 60.618]).

[46] *In Rom. hom.* 23.3 (PG 60.618; NPNF 1/11:514).

[47] Ibid. 23.1 (PG 60.616; NPNF 1/11: 512).

[48] Ibid. 23.3 (PG 60.618; NPNF 1/11: 514). See also *De recip. Sev*., a sermon of which we only have the Latin version (PG 52.423-26; trans. in English by Bryson Sewell, "John Chrysostom & Severian of Gabala, Two Homilies on Peace: That Severian Must Be Received & On Peace [De Severiano Recipiendo & De Pace]," Internet Archive, 2014, https://archive.org/details/ChrysostomSeverianDeSeverianoRecipiendoAndDePaceSewell [accessed April 2021], 4).

over the interpretation of divine law. In the hands of an unscrupulous bishop, such an understanding can of course be open to abuse—but Chrysostom was no unscrupulous bishop, and so we observe great tension in his attempts to carry out his episcopal responsibilities in good conscience.

There are several instances where Chrysostom's aims as shepherd of Christ's flock accorded with the imperial agenda, resulting in mutual benefit. In the affair of the statues in Antioch, it was not just Flavian who had an important role to play. While Flavian was at the capital interceding for Antioch and its city officials, Chrysostom was delivering a series of sermons directing people to the spiritual significance of the crisis. On the one hand, he reminded people to repent and to turn to God for deliverance. On the other, he comforted them through reminding them of God's mercy and the intercession of the church.[49] By enjoining the people to seek mercy from God, as well as from the emperor (Theodosius I, Arcadius's father), he was helping defuse the tense situation.[50] We must also again mention the Gainas crisis.[51] Chrysostom seemed to have stood against the emperor at the time that Gainas requested for a church in the city from Arcadius. But we must remember that Gainas was the emperor's enemy. At the height of his power, Gainas made many demands to which Arcadius was forced to accede. For example, Zosimus reports how Gainas schemed with Tribigildus to pillage Phrygia and Asia and used this to pressure Arcadius to get rid of his prefect, Eutropius. He later became powerful enough to have even been able to summon the emperor to him in Chalcedon, where he also got him to give up "the most prominent men in the state": Aurelianus, the consul that year; Saturninus, the ex-

[49] For an extensive exploration of the affairs concerning the statues, especially the competing viewpoints of Chrysostom and Libanius as to who truly secured the pardon from the emperor (i.e., Flavian or Ceasarius, the *magister officiorum* sent by Theodosius to hold an inquiry), see chapter 2 of Stephens's, "Authority," 49-80. Notable information is that Theodosius did not send the pardon for Antioch back with Flavian but later with an imperial courier and after he had met with Caesarius. As such, it is difficult to ascertain the importance of the role Flavian played in the proceedings. I venture, however, that Theodosius's neglect to endorse the bishop or the church (per Stephens's observation) does not mean that the capital (not Theodosius *per se*) did not appreciate the church's cooperation. Chrysostom's fame and usefulness as a preacher may have caught the capital's attention at this time. Perhaps Caesarius, who was consul in 397, said something about him to Eutropius, who would later secure Chrysostom's election as bishop of Constantinople. Stephens has this information in a separate chapter on a separate issue but does not note the possible link. Palladius also says that Eutropius wanted Chrysostom to be bishop, having become acquainted with his excellent qualities when some of the emperor's affairs had taken him to the farther east (*Vit. Chrys.* 5, [SC 341, 112; Meyer, *Life*, 36]). This does not contradict the idea that he may have paid closer attention to Chrysostom after first hearing about him from a colleague.

[50] For example, *De stat.* 17.2; 21.2, 3 (PG 49.174, 213-14, 216; NPNF 1/9:454§6, 483-84§6, 485§10).

[51] See chapter 1, pp. 76-77.

consul; John, the emperor's confidant.[52] These things must have caused deep shame to the emperor, as they demonstrated his helplessness. But in at least the instance of Gainas requesting a church in the city for Arians (because Gainas and his Goths were Arians)—Chrysostom gave Arcadius a "way out". Invoking divine law, he stood in solidarity with the emperor against Gainas's demand. Indeed, in this instance, the emperor accepted his intervention.

Chrysostom's interventions were not always successful, however, and the bishop did not always stand in solidarity with the emperor. We have examples of Chrysostom attempting to protect, from exile and/or death, two men who appealed to the church for sanctuary. The more famous example is the aforementioned Eutropius, who, according to Sozomen, originally served as chief of eunuchs before attaining consular and patrician dignity.[53] The great influence he held in court is evinced by such acts as arranging the marriage between Arcadius and Eudoxia; scheming with powerful generals like Stilicho and Gainas to bring about the downfall of Rufinus and other political rivals; and, indeed, ensuring that Chrysostom was elected bishop of Constantinople against the objections of Theophilus of Alexandria.[54] Eutropius managed to antagonise many factions. The pagan historian, Zosimus, depicts him as power-hungry and greedy, taking the wealth and properties of his rivals.[55] The *anomoeans* also disliked him for refusing requests concerning the burial of their leader, Eunomius.[56] Despite Eutropius's initial support of Chrysostom, his relationship with the official Christian church was also tenuous. He ignored the law of church asylum to depose his political rival, Timasius, and afterwards issued a law against seeking refuge in churches.[57] For this reason, and perhaps for other things the details of which we do not know, Chrysostom describes him as one who "used to war against the church" and who was its "enemy."[58]

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[52] Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.14, 18 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 3:20-22, 26-28; Ridley, *New*, 105, 107-108).

[53] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.7 (SC 516, 266; NPNF 2/2:403-404).

[54] See Zos. *Hist. nov.* 5.3, 7-12 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 8-9, 13-19; Ridley, *New*, 100, 102-105) for Eutropius's political machinations. The Christian historians, meanwhile, report on Eutropius's role in Chrysostom's election. See Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 242; NPNF 2/2: 400); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.2 (SC 505, 262; NPNF 2/2:138); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 112-14; Meyer, *Life*, 36). Ps-Martyrius also notes Theophilus's opposition to Chrysostom's election but does not mention Eutropius (*Or.* 36 [Wallraff, *Oratio*, 86-88; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 60]).

[55] Zos. *Hist. nov.* 5.10, 12 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 17-18, 19; Ridley, *New*, 103-105).

[56] Philost., *Hist. eccl.* 11.5 (Bidez and Winkelmann, Philostorgius, 135; Amidon, *Church*, 147).

[57] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.7 (SC 516, 266-68; NPNF 2/2:403-404); cf. Socr. 6.5 (SC 505, 272-74; NPNF 2/2:140).

[58] *In Eutr.* 3 (PG 52.393-94; Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, trans., *John Chrysostom*, 135-36).

It happened that Eutropius himself lost the emperor's favour (Socrates). Arcadius was already being pressured by Gainas to get rid of him (Zosimus), and Eutropius sealed his fate by getting into a verbal altercation with the empress and insulting her (Zosimus, Sozomen, Philostorgius).[59] In any case, Eutropius fled to the church as a suppliant. At the time of his flight, soldiers were clamouring for his slaughter, and the emperor himself had to appease them on account that Eutropius was clinging to the church's altar.[60] The emperor was only delaying Eutropius's arrest, however, perhaps to avoid another major public disturbance should his soldiers storm the church. Chrysostom knew it because the sermon that describes this event, *In capto Eutropium*, was a plea for Eutropius's life. He highlights Eutropius's wretchedness and the church's magnanimity to appeal to the members of his congregation, some of whom were criticising the church for receiving Eutropius, to use their voices to move the emperor to change his verdict.[61] Chrysostom exhorts them, "Let's approach the generous emperor and plead for the sake of the church and of the altar, he favour the sacred table in respect of this one man."[62] Despite Chrysostom's pleas, Eutropius was eventually taken from the church, exiled, and later beheaded.[63] However, in this example, we see how imperial and episcopal powers can have conflicting aims. The emperor had political reasons for wishing to get rid of Eutropius. In this instance, Chrysostom had to stand against him, because upholding his role as bishop meant advocating for a universal concept of mercy based on the mercy of God. Chrysostom's most striking claim in the sermon was that Eutropius, by his misfortune, had "come to know both the power and philanthropy of the church" which was willing to take him in "like a compassionate mother, and stood up to the emperor's anger and popular rage and unbearable hatred."[64]

Another example of Chrysostom standing up for the church's right to give asylum is worth mentioning because, in this instance, he seems to have done so at

[59] See Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.18 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 26-28; Ridley, *New*, 107); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.7 (SC 516, 268; NPNF 2/2:404); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.5 (SC 505, 272-74; NPNF 2/2:140); Philost., *Hist. eccl.* 11.6 (Bidez and Wilkelmann, *Philostorgius*, 136-37; Amidon, *Church*, 147-48). See also *Cod. Theod.* 9.40.17 (*Theodosian Code*, 257-58) for the edict confiscating Eutropius's property and stripping him of his consulship.

[60] *In Eutr.* 4 (PG 52.395; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 138).

[61] Ibid. 1 (PG 52.393; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 135).

[62] Ibid. 5 (PG 52.396; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 138).

[63] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.7 (SC 516, 268-70; NPNF 2/2:404); Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.18 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 26-28; Ridley, *New*, 107); Philost., *Hist. eccl.* 11.6 (Bidez and Winkelmann, Philostorgius,136-37; Amidon, *Church*, 148).

[64] *In Eutr.* 3 (PG 52.393-94; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 135-36).

great risk to himself. In a sermon that has come down to us under the title, *De capto Eutropio*, Chrysostom describes how he tried to prevent the capture of an unnamed man, who came to the church for sanctuary. However, the man *left* the church instead of holding fast to the altar, and it was outside the walls of the church that the emperor's soldiers took him.[65] Scholars believe that, contrary to the title, this sermon was not about Eutropius. Whereas Chrysostom indisputably protected Eutropius, the man that was the subject of this sermon was someone Chrysostom was accused of giving up.[66] We cannot ascertain who the subject of the sermon was.[67] Regardless, according to Chrysostom, when an army came seeking the refugee, the Church (meaning himself) withstood them. Chrysostom saw the protection of refugees as part of his work as bishop. We know this because he justifies his resistance by quoting Matthew 16:18, "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Although the refugee went out of the walls of the church, Chrysostom still tried to protect him, claiming the church does not just refer to the literal walls of the church but to the laws of the Church. He says, "When thou takest refuge in a Church, do not seek shelter merely in the place but in the spirit of the place. For the Church is not wall and roof but faith and life."[68] Because of what he tried to do, Chrysostom himself was hurried away to the imperial palace. He claims he was "forcibly dragged away" and he was expecting punishment (though we do not know if he indeed received punishment on this instance). But he claims to have maintained his stance, and, by meditating on heaven, resurrections, and heavenly prizes, was not dismayed.[69]

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[65] *De capt. Eutr.* 1 (PG 52.395-97; W. R. W. Stephens, trans., NPNF 1/9:252-53). Only the first two paragraphs of the sermon are acknowledged by scholarly consensus as genuine. See discussion in Alan Cameron, "A Misidentified Homily of Chrysostom," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 32 (1988): 35.

[66] *De capt. Eutr.* 1 (PG 52.397; NPNF 1/9:253).

[67] The most probable candidate, convincingly argued by Cameron, is the *comes*, John, who was one of the hostages Gainas demanded from Arcadius. In the Synod of the Oak, Chrysostom was accused of having refused John asylum. Some thought the same thing, perhaps, after the incident happened, necessitating Chrysostom's defence that he did not, in fact, abandon John. John left the church ("Misidentified," 33-38).

[68] *De capt. Eutr.* 1 (PG 52.397; NPNF 1/9:253). Daniel Salyers independently makes a similar observation, based on a study of Chrysostom's ecclesiology, that the church is not bound by spatial limitation but defined by moral laws which governed the Christian's life. See "'Clutching the Altar with Chattering Teeth': Exploring the Ancient Custom of Asylum-Seeking Through the Lens of John Chrysostom" (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2020), 205, 244.

[69] *De capt. Eutr.* 1-2 (PG 52.397-98; NPNF 1/9:253).

1.3 Chrysostom's Deposition: Further Examples of Resistance

Based on how Chrysostom wielded episcopal power, it is not surprising that imperial authorities later became wary of him. Ancient sources tend to fixate on his conflict with Eudoxia as the main reason he lost imperial support. Reports are unanimous that Eudoxia was personally invested in twice convening a council to depose and exile Chrysostom—either because Chrysostom often and publicly censured her for avaricious conduct or she was manipulated by Chrysostom's enemies into thinking that he did.[70] Alongside Theophilus, she was portrayed as masterminding Chrysostom's destruction.

Modern scholars, however, have increasingly challenged the reliability of these allegations. First, several have pointed out that the persecution of Chrysostom and his followers continued and even worsened after Eudoxia's death in 6 October AD 404, suggesting she was not the primary instigator.[71] Secondly, they point to a lack of evidence with regard to the purported reason for Eudoxia's animosity. For example, Chrysostom reportedly sealed his fate when, after being recalled from his first exile, he again insulted Eudoxia either by comparing her to Herodias (Socrates, Sozomen) or Jezebel (Palladius). But we have no proof that such a sermon or sermons existed. Texts purporting to be those in question (*Sermo antequam iret in exsilium* and *Sermo cum iret in exsilium*) have been linguistically and thematically proven to either be spurious or deeply corrupt.[72] And the story of Chrysostom criticising Eudoxia for seizing someone's property in the manner of Jezebel does not exist in any contemporary source. It was drawn from the *Vita Porphyrii* (late fifth-sixth century), which contains many fictional and legendary elements.[73]

Of course, the lack of primary evidence does not mean that the conflict between

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[70] Ps Mart., *Or*. 36 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 86-88; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 59-60); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.16 (SC 516, 302-304; NPNF 2/2:409); Socr. *Hist. eccl.* 6.15 (SC 505, 324; NPNF 2/2:148-49); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 8 (SC 341, 178; Meyer, *Life*, 57); Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.23 (Paschoud, Zosime, 34-35; Ridley, *New*, 110-11).

[71] Liebeschuetz, "Fall," 3; Roland Delmaire, too, on the basis of anti-Johannite legislation late in 404, and, drawing from him, Mayer. See Mayer, "Media," 161.

[72] *Ant. ir. in exsil.* (PG 52.427-32); *Cum. ir. in exsil.* (PG 52.435-38). See extensive discussion in Mayer, "Media," 151-156. Also in Barnes and Bevan, introduction to *Funerary*, 16-17, 27-28.

[73] And appears in other late *vitae* like *Vit. Epiph.* (late fifth to sixth century) (PL 63.207-240) and *Vit. Chrys.* by George of Alexandria (seventh century) (François Halkin, ed., *Douze récits byzantins sur Saint Jean Chrysostome*, SH 60 [Brussels: Société des Bollandistes, 1977). The story, as Barnes and Bevan argue, was in the first place probably inspired by Palladius's report that Chrysostom had called Eudoxia "Jezebel." See fuller discussion in Barnes and Bevan, introduction to *Funerary*, 28-29. *Vit. Porph.* borrows from Theodoret, which accounts for its late date.

Chrysostom and the empress was entirely fabricated, but it does raise the possibility that the ancient sources were engaged in some kind of tactical misdirection. For example, Mayer argues that even if Chrysostom did not make the comparison between Eudoxia and the female biblical villains himself, Pseudo-Chrysostomian homilies evince that his supporters certainly did. She suggests, in agreement with Sever Voicu, that they might have done so to use Eudoxia as a scapegoat for his deposition. That is, it allowed the Johannites to depict themselves as the persecuted church, but it also let them exempt Arcadius from the role of persecutor. To aid their cause, the blame had to fall squarely on Eudoxia.[74]

Similar to Mayer and Voicu, I believe that Eudoxia's purported animosity towards Chrysostom is exaggerated. I would also add that the Johannites had to depict themselves as the persecuted church not only to garner sympathy from the authorities and the public but to deflect blame for the disturbances partly caused by *Chrysostom's* wilful resistance, which were a direct result of his views on episcopal authority. That is to say, Chrysostom's criticism of Eudoxia may have contributed to his deposition, but that did not warrant his exile and death. For this, we have to think about what happened after his deposition and how he handled it. Did the political authorities have reason to see him as a threat?

Chrysostom's first deposition caused a popular uprising, sufficiently large that he was recalled after only a few days.[75] As Sozomen and Socrates report it, when the public learned of the decree of Theophilus's council, they rose up in sedition and ran to the church. Chrysostom's supporters immediately attempted two things: first, they prevented officers sent by the emperor from carrying out Chrysostom's banishment. Second, they immediately clamoured for a larger council that would reverse the Synod of the Oak's decision. To avoid being blamed for disobeying the emperor's mandate and inciting an insurrection, Chrysostom was said to have *secretly* escaped church at noon three days after his deposition.[76] In Chrysostom's own account, however, related in a letter to Innocent of Rome, he does not say he escaped quietly. Instead, one late

[74] See Mayer, "Media," 160-66.

[75] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 (SC 341, 180-84; Meyer, *Life*, 57-58); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 66-67 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 120-22; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 77-78).

[76] Identical accounts in Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.18 (SC 516, 310-14; NPNF 2/2:410) and Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.15 (SC 505, 326-28; NPNF 2/2:149). Ps-Mart. also claims Chrysostom left quietly (*Or.* 58 [Wallraff, *Oratio*, 110; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 72-73]). Even then, Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 10 reports that one of the Christian officers had to warn him that Lucius was going to drag him out if he did not hurry and leave quietly (SC 341, 206; Meyer, *Life*, 66).

evening, as he "was being swept along with the whole populace," he was "arrested by the chief spy [*curiosus*]…. in the centre of the city…. dragged off by force and put aboard a ship which set sail that night at the very time [he] was calling a synod for a just trial."[77]

The discrepancy in the reports of how Chrysostom left Constantinople is important. Although we may not be able to prove which version is accurate, what is important to note is that the Johannite narrative that informed Sozomen's and Socrates's reports wanted Chrysostom to appear more submissive. This was likely to show that he had no hand in the disturbances that followed, and that he cared for the wellbeing of the citizens more than for his own position. But Chrysostom's idea was different. For him, his innocence could only be proven by his resistance, by the fact that he did not abandon his duty as bishop, not even in the face of the emperor's command. This latter act is more consistent with the Chrysostom we see in *De capt. Eutr.*, who had to be taken away because he stubbornly upheld what he believed to be the duty of the church. We would not perhaps go so far as Zosimus, who, understandably disliking the head of the Christian church, depicted Chrysostom as one who skilfully and intentionally controlled the mob.[78] But I do believe that, rather than being the man of the Johannite narratives who meekly accepted his fate, who sacrificed his position for the peace of the city, Chrysostom acted in ways that inspired his followers to resist the injustice done to him. Unfortunately, from the viewpoint of the imperial power, Chrysostom and the Johannites, by their resistance, were causing the disturbances in the city. Indeed, after Chrysostom's departure, multiple demonstrations were held by his supporters in public spaces—in churches, marketplaces, and at the emperor's palace, demanding his recall. The people openly insulted not only the council that deposed Chrysostom but also the emperor. Finally, to appease the public, the emperor had Chrysostom recalled.[79]

Chrysostom's enemies refused to give up the war, however. Given Chrysostom's previous resistive attitude toward imperial command, and the events

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[77] *ep. 1 ad Innoc.* 2 (PG 52.532; Meyer, *Life*, 19); Theodoret also says Chrysostom was "forced" to quit Constantinople (*Hist. eccl.* 5.35 [SC 530, 470; NPNF 2/3: 153-54§34]).

[78] Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.23-24 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 34-38; Ridley, *New*, 110-12).

[79] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.18 (SC 516, 310-14; NPNF 2/2:410-11); cf. Socr. 6.16 (SC 505, 328-32; NPNF 2/2:149). Other purported reasons for his recall were that Eudoxia suffered a miscarriage (Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 9 [SC 341,180; Meyer, *Life,* 57]; Ps-Mart., *Or*. 66-67 [Wallraff, *Oratio*, 120-22; Barnes and Bevan, Funerary, 77-78]) or there was an earthquake (Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.35 [SC 530, 470; NPNF 2/3:154§34]).

after his first deposition that proved him to be an influential and disruptive force, it was not difficult to convince Arcadius to get rid of him for good. And so, as Lent was approaching, Chrysostom was summoned to the emperor's audience halls and was offered voluntary retirement first. But Chrysostom declined, saying it would be a great sin to abandon his charge and he would rather die. He was thus arrested and expelled,[80] and control of the church of Constantinople was given to his opponents, Leontius of Ancyra and Ammonius of Laodicea and their cohorts, Acacius of Beroea, Antiochus of Ptolemais, and Severian of Gabala.[81]

When Chrysostom was expelled, he was not, however, rushed out of the city at once but was made to stay in the bishop's quarters.[82] To avoid another uprising, the emperor still hoped he would leave voluntarily. However, on the Great Sabbath (i.e., Holy Saturday), Chrysostom again disobeyed a command to leave.[83] Meanwhile, Chrysostom's supporters were resisting pressure to commune with his enemies,[84] and separated themselves by worshipping in other churches. Pseudo-Martyrius claims this was sanctioned by Leontius and Ammonius—but to trick them.[85] During Easter, Johannite priests and deacons were celebrating the mysteries in church when Chrysostom's enemies returned with soldiers to attack them and to compel them to commune with Leontius and his company. No one was spared from attack because Chrysostom's enemies had chosen pagan soldiers, who were ignorant of the mysteries, to carry out the deed.[86] After being driven out from there, the Johannites

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[80] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 87 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 142; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 88); cf. a slightly different version of the event in Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 (SC 341, 190-92; Meyer, *Life*, 61).

[81] Ps-Mart. identifies Leontius and Ammonius not by name but by description (see Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 86n182, 89n192); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 names the other three. But all are involved one way or the other in the rest of the narrative (SC 341, 196; Meyer, *Life*, 62).

[82] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 (SC 341, 192; Meyer, *Life*, 61); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.21 (SC 516, 324; NPNF 2/2:412).

[83] Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 9 (SC 341, 192-94; Meyer, *Life*, 61-62). On that same day, some bishop allies of Chrysostom caught the emperor and empress at the shrine of martyrs and asked them to spare the Johannites as it was Paschal season, but they would not listen.

[84] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 89 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 144; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 89). Leontius and Ammonius had apparently encouraged them to communion with unspecified bishops who had not wronged Chrysostom but who would side with his enemies later.

[85] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 91 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 146; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 90). I.e., in different church buildings besides *the* church of Constantinople.

[86] There seems to be a discrepancy among the sources here. Sozomen says they were gathered in church (singular) (*Hist. eccl.* 8.21 [SC 516, 324; NPNF 2/2:412]). Ps-Martyrius says they were gathered in churches (plural) (*Or.* 91, 93 [Wallraff, *Oratio*, 146, 148-50; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 90-92]). Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 9 mentions no church at all, stating the action occurred at the baths of Constantine (SC 341, 194-96; Meyer, *Life*, 62). However, it is possible to solve the discrepancy. Regarding time: Ps-Martyrius specifies the expulsion from the churches was a nighttime event; Palladius says it was in the morning that the Johannites were gathered at the baths (an event Ps-Martyrius also records). So, the Johannites may have started the baptismal rites in the churches,

celebrated the Paschal feast in the public baths named after Constantius. They were driven out again by the prefect, Lucius, and his soldiers.[87] The Johannites that got away then ran to the hippodrome the day after the baths episode and assembled on a spot outside the walls of the city, and afterwards in different places as separate assemblies.[88] Chrysostom's resistance also occasioned assassination attempts on his life, one of which ended with an assassin killing at least one person and wounding a number who were in his way.[89] Finally, Chrysostom's enemies begged the emperor to remove him from their midst and for his blood to lie on their heads. So, the emperor ordered Chrysostom through a notary to leave the city, saying Chrysostom's enemies—Acacius of Beroea, Antiochus of Ptolemais, Severian of Gabala, and Cyrinus of Chalcedon—had taken upon themselves the responsibility for his condemnation.[90]

Though Chrysostom eventually obeyed the emperor's mandate enjoining his immediate departure, escaping unnoticed,[91] his physical departure did not end the problem. What came next was a fire that burned the church and the Grand House of the Senatorial Council to the south of the church. The question of who set the fire is an interesting one. Palladius blames Leontius and Ammonius,[92] but Ps-Martyrius seems willing to concede that some Johannites did it, though it was unplanned, and they were inflamed by secret agents from Chrysostom's enemies who had infiltrated their ranks.[93] Regardless, from the perspective of the law enforcers, the Johannites

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then moved to continue it in the baths, only to be dispersed again. As to place, the Johannites may have indeed been gathered in churches, the unspecified church Sozomen mentions being just one of them. This church may be the church of Constantinople, even though Ps-Martyrius says the Johannites no longer met there—they may have tried on this important occasion and Ps-Martyrius is simply covering up the trespass.

[87] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.21 (SC 516, 324-26; NPNF 2/2:412); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 95-96 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 150-52; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 92-93).

[88] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 97 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 152; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 93); Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.21 (SC 516, 326; NPNF 2/2:412); cf. Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 (SC 341, 194-98; Meyer, *Life*, 64).

[89] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.21-22 (SC 516, 326-28; NPNF 2/2:413); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 105 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 158-60; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 97).

[90] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 108 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 164; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 99); cf. Pall., 10, which says this happened five days after Pentecost (SC 341, 204-206; Meyer, *Life*, 65-66).

[91] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.22 (SC 516, 328; NPNF 2/2:413); cf. Ps-Mart., *Or.* 109 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 164; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 99).

[92] Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 9 (SC 341, 186; Meyer, *Life*, 59).

[93] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 111 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 166; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 100).

were responsible,[94] and the new prefect, Optatus, another pagan, punished them.[95] Johannite gatherings were dispersed, bishops were imprisoned or expelled from the church, and some were forced to hide or to flee from the city. A reader and cantor, Eutropius, was tortured to reveal the names of those that burned the church though he disclosed no information, and a presbyter, Tigrius, was killed.[96] Olympias, Chrysostom's deaconess and very wealthy friend, was fined many talents of gold and eventually driven out of the city to Nicomedia.[97] Besides being punished for the fire, the Johannites were persecuted to force them to commune with Arsacius, who was made the new bishop of Constantinople, and then, after Arsacius died, with his successor, Atticus. As Palladius reports, edicts were issued expelling bishops from churches and depriving them of their property. Dignitaries were demoted from high positions, soldiers lost their girdles (i.e., were dismissed from office), and civilians, including craftsmen, were heavily fined and banished.[98]

From the perspective of imperial power, the chaotic situation in the capital cannot but be traced to the fact that, although Chrysostom had left the city, he had not given up his claim to the episcopacy. This was problematic to Arcadius for other reasons. First of all, the Johannites did not just live in the capital. Chrysostom had many allies from the surrounding Eastern provinces.[99] Second, even in exile, Chrysostom's fame was undiminished, inspiring his supporters to keep up the resistance. Sozomen reports how, even in exile, he used money received from Olympias and others to purchase the liberty of captives of Isaurian robbers, restoring them to their families. He went on teaching wherever he was and was still able to receive visitors and keep up correspondence with friends. He was still beloved in Armenia, Antioch, and other parts of Syria and Cilicia.[100] Palladius likewise talks of Chrysostom's popularity in Cucusus in Armenia, even when he was transferred to the much remoter Arabissus, and how he kept gaining followers from the church of

[94] An opinion shared by Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.18 (SC 505, 340; NPNF 2/2:151) and Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.24 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 35-38; Ridley, *New*, 112-13).

[95] See Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.23-24 (SC 516, 332-42; NPNF 2/2:413-15); Ps-Mart., *Or*. 112, 116, 118, 123 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 166-78; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 100-106); Thdt., *Hist. eccl.* 5.36 (SC 530, 474; NPNF 2/3:154§34).

[96] Ps-Mart., *Or*. 125 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 180; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 107).

[97] Ibid. 120, 130-31 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 174, 184-86; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 104, 110-11).

[98] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 11 (SC 341, 216-20; Meyer, *Life,* 70); cf. Edicts of January 29, September 11, and November 18, AD 404 (*Cod. Theod.* 16.4.4-6 [*Theodosian Code*, 449-50]).

[99] We can see this from Palladius's list of Johannite bishops (*Vit. Chrys*. 20 [SC 341, 396-406; Meyer, *Life,* 132-35]).

[100] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.27 (SC 516, 356-58; NPNF 2/2:417).

Antioch.[101] Thus, even if his enemies had control of Constantinople, there was very real hope that Chrysostom could have garnered enough support in the Eastern provinces to get himself reinstated. This is corroborated by Mayer's study of Chrysostom's letters in exile. In "The Bishop as Crisis Manager," Mayer examines what goals Chrysostom had as a bishop out of location and how he achieved them. Seeking his rehabilitation was his number one priority. For example, immediately upon arrival in Cucusus in September 404, he sent 12 letters to a cluster of bishops in the regions of Palestine and Cilicia, seeking their support. What is interesting about these letters, and others Chrysostom wrote, was his strategy of highlighting the isolation and misery of his place of exile when writing to powerful civic and ecclesiastical leaders "who have not yet assisted him in a way that he requires or whose support is hesitant." However, to supporters, he writes in a cheerful, optimistic tone.[102] The point is, he had not given up the fight.

Third,—Chrysostom's biggest gamble and what perhaps ultimately sealed his fate—was that he sought help from Rome. Although Chrysostom addressed his appeal to the pope, Innocent, and not to the western emperor, Honorius, he must have known that Innocent could only intervene in the matters of the East if he also had imperial support. After all, Chrysostom had been ejected at Arcadius's command and the Johannites were being ordered to commune with Arsacius and Atticus with imperial edicts. And, so, Arcadius could not but take Chrysostom's wilful resistance as a challenge to his authority. Indeed, when Innocent sent an embassy from Rome accompanied by Eastern bishops in league with Chrysostom to formally request Honorius and Arcadius to convoke a council for Chrysostom, Ps-Martyrius accuses Atticus of framing it as though this was done to insult the Eastern emperor. So, Innocent's ambassadors were ignominiously dismissed.[103] It makes sense that the

[101] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 11 (SC 341, 220-22; Meyer, *Life*, 69-71).

[102] See discussion (including examples of other letters) in Wendy Mayer, "The Bishop as a Crisis Manager. An Exploration of Early Fifth-Century Episcopal Strategy," in *Studies of Religion and Politics in the Early Christian Centuries*, ed. David Luckensmeyer and Pauline Allen (Strathfield, Australia: St Pauls, 2010), 159-70. She bases her analysis on Delamaire's carefully documented letters. See more examples of Chrysostom employing exilic *topoi* (following the likes of Cicero, Ovid, and Dio Chrysostom) in Mayer, "Deconstructing," 248-57. Mayer's analysis is that Chrysostom was constructing the persona of an exile and not always objective reality. This was part of his campaign for rehabilitation. In particular, he was not as isolated as he leads some to think. For example, as late as spring 406, a presbyter named Evethius was available to him to take certain letters to Rome and bring back replies.

[103] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 134 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 190-92; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 112-13).; cf. Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.28 (SC 516, 360-62; NPNF 2/2:417-18).

Eastern empire, if not Arcadius himself, distrusted the intentions of the Western envoys even though the issue they were contesting was about church and not politics. As we have seen, the jurisdictions at this time of the religious and the political spheres were extremely blurred. Moreover, Arcadius had reason to be wary of any interference from the Western empire as the Western administrator, Stilicho, had on multiple occasions attempted to either control or undermine him. For example, after Theodosius I's death, Stilicho, who had control of Theodosius's army in the West, had purposely sent weaker armies to the East, wanting influence over the young Arcadius too.[104] He had also conspired to kill Rufinus (who had originally administrated the empire for Arcadius) and supported Eutropius (the same one who later fell out of favour) to gain full control of the court.[105] As late as AD 406, he would be attempting to take territory (Ilyricum) from Arcadius to attach to the Western empire for his own purposes.[106] Given the political tensions that existed between the two halves of the Roman empire, it would not have been difficult to convince Arcadius that Chrysostom, as long as he was alive, was a political liability.

Pseudo-Martyrius and Palladius certainly took Chrysostom's final transfer to a remoter area near the Black Sea as an execution in the sense that there was every intention to kill him. When Pseudo-Martyrius wrote his funeral speech, word of Chrysostom's death had only just reached the capital, and Pseudo-Martyrius was uncertain as to how he died exactly.[107] Palladius, who wrote later, clarifies that he died on the way to his final place of exile, forced, for three months, to travel either in tempestuous rainstorm or under the sun's extreme heat. His health was already poorly, he was bald, and they would not even allow him to go to the baths for some relief. In this way, Chrysostom's body soon succumbed to the difficult journey.[108]

1.4 Summary and Conclusion

Chrysostom's background in Antioch caused him to emphasise ministry, motive, orthodoxy, and the endorsement of other legitimate bishops as conditions for a legitimate claim to apostolic succession. Pastorally, this was necessary because of the greatness of the authority Christ entrusted to the bishop, especially as evinced in

[104] Zos., *Hist. nov.* 5.3 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 8-9; Ridley, *New*, 100).
[105] Ibid. 5.8 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 15; Ridley, *New*, 102-103).
[106] Ibid. 5.26 (Paschoud, *Zosime*, 39-40; Ridley, *New*, 112-13).
[107] Ps-Mart., *Or.* 136 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 192-94; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 114).
[108] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 11 (SC 341, 224-30; Meyer, *Life*, 72-73).

the relationship between bishops and kings. For Chrysostom, imperial/civic authority and episcopal authority are both ordained by God. In theory, the jurisdiction of the former is only over bodies and the latter only over souls. However, in practice, the lines are blurred. Imperial/civic authorities maintain the peace of the city, which is necessary for the flourishing of the Christian religion. Bishops, meanwhile, are the interpreters of divine law, which dictates how Christians participate in civic life. Chrysostom strove to perform his duties guided by the constraints of scripture, pastoral concern, and conscience. This led him at times to work well with imperial/civic authorities but also to resist them when they threatened divine law. I have re-examined key moments in Chrysostom's career in Antioch and especially in Constantinople and have demonstrated the great political influence he held because of his position, his views on episcopal authority, and his outspokenness. He resisted the will of the emperor multiple times and did so again in the events leading up to his deposition and after. These actions made imperial/civic authorities wary of him, more so after his deposition caused much disturbance in the city. Re-examining the various historical accounts, I have argued that Chrysostom was not as docile in the face of expulsion as may be assumed solely from the fact that he eventually left the city quietly. Chrysostom's refusal to give up the fight for his restoration, including the political baggage resulting from his appeal to Rome, ultimately led to his execution.

2. Unity

Having discussed the tensions produced by Chrysostom's views on episcopal authority in relation to imperial/civic authority, we now turn to the equally complex matter of the interplay between episcopal authority and other ecclesiastical powers.

In the face of clashing powers, preserving the unity of the church must be at the top of a bishop's concerns. We will see this in Chrysostom's interpretation of those parts of scripture where Christian leaders come into conflict. Yet, when faced with the dilemma in his own life, Chrysostom acted in ways that raise questions about his commitment to keeping this unity intact. Ancient historians seem keen to show that Chrysostom was very committed to unity. According to the narratives, he tried multiple times to defuse tension even amid the injustice done to him. As we saw, when news of his first deposition arrived at the capital, 1) it is implied he would have left but was kept by his supporters from leaving; 2) when he *was* able to leave, he did so quietly. To add to this, Socrates claims that when Chrysostom was recalled, he only resumed

his duties (despite not yet being cleared of charges) because the people insisted.[109] Palladius, meanwhile, includes two dramatic narratives in his report. First, as the Synod of the Oak was ongoing, Chrysostom was said to have met with forty bishops in the bishop's house. Chrysostom instructed them that, if his enemies were to force them to commune, they should commune but not sign the document condemning him. Chrysostom reassured the bishops that they should keep their position, telling them that the teaching office did not begin and will not end with him.[110] Secondly, before leaving the city after his second deposition, Chrysostom gave a farewell address to Olympias and his other deaconesses, telling them to submit to whomever will be his successor.[111] Putting all these together, the picture we get is of a man willing to relinquish his position and suffer injustice in order to maintain peace in both the church and the city.

And yet, as we began to see in the previous section, there are inconsistencies in this picture. By Chrysostom's own account, in his first deposition, he did not exit voluntarily but was forcefully expelled from the city. In his second one, he delayed leaving, allowing tensions to mount to the point of violence during Easter. And even after leaving, he did not at all relinquish his claim to the see of Constantinople but did everything he could to be reinstated. Some of these inconsistencies have also been noted by Boicu Dragoş, who goes so far as to challenge the words Palladius put into Chrysostom's mouth, or at least Chrysostom's sincerity in calling for unity.[112] Dragos's questioning of Chrysostom's sincerity deserves to be addressed. In this section, I will therefore consider how Chrysostom viewed unity and how far his commitment to it went in light of a bishop's other priorities.

2.1 Human Solidarity and Church Unity

In chapters 2 and 3, we saw how Chrysostom stressed the themes of solidarity and unity at various points in his theological reflection. "Solidarity" is probably the more fitting word to describe how human beings are bound to each other outside the bounds of religious faith and belonging. We saw Chrysostom affirm that 1) human beings share the same nature; 2) God's lovingkindness extends to all people, regardless of

[109] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.16 (SC 505, 330-32; NPNF 2/2:149).
[110] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 8 (SC 341, 164-68; Meyer, *Life*, 52-53).
[111] Ibid. 10 (SC 341, 206-208; 66-67). As long as they did not conspire to obtain the episcopal seat.
[112] See Dragoş, "Let None," 29-45.

their moral standing; 3) everyone stands under God's judgment. On the basis of these principles, Chrysostom encouraged a civic solidarity that transcended social stations and ethnic differences. For example, he repeatedly exhorted the wealthy to change their attitude toward the poor and to share their wealth with the poor, and his liturgical processions welcomed and highlighted participation by all types of people, regardless of gender, race, and social status. Earlier in this chapter, we also stressed that Christians are to pray for all humanity, so much so that Chrysostom can call the bishop, who leads this intercession, a common father to all humanity.

And yet, Chrysostom encouraged division in other ways. His liturgical processions, while open to all, were organised and made more ostentatious to antagonise the *homoians* and eclipse *their* processions. When encouraging his congregation to invite people to hear his preaching, he did not hide his intention to disabuse the visitors of their heresies and convert them to Nicene Christianity. He associated pagan and Jewish celebrations and rituals with demonic activity, and vehemently warned Christians to stay away from their gatherings. He destroyed pagan shrines. He discouraged attendance in traditional places for social activity, such as the hippodromes, the theatres, and the baths.

So, then, when we speak of "unity" in the thought of Chrysostom, we must differentiate it from the "solidarity" he expected all human beings to have based on their common nature and on God's generous blessings to all his creation. On the concept of unity, we find two levels present in Chrysostom's thought.

On the first and at the broadest level, there is a unity of faith. I suggest the shift of vocabulary from "solidarity" to "unity" because the theological concepts Chrysostom uses to describe the Church emphasise "oneness" in addition to "commonality". For example, Chrysostom tells his congregation that many things bind them together: "*One* table is set before all, *one* Father begat us, we are all the issue of the same throes, the same drink hath been given to all; or rather not only the same drink, but also to drink out of *one* cup [ital. mine]."[113] Chrysostom here is describing the unity of Christian community, which, as we have repeatedly emphasised, for him went hand in hand with faith in right doctrine (particularly the *homoousian* triunity of God) and obedience to the moral teachings of the church. Unity of faith is thus foundational in linking together different orthodox communities and forming ecclesiastical alliances. For example,

[113] *In Matt. hom.* 32.7 (PG 57.386; § 10 in NPNF 1/10:217-18).

when Theodosius embraced the Nicene faith as the official religion for Constantinople, he issued an edict identifying the orthodox communities as those who shared in the faith professed by the bishops of Rome and Alexandria.[114] The emphasis on one faith hinging upon shared doctrine is also why, as we argued earlier in this chapter, Chrysostom could be amicable to the Paulinian-Evagrian party despite belonging to the Meletian-Flavian faction. Unity at this broadest level had huge implications for episcopal relationships and, historically, for the events surrounding Chrysostom's deposition. We will return to this complex matter in section 2.3.

Let me first discuss a second level of the unity of faith, which is when a community is bound together under a single bishop. Chrysostom bound the congregation to each other and to himself through the notion of love. This love was no mere fondness or personal feeling. As we said, in *De sac.*, it is rooted in the nature of apostolic succession. The bishop lays claim to Christ's love for His flock and makes it his own.[115] This is important when we consider that Chrysostom came to Constantinople as an outsider. He did not grow up in that city nor serve in its church as he did in Antioch. The people there did not know him except perhaps by reputation, and he had no previous interactions with them that might lead him to claim to be their friend. And yet his sermons assume a deep connection of love between them and him. When Chrysostom, for example, returned from Asia Minor, he delivered a sermon to justify his long sojourn to his congregation. He had no need to justify his absence, he claims, but did so because he was a *slave* of their love for him. He calls them "crazy lovers" for having "displayed burning desire yesterday, frenzy, shouting in the marketplace."[116] Another example is *In Acts hom.* 3, where he expresses his sentiments with such intimacy: "I wish my love for you would be obvious from my face;" "I desire your progress, I love you, hold you close."[117]

In yet another significant example, Chrysostom uses the special bond of love

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[114] In AD 380, *Cunctos Populos* declared to the people of Constantinople that the religion of the empire was that which Peter the Apostle transmitted to the Romans and was being followed by Damasus of Rome and Peter of Alexandria: "the single Deity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, under the concept of equal majesty and of the Holy Trinity" (*Cod. Theod.* 16.1.2 [*Theodosian Code*, 440]).

[115] *De sac.* 2.1 (SC 272, 100-104; Neville, *Priesthood*, 53): "[H]e wanted Peter and all of us to learn how much he loves his own Church, in order that we too might show great concern for the same thing."

[116] *De regressu* 9-10 (A. Wenger, ed., "L'homélie de saint Jean Chrysostome 'à son retour d'Asie'." Revue des Études Byzantines 19 (1961), 116, 118; Wendy Mayer and Pauline Allen, trans., *John Chrysostom*, 100-101).

[117] *In Act. apost. hom.* 3.5 (PG 60.42; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 182-83).

between bishop and congregation, and the obedience toward the bishop that comes with it, to broker a reconciliation. This conflict was with Severian of Gabala, a Syrian with whom he was initially friendly until Severian gained too much influence in court. Sarapion, Chrysostom's archdeacon, kindled the fire by telling Chrysostom that Severian was troubling the church. Sarapion and Severian afterwards had an exchange where Sarapion refused to show Severian respect and Severian responded, "If Sarapion die a clergyman, then Christ was not incarnate." For this, Chrysostom was said to have expelled Severian from the city as insolent and blaspheming.[118] Since Severian had at this time become very popular, the church suffered from the break. Chrysostom does not specify precisely what happened. However, in his sermon calling for reconciliation, he talks of "sorrowful things," "disturbances," and "dissensions." He also specifically exhorts his congregation, "[D]esist, be at peace, restrain your passions, curb your anger."[119] Since the conflict was so public, Chrysostom and Severian had to "bury the hatchet" publicly as well, each delivering a sermon. Severian, who was *not* their bishop, could only make general exhortations to peace via themes of reconciliation in scripture.[120] But Chrysostom could appeal to his flock by evoking the strong and intertwined themes of affection and obedience. He reminds them, primarily, that he is their father and they are his sons, and so they owe him obedience and affection. He makes dramatic expressions of love, saying that he trembles excessively for them and is ready to pour out his blood for them. He calls love a strong wall against the devil. He reminds them all that Christ suffered to bring peace, to unite earthly and heavenly things. Only after this does he ask them to receive Severian with a full heart and open hands.[121]

Because the relationship between bishop and congregation rests on the love, ministry, and authority of *Christ* over his sheep, Chrysostom could also teach that the connection between bishop and congregation remains unbroken even in the physical absence of the bishop. The opportunity to teach this presented itself in the same sermon where Chrysostom explains his time away in Asia Minor. Having missed celebrating Easter with his congregation, he nevertheless tells them they could still

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[118] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.10 (SC 516, 278-80; NPNF 2/2:405); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.11 (SC 505, 304-14; NPNF 2/2:145-46).

[119] *De recip. Sev*. (PG 52.426; Sewell, "Peace," 4).

[120] Sever., *De Pace* (A, Papadopoulos-Kerameus, ed., Ἀνάλεκτα Ἱεροσολυμιτικῆς Σταχυολογίας, vol. 1 [Petropoli: 1891], 15-26; Sewell, trans., "Peace," 5-11).

[121] *De recip. Sev.* (PG 52.426; Sewell, "Peace," 3-4).

celebrate it together "today," since they were observing the "one and the same Easter over and over."[122] Now baptism was also a major event during the Easter service, and Chrysostom addresses assumptions that his absence rendered it ineffective. He argues that, even without his presence, the grace was no less effective and the gift not defective for the large number that was baptized. Though the baptism was not done in his presence, *still it was done in the presence of Christ*. A human being only lends his right hand, but it is God who moves it. The Holy Spirit acts whether conferred through Chrysostom or through other priests. Thus, though Chrysostom was separated from them in body, he was bound close to them in love.[123]

On the one hand, Chrysostom's rhetoric of love built on apostolic succession likely helped inspire the great loyalty we have seen toward him. He did not have to be physically present to be loved and obeyed. As we mentioned earlier, in the Easter service immediately after his second deposition, the mysteries were being carried out not by Chrysostom himself (who was under house arrest) but by priests and other bishops who were loyal to him. Afterwards, even after he departed Constantinople, many refused to accept another bishop. Chrysostom, likewise, continued to care for his church even though he was away. As Mayer has carefully demonstrated, Chrysostom made sure his ministry in Constantinople went on as before. For example, when he received word that the dole normally available to widows and virgins had been cut off, he wrote to a high-ranking person in Constantinople to try to help resolve the issue (*ep.* 217). In another example, in a cluster of three letters sent to Constantinople at the end of November 404, he upbraided presbyters who were neglecting their preaching duties, writing to a certain Theodore, who was the patron of one of them, to correct the situation.[124]

On the other hand, Chrysostom's rhetoric was insufficient to inspire unwavering loyalty under his headship. That Theophilus could so easily turn Chrysostom's own clergy against him is suggestive of a fragile relationship. Chrysostom even concedes that all Theophilus had to do was call Chrysostom's archdeacon and this archdeacon won the clergy over to Theophilus's side.[125] It is important to address why Chrysostom

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[122] *De regressu* 13 (Wenger, "son retour," 118; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 101).
[123] Ibid. 15-17 (Wenger, "son retour," 120; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 102).
[124] Mayer, "Crisis," 168.
[125] *In ep.* 1 *ad Innoc.* 1 (PG 52.531; Meyer, *Life*, 18). Unless Chrysostom had another archdeacon, the archdeacon who betrayed him would have to have been Sarapion. Yet Sarapion was loyal to him against Severian. So why would Sarapion turn against his bishop when it came to his conflict with Theophilus? One reason may be that Sarapion was an Egyptian and felt compelled to

aroused such polarised sentiments from members of his flock. I believe he had genuine fatherly affection for all of them. However, he was stricter toward his clergy than toward his laypeople.

2.2. Chrysostom and His Clergy

Though we have argued in a number of places that Chrysostom tried to hold all Christians to a similar standard of holiness, in truth, he was stricter with the clergy.[126] This is no surprise, given that, in *De sac.*, he felt the clergy had to live more holy lives and be beyond reproach because they were responsible for more people and were meant to set an example for others. Among his first acts as bishop was thus to reform the lives of his clergy.[127] Chrysostom saw rampant injustice, gluttony, falsehood and toadyism among the clergy of Constantinople,[128] faults that became apparent to him because he personally supervised all of the church's affairs. Pseudo-Martyrius tells us "[h]e directed everything by his own efforts and skill."[129] When he was criticised by friends for this, he reasoned that he wanted to manage all because he suspected that the clergy had shown a neglect of the church's affairs.[130] For instance, Palladius reports that Chrysostom felt the church had been making unnecessary expenditures. Thus, he ordered larger portions of the funds of the episcopal household to be shared with the hospital, and he built more hospitals for strangers and especially for those with epilepsy.[131]

Sincere though Chrysostom's philanthropy may have been, taking money out of the episcopal household was also a pointed way to teach his clergy discipline and indicate to them that they should tighten their belts. Other ways Chrysostom reportedly "distressed the clergy" was by denouncing spiritual marriage, making the clergy undertake fasts and avoid the public baths, and calling on them to persevere in nocturnal litanies (annoying those who were accustomed to sleep the whole night

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obey the bishop of Alexandria. If Sarapion had family and other interests in Egypt, he would have had even more reason to fear Theophilus. Based on Chrysostom's words that his archdeacon and others were "led astray" and "trained to be his accusers," he does not seem to have blamed them. Perhaps he was thinking that conceding that they betrayed him would have reflected poorly on his leadership. But Chrysostom may have also been genuinely sympathetic toward them, as, after his first return from exile, he rewarded Sarapion with a bishopric.

[126] See pp. 104, 136-41.

[127] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.3 (SC 516, 242-44; NPNF 2/2:400).

[128] Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 5 (SC 341, 118-26; Meyer, *Life*, 38-39).

[129] Ps-Mart., *Or*. 21-22 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 68-72; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 50-52).

[130] Ibid.

[131] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 5 (SC 341, 122; Meyer, *Life,* 39).

through).[132]

From Chrysostom's own lips, *In Acts hom.* 3, we get an even better sense of his struggles managing his clergy. *In Acts hom.* 3 is interesting because it begins with a teaching drawn from the election of Matthias (Judas's replacement among the Twelve) in Acts 1:12-26. Chrysostom applies the lesson of the story to episcopal election. He tells his congregation (specifically the clergy and bishops that sit amongst them), "If you believe that the election is with God, be not displeased. For it is with Him you are displeased, and with Him you are exasperated: it is He who has made the choice."[133] He then uses the rest of the sermon to exhort members of his audience not to desire the office of the bishop, for it is full of difficulties. Some of these difficulties he previously discussed in *De sac.*, particularly the many responsibilities a bishop is expected to exercise (e.g., preaching, teaching, ordinations, providing for the poor), the many anxieties these cause him, and the many criticisms he receives. For all a bishop does, he is hated and envied. His soul is punctured on all sides by friends, enemies, and strangers.[134] What is new, however, is Chrysostom's emphasis on the use of authority. He compares the bishop to the emperor (as in *De sac*.) but adds that a bishop gets no support from "law and order" to accomplish his duties. If, in the use of authority, he is exceedingly moved (i.e., angry, passionate), he is thought cruel. If not, he is cold. Chrysostom argues that a bishop must be able to balance the two opposites so as not to be despised or hated. In carrying out his duties, Chrysostom laments, a bishop is at times forced to offend people or strike with terror, even when he does not wish to.[135] These counsels of Chrysostom are no longer, as in *De sac.*, theoretical. Neither was he discussing episcopal hardship in general. Chrysostom was delivering this homily in Constantinople, at a time when, as Socrates accusingly puts it, he was correcting his clergy "with more than proper superciliousness," and when he was expelling many of them from the church.[136] Palladius, too, mentions two deacons whom Chrysostom expelled for murder and fornication.[137] Thus, Chrysostom's sermon

[132] Ibid. (SC 341, 118-26; Meyer, *Life*, 38-39); cf. Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.3 (SC 516, 242-44; NPNF 2/2:400). We discussed spiritual marriage in the previous chapter, pp.125-26, 142-43.

[133] *In Act. apost. hom.* 3.4 (PG 60.38; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 178).

[134] Ibid. (PG 60.39; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 178-79). If the bishop, in *De sac.*, is many-sided, here, he is described as "punctured on all sides."

[135] Ibid. (Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 179-80).

[136] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.4 (SC 505, 268; NPNF 2/2:139).

[137] Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 8 (SC 341, 162; Meyer, *Life*, 51). At the Synod of the Oak, an ex-deacon, John, also accuses Chrysostom of wrongful termination, for insulting his clergy multiple times, and for

sounds like an apologia. There were people from the clergy and the congregation who were likely questioning his decisions and perhaps even his election.

Moreover, Chrysostom goes on to discuss a particular problem he talks about generally but which he may have actually been having, if Socrates's and Palladius's reports are trustworthy. What should one do about ordained persons (as Chrysostom does not specify, these may include deacons and priests) inherited from a previous bishop when these (i.e., the deacons and priests) are discovered to have previous sins?[138] Though Chrysostom always reassured his congregation that the road to forgiveness is repentance and that they should repent as many times as needed, he had a much higher standard for priests. In *De sac.*, he recommends that the priest who falls in a manner worthy of deposition should voluntarily resign.[139] This is why, on principle, he could not let even previous sins go unpunished. Chrysostom tells the congregation that a bishop who inherits this kind of problem is thus caught between two precipices: on account of an ordained person's previous sins, should he send the man away or let him stay and serve? He reasons that if he sends the man away, people will object that he cannot, that sending the man away is the responsibility of the one who ordained him (thus, not of the present bishop). But if the present bishop allows the man to stay, it will offend (i.e., σκανδαλίζω, cause to sin) the other members of the clergy because the offense was not dealt with. Even if the present bishop lets the man stay, but does not promote him to another rank, it will be clear to the others that something is wrong and it will offend anyway. But if he promotes him, would that not be even worse?[140]

Chrysostom, in discussing this, does not attempt to provide a solution. One reason could be that he only wanted to stress the difficulty a bishop faces, so a solution would have been of no use. However, it is far more likely that the congregation already knew what he ended up doing and to whom he was referring. Emphasising the difficulties was merely Chrysostom's way of defending the actions he took as bishop. As I have previously noted, Chrysostom was already reforming the clergy as soon as he assumed office. Secondly, what was the point of saying all these things to the

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wrongfully accusing three deacons of stealing his cowl (See Photius, *Bibliotheca* 59 [Barnes and Bevan, trans., appendix A in *Funerary*, 153-54]).

[138] *In Act. apost. hom.* 3.4 (PG 60.40; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 180; cf. a clearer translation of this section in George Stevens [NPNF 1/11:23]).

[139] *De sac.* 3.10 (SC 272, 168; Neville, *Priesthood*, 80).

[140] *In Act. apost. hom.* 3.4 (PG 60.40; Mayer and Allen, *John Chrysostom*, 180).

congregation? If they were not already aware of the matter, Chrysostom would have only embarrassed his clergy and incited gossip by talking publicly about someone else's previous sins. This would have especially been the case if he had ended up allowing the man to stay, which indicates that he probably had not.

The way Chrysostom handled this crisis, including criticisms about his management, and what he consistently taught about the burden of the priesthood, helps to explain why he kept a character like Sarapion as his archdeacon. It is odd that Chrysostom, who celebrated and sought to keep the monk's tranquillity in the midst of harsh ministry, would employ a man who, as Sozomen describes, was "naturally prone to anger" and "always ready to insult his opponents."[141] But Chrysostom's own strictness toward his clergy, and his stubborn refusal to accept criticism with regard to his management, explains why he could appreciate a man like Sarapion, who reportedly urged him to govern the clergy with a rod.[142] So, then, while Chrysostom's teachings on love and unity could work well with his congregation, the matter was not so simple with the clergy. Chrysostom perceived that they, too, were in a position of authority with regard to the flock, and he was in a position of authority with regard to them. He was aware his reforms were perceived by some as overly harsh, but, in the end, he made the decisions that he hoped would keep the priesthood free from scandal. His critics may reproach him for harshness, but they could not reproach him for allowing sin to flourish in the ranks of the clergy.[143]

2.3 Unity and Bishops

We now turn to the promised extended discussion of what we previously identified as Christian unity existing on the first and at the broadest level—that of orthodoxy. This time, however, we will discuss its significance for episcopal relationships, as well as the effects it had on the events surrounding Chrysostom's

[141] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.9 (SC 516, 274; NPNF 2/2:404).

[142] Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.4 (SC 505, 268-70; NPNF 2/2:139).

[143] Indeed, Pigott argues that Chrysostom was not unnecessarily severe on his clergy and that he did not impose his personal rigour on them. For example, by rerouting church funds from the episcopal household toward the care of the poor, Chrysostom was simply exercising an episcopal strategy already practiced "empire-wide." Moreover, he was strict on his clergy because he was strategically rehabilitating their public image so as to win more popular support for Nicene Christianity (as opposed to relying only on imperial support). See "Capital Crimes," 760-64. Pigott is likely right about Chrysostom's intentions, but further analysis is required to fairly critique Chrysostom's severity: 1) Chrysostom's desired reforms may have been commonplace, but his specific implementation of those reforms may not have been; 2) Some of the practices he enforced, even if commonplace, could, in the first place, have been unnecessarily severe for all clergy everywhere; 3) Instead of adjusting his unpopular policies, Chrysostom took a defensive stance.

deposition.

Chrysostom's main episcopal conflict was with Theophilus, the bishop of the prestigious see of Alexandria and patriarch of Egypt. Their conflict was not, at least on the surface, a conflict about orthodoxy. The Origenist controversy was involved because of Theophilus's war on the Tall Brothers, whom Chrysostom was forced to aid, but Theophilus and Chrysostom did not contend with each other on the matter of Origenism. I will not go so far as to say doctrine was not involved in the conflict at all. As I will endeavour to show, doctrinal differences *were* part of the issue. But doctrine was not the main issue. The breakdown of "unity" was for another reason—ecclesiastical politics. That is, two bishops were acting within their prerogatives as bishops, managing their respective episcopal territories and discharging their duties as they saw fit. Our goal is to explore and nuance how such a breakdown could happen without caricaturing one party as the hero and the other as the villain. This is not to say that no underhanded tricks were employed. Theophilus was certainly very shrewd in how he engineered Chrysostom's deposition, but we must consider that he felt his actions justified given what he perceived was Chrysostom's unlawful interference in the affairs of Egypt. Drawing on reports, letters, and analysing the actions of both parties, we will see that the conflict they found themselves in was complex.

Our main concern is still Chrysostom's viewpoint, however. I will therefore first discuss how he interpreted apostolic conflicts in scripture. Because he clung to the concept of apostolic succession, apostolic unity was, for him, an example for bishops to follow. This discussion will therefore reveal his thoughts on conflict between Christian leaders, how it ought to be handled, and why it is important to maintain unity and peace.

2.3.1 Apostolic and Episcopal Unity: Chrysostom's Theological Justifications

There are two instances of major apostolic conflicts recorded in scripture. The first, recounted in Paul's epistle to the Galatians 2:11-16, concerns Paul's confrontation with Peter regarding Jewish association with Gentiles in Antioch. The second, recorded in Acts 15:36-39, was the disagreement between Paul and Barnabas on whether to take Mark on a missionary journey after he had previously abandoned them.

In the epistle to the Galatians, Paul relates his confrontation with Peter as follows: Peter had, for some time, been associating freely with the Gentile Christians

in Antioch. However, when messengers from James came from Jerusalem, Peter stopped associating with the Gentiles, presumably because it was offensive to the Jews. Paul thus confronted Peter and publicly exposed his hypocrisy.

In her detailed study of Chrysostom's sermon, *In illud: In faciem ei restiti*, Mitchell demonstrates Chrysostom's creativity in proving that despite their confrontation, Paul and Peter, "the pillars of the church," were actually "bound together with one another by the bonds of love."[144] Chrysostom uses various examples from scripture to show that Peter was courageous, not cowardly (and, therefore, not hypocritical), and that Paul was not contentious for the sake of his own vainglory (cf. Acts 2:24, 34-25; Gal. 1:18).[145] It just so happened that Christ gave specific missions to each apostle: Peter to go to the Jews, Paul to go to the Gentiles.[146] Peter was employing condescension (συγκατάβασις) to teach the Jews from James. He perceived they were not yet ready to abandon Jewish customs. Out of fear for (not of) them, lest they lose faith at seeing Peter freely associating with Gentiles, he returned to his former concession by observing food laws. The Jews who lived in Antioch were unaware of Peter's intent and joined in—this ignorant action by the Antiochene Jews was what Paul was accusing.[147] In truth, however, Peter and Paul had an understanding. They had the same underlying intention (γνώμη) to set the Jews from James free from the Law. A direct teaching from Peter would not have sufficed because, not understanding his strategy of concession toward them, the Jews from James would say his words contradicted his prior actions. They also would not have listened to Paul because they had an aversion to him due to his former reputation as persecutor of the church. So, Peter arranged with Paul in advance for Paul to reprove Peter in an exaggerated fashion. As Mitchell puts it, for Chrysostom, Peter's silence in this instance was more effective than the tongue of Paul to correct those who came from James and also to return the Jewish believers at Antioch to their original position. Paul was not Peter's adversary but the interpreter of his silence. The shared aim of both was to have their teaching readily accepted.[148]

Chrysostom's arguments demonstrate his keen interest in defending apostolic

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[144] *In. fac. ei rest.* (PG 51.371-88); Margaret Mitchell, "Peter's 'Hypocrisy' and Paul's: Two 'Hypocrites' at the Foundation of Early Christianity," *New Testament Studies* 58, no. 2 (April 2012): 223-24

[145] Ibid., 226-28.

[146] Ibid., 229.

[147] Ibid., 230-32.

[148] Ibid., 231-33.

harmony. But why was this so important to him? Besides providing a general apology against those that may exploit apostolic dissension to criticise the Christian faith, Susan Griffiths reminds us that the setting of Paul and Peter's conflict, indeed the same setting where Chrysostom delivered the sermon, is very important: it is Antioch.[149] Chrysostom's Antioch, as we have repeatedly noted, was deeply divided between followers of different bishops. The story of Peter and Paul's conflict would have resonated with them. Where the story might be used to justify their disunity, Chrysostom tells them to examine the evidence more closely. He interprets it as a story of apostolic harmony, simultaneously reminding his congregation of Antioch's ties to the apostles, and, in Griffith's words, making "a plea to the citizens of the city to rise up and be praiseworthy." [150] Indeed, Griffith is correct in noting that, for Chrysostom, the real city to be praised is God's city, as, at his conclusion, he exhorts his audience to be tightly bound in burning love for each other, so that they may be found worthy of seeing Peter and Paul and be found in the midst of their tents in the city not made by men but God.[151] Put another way, in an ideal scenario, Christianity and Christian leadership should give people a reason to love each other and to be united, not tear them apart.

These same concerns for unity and for how it plays out in Christian leadership per God's *oikonomia* (in the sense that Peter and Paul each had their mission) are present in Chrysostom's discussion of the conflict recorded in Acts 15:36-39 between Paul and Barnabas. Paul and Barnabas were planning to visit and strengthen the churches they had planted on a previous missionary journey. Barnabas wanted to take Mark, but Paul did not, because Mark had deserted them on an earlier trip. Disagreeing about what to do with Mark, they parted ways. Paul went to Syria and Cilicia and Barnabas, with Mark, continued on to Cyprus. Commenting on this text, Chrysostom argues that God sometimes allows disagreements among his ministers. Their disagreement was not evil because they were not contending for the sake of human honour but were doing so by the arrangement of "divine providence." Both, that is, had the intention to serve faithfully. Both "acted upon their human judgment" with the intention to teach. Chrysostom speculates that God, knowing Paul's character was

[149] See Susan Griffith, "Apostolic Authority and the 'Incident at Antioch': Chrysostom on Galatians 2:11-14," *SP* 96 (2017): 120-23.

[150] Ibid., 123-26.

[151] Ibid., 125-26.

more vehement (but not to say he was never gentle), sent him to Syria and Cilicia, where such a disposition was probably needed. Barnabas's softer character was probably more needed in Cyprus. Though the two disagreed, they did not withdraw in enmity, as evinced by Paul giving Barnabas many encomiums in his epistles. Chrysostom thinks they spoke to one another and agreed to withdraw from each other so that each other's plans could stand. Moreover, their respective actions proved beneficial for Mark, who was converted out of awe of Paul, but was not left behind, thanks to the kindness of Barnabas. If only awed, Mark would have condemned himself; if only favoured, he would have loved Barnabas exceedingly but would not have been corrected. It was thanks to both that he was kept from falling.[152]

2.3.2 Unravelling Chrysostom vs. Theophilus and the Coalition of Minor Bishops

We can see from the previous examples how important it was to Chrysostom to maintain the unity of the pillars of the church. This greatly influenced how he acted toward Theophilus in the initial stages of their conflict. But Theophilus did not have quite the same regard for him, nor did they share the same γνώμη on the various issues connected to their conflict. Coming to a peaceful resolution would have been very difficult, if not impossible, for these two men who had very clear ideas about their authority and who could be uncompromising about their respective responsibilities and priorities.

In the following discussion, I will address three considerations that exacerbated the troubles between them: 1) doctrine and control; 2) primacy; and 3) ecclesiastical politics within Constantinople.

1. Doctrine and Control

Although neither Theophilus's nor Chrysostom's orthodoxy was ever in question, orthodoxy played an important part in their conflict, for Theophilus had justified his persecution of the Tall Brothers by accusing them of Origenism. The Johannite sources claim that this was a false charge, and that Theophilus persecuted the Brothers because they had received Isidore, a presbyter whom Theophilus had initially favoured but later expelled on account of financial impropriety.[153] Theophilus

[152] See *In Act. apost. hom.* 34.2 (PG 60.247; J. Walker et al., trans., NPNF 1/11:212-14).

[153] Either that or because Isidore had sided with Theophilus's arch-presbyter, Peter, whom Theophilus had expelled also because of financial matters. See Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.12 (SC 516,

had then become angry with Chrysostom because *he* gave the Brothers refuge in Constantinople. Regardless of the real issue, Theophilus had judged the Brothers to be heretics. Susanna Elm therefore argues that Chrysostom, in allowing the Brothers to stay, questioned the legitimacy of Theophilus's actions and thus his competency in judging doctrinal issues. This constituted interference in the affairs of Alexandria.[154]

While Elm captures Theophilus's viewpoint accurately, what about Chrysostom? Is it right to think he was simply naïve about the implications of his actions? This is unlikely, as the historical sources show he was careful not to receive the Brothers *in communion*, although he characteristically offered hospitality.[155] Was his hand forced to help them? Perhaps, especially when the Brothers, frustrated with his refusal to do anything more than write to Theophilus, appealed to the empress themselves.[156] But it is important that Chrysostom *did* write to Theophilus to try to reconcile them. While we do not have the exact contents of his letter, as we shall see, Chrysostom did have an opinion about the Brothers' orthodoxy, an opinion that exacerbated the conflict between him and Theophilus.

But first things first. What kind of Origenism was being disputed and why did Theophilus consider it heresy? Although the ancient historians say that Theophilus charged the monks with Origenism, they define Origenism seemingly only as the opposite of divine anthropomorphism, i.e., of God having some kind of corporeal form. For example, Sozomen juxtaposes "Origenism" against divine anthropomorphism by stressing that Theophilus formerly taught that God was incorporeal but that he became an anthropomorphist *and* rejected the books of Origen after being violently threatened by anthropomorphist monks.[157] Later, he reports that Theophilus knew the Tall Brothers were Origenists, so he brought them into conflict with monks who maintained the "*other* view [ital. mine]"—i.e., the Anthropomorphists.[158] He does not describe any

284-88; NPNF 2/2:406); cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.9 (SC 505, 298-302; NPNF 2/2:144-45); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 6 (SC 341, 130-40; Meyer, *Life*, 42-44).

[154] Susanna Elm, "The Dog That Did Not Bark: Doctrine and Patriarchal Authority in the Conflict Between Theophilus of Alexandria and John Chrysostom of Constantinople," in *Christian Origins: Theology, Rhetoric and Community*, ed. Lewis Ayres and Gareth Jones (London: Routledge, 1998), 79.

[155] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.13 (SC 516, 290; NPNF 2/2:407); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 7 (SC 341, 148-54; Meyer, *Life*, 47-48). Had he not, his other enemies would probably have criticised him for it.

[156] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.13 (SC 516, 292; NPNF 2/2:407); Ps-Mart., *Or.* 36 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 86-88; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 59-60); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 8 (SC 341, 156; Meyer, *Life*, 49).

[157] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.11 (SC 516, 282-84; NPNF 2/2:406).

[158] Ibid. 8.12 (SC 516, 288; NPNF 2/2:407); cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.7 (SC 505, 292-94; NPNF 2/2:142-43).

other theological aspects of Origenism, not even when the great anti-Origenist theologian, Epiphanius of Salamis, enters the narrative. This might have been on purpose. Palladius, a well-known Origenist advocate, does not describe any of the theological issues either, focusing only on Theophilus's dispute with the Brothers about accepting Isidore. Meanwhile, Socrates is very defensive of Origen and his teachings.[159] Since these mid-fifth-century historians were evidently sympathetic to Origen or to Origenism as it existed in their region between the latter half of the fourth century and the mid-fifth century, it is likely that they wished to downplay the grave accusations against Origenism that had previously circulated. For, as Elizabeth Clark has shown, the Origenist controversy in which Theophilus became involved was more than a dispute about divine anthropomorphism.

From at least the 370s, the decade when Epiphanius wrote his anti-heresy manifestos, *Ancoratus* and *Panarion* 64, the Origenist controversy was a major issue in Palestine and Egypt, involving such figures also as John of Jerusalem and Jerome. Epiphanius, and, later, Theophilus (through synodal and festal letters), accuse the Origenists of the gravest heresy, including teaching the subordination of the Son and denying the resurrection of the body.[160] To be fair, these accusations may have been misinterpretations of Origen, or they may have indeed been taught by some that misunderstood Origen. But the point is that the incorporeality of God was the least of Epiphanius's and Theophilus's worries. Indeed, despite being anti-Origenists, Clark notes that Epiphanius was also an iconoclast who taught that scripture correctly ruled out images, as God is incomprehensible and inexpressible.[161] He famously ripped out a curtain in a Palestinian church that was decorated with an image either of Christ or one of the saints.[162] Meanwhile, Theophilus, at one point, was able to be anti-Origenist but also to ally himself with anti-Anthropomorphites.[163] And, indeed, Chrysostom himself taught the incorporeality of God yet was never accused of Origenism.[164]

Either, therefore, the ancient sources were intentionally downplaying the

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[159] Socr., *Hist eccl.* 6.9 (SC 505, 300-302; NPNF 2/2:144-45).

[160] See chapter 3 of Elizabeth Clark, *The Origenist Controversy: The Cultural Construction of an Early Christian Debate* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 85-121.

[161] See Clark, *Origenist*, 103-104. This is based on a pamphlet against images and on a letter he wrote to Theodosius I in about AD 393-94.

[162] Ibid., 102-103.

[163] Ibid., 120. That is to say, in AD 403, he was still writing against Origenism but also wrote that Anthropomorphites were "uncultivated and simpleminded" and heretical.

[164] For example, in *C. anom. hom.* 2.190-93 (SC 28bis, 158; § 22 in Harkins, *Incomprehensible*, 79), Chrysostom describes God as one "who has no body."

reasonableness of Theophilus's actions (i.e., outrightly rejecting that he had any valid doctrinal concerns) or they were sympathetic to Origenism and so avoided mentioning anti-Origenist accusations. In like manner, I suggest that Chrysostom, too, did not see Origenism as posing a doctrinal concern. For if Origenism had been a problem in Constantinople and nearby areas, he would have said something about it, since he often refutes heretical groups and teachings in his sermons. We have shown in previous chapters that Chrysostom especially had a lot to say about Christ's equality with God and about bodily resurrection, so why would he keep silent? Instead, we have Chrysostom reportedly writing to Theophilus that he saw nothing amiss with the orthodoxy of the Tall Brothers, and that Theophilus should send an accuser if he still had concerns.[165] While Chrysostom may have been ignorant of the disturbances that Origenism caused in Palestine and Egypt, he surely must have had some knowledge of Epiphanius's works or even access to some of the contents of the synodal and festal letters that Theophilus was writing from AD 399-404.[166] Theophilus's mistake was to expect that he could compel Constantinople to accept his condemnation of Origen and his persecution of the Tall Brothers without any pushback when they were not experiencing the same problems with Origenism as Egypt and Palestine. And, in Chrysostom's defence, he was willing enough to concede his ignorance of Egypt's affairs and to let Theophilus judge his domain as he saw fit. But when Theophilus sent Epiphanius to try to form a synod that would condemn Origen's writings in Chrysostom's territory, Chrysostom could not allow it.[167]

If my analysis is correct, then the issue of orthodoxy played a more important

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[165] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.13 (SC 516, 290-92; NPNF 2/2:407); cf. Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* (SC 341, 150-54; Meyer, *Life*, 47-49).

[166] Some of these letters have been translated and preserved in Jerome's epistles. See Jerome's *Ep*. 63; 86.1-2; 92; 96; 98 (Isidor Hilberg, ed., *S. Eusebii Hieronymi: Epistulae*. 3 vols. CSEL 54, 55, 56 [Vienna: F. Tempsky, 1910-1918]). Clark also lists fragments from six letters that Theophilus wrote against Origenists when he arrived at Constantinople in AD 403, including letters to Atticus and Sarapion. This is preserved in an anti-Origenist florilegium of the sixth century (*Origenist*, 118-21).

[167] Chrysostom reportedly paid little attention to their letters calling on him to set up a council to ban Origen's works (Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.14 [SC 516, 292-98; NPNF 2/2:407-408]; Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.10 [SC 505, 302-304; NPNF 2/2:145]). When Epiphanius arrived, he refused all of Chrysostom's offers of hospitality unless Chrysostom denounced the works of Origen and expelled the Tall Brothers. In Socrates' account, he privately assembled all the bishops residing in Constantinople and showed them the decrees he had issued against the discourses of Origen. Some approved the decrees, some objected. Sozomen reports he planned to stage a coup at the Church of the Apostles (denouncing Origen, Dioscorus, and Chrysostom as abetter of those heretics – Socrates reports he was able to do this. But in both accounts, Chrysostom sent word warning him that he was causing an insurrection and would be blamed (Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.14 [SC 516, 296-98; NPNF 2/2:408]; Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.10 [SC 505, 302-304; NPNF 2/2:145]).

role in the conflict between Theophilus and Chrysostom than has been recognised. This was not just a question of orthodoxy being an expression of authority. There were actual doctrinal differences at stake. Of course, there is evidence that Theophilus's anti-Origenist stance was insincere. As Clark has demonstrated, he combated it for only four years, coinciding with the time he began persecuting the Tall Brothers and desisting sometime in AD 404,[168] after they had reconciled in the Synod of the Oak. But the point is that he sided with the anti-Origenists, and Chrysostom refused to validate anti-Origenist accusations for political advantage. That Chrysostom did not address the theological merits or demerits of Origenism was perhaps due to the fact that, again, it was not yet a problem in his territory. Secondly, he would not have had time to make it his problem, given more pressing concerns during those last, tumultuous years. But because he believed in the Brothers' orthodoxy, he was motivated to help broker a reconciliation between them and Theophilus, although neither party wanted it.

2. Primacy

The ancient sources make a point of telling us that even before Chrysostom's election to the see of Constantinople, Theophilus wanted control over the see. No wonder—for canon 3 of Constantinople 381 granted the bishop of Constantinople seniority of honour second only to the bishop of Rome.[169] Control over the see of Constantinople would have increased the power and influence of the see of Alexandria. It was therefore a blow to Theophilus that the episcopal candidate of his choosing, Isidore, his own presbyter, was passed over in favour of Chrysostom.[170] Worse, Chrysostom was from Antioch, which rivalled Alexandria in history and eminence. Alexandria may have claim over Athanasius, but Antioch boasted historical-scriptural ties to Peter and Paul. Furthermore, Chrysostom belonged to the Meletian-Flavian faction, whereas Alexandria had supported Paulinus.

Of course, I do not think that Theophilus had reason to be hostile to Chrysostom on these grounds alone. Chrysostom had even asked for his help to get Flavian legitimised by Rome. However, from Theophilus's perspective, they had no strong ties

[168] Clark, *Origenist*, 106-21.

[169] Liebeschuetz, "Fall," 5; cf. Josepho Alberigo et al., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta*, 3rd ed. (Bologna: Instituto Per Le Scienze Religiose, 1973), 32.

[170] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 240-42; NPNF 2/2:400); cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.5 (SC 505, 274; NPNF 2/2:140).

to each other. If a matter should arise that threatened Theophilus, he must have thought that Chrysostom had the personality and background to freely challenge him. Theophilus was probably wrong about this. As I have endeavoured to demonstrate, Chrysostom, because of his theological convictions about the apostolic succession and unity between Christian leaders, tried to show deference to him. It likely mattered to Chrysostom, too, that Theophilus had probably been among the bishops that ordained him, since Theophilus was the most senior bishop present during Chrysostom's election. But Theophilus did not give these ties with Chrysostom the same regard. He ignored Chrysostom's attempts at reconciling him with the Tall Brothers, probably thinking that any kind of concession on his part would make Chrysostom think he had power over him. And when Theophilus was finally summoned by the emperor to answer to the Brothers' charges before Chrysostom,[171] he thought that Chrysostom would not shy away from the task. If he were to stand trial before Chrysostom, this would confirm the primacy of the see of Constantinople, and, to a smaller extent the see of Antioch, because of its association with Chrysostom, over the see of Alexandria. This was the very thing Theophilus had feared at the time of Chrysostom's election. Of course, if the accusations against him had been true, he must also have had personal reasons for wanting Alexandria to stay ahead, as Chrysostom suggests in his letter to Rome.[172] That is to say, Theophilus required the primacy of the see of Alexandria to protect himself from accusations of misuse of authority. The plight of the Tall Brothers is an example of how he misused his power and influence. Justified or not, he imprisoned them, drove them out of their home in the Desert, and, most importantly, opposed their petitions wherever they went (notably, in Jerusalem and Constantinople).[173] Had Chrysostom been an opportunist, he could have used his position in Constantinople and his strong ties with Antioch, and the many bishops that were loyal to him on account of these ties, to pose a challenge to Theophilus. And, indeed, Chrysostom ended up doing precisely this, albeit after he had been deposed.

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[171] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.13 (SC 516, 290-92; NPNF 2/2:407); Ps-Mart., *Or*. 43 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 94; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 63-64); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 8 (SC 341, 156-58; Meyer, *Life*, 49-50).

[172] I.e., Chrysostom says Theophilus ignored his hospitality when the latter came to Constantinople, then treated him like an enemy when the emperor commanded Chrysostom to preside over the case against Theophilus, even though Chrysostom refused (*ep. 1 ad Innoc.* 1 [PG 52.529-31; Meyer*, Life,* 18-19).

[173] See Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.12, 8.13 (SC 516, 286-92; NPNF 2/2:406-407); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.7 (SC 505, 288-94; NPNF 2/2:142-44); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 6-7 (SC 341, 138-49; Meyer, *Life*, 44-47).

To further understand the significance of primacy, let us consider why Rome chose to support Chrysostom. As far as we know, Chrysostom was not closely acquainted with any bishops in the Western sees, nor did he ever have a chance to visit that side of the empire. Yet his reputation as bishop of Constantinople, the backing he had from many other Eastern bishops, the opportunity his dilemma provided for Rome to check the power of Alexandria or indeed to insinuate itself into the political affairs of the East—all these may have motivated Innocent to take Chrysostom's side. Of course, Innocent may have also believed that there were procedural irregularities in Chrysostom's deposition. As such, he had further motivation to check Theophilus's power, and so he called for another synod to investigate. If Rome had done nothing despite Chrysostom's pleas, that would have been as good as acquiescing that the East can take care of themselves. We can sense something of the power of Rome by the things Chrysostom requests of the pope. For example, he asks Innocent to uphold canon law by not letting bishops interfere or expel bishops from other provinces and he asks that Theophilus and his cohorts be subjected to penalties provided by ecclesiastical legislation.[174]

In the end, it is fair to say that ecclesiastical alliances secured Chrysostom's rehabilitation. In the case of Constantinople, Liebeschuetz is probably right that Atticus relented on rehabilitating Chrysostom's memory because Antioch (where support for Chrysostom had been strongest) had first done so. When the people of Constantinople learned about it, they must have insisted on Chrysostom's restoration to the diptychs of Constantinople as well. This would have been easier to grant, since Arcadius and Eudoxia had both died by then.[175] As for Alexandria, whose bishop by then was Cyril, Theophilus's nephew, it would have had little choice but to accept this outcome since Rome, Antioch, and Constantinople had all already done so. Thus, even though it took about three decades—from the time of Chrysostom's exile in AD 404 to AD 438, when his remains were returned to Constantinople and placed under the altar of the Church of the Apostles,[176] Chrysostom's strategy—consolidating and garnering support even in exile, sending an embassy to Rome, maintaining his innocence through his personal suffering, encouraging patient endurance in his supporters—ultimately paid off.

[174] *ep. 1 ad Innoc.* 4 (PG 52.534-36; Meyer, *Life*, 23-24).

[175] Liebeschuetz, "Fall," 31.

[176] Young Richard Kim, "An Iconic Odd Couple: The Hagiographic Rehabilitation of Epiphanius and John Chrysostom," *Church History* 87, no. 4 (December 2018): 1000.

3. Ecclesiastical Politics within Constantinople

Although Theophilus played the main role, he was not the only bishop responsible for Chrysostom's deposition, exile, and death. Theophilus left Constantinople sometime after Chrysostom's recall from his first deposition.[177] Yet Chrysostom was deposed a second time after. We do not hear of Theophilus's direct involvement here anymore except from afar and in a supporting role. The play was in the hands of Leontius of Ancyra, Ammonius of Laodicea, Acacius of Beroea, Antiochus of Ptolemais, Severian of Gabala, and Atticus of Constantinople.[178] The motives of some of these are reported by the ancient historians and give us insight into the episcopal conflicts incited by the competitive political climate that beset the episcopal throne of Constantinople.

The episcopal throne of Constantinople was coveted and there was fierce competition for it. We see this competition even in Chrysostom's election. Sozomen and Socrates report that Chrysostom's election was unanimously endorsed by the clergy and people and approved by the emperor.[179] But Pseudo-Martyrius adds that this unanimous vote came *after a lot of contention*. Not only was Chrysostom's election initially opposed by distinguished people from "the great and illustrious assembly" (i.e., the Senate of Constantinople), but a lot of older clergy apparently pretended to nominate each other while secretly wanting the throne for themselves. In fact, Pseudo-Martyrius ascribes Chrysostom's eventual unanimous election to God's work, indicating that it was something of a miracle.[180]

Chrysostom must have been aware of this too. Indeed, as we saw earlier in *In Acts hom*. 3, he had to defend his election, more so after having made some unpopular decisions. He had reason to believe that his position was always precarious, especially since his see was located in the capital, so close to the emperor and empress and other politically powerful people. Some bishops expressly came to Constantinople to curry favour with these political powers. This, for example, was the case for Severian

[177] Ancient sources try to show he left in the face of Chrysostom's triumphant return. See *ep. 1 ad Innoc.* 2 (PG 52.532; Meyer, *Life*, 20); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.17 (SC 505, 332-34; NPNF 2/2:150). Ps-Mart., *Or.* 80-85 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 132-40; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 83-87); Pall., *Vit. Chrys.* 9 (SC 341, 180; Meyer, *Life*, 57-58).

[178] These names appear frequently in the ancient sources engineering Chrysostom's exile and the persecution of the Johannites. Cyrinus of Chalcedon and Arsacius of Constantinople are also frequently mentioned, but they did not outlive Chrysostom.

[179] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.2 (SC 516, 238-40; NPNF 2/2:400); Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.2 (SC 505, 260; NPNF 2/2:138).

[180] Ps-Mart., *Or*. 14-15 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 60-62; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 46-47).

of Gabala, who followed the example of Antiochus of Ptolemais. Antiochus gained renown because of his discourses and was able to amass some property before returning to his own city.[181] Severian, too, managed to gain the admiration of the emperor and empress for his preaching. Initially, Chrysostom was also friendly with Severian,[182] so much so that he commended the care of the church to Severian when he went to Asia.[183] Sozomen notes, however, that Chrysostom became jealous when it began to seem to him that Severian "thought of only gratifying his auditors and pleasing people with his discourses."[184] This jealousy likely had nothing to do with Severian's skill (Chrysostom surpassed him) but with the fact that Severian was gaining power and influence by virtue of his closeness to the imperial family. Even if he was not a threat to Chrysostom's position *per se*, he could cause problems for Chrysostom if, or indeed *when*, they clashed. As we saw in the sermon Chrysostom delivered after he was "forced" by Eudoxia to "reconcile" with Severian,[185] Sarapion was not far off the mark for suggesting that Severian was troubling the church, for Severian's expulsion apparently caused fighting within the church of Constantinople. Ancient historians would also repeatedly single Severian out for cooperating with Eudoxia to get rid of Chrysostom.[186] Besides Severian, some bishops apparently used their connections with the imperial family to speak badly about Chrysostom, pretending certain homilies he delivered were making sport of the empress and of others of the royal court.[187] Conversely, it was rumoured that Chrysostom delivered a particularly scathing sermon against Eudoxia due to his belief that it was Eudoxia who turned Epiphanius against him.[188] While we cannot ascertain the truthfulness of this rumour, we can to a reasonable degree affirm that the politics in Constantinople gave its bishop cause to be concerned about the security of his position and to be uncertain of who

[181] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.10 (SC 516, 278; NPNF 2/2:405).

[182] Ps-Mart., understandably, is more critical of Severian. He calls him "a bishop of the least among the cities of Syria" who spoke "trivial words" and was of "uncertain parentage." Chrysostom let him flourish at first so as not to destroy his reputation or appear envious, but he finally "persuaded Severian to keep quiet because he had nothing to say" (*Or.* 17 [Wallraff, *Oratio*, 64; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 48-49]).

[183] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.10 (SC 516, 278-80; NPNF 2/2:405).

[184] Ibid.

[185] Ibid.; cf. pp.190-91 above.

[186] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.16 (SC 516, 302; NPNF 2/2:409); cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.15 (SC 505, 324; NPNF 2/2:148).

[187] Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 6 (SC 341, 126; Meyer, *Life*, 40).

[188] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.16 (SC 516, 302; NPNF 2/2:409); cf. Socr., *Hist. eccl.* 6.15 (SC 505, 324; NPNF 2/2:148). Sozomen claims he lacks sufficient data to ascertain it.

his true friends were.[189]

A sense of insecurity set visiting bishops *against* the bishop of Constantinople as well. Some perceived his actions, even well-meaning, as intending to control them or to harm their advancement. For example, Sozomen notes that when Chrysostom told Olympias, who gave financial favours to many bishops and clergy (both mainstays and visiting), not to give too liberally to the already wealthy, he angered many of the clergy.[190] And then there was Acacius of Beroea, who was offended that he was not given the exact lodgings he desired when he visited Constantinople. What could have caused the extreme anger of this otherwise ascetic and hospitable man against Chrysostom?[191] Could paranoia have made him think that a simple, practical decision was an intentional slight against him? Perhaps Acacius expected special treatment from Chrysostom. After all, many years before, he and Diodore of Tarsus had together ordained Flavian, Chrysostom's bishop in Antioch, at the risk of the displeasure of Rome. And Acacius, with Isidore, had been on the embassy that later secured Flavian's legitimacy with Rome.[192] How dare Chrysostom then refuse his request? Acacius of Beroea was heard saying in the presence of Chrysostom's clergy: "I am going to season a pot for him."[193]

2.4 Summary and Conclusion

Chrysostom advocated human solidarity and Christian unity, with the latter having two levels. However, his commitment to Christian unity was tested and ultimately surpassed by other priorities. As bishop, Chrysostom sought to bind his congregation to each other and to himself by appealing to love and obedience founded upon the love, ministry, and authority of Christ. This worked well with his congregation but not with his clergy, for Chrysostom was much harsher on his clergy on account that they, too, were in positions of authority. Unity between legitimate bishops was also important to Chrysostom, as demonstrated in his interpretations of two infamous apostolic disputes in scripture. It is thus not surprising that Chrysostom extended

[189] See also Pigott, "Capital Crimes," 765-70 for other examples of why Chrysostom would have been wary of visiting clergy. I arrive at my views independently from Pigott, but Pigott also convincingly describes the unique challenges Chrysostom faced due to the abundant availability of opportunities for aristocratic and imperial patronage at Constantinople.

[190] Sozom., *Hist. eccl.* 8.9 (SC 516, 274; NPNF 2/2:404-405).

[191] Ibid. 7.28 (SC 516, 214; NPNF 2/2:396).

[192] Ibid. 7.11, 8.3 (SC 516, 112; NPNF 2/2:382, 400-401).

[193] Pall., *Vit. Chrys*. 6 (SC 341, 126; Meyer, *Life*, 41); Ps-Mart., *Or*. 45 (Wallraff, *Oratio*, 96-98; Barnes and Bevan, *Funerary*, 64-65).

Theophilus various courtesies, most exceptionally, by trying to reconcile him with the Tall Brothers and by refusing the emperor's direct command to judge Theophilus in trial. However, Chrysostom's commitment to unity soon waned because Theophilus did not share the same goals of reconciliation with him. Their conflict was exacerbated by issues of doctrine and primacy. We also demonstrated that Chrysostom was not as committed to unity between bishops in practice as in theory because of the political environment in Constantinople. The political opportunities and advancement proffered through direct contact with the imperial family and other powerful people made Constantinople a breeding place for paranoia and conflict between Chrysostom and visiting bishops.

3. The Nature of Priestly Ministry

In this last section, we return to a sustained discussion of Chrysostom's theology, assessing his views on the nature of priestly ministry. As we have seen, for Chrysostom, authority and ministry are inextricably linked, and both are grounded in Christology and the concept of the apostolic succession. We have already noted the continuity of Christ's earthly ministry with that of the apostles and with that of the Christian priest. However, we must also discuss the relationship between Christ's High Priesthood and the Christian priesthood. As we shall see, Chrysostom's discussion of this relationship combines the various examples of priestly ministry we have covered and gets to the heart and meaning of priestly ministry itself.

3.1 The High Priesthood of Christ

Before we can compare priestly ministry with Christ's High Priesthood, we must first understand how Chrysostom defined and understood Christ's High Priesthood. Fortunately, in a collection of thirty-four homilies on the book of Hebrews, Chrysostom dedicates eight to expository discussions on just this theme.[194] *Hom.* 7 comments on Hebrews 4:14-16, while *hom.* 11-17 discuss concepts from Hebrews 6:20-9:26.

Hom. 7 establishes a theological point that Chrysostom sustains throughout

[194] The provenance of the homilies is uncertain, but Allen and Mayer compellingly argue against the assumption that they were all delivered as part of the same series. Each homily must be investigated for itself, and, even then, it is difficult or impossible in some cases to ascertain if Chrysostom delivered a certain homily in Antioch or Constantinople. See Pauline Allen and Wendy Mayer, "The Thirty-Four Homilies on Hebrews: The Last Series Delivered by Chrysostom in Constantinople?" *Byzantion* 65, no. 2 (1995): 309-348. Regardless, as we shall see, there is a consistency in Chrysostom's theological reflections due to being anchored on the exposition of a single epistle.

hom. 11-17, namely, that Christ's High Priesthood pertains to His condescension. In Hebrews 4:14-15, Christ is described as a High Priest able to sympathise with human weakness. It is a natural reference to the incarnation. Yet Chrysostom does not dwell on the incarnation nor on its implications. Instead, he chooses to defend Christ's divinity. He points out how the passage that immediately precedes vv.14-15 emphasises that nothing is hidden from *God's* sight (v.13). It is a reference, he argues, to Christ's divinity. Thus, in calling Christ High Priest, Paul, whom Chrysostom believed to be the author of Hebrews, is stressing Christ's condescension.[195] To further support his argument, Chrysostom points to v.16, where the epistle, on the basis of Christ's High Priesthood, invites the reader to draw near to "the throne of grace." Christ has a throne, Chrysostom argues, whereas a Hebraic priest does not sit but stands. That Christ chooses to stand (i.e., as High Priest) is therefore not of *nature* (i.e., of His being God) but of grace, condescension, and humiliation. In the exhortation, Chrysostom seems to want to emphasise Christ's loving kindness without sacrificing His authority. He essentially calls the congregation to repentance, interpreting "the throne of grace" as the present time, a *time* of grace.[196] Christ will judge later at the *eschaton*. Presently, the congregation are called only to come in faith and to show gratitude by living a life of virtue. Chrysostom especially exhorts older people not to use their age as an excuse to be lax in virtue. Quite the opposite, they should stop acting like children and instead be masters of their passions. As we have seen multiple times, he insists that the beatitudes and the biblical teachings against lust are not only for monastics but for everyone.[197] Aptly, because the emphasis of the text and of Chrysostom's sermon is on the accessibility of Christ, there is no mention of human (as opposed to divinely incarnate) priesthood.

The next set of sermons to be discussed (*hom*. 11-17) are expositions of Hebrews 6:20-9:26. In *hom.* 11, Chrysostom introduces what will be his consistent thesis for the next set of homilies: "Our High Priest is on high, far better than those among the Jews, not in the kind of Priesthood only, but also in the place, and the tabernacle, and the covenant, and the person. And this also is spoken εἰς το κατὰ σάρκα."[198] The note "εἰς το κατὰ σάρκα" again refers to the incarnation, a call back to

[195] *In Heb. hom.* 7.1-2 (PG 63.61-63; § 2-4 in Frederic Gardiner, trans., NPNF 1/14:398-99).
[196] Ibid. 7.2-3 (PG 63.63-65; § 6-8 in NPNF 1/14:400-401).
[197] Ibid. 7.3-4 (PG 63.65-68; § 8-11 in NPNF 1/14:401-402).
[198] Ibid. 11.2-3 (PG 63.92; § 4-5 in NPNF 1/14:419-20).

Christ's condescension. If Christ had not condescended, the comparisons Paul (and Chrysostom) are about to make between the Son and human priests would not even be possible. In *hom.* 12 and 13, Chrysostom begins elaborating on this comparison, by clarifying what Paul meant when he taught that Christ is high priest "after the order of Melchizedek."

What does it mean and why did Paul teach it? Chrysostom argues, firstly, that the descriptions used of Melchizedek—such as that he had no parents and no beginning or end—are interpreted by Paul mystically, in the sense that he is using Melchizedek as a type of Christ. Literally, Melchizedek can only be described as parentless and without beginning or end because his genealogy is not given, and we know nothing of when he was born or when he died. Paul describes Melchizedek in this way, Chrysostom argues, to show that Melchizedek's priesthood is more glorious than the Jewish priesthood, and that Melchizedek was greater than even their forefathers (since Abraham submitted a tithe to Melchizedek). Since Melchizedek is a type of Christ, this means, Christ, who is the reality, is far superior to even Melchizedek. Christ is the One who is truly ("from the very nature of the reality") without beginning or end. In this sense he is parentless, even though He has a Father.[199]

Chrysostom also ascribes a dual meaning to the description that Christ is a priest "after the order of Melchizedek." "After" (κατὰ) means "according to" but also "coming after". The sense of "according to" is used in order to identify Christ's priesthood with Melchizedek's whilst simultaneously distancing it from the Aaronic priesthood. Christ's priesthood is "according to" that of Melchizedek; hence, it is *not* a Jewish (or Hebraic) priesthood. This was important for Chrysostom because he saw the Jewish priesthood as purely sacerdotal, whereas Melchizedek was a king, and thus his priesthood was also regal. Similarly, Christ's priesthood is "both regal and sacerdotal." Chrysostom writes, " … King indeed He always was, but has become Priest from the time that He assumed the Flesh, that He offered the sacrifice."[200] Meanwhile, the force of κατὰ as "coming after" is to indicate the superiority of Christ's priesthood over both Melchizedek's and Aaron's, since His priesthood came after both of theirs. Chrysostom argues that the introduction of something new, be it the priesthood or the covenant, indicates something better.[201] Indeed, Christ's priesthood

[199] *In Heb. hom.* 12.1-2 (PG 63.97-98; § 3 in NPNF 1/14:423-24).
[200] Ibid. 13.1 (PG 63.101-103; § 1-2 in NPNF 1/14:427-28).
[201] Ibid.

is superior because: 1) it is eternal as Christ is eternal, so that "He lives by His own power"; 2) Christ's priesthood was made with an oath from God ("You are priest forever…"); 3) unlike Hebraic priests, Christ is one priest, having no successors because He is immortal; 4) Christ lives always, and He can intercede continually. This last consideration, Chrysostom claims, is a sign of His condescension. For, being God and judge of all and able to do anything He pleases, Christ really has no need to intercede, but does it anyway to take away our fears by demonstrating that His love for us and His confidence toward the Father are continuous and eternal.[202]

The central event of Christ's priestly ministry, however, is not intercession but sacrifice. As particular actions, intercession and sacrifice have some distinction. As noted, the intercession is continuous. But, with regard to the sacrifice, Chrysostom says Christ executed the priest's office once, and then sat down on His throne.[203] What is the nature of this sacrifice? In *hom.* 14-17, Chrysostom begins by discussing the location of the sacrifice: the church versus the tabernacle. Actually, location does not sufficiently convey Chrysostom's interpretation. Chrysostom writes:

> [W]hen our Lord Jesus Christ lies slain [as a sacrifice], when the Spirit is with us, when He who sits on the right hand of the Father is here, when sons are made by the Washing, when they are fellow citizens of those in Heaven, when we have a country, and a city, and a citizenship there, when we are strangers to things here, how can all these be other than 'heavenly things'?... Are not our Hymns heavenly? Do not we also who are below utter in concert with them the same things which the divine choirs of bodiless powers sing above? Is not the altar also heavenly? How? It has nothing carnal, all spiritual things become the offerings. The sacrifice does not disperse into ashes, or into smoke, or into steamy savor, it makes the things placed there bright and splendid. How again can the rites which we celebrate be other than heavenly? For when He says, "Whose soever sins ye retain they are retained, whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted," when they have the keys of heaven, how can all be other than heavenly?[204]

[202] Ibid. 13.2-3 (PG 63.103-106; § 3-7 in NPNF 1/14:428-30).
[203] Ibid. 13.3 (PG 63.106; § 8 in NPNF 1/14:430).
[204] Ibid. 14.1-2 (PG 63.111-12; § 3 in NPNF 1/14:433-34).

Thus, with the sacrifice, Chrysostom describes a whole *reality* that transcends time, space, and present civic structures, a *reality* concretely manifested in the church but going beyond the walls of the church because it is heavenly. The Hebraic tabernacle and its furniture and cultic practices are only "the example and shadow of holy things," but the church, its priesthood, its ministries, its liturgy, and its citizens are the "holy things," which Chrysostom also calls "heavenly things" and "spiritual things."[205]

Hom. 15 adds further details of the nature of the sacrifice and of what is meant by Christ's superior tabernacle. First, Chrysostom explicitly identifies Christ's once-for-all sacrifice offered in blood (Heb. 9:7) as that sacrifice which He performed on the cross. Second, Chrysostom equates the superior tabernacle not only with the church but with the incarnation (again making Christ's Priesthood a matter of condescension). Chrysostom asserts that when Heb. 9:11 says Christ came as High Priest of a greater and more perfect tabernacle, the tabernacle that is being referred to is Christ himself. God the Word and all the power of the Spirit dwells in Him. This is why the tabernacle is described as "not of this creation" (v.11). It is because Christ, the tabernacle, is "of the Spirit" (Matt. 1:20). Chrysostom thus concludes that Christ did not first come to earth and then become High Priest, but "came and became at the same time," meaning that the incarnation was the purpose of his High Priesthood.[206]

In *hom.* 16, Chrysostom connects Christ's High Priesthood to the ministry of mediation. This is occasioned by Heb. 9:15-18 describing Christ the High Priest as the mediator (μεσίτης) of the new covenant. Chrysostom makes it clear that the Son is mediator between the Father and humanity, and that such mediation is necessary because humanity has offended God and must die for its offence. But Christ intervenes 1) by bringing words from the Father to humanity (thus, teaching); and 2) by His death, making humanity worthy of the testament. As Moses sanctified the people of the old covenant with blood and hyssop, Christ sanctifies Christians with baptism, which is His passion (blood). And this sanctification of Christ's is superior to that of Moses because it washes not just the body but the soul, giving remission of sins.[207] Chrysostom also visits the concept of Christ's mediation in his homily on 1 Tim. 2:4-5. If, in the sermon on Hebrews, he explains the reasons for and the manner of Christ's mediation, in *1 Tim. hom.* 7, he explains why it works. He writes, "For this is the

[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid. 15.1-2 (PG 63.118-19; § 2-4 in NPNF 1/14:439-40).
[207] Ibid. 16.1-2 (PG 63.123-25; § 1-5 in NPNF 1/14:443-44).

property of a mediator, to be in close communion with each of those whose mediator he is."[208] In Christ's case, the closeness in communion is not only relational but *ontological*. Chrysostom explains that Christ could be mediator because only He shares God's nature and human nature:

> Because He was to mediate between two natures, He must approximate to the two natures…. As therefore He became Man, so was He also God. A man could not have become a mediator, because he must also plead with God. God could not have been mediator, since those could not receive Him, toward whom He should have mediated.[209]

Besides focusing on nature, Chrysostom emphasises the attributive "one." As there is one God, so there is one Mediator. But God and the Mediator are not two (even if reason assumes one and one are two) but one.[210] Although we will later see a connection between Christ's mediation and human priestly mediation, we should not forget to emphasise that, here, Chrysostom preserves the uniqueness of Christ's mediation by anchoring it to the uniqueness of His person, Christ being both divine and human.

In *Heb. hom*. 17, Chrysostom finally explicitly relates the High Priesthood of Christ to the performance of the Eucharist (before this, he only implied it). First of all, commenting on the image of Christ entering the Holy of Holies and making an offering for humanity, Chrysostom asserts, "He is Himself then both victim and Priest and sacrifice."[211] Again, he writes, "So Christ was once offered…. By whom?... Evidently by Himself … to bear the sins of many."[212] But why, Chrysostom asks, do Christians offer every day? This is done, he explains, as "a remembrance of His death, and this is one and not many," because the offering is "always the same thing: so that the sacrifice is one."[213] The "one and not many" likely refers to the remembrance of Christ's death as much as to the death itself, since Chrysostom argues that Christ is not many just because the offering is made in many places. Rather, "Christ is one everywhere, being complete here and complete there also, one Body." Moreover,

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[208] *In 1 Tim. hom.* 7.2 (PG 62.536-37; NPNF 1/13:430).
[209] Ibid. (PG 62.537; NPNF 1/13:430).
[210] Ibid.
[211] *In Heb. hom.* 17.1 (PG 63.128; § 3 in NPNF 1/14:447).
[212] Ibid. 17.2 (PG 63.129; § 4 in NPNF 1/14:447-48).
[213] *In Heb. hom.* 17.3 (PG 63.131; § 6 in NPNF 1/14:449).

chronologically, there is no new sacrifice superseding an old sacrifice: “That we offer now also, which was then offered, which cannot be exhausted…. This is done in remembrance of what was then done. For (says He) ‘do this in remembrance of Me.’ (Lk. 22:19)…. It is not another sacrifice, as the High Priest, but we offer always the same, or rather we perform a remembrance of a Sacrifice.” [214] In short, the remembrance and the thing itself are one, just as the High Priest is one. [215] As is usual with Chrysostom, he does not explain how this can be so but only accepts that it is so. He prefers to focus on what Christians ought to do as a result of their encounter with the truth. For *hom.* 11-17, Chrysostom finds a way to close each sermon by correlating the theological point under discussion to the virtues of repentance, almsgiving, and purity, which is not unreminiscent of the moral exhortations we discussed extensively in chapter 3. In the last homily of this series, for example, Chrysostom addresses the number of times a person should partake of the sacrifice, for it seems that some monks only partook of the eucharist once a year or even at an interval of two years. His conclusion is that one should take it as often as one can (the implication being that some monks, living in isolation, may not be able to, and that is fine). The important thing is that when one *does* take it, one does so “with a pure conscience, from a pure heart, with an irreproachable life.”[216] He asks the congregation to note how, after the performance of the sacrifice, a deacon or priest would call only on those who are holy to draw near, “that no person should come to the spiritual fountain carelessly and in a chance way.” When the deacon shouts, “The Holy things for the holy,” Chrysostom explains that this is equivalent to saying, “If any is not holy, let him not draw near,” leaving the responsibility to assess and accuse themselves to each one. Moreover, Chrysostom highlights that to be holy does not simply mean to be free from sin but to have the presence of the Spirit and the wealth of good works.[217]

3.2 Christian Priesthood and the High Priesthood of Christ

Now that we have established Chrysostom’s understanding of the High Priesthood of Christ, we can explore the connection between it and Christian priestly ministry as described in *De sac.* book 3, of which I have given a detailed summary in

[214] Ibid.
[215] Ibid.
[216] *In Heb. hom.* 17.4 (PG 63.131-32; § 7 in NPNF 1/14:449).
[217] Ibid. 17.4-5 (PG 63.132-33; § 8 in NPNF 1/14:449-50).

chapter 1.[218] This comparison is worth making because the passages in book 3 are also centred on the eucharistic sacrifice and evoke the same images and themes that we saw Chrysostom examine in his homilies on Hebrews.

In particular, in *De sac.* 3, as in his homilies on Hebrews, Chrysostom makes similar associations between priestly ministry and heavenly reality. He begins by arguing that, although the priesthood is a ministry performed on earth and by men still in the flesh, the priesthood τῶν ἀγγέλων φαντάζεσθαι διακονίαν (makes visible the ministry of angels) and should be performed as if standing in the midst of heaven itself.[219] But why? Because, Chrysostom argues, again invoking the epistle to the Hebrews, the Christian priesthood ("the ministry of grace") is superior to even the awe-inspiring and fearful elements of the Hebraic priesthood with its bells, ephod, and Holy of Holies. To prove his point, he then conjures up the image of the eucharistic sacrifice—"the Lord sacrificed and lying before you, and the High Priest standing over the sacrifice and praying, and all who partake being tinctured with that precious blood"—then asks his readers, rhetorically, if they are not then and there "transported to heaven" to "look round upon heavenly things?"[220] And then, as he does in his homilies on Hebrews, he expands on the concept of heaven so that heaven is not limited to the notion of space or focused on a singular event but encompasses the whole of Christian life. That is, Chrysostom builds on his previous argument (i.e., that the priest ministers in the midst of heaven) by teaching that the priest has been made the steward of "heavenly things." By being entrusted with the keys to heaven, the priest has been given all the authority needed to care for souls: to teach, to perform the sacraments, to manage the church, and to intercede for humans before God and before kings.[221]

Now, in writing *De sac.* 3, Chrysostom's aim was only to stress the excellence of the priesthood, to correct the opinion that he had refused ordination because he had a low view of it. His discourse on the *nature* of the priesthood is incidental. He had likely not yet reflected in depth on the relationship between Christ's High Priesthood and Christian priesthood. He only saw how the Christian priesthood is greater than the Aaronic priesthood. Hence, the emphasis on it making visible only the ministry of

[218] See pp. 23-26.
[219] *De sac*. 3.4.1-10 (SC 272, 142).
[220] *De sac.* 3.4 (SC 272, 142-44; Neville, *Priesthood*, 70).
[221] Ibid. 3.4-5 (SC 272, 144-50; 71-74).

angels, as well as the presentation of Christ as sacrifice but no mention of Christ as High Priest. But the desire to link the ministry of the eucharist to the ministry of Christ, who is the perfect tabernacle of the Holy Spirit, is there, not only in the use of the images in Hebrews, but in the reminder that it was not angels who instituted the priesthood but that the Holy Spirit Himself διετάξατο τήν ἀκολουθιάν.[222] Since we know how Chrysostom viewed Christ's High Priesthood and how he interpreted the epistle to the Hebrews, we can better appreciate the theological implications of his discourse on the Christian priesthood.

Recall that Chrysostom conceived Christ's High Priesthood as a work of condescension and mediation. In his explanation, condescension would be unnecessary, and mediation would be impossible, if Christ did not share His natures with God and with humans. This same approach undergirds Chrysostom's view of Christian priestly ministry. Obviously, the priest is already human, so Chrysostom only had to play up the priesthood's association with the divine to justify the priest's performance of similar responsibilities of condescension and mediation. Chrysostom associates the priesthood with the divine, for example, by emphasising that the remission of sin through baptism and the eucharist can be done by "no other agency except [the priests'] sacred hands,"[223] meaning that it is through the priest's mediatory work that humanity is given access to the divine (which is the whole purpose of condescension). Similarly, he strongly emphasises that when a priest performs the sacraments, what he does on earth for the remission of sins is being ratified in heaven.[224]

Outside of the eucharist, the principles of condescension and mediation are also present in teaching. Chrysostom expects the priest, angelic in ministry and virtue, to nonetheless be many-sided, able to teach people in mundane matters and able to intercede (via prayers) before God for all people.[225] Moreover, priestly ministry echoes some of the regal aspects of Christ's High Priesthood in that the priest is set over all of God's possession and compared to a secular king in some respects. However, it is notable that Chrysostom stresses the sacerdotal more than the regal (service more than rule), as he does not make mention, for example, of the throne of the bishop,

[222] *De sac*. 3.4.6-7 (SC 272, 142; Neville, *Priesthood*, 70).
[223] *De sac.* 3.6 (SC 272, 150; § 5 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 72-73).
[224] Ibid. 3.5 (SC 272, 148; Neville, *Priesthood*, 72).
[225] We have discussed these extensively in chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

which could have elevated the discussion of the bishop's authority. Perhaps this was in order not to exclude the presbyters (who may have only been standing) from the point he was making, but was more likely to encourage humility, as the "throne" of Christ (as we have seen in his homilies on Hebrews) represents the divine prerogative. *Unlike* Christ, the priests themselves are not divine. In fact, Chrysostom teaches that the otherwise human and feeble priest is only able to do the awesome work he is doing because of the grace of the Holy Spirit. Referring specifically to the role of the priest in the eucharist, Chrysostom writes, "Anyone who considers how much it means to be able, in his humanity, still entangled in flesh and blood, to approach that blessed and immaculate Being, will see clearly how great is the honour which the grace of the Spirit has bestowed on priests."[226]

What should be evident by now is that the parallels between Christ's High Priesthood and Christian priesthood all exist on the level of ministry. A priest cannot be divinely incarnate. However, by performing priestly duties, he is imitating Christ, effecting the type of work only Christ can do. Inspired by the teaching that, in the eucharist, Christ is both the offering and the one who offers, John Zizioulas even claims that, for the Eastern Fathers, Chrysostom included, there is therefore "no ministry in the Church other than Christ's ministry."[227] The Holy Spirit, who constitutes the Body of Christ, is also the one who realises the ontological identification between Christ's ministry and the Church's ministry. But why is this ontological identification important? Because then the Church's ministry takes on the characteristics of Christ's ministry, in that Christ's ministry is a ministry that was, is, and is to come. That is to say, Zizioulas argues that ministry is not only about the past and present but offers a taste of the *eschata* in the here and now. Zizioulas further argues that if soteriology is *theosis* (as the Eastern Fathers believed), then the Church's ministry has existential importance because it realises "here and now the very saving work of Christ, which involves the *very personal life* and presence of the one who saves."[228] Because of this, the relationship between priests and Christ is not one of replacement, as though Christ were absent, but one of "*representation by participation*." Like Christ, the ordained person "becomes a 'mediator' between man and God not by presupposing or

[226] *De sac.* 3.4-5 (SC 272, 146-48; § 4 in Neville, *Priesthood*, 70-71).

[227] Zizioulas, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), 210.

[228] Ibid., 210-12.

establishing a distance between these two but by *relating* himself to both in the context of the community of which he himself is part."[229]

Zizioulas has accurately captured the essence of Chrysostom's view of Christian ministry, as well as some of its staggering implications. I have, however, more to add about how such teaching ought to revolutionise how a minister views his work and how it can reinvigorate faithful service. Moreover, the nature of ministry as Chrysostom conceives it could apply to Christian ministers who are not ordained. Finally, I will discuss how the totality of Chrysostom's views on authority, unity, and the nature of ministry could contribute to shaping understandings of Christian leadership in the post-Christendom context.

4. Conclusion

Zizioulas grasped the relational aspect of Chrysostom's theology of ministry very well. However, I submit that this must not be separated from Chrysostom's emphasis on *action*. For Christ, condescension and mediation are about His *being*. His unique nature made His ministry possible. For the priest, however, mediation and condescension are pure *actions*—priests do not *become* divinely incarnate. Therefore, it is in the *act* of ministry that a priest arrives at a mystical identification with Christ, at the deification that is the goal of Christian life. If Chrysostom is right that the whole heavenly reality, including the *eschaton*, could be contained in a single event, then deification, too, must be included in it. This communion, or deification, is not tied to the office of the priest *per se*, but to Christ's ministry as it is performed. When the act ceases, so does the momentary identification with Christ. In this way, *theosis* becomes something that is a present reality but also still to come.

In emphasising the act of ministry, Chrysostom's theology extends this awesome privilege even to those who are not ordained. Of course, certain ministries—the privilege of leading the eucharist and of overseeing the church—are, for Chrysostom, only for the ordained. But the broader sense of finding communion with Christ and of arriving at deification in the act of ministry is open to all. As we have noted earlier, in Chrysostom's discussion of Christ's High Priesthood in Hebrews, the role of the Christian priest almost fades into the background. The spotlight is on the condescension of Christ and on the response of the congregation. In intimate

[229] Ibid., 230.

moments, the individual must act as his own priest (even though he may have been first invited into that moment by the words of the ministerial priest), drawing near the throne of grace not necessarily liturgically, but through private repentance and by directing himself in virtue. In the more private and personal realm, where not even the priest can know what is in their hearts and minds—every human being must assess or judge himself and draw near to God, thereby performing the priestly function. As we noted elsewhere, too, Chrysostom encourages the laity to be like priests (and therefore like Christ) to their neighbours, teaching one another.[230] Husbands may not be overseers of churches but are overseers of their families, and parents likewise over their children. We also talked about how the poor can be spiritual patrons to the wealthy and how the wealthy may act as material patrons toward the poor.[231] *In Acts hom.* 18, Chrysostom even explicitly teaches that the laity can be engaged in the ministry of "feeding Christ's sheep," and gives concrete action points particularly for the wealthy members of the church who had estates in the country. He exhorts them to build churches on their estates instead of marketplaces and baths in towns and cities, and tells them to maintain presbyters and deacons to minister to the workers they have there. People would therefore not have to travel far to go to church. In this way, Chrysostom asserts, laypeople might participate in the ministry of Peter and John, who converted souls and performed miracles. Chrysostom's congregation may not be able to convert their laborers with miracles, but they can do so with kindness, good offices, gentleness, courting, etc.[232] By emphasising the type of attitude they ought to have toward their workers, Chrysostom is preventing people from thinking that giving generously and building churches alone is sufficient ministry. It is part of ministry, to be sure, but virtue and benevolent management are integral parts of the *act* of ministry, whether for the layman or the priest.

The heart of a theology of ministry that is grounded in action and relation is encapsulated, again, in Peter's commissioning in John 21. We examined this same passage at the beginning of this chapter to highlight the concept of the apostolic succession. But in *hom.* 88 on John, Chrysostom tackles the passage again with a similar but more pronounced emphasis on the love of Christ. He teaches that when Christ told Peter to "feed [His] sheep," Christ was expressing *His* great love for those

[230] See chapter 1, p. 37; chapter 2, pp. 55-57.
[231] See chapter 3, pp. 145-50.
[232] *In Act. apost. hom.* 18.4 (PG 60.147; NPNF 1/11:117-18).

sheep for which He died. And Peter, likewise, is interpreted as accepting this responsibility out of love *for* Christ. In fact, Chrysostom understood Peter's acquiescence in Christ's "Do you love me more than these?" as Peter claiming that his love for Christ exceeded the love of the other disciples for their common master.[233] This is why, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom argues that caring for Christ's flock is proof of the *greatest* love for Him. Such emphasis on love strongly suggests that there is more going on here than mere commissioning, i.e., more than the handing over of responsibility and authority. Christ hands over His love as well, knitting His people together *in the act of ministry*. The love Christ hands over is intentionally entrusted through the act of ministry ("feed my sheep") so that it remains a concrete and continuous manifestation of Christ's love—not just a memory of a distant past. Love of and for Christ are inseparable from ministry. At the heart of the priest–congregation relationship, therefore, is the relationship between Christ and his flock (which also includes the priest). Inasmuch as the priest stands for Christ in relation to the congregation, the congregation stands for Christ in relation to the priest. In the same passage, there is an interesting exchange in which Peter asks Christ, regarding the "other" disciple, "What about him?" Chrysostom interprets the reference as being to Peter, who, after having received chief authority, now demonstrates it by showing concern for the brethren, wanting John to share all that Christ said about Peter. And Jesus's response, "If I will that he tarry, what is that to you?" is Christ's way of curbing Peter's impatience—to show Peter that no matter how much Peter loved, Christ's love is greater.[234] Chrysostom is not here putting Peter down. On the contrary, he praises Peter for showing concern. Christ's love was not meant to make Peter feel inadequate,

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[233] *In Ioh. hom.* 88.2 (PG 59.480; Thomas Aquinas Goggin, trans., *St. John Chrysostom. Commentary on Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist Homilies 48-88* [Washington, D. C. : Catholic University of America Press, 1959], 474). Chrysostom states that Christ, in commending His sheep to Peter and foretelling Peter's martyrdom, testified that Peter's love was "greater than that of the others."

[234] Ibid. Chrysostom gives a second reason, which is consistent with the idea we earlier explored on how the apostles should regard each other: Jesus did not answer Peter because he did not want him to think that He orders their matters after a single rule. They had unseasonable sympathy for each other, but now that Peter and John were about to receive charge of the whole world, it was necessary that they should no longer be closely associated together as it would have been a great loss to the world. Chrysostom makes Jesus say: "You have been entrusted with a mission; look after it, perform it, fight and struggle for it. What if I do indeed wish for him to remain here? You look after, and take care of, your own affairs" (ibid.; Goggin, *Commentary on Saint John*, 474-75). From this passage and how Chrysostom interprets the position of John, we see how a priest or bishop can be both leader of the flock and member of the flock.

but to reassure Peter that his anxieties are misplaced. When ministry is performed with full awareness of the minister's communion with Christ and the Christlikeness achieved in the act of ministry, one may peacefully rest in confidence in Christ's love. Rightly carried, priestly ministry must therefore aid and not hinder the deeply personal relationship between Christ and every member of His flock (which includes the priest).

Having extensively discussed Chrysostom's views on episcopal authority, ecclesiastical unity, and the nature of ministry, we are left with two questions: 1) how might the principles Chrysostom espoused be practiced today? and 2) should they be? Based on our study, we can say that Chrysostom, as bishop, for good or ill, made the following impact:

> 1) He reminded the civic authorities that their power is from God and that they therefore owed Him loyalty. In Chrysostom's sociopolitical context, where Nicene Christianity was the official religion, this included standing up against heresy, Judaism, and paganism. Even though Chrysostom did not seem to advocate violence against non-Christians, except if in the definition of violence we include depriving them of their religious spaces, he agreed with and advocated policies that would make it difficult for them to practice their religion.
>
> 2) But a second aspect of making civic authorities aware of God is reminding them of His mercy. He is the condescending and mediating God. As such, Chrysostom fought for the church to be a sanctuary of mercy. He was always reminding his clergy and congregation of the fleetingness of wealth and underscored this to promote being charitable towards the poor. He also requested funds for worship from wealthy patrons, but the celebration of the Christian liturgy was not for entertainment, including long vigils and calls to repentance to rejuvenate souls.

Chrysostom did these things even though they made him unpopular in some circles and even endangered his life. This is not to say that he was not a flawed bishop. As we have shown above, friends and enemies alike attest to his questionable treatment of his clergy: his refusal to accept criticism with regard to micromanaging them; his continued confidence in Sarapion despite multiple complaints; his own sarcastic way of correcting his clergy. While he may have perhaps hoped to discipline them, he rather created an environment that aroused resentment and insecurity. Of course, as we saw,

Chrysostom himself was under tremendous pressure because of the political environment in Constantinople and because he was stepping into a role in a city that was new to him. Not that we are excusing his behaviour, but he was bishop for only six years. Perhaps the somewhat strict measures he employed, when he was trying to establish control and credibility, would have been relaxed had he stayed in office longer. Perhaps he would have relaxed as he himself became more comfortable in his role and in his environment. Alas, all this can only be speculation and in hindsight. All things considered, however, Chrysostom carried himself nobly throughout his six years as bishop of Constantinople and deserved the rehabilitation for which he fought so hard. Here was a man who did not rest even in exile. And we are not relying only on hagiographic reports of historians but have appraised the letters he sent, pastoring even from afar.

We need to look at the legacy Chrysostom left in light of our different context today. The tasks of Christian leadership remain the same: 1) to call society to be mindful of God; 2) to apply God's mercy in concrete situations; 3) to communicate Christ's condescension and mediation through actions; 4) to hold oneself to a high standard of virtue; 5) to responsibly manage public influence. However, exactly how we do this requires expanding our definition of "powers" and realistically assessing the form of influence we have today.

For example, several times we saw Chrysostom use the emperor's Christian faith as a diplomatic tool to advance the Christian agenda. However, the same tactic cannot be employed today where 1) state or civic leaders are not necessarily Christian; 2) even if they are, especially in democratic contexts, they are public servants. The public that voted them into power are not necessarily Christian. Even if Christian leaders were to find themselves in the role of pastors to state or civic leaders, they must be careful not to exploit this, for instance, by abetting state or civic leaders in bypassing the public and passing or denying bills solely on the basis that this is beneficial to the Christian church or its goals. That is to say, Christian leaders should not neglect convincing *the public* and not just the leaders of the message of Christianity. Why do I say this and what does this have to do with Chrysostom? To acknowledge that the public, and not the politicians, are the true "powers" in democratic contexts is, I think, more faithful to the spirit of Chrysostom's teaching, which follows Paul's, that Christians should obey the authority that God has put over them. For Paul and Chrysostom, the powers in their respective contexts were the emperor and the civil

authorities under him. Yet Chrysostom says that it is not the one who sits on the throne that is ordained by God but only that someone should sit on the throne. This suggests that today, if democracy is the official political system of a state, it is under God's election, too. This is not to say that state or civic leaders are without authority—the public gave them authority to keep order. The task of Christian leaders is to mediate between these two powers, not to side unquestionably with one or the other, and to remind both of the power and mercy of God. And even then, to think of power in terms of only the government and the public is an oversimplification. If we concede that Chrysostom, although a bishop and not a politician, held immense political power, we must similarly expand our understanding of public powers. Among the powers-that-be in today's context are, for example, those that control money (as it has always been), technology, education, and religion. The pressing task for Christian leaders and theologians is how to make sense of the relationships of these powers under the *oikonomia* of God. For what reason did God allow each of these to flourish? And how might Christian leaders mediate between these powers to achieve a just and peaceable society where the practice of religion may flourish? A similar reassessment of powers and purpose must be undertaken for autocratic contexts, instead of limiting the church's choice to either absolute silence or total resistance.

Since we have been focusing, however, on the *act* of ministry, the best way forward for Christian leaders is to keep in mind that there is strength in unity in ministry. In many cases, Christian leaders disagree on the proper way to relate to the state. Some call for more active participation in political matters, including joining rallies and vigils, signing petitions, and speaking out against injustices on social media and other platforms. Some insist church leaders should focus on the spiritual, teaching Christians to be virtuous human beings and to refrain from political activity. Both are valid approaches, contributing to the care of souls. Chrysostom would perhaps say that God instituted both types of approach, and selected leaders to implement them, according to where He puts them, according to His *oikonomia*. It is therefore a missed opportunity if advocates of the two approaches quarrel instead of using ministry to witness to society about God. It is wiser to assess the positive contributions of different approaches to ministry, so that what one body lacks, the other can perhaps fill. Both ways must be recognised as valid engagements with the world, if we are right that it is anyway impossible to separate the care of the body from the care of the soul. In much the same way as Christ's ministry of condescension and mediation entailed His

having two natures, so, even if the church is in many ways different from the world, in the *act of ministry*, at least, it condescends and mediates. For whenever we imitate what Christ unconditionally did for the world, we bring a little taste of heaven to earth.

Appendix

As part of the conclusion of each preceding chapter, I have reflected generally on the relevance of Chrysostom's ideas to contemporary issues of church leadership. In this appended material, more specific and concrete applications of the lessons learned from him will be discussed. Some of the issues discussed below will be familiar to readers, and certain discussions will perhaps resonate with some denominations more than others. The aim is not to introduce new practices, although new can be a relative concept, as what may be new for some may not be new for others. Certain practices can also appear new when they are, rather, a revival of something old. And it is possible for churches to have retained all the trappings and practices of the ancient church but to have forgotten their relevance to pastoral care. The following recommendations are aimed at providing a Chrysostomian angle with which to assess the advantages and disadvantages of some pastoral care practices.

1. Rethinking the Relationship between Ordained and Laity as Conversation

Chrysostom envisioned the local church as a community bound to one another in love, where love manifested in a symbiotic relationship, not least between the clergy and the laity. In Chrysostom's vision, church leaders laboured for the health of the souls of their flock. They taught, oversaw the church's ministries, provided pastoral care, and set their congregation a good moral example in word and deed. In return, the flock respected their divine election and obeyed them, particularly by attentively listening to their doctrinal and moral instructions. In teaching these things, Chrysostom highlighted the dependence of the congregation on the clergy in matters of faith and life. But unlike literal sheep who are hapless without their shepherd, Chrysostom understood that his congregation could not just be blind followers. Neither should they be mere spectators, as spectating often led to unhealthy criticism of their ministers' every move. In significant ways, Chrysostom gave laypeople grounds to be confident about being able to contribute to the life of the church. He encouraged them to participate in priestly ministries—to teach, oversee, and pastor themselves and their families and acquaintances. But Chrysostom also tried to set limits to how much they could do. In teaching, for example, he told them to teach what he, as their priest, taught. He told them to build churches and sustain clergy, but he also taught them to respect the clergy's correction. And it was not as though, in asking them to participate, he was

inviting them to challenge him or to tell him how to manage the church. These two elements in Chrysostom's approach—i.e., encouraging the laity to participate meaningfully in the life of the church, whilst requiring them to respect the authority of the clergy as God's chosen leaders—are very difficult to balance. It is inevitable that, as laypeople become more confident of the significance of their participation, they will take charge of their own souls. The priest may be the doctor of souls, but patients need not always listen to his advice, especially if they can read and interpret the prescription (i.e., scripture) themselves. Chrysostom's approach thus reveals that tension between these two otherwise positive aspects, if not managed carefully, can become a hindrance to the growth and harmony of a church. For Chrysostom is right that it is attractive to encourage the laity's meaningful participation but also that it can become a problem for church authorities when viewpoints within the church clash. At the same time, it is desirable to respect the authority of church leaders (because they are supposedly more knowledgeable, having studied scripture and church life more extensively, and for order's sake), but (as we have seen in Chrysostom's own relationship with his clergy), wielding authority is not easy. Church leaders can be overbearing and insensitive. Without necessarily meaning to, they may act in ways that hurt, rather than nurture, the souls of the members of their flock.

In my reflections in chapter 2, I hinted at this dilemma, particularly in the context of persuasive teaching.[1] I highlighted persuasive teaching as a beneficial approach to the leader–laity relationship because it encourages leaders to see their flock as individuals—i.e., autonomous human beings with their own unique dispositions and experiences, who have the capacity to think, judge, and take responsibility for their choices—and engage them as such. The key to persuasive teaching is, of course, discourse, as persuasion cannot occur without it. Indeed, without discourse, persuasion is just one-sided dictation or could even become dishonest manipulation, neither of which encourage human beings to exercise their capacity for thought, discernment, and expression. Even when Chrysostom argues that the priest is responsible for many souls, he does not take away from each person the responsibility for his own actions. Each person must face God's judgment. It is just that the priest who leads them astray by not fulfilling his priestly responsibility faithfully is guilty as well. Church leaders cannot "save" their flock by tricking them into believing or

[1] For my reflections on persuasive teaching on which this section builds, see pp. 100-110.

responding to God in the appropriate manner. They can only do their work faithfully. Their ministries, as represented by preaching and the sacraments but extending to correction, the care of the poor and the community, etc., are to create opportunities for the flock to encounter God and to engage with His self-disclosure. As God is not looking for an artificial response from His worshippers but an honest one where their will and actions are engaged, discourse must inevitably happen. That is to say, the congregation must be allowed to respond to God and to voice their responses. Their responses to God's voice and to the priest's voice and to one another's voices and to the voices of believers who have gone before is essentially what theology is about.

The congregation therefore theologises, whether leaders intend for them to or not. More significantly, the theologising of the laity does not remain a private matter. It comes out in their conversations with one another and expresses itself in their actions. Even non-participation in the life of the church suggests something about their response, their theology—why do they stay away, for instance? Or why are they hesitant to become more involved? When church leaders ask such questions as part of their diagnosis of the state of the spiritual health of their flock, they inevitably invite their members to express their theologies out loud, to be part of the conversation going on in the church. Chrysostom said that the priest needs a thousand eyes to oversee his congregation.[2] In the framework of conversation, church leaders would need a thousand ears, too. But the thousands of voices to which they are listening will not always be helpful and encouraging. Many of the voices will perhaps be critical, unreasonable, insistent for change. What can church leaders do to bring clarity to church discourses—to encourage members to theologise and express their theology but to also maintain a harmonious environment?

In the political sphere, the public is urged to speak up, to exercise their right to free speech, to claim a platform on which to express their opinions. But when they go too far and are deemed to be engaging in unacceptable speech, they can be censored or penalised by governing institutions (e.g., the state, their place of work, their social media platform) or by their peers. In the church, conversations can be managed in a different way, in a way that is anchored on priestly ministry. As we argued in chapter 4, for Chrysostom, priestly ministry resembles Christ's ministry in the matter of

[2] See p. 41.

condescension and mediation.[3] How, then, can the principles of condescension and mediation be appropriated to help encourage healthy conversations within the church?

One challenge for church leaders is that they do not merely guard their own opinion but the official position of the church on issues that have been decided by many people over, in some cases, many generations.[4] Church leaders cannot simply ignore tradition to make room for new theologies. Inevitably, they apply some restrictions to the types of conversations that are encouraged in church. The intention behind the restriction is key, however. Church leaders should consider using restrictions not to suppress but to slow down.

Restrictions are necessary if Chrysostom is right about the nature of the church and its purpose in soul care. In previous chapters, we noted how Chrysostom associated the church with heavenly realities, even describing it as the antithesis of the city (i.e., of the worldly city, not the heavenly). Cities, crafts, marriage, civilisation—these, Chrysostom claimed, were God's concessions.[5] Though Chrysostom did not go so far as to explain their purpose besides helping humans in their weakness, they were probably given to make life bearable, even enjoyable and meaningful, in a postlapsarian world. Prior to Christ's coming, humans could not dwell in paradise, but they could have shelter, clothing, and companionship. If they had been left completely destitute, the pursuit of virtue would have been even more difficult. But while the city represents concession, the church represents the striving after an ideal. The church, with the glimpses it gives of heaven, exists to remind people that the world fashioned by human ingenuity is not all that there is. And the ideal for which the church strives is not an open future. As we have repeatedly noted, the heavenly ideal, for Chrysostom, is a whole reality, a reality which is not strictly linear. It encompasses, all at once, the prelapsarian past, the present time of grace, and the eschatological future.[6] Boundary-breaking as this may be, it also limits the church. The church is limited by its commitment to keep intact the continuity between the prelapsarian past, the present time of grace, and the eschatological future. It does this to reflect the heavenly reality as faithfully as possible, on the basis that it is in heaven that one encounters God's

[3] See pp. 217-22.

[4] As, indeed, Chrysostom did, inheriting the guardianship of Nicene Christology. He was not yet born during the council of Nicaea. And, during Constantinople 381, he was a deacon of Antioch and was not present in the council or involved in any way.

[5] See pp. 124-33.

[6] See, esp., pp. 212-13.

self-disclosure most fully.[7] This is why, as we have noted in chapter 4, priestly ministry is so important. The priest does not replace Christ, but, where the priest faithfully carries out Christ's ministry, we experience the concrete manifestation of the heavenly reality (and, so, that continuity between the prelapsarian past, the present time of grace, and the eschatological future) which the church is trying to preserve.[8] Preserving this continuity, which is so intrinsic to the communication of God's self-disclosure, is therefore why the church cannot just change without giving due regard to its traditions. In turn, this is why restrictions, in light of conversations, are necessary. The church needs time to assess its present position, its faithfulness to tradition (and to assess if aspects of tradition itself have changed), and its goals moving forward. For, indeed, the aim is to become more and more sanctified in the image of Jesus Christ. But, over the years, the church can lose its way. It can, in some respects, sometimes become so *unlike* Christ that it has to remember how to be like Him again. And positive changes do not always come from its leaders, who can also stumble, but sometimes from its members. This is why church leaders cannot also afford to ignore the theologising of the laity. Besides, as I have argued, allowing the laity to theologise and to articulate their theologies is necessary to soul care because it affirms their God-given human capabilities and allows them to exercise their humanity as they respond to God's self-disclosure.

Church leaders who are committed to soul care must therefore take upon themselves the responsibility of helping members of the laity articulate their theologies. Priestly condescension and mediation are integral throughout this process. They are the basis for using restrictions not to suppress conversations but to slow them down. As a first step, church leaders can mediate by carefully managing platforms inside the church. This includes giving platforms to dissenting voices. It is part of the risk of respecting people's autonomy that they be allowed to disagree and to persuade people to their perspective. However, the church leader may introduce guidelines into public church conversations. This is because not all ideas are helpful or considerate of the ideal of the church about which we earlier spoke. Perhaps the most common representatives of the churchly ideal, which have stood the test of time, are scripture and the sacraments. Denominations may differ on what they accept as canonical or

[7] Acts 7:55; Rom. 8:34.
[8] See pp. 218-21.

sacramental, but within their own churches, scripture and sacraments can give conversations a common ground. And, in a local church, people may differ in their interpretation or application of what is said in scripture or meant by the sacraments, but at least their conversations flow out of or concern the same things. Beyond this, there is much leeway for flexibility. Church leaders may, for example, require those given a public platform to defend their opinion on the basis of scripture but also encourage them to draw from the thoughts of other Christians (alive and in history) who similarly reflected on the world around them through the lens of scripture. Or, if a particular issue is contentious to the point that people are talking *at* and no longer *to* each other, church leaders may halt public conversations on said issue altogether until things are calmer. The aim is to put reasonable limits on public church conversations, as this will help in terms of clarity, articulation, and managing people's expectations.

In some cases, the role of church leaders requires more than just issuing guidelines. Some members may have something important to say but have difficulty expressing themselves or they may have a different perspective on a contentious issue. Prior to giving such members a platform, church leaders may help them express their thoughts and feelings in a way that is intelligible to the rest of the congregation, such as by testing the intelligibility and rigour of their thinking. The ministry of condescension comes in where church leaders have a sincere desire to understand their members. This involves investing time for personal conversations and first asking questions aimed to understand before giving assessments. Once church leaders have a better understanding of the issue at stake and the reason for their members' position, they can then begin feeding them questions designed not to aid their own understanding but to encourage their members to reflect more on what they (i.e., the members) are saying, thinking, feeling, etc. Church leaders can acknowledge what their members have done well and then point out blind spots to encourage them to express their ideas more clearly. This is done not to invalidate their members' opinion but to aid them in their articulation.

The next step is for church leaders to introduce the conversation to a small group preferably under their supervision, as they are now beginning to mediate between two "parties". This is testing the conversation, to see if there are other people within the group that see the reasonableness of the ideas being presented. Such ideas, coming from the laity, are not necessarily expressed in formal theology. Indeed, not all people are able to express themselves best in words. But this is why the role of

church leaders is important. If they can be many-sided, if they can be “all things to all people,”[9] they can help their members put their ideas or instincts into language that is intelligible to the church. When one has articulated something well, usually, the thing articulated has been well thought through. This does not mean the ideas presented are perfect. Discourse is itself part of the process of improving clarity. But if a particular idea, instinct, response or theology is confusing and muddy, then, in its present form, it is likely not a very good idea yet and should not be made part of the larger conversation yet. In the context of church, bringing it into the larger conversation might entail giving it a public authoritative platform, for instance, in a seminar or, for clergy members, even at the pulpit.

This process is what I mean by using restrictions not to suppress but to slow down. In a normal conversation, when a person speaks too fast, he becomes difficult to understand. He can trip over his own words, become confused, and even say things he does not mean or has not had time to think about. Moreover, there is no time for listeners to process and analyse what he is saying. Many times, people can be too eager to speak but not have the patience to articulate themselves well or to listen. The role of church leaders is to encourage them to slow down, for a muddled conversation is an ineffective conversation. And while premature insights may sometimes not be helpful to the church, given time and care, such insights may be refined into gold. Of course, in the process of slowing down, some good ideas may get discarded. If a certain idea does not pass the process, it may not necessarily be that the idea is wrong. Perhaps it is not the best direction for the church to take at the present time. In this case, members must exercise patience. Just as church leaders exercise this ministry out of their responsibility toward the flock entrusted to them, so members must respect the church leaders’ authority and election, and, thus, their final decision. Patience is important to ensure that the church is not reforming itself only because of societal or political pressure. If change comes, it must come because healthy conversations are taking place between leaders and the laity as part of the overall discourse between God and His church. Such conversations must therefore be done alongside regular private and communal prayers, in addition to the reading of scripture and the study of church history.

Having said all this, there is a proper place for church discipline in the context

[9] 1 Cor. 9:22.

of conversations. Chrysostom, if we recall, used exclusion as a persuasive tool to promote individual sanctification—but also to urge people to reflect on the effects of personal moral failure on the larger Christian community.[10] In the schemata of conversation, exclusion as discipline might therefore take the form of banning people from public church conversations. This could be a penalty for people who do immoral things to advance their views or agenda. For example, if a person retaliates through underhanded means—such as, by spreading lies about his opponents, forcibly dominating conversations in church, or manipulating or cowing people into agreeing with him—these may be valid reasons to refuse him a proper, formal platform. Naturally, if the church leader himself is the one guilty of all this, the laity and his fellow clergy must band together to hold him accountable. The shift in power dynamics is possible if there are well-established parameters as to what constitutes moral failure and if there are agreed consequences for it (including, of course, conditions for reconciliation).

2. Synergistic Virtue Formation in the Context of Church

For Chrysostom, whose view of the pursuit of virtue is synergistic, giving moral guidance is an important aspect of pastoral care. As we argued in chapter 3, God grants supernatural grace, but a Christian must be able to take hold of that grace and use it to live an angelic life on earth. But what does this look like concretely? How can church leaders cultivate synergistic virtue formation?

In chapter 3, I noted Chrysostom's view that God gave the intellect as a natural means to manage the risks posed by the body. The soul, where the intellect resides, and the body are both necessary parts of human nature, since human beings were created to inhabit the physical world yet also need to overcome physical passions to govern it well. However, the intellect *alone* is not enough to help human beings live the angelic life. In their prelapsarian life, they had God's supernatural grace in the form of immortality and ineffable glory. This grace was extrinsic to their nature and could thus be removed from them after their Fall. After the Fall and God's supernatural grace was removed, living like angels became impossible for them so they were allowed concessions—marriage, cities, civilisation.[11] Christ's sacrifice restored God's supernatural aids to human beings and gave them even more. Because some of the

[10] See pp. 95-100.
[11] See our previous discussion, pp. 116-24.

gifts can appear abstract (e.g., adoption and remissions of sins) and some are yet to be fully experienced (e.g., immortality, resurrection), Christ devised ways for His followers to apprehend the supernatural through natural means. That is the very essence, of course, of the incarnation. Because the supernatural gifts are presented in a way that human nature can understand them and interact with them, synergistic virtue formation can be accomplished. By following this pattern, church leaders can care for souls effectively. What would be different if church leaders were to think of various church paraphernalia and activities as tools for synergistic virtue formation? What if they were to view scripture, the sacraments, worship, music, and the church building itself as pastoral care tools encouraging the interaction between the supernatural and natural, grace and labour? Now and at various points in history, church activities—the meanings behind them and how they ought to be done—have been debated. In the following examples, my aim is not to argue for one meaning or method over another but to offer a Chrysostomic way of assessing the differences and debates for church leaders to consider.

The first aid to consider is scripture. Chrysostom referred to scripture as "the word of Christ" and frequently demonstrated the connection between the Old Testament and Christ's teachings.[12] The salvific message of the Old Testament is incomplete without the New, for it is the New that explains and confirms the gifts that Christ won for humanity. From a Christian viewpoint, the Old Testament is God's revelation. But only with the New can it also work as medicine for the soul. With the New Testament, scripture does not just relate things about God or the way He works in the world. Neither does it only list commands for a person to follow. Rather, the Old and New Testaments together affirm that Christ has given human beings the power to live according to His instructions and to aim for the angelic life that they once lived in paradise. Because the power is available, Chrysostom can then apply the Bible like a prescription in terms of teaching people about God and living a moral life.

But Chrysostom did not view the Bible like a talisman that imparts moral protection. A person that has it or reads it does not magically become virtuous. Instead, the Bible's purpose and advantage is that it is written in human language and communicates to the verbal capabilities of human intellect. This is not to say that the physical presence of the Bible cannot offer some comfort to a believer, but, even then,

[12] See, for example, pp. 50, 71, 91, 168n18.

the believer benefits from understanding what it stands for first. In Chrysostom's time, preaching was one of the more direct ways that scripture could be communicated to even those that could not read. As literacy rates increased throughout the world, so did the development of translations, in both literal and dynamic forms, in various languages.[13] Indeed, if Chrysostom had been alive today, he would have probably appreciated the proliferation of translations that allow people to read scripture for themselves. He himself could only use (and read, as far as we know) the Greek translation of the Old Testament. Church leaders today are much more able to encourage the reading of scripture in their congregations. Both communal and private reading have their uses, but I will especially highlight the need for frequent private reading. Private reading is important because not all souls have the same ailments. Certain passages of scripture will appeal to certain souls at moments when they might not quite appeal to others. Moreover, depending on what ails their soul, some people may require longer periods of meditation with the passage they are reading. Communal reading or Bible study is wonderful for inspiring unity and community and forging conversations, but not everyone's needs or expectations can be met in a given session. It is therefore necessary that church leaders provide avenues and opportunities for their members to make private scripture reading a daily habit.

One issue that arises in relation to the accessibility of scripture, however, is if this renders preaching unnecessary. It may appear that way if we only think of the purpose of preaching as the transmission of God's Word. However, as we argued in chapter 2 and above, preaching is more than transmission. It is a way for human beings to exercise their humanity (i.e., their capacity to think, feel, judge) and actively interact with God. Through preaching, the congregation is given something to reflect about while they sit listening and to respond to after they go home. The aim is to encourage them to exercise their analytical abilities, their emotions, their will, and their autonomy not just as they listen to the sermon but as they live their lives. However, in synergistic virtue formation, the likelihood of preaching having this effect depends considerably on whether the priest himself exercised *his* humanity and engaged scripture deeply and prayerfully during his preparation. It is the priest, therefore, that could potentially benefit the most from the ministry of preaching. If the priest's soul is

[13] See Philip A. Noss, ed., *A History of Bible Translation* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 2007).

cared for through this activity, then he will be better strengthened to care for the souls of his congregation. The emphasis is not on the preacher's delivery or his ability to entertain. Presentation may grab people's attention, but it does not necessarily demonstrate that the preacher has encountered God, the apostles, or the prophets in his sermon preparation. Not that presentation is not an aspect of persuasive teaching, but honest, thoughtful encounter with God is more important. After all, church discourse should not be just between the church leader and his congregation. Discourse must happen with the Triune God first, and with the apostles and prophets as well.

If preaching is helpful for the care of the church leader's soul, then even the less gifted preachers will find great benefit in preparing their own sermons. Not that delivering someone else's sermon is inherently wrong (unless, of course, one tries to pass it off as one's own or delivers it despite the writer's express prohibition). However, from the perspective of pastoral care, preparing one's own sermon is a perfect exercise for synergistic virtue formation. The preacher is taking hold of God's supernatural aid, interacting with it body and soul, to seek help and instruction from it—for himself first, then for his congregation. This is not to say that there is no time or place for preaching someone else's sermon. God's Word, and His supernatural grace, is surely present in the sermons of others just as much as in one's own. Learning from fellow preachers and following their example could indeed be beneficial, although it would be even better if one preacher interacts with the sermon of another and not just deliver it word for word. Some people find verbal articulation difficult or lack time and resources to write a good sermon, which is why they want to borrow another's. And, indeed, sometimes, it might be healthy for the church to be in touch with the communion of saints by hearing sermons preached from another time or place. However, it would be more beneficial for the pastor's soul if he were to digest these resources and explain to his congregation which parts of the message are universal and which can have a different application for the congregation's specific situation.

What of scripture being used in the liturgy? From the vantage point of synergistic virtue formation, there are advantages to using scripture in both ancient languages (i.e., Greek, Latin) and the vernacular. If a church uses it in the vernacular, then, similar to reading, one is encouraging people to apply their intellect to meditate on its words, in this way bringing wisdom or comfort to the soul. On the other hand, if one uses Latin or Greek, it could also help souls. For although some would not

understand what is being said, the use of the language may evoke a sense of holiness in the proceedings, a sense of connection with the Christian church of the past and the mysterious, ineffable aspects of God's character. Both vernacular and ancient languages, therefore, can play a part in persuasive teaching—the former through using words, the latter through creating environment. The church need not be limited to using only one or the other, but seek to balance both, if at all possible.

Creating a conducive environment is extremely important to synergistic virtue formation since the intellect, as we noted in chapter 2, also processes images, memory, and imagination. Thus, Chrysostom often used his congregation's surroundings to highlight spiritual realities. Whether preaching in church or in a martyrium or just after a liturgical procession, the heavenly presence was not far from his mind. He imagined the sacred spaces as though they were inhabited by angels and the communion of saints, standing together to receive Christ Himself.[14] In the house of worship (and not just in the act of worship), therefore, one can find the supernatural working through the natural. Church leaders can help their congregations apprehend this aid by making them aware of the purpose of a church building, even by designing the building in such a way as to enhance awareness of the supernatural. There are various ways to do this. A case could be made, for instance, for building a church that is grand, that conveys a sense of the grandeur of the old Jewish temples or of the heavenly Jerusalem of the book of Revelation.[15] However, the church leader should make every effort to fill such a building with worshippers, else, it would feel like a very lonely heaven indeed. If this can move people to respond in faith, in the sense that they become more involved in reaching out to people in their communities and with genuine concern for them invite them to church, then it may be a worthwhile if costly investment. On the other hand, there is also much value in simplicity and in building churches that do not resemble medieval cathedrals or modern concert halls. Such buildings can be used to highlight simplicity, humility, and even charity. While some of the church's treasury will of course go to the upkeep of the church, believers will see most of their contributions go not to the care of buildings but hopefully to the care of the destitute in the community through various humanitarian and faith-based projects. Just because

[14] See p. 83, besides the eucharistic description in *De sac.* which we have cited multiple times.

[15] For the building and description of Solomon's temple, see 1 Kngs. 5-9. For the description of the heavenly Jerusalem, see Rev. 21:15-22.

something is simple does not mean that it cannot be heavenly, nor that it cannot convey mystery. For, as Chrysostom reminds us, the monks sought the desert, where they only had the most basic of their needs met, yet it was there that they found heaven.[16]

Another thing to consider is the interior of the church, particularly how things are set up during worship. Chrysostom complained that preaching could sometimes be regarded as an oratory contest, with the audience acting as though they were judges. This still happens in the present time, with preachers expected to entertain as well as teach. Besides preachers, worship music leaders can also be seen this way. Some might appreciate this kind of attention at first, but, as Chrysostom noted, it may end up doing more harm than good.[17] It is impossible for human beings to be consistently good all the time, and if the congregation expects preachers to entertain as well as to teach, they will be critical not only of the content of the preacher's teaching but the style, and they can be less forgiving of mistakes. They might compare the preacher to an actor or a comedian and become disappointed when the preacher's style does not grab their attention as well as these. Similarly, they might treat worship music leaders like rock stars, comparing one to another based on their musical abilities. Because of misplaced expectations, laypeople can become overly critical and church ministers, eager to please, can fall into competitiveness and pride. It is not uncommon for many churches today to use big stages and fancy equipment without a second thought, and in a way too reminiscent of secular entertainment or commercial events. Not, again, that there is anything inherently harmful in this. However, it is worth considering that though these things may attract attention and communicate success, they could also be affecting how churchgoers perceive worship and the role of church leaders. Unless church leaders intentionally reflect on the effects of physical environment on pastoral care, they may not realise that they, too, are being affected by it. It could be part of the reason that they are putting unnecessary pressure on themselves to perform rather than to pastor, creating unhealthy relationships (because of the jealousy and competition toward each other and resentment toward their flock) in the process.

We now come to the sacraments. Here again we have an example of the

[16] See pp. 129-30.
[17] See pp. 52-53.

supernatural working through the natural. But how does a Christian take and use the grace made available through the sacraments to live a life of virtue? While simply partaking of the sacraments may infuse the soul with some inexplicable strength, in the synergistic view of virtue formation, the intellect and the body have to be properly engaged. This means that the person has to understand the act in which he is participating and understand what he is receiving. Knowing, understanding, willing, and doing, therefore, all come into play when one participates in a Christian rite. But this is only the beginning. Afterwards, the person must continue to live his life in a manner that is consistent with the meaning of the act in which he participated. Since understanding, will, and behaviour—i.e., soul and body—are all engaged by the sacraments, the role of the church leader is therefore to make the meaning of the sacraments as clear as possible to the congregation and to enhance the experience for them. The church leader must not allow the congregation to lose sight of the meaning of the sacraments, for it is through directing their understanding, will, and actions toward the right goal that they can strengthen their souls. The emphasis on understanding, will, and action is not a great burden, as humans exercise these capabilities daily. The sacraments are actually supposed to ease the burden, offering people (or reminding them of) God's supernatural grace, which frees them from the worries related to mortal life. For example, in the act of receiving and eating the bread and drinking the wine, Christians, as participants or spectators, are reminded that the remission of sins has been made available to them because of the sacrifice of Christ. The representation of His death is a constant reminder of His love, of the fact that forgiveness costs something, of His call that they must constantly die to sin. The washing in baptism is a washing of the body and not just of the soul, a reminder that the body must be kept pure and blameless. The ordinary act of eating, made holy in the Eucharist, is a reminder that God stakes His claim on Christian lives not just on Sundays or on sacred occasions but in their ordinary, day-to-day activities. The church leader can highlight these things not just in words (e.g., in preaching, catechism, etc.) but in how he sets up the sacramental experience.

The first step is clarifying how the supernatural works through the natural in the sacraments. Let us consider, for example, the remission of sins. Some denominations believe that this occurs during the act of baptism, and post-baptismal sins are remitted in the Eucharist. Others see these sacraments as only symbolic. As soon as one repents and asks God's forgiveness, he is forgiven even if baptism has not yet taken

place. Some believe the Holy Spirit comes on the believer at the moment of baptism, others at the moment of faith. Neither perspective detracts from the sacraments if we think of the sacraments from the viewpoint of synergistic virtue formation. The important point is knowing and believing that Jesus has won the remission of sins and eternal life for us. Of course, if a person believes that the water of baptism and the bread of the eucharist are special means of grace, he might be more motivated not to miss them. But if he does not view these as things with which he must work, but attaches superstition to them, then his undergoing of baptism or repeated taking of the eucharistic bread would not help him in the moral life. On the other hand, if he believes these are only symbolic, he might forsake the rituals. But this would do him no good either. For the sacramental experience, even if it is only symbolic, exists to remind Christians in a powerful way (again because it engages soul and body) that grace is available to them to live a life of virtue. So, then, knowing the impact the sacraments should have in one's life, and learning to work with the sacraments, is more important than the argument of whether it is symbolic or real.

Of course, different churches perform the sacraments differently, and issues have arisen regarding which way is correct. The advantage of thinking of these matters from the perspective of synergistic virtue formation is that varieties are not only allowed but encouraged (i.e., the same medicine is applied differently depending on the sickness). It does not necessarily favour one method over others but focuses on helping the church in question understand the meaning of the act. It highlights the individuality of every local church, since any local church will have its own history, strengths, and problems. Its rate of progress (in view of sanctification) may or may not be shared by other churches. Of course, we do not just come up with new meanings for the sacraments—they are still grounded in Christ's sacrifice, in the forgiveness of sin, in sanctification, and in eternal life. But there can be differences in the way those graces are apprehended by churches. In the case of baptism, for example, some churches prefer that people be lowered into the water, others that they only be sprinkled. Pragmatic issues aside, both indicate washing. But whereas the former is a strong reminder of death and rebirth into eternal life,[18] the latter evokes Christ as the sacrificial lamb whose blood sanctifies His people and makes them holy.[19] Both are

[18] Rom. 6:4.
[19] Heb. 9:11-14.

perfectly acceptable if the goal is to make these truths *felt* in a way that engages body and soul. As for the Eucharist, one debate has been whether to always use bread or wine, or if more culturally specific products—say, coconut water and a local biscuit—might make the ritual more meaningful to the community in question. If, again, the goal is pastoral care, a case could be made for either. On the one hand, familiar food can remind Christians of Christ's significance in their everyday lives, no matter how mundane the activities in which they engage. Moreover, it can remind them that He provides for the nourishment of their bodies and souls and that they can trust Him for their daily needs. They can therefore treat those less fortunate than themselves with more generosity. This would strengthen their connection to the earthly community to which they belong. On the other hand, using bread and wine may be a reminder for them of the world into which Jesus came. Bread and wine tie up nicely with Christ's teachings regarding the vine and the branches, or indeed in the way that He fed thousands with only five loaves of bread (and two fish).[20] Depending on the cultural context of a church, using bread and wine may also symbolise the foreignness of the heavenly reality, the new reality Christ bought with his blood. It might help the Christian community set itself apart from local culture, which may be especially helpful if local food is tied to non-Christian or anti-Christian religious or cultural practices. Church leaders must grapple with these considerations as part of their pastoral care ministry, and they will best be able to direct the church to a wise course of action if they listen to the people and attempt to identify and understand their most pressing concerns and challenges. But the meaning of the sacraments and why they are performed as they are should be articulated, as this is the first step for the congregation to be able to "take and use" the grace which has been made available to them.

3. Balancing Individuality and Community in the Goals of Church Leadership

In the previous section, I noted some of the importance of recognising the individuality of churches. But throughout this thesis, I have also emphasised the importance of recognising individuality in people as the way to care effectively for their souls. In chapter 2, I claimed that individuality is implied in Chrysostom's emphasis on a human's ability to think, argue, choose, and act, and that a human being's thoughts, choices, and actions are influenced by the particular disposition of his soul.

[20] Jn. 15; Matt. 14:13-21.

Chrysostom also said that the priest must therefore be flexible in how he applies medicine to the souls of his flock, because not everyone possesses the same disposition.[21] He did, therefore, recognise the uniqueness of a person. In relation to this, I argued in chapter 3 that individuality should be emphasised in terms of thinking of one's progress in virtue. This has a special relevance for church leaders that tend to overwork themselves for the sake of the community, neglecting their own mental and physical health. To value one's individuality is to prioritise care for one's body and soul. This is not to say that church leaders should neglect their flock for personal comfort, but, generally, they can best care for their flock when they have both healthy souls and bodies.[22]

Indeed, the concept of embracing individuality in the service of the community requires further explanation. How do we, in concrete ways, balance these aspects of soul care?

The most important thing is not to equate individuality with isolation. By isolation, I do not only mean literal spatial isolation (akin to the practice of some monks), though, of course, going into periodic isolation (such as a retreat) may be helpful to church leaders, who also need their rest. Chrysostom noted that some monks avoided temptation and sinning by physically isolating themselves and punishing their bodies, but he also recognised that this kind of isolation was not possible for church leaders.[23] He would be a very poor leader indeed who was constantly absent when his flock needed him. But I am also thinking of a more dangerous kind of isolation, which is when a church leader is "present" but begins to avoid meaningful interaction and conversations with his fellow leaders and his congregation—when he starts to become too secretive of his activities, for example, showing up only when there is ministry to do, or when he becomes too sensitive to criticism and shuts down anyone that tries to say anything to him. In fact, isolation is inadvisable for church leaders, Chrysostom said, because it is only in the midst of ministry that he can condition himself for the hardships of ministry.[24] If a church leader wishes to "discipline" himself in the midst of public ministry, then a way to do this is perhaps by subjecting himself entirely to communal accountability. This is quite different from incessantly working. For the

[21] See pp. 41, 60.
[22] See pp. 156-62.
[23] See pp. 38-39.
[24] See pp. 115, 134-35.

health of his soul, a church leader needs to step back from work once in a while. But, also for the health of his soul, he must not avoid meaningful interaction with his flock.

The principle that individuality must be balanced with community is related to our previous claim that, although God provides supernatural aids, virtue formation must be synergistic. A pastor cannot live virtuously by the strength of his own spirit alone. It is true that, in *De sac.*, Chrysostom argued that a priest should have strength of soul, the reason being that he cannot rely on the help of extensive bodily discipline to be virtuous (in comparison to monks), and he has no help from the law to fulfil his responsibilities (in comparison to kings).[25] But this does not mean that there are no other means for a priest to set boundaries for himself. Of course, the study of scripture, prayers, and the sacraments are all useful aids for the priest. But so is community. Indeed, we find that as Chrysostom advanced in his career as a priest, his homilies, unlike *De sac.*, emphasised the love of the flock for the shepherd as much as the love of the shepherd for his sheep. In one homily, we even saw him explain his actions to them because he felt accountable to their love for him.[26] But Chrysostom did not take this idea far enough, if the reports are accurate that he had been quite cold to his clergy. He should have listened to his critics just as much as to his supporters. Of course, church leaders with evil intentions would not seek to restrain themselves even if communal accountability were available to help them. But there could be policies set in place that might help church leaders from falling into sin or guard against them abusing their flock. The problem, I think, is not that there are no means to formally monitor church leaders. Rather, church members tend to be insensitive to church leaders acting questionably. Understandably, they do not usually make it their concern to watch over the moral life of their leaders, on account that the leaders are supposed to be more holy than them and more respectable. There is also a tendency to judge a person who is an active minister and an impressive teacher as being filled with the Holy Spirit, a misconception that equates skill and passion with spiritual strength or piety. And, indeed, a misconception that spiritual strength is a thing that a person obtains either completely through the grace of the Holy Spirit, or, after much training, a state of piety that one arrives at and from which one can never fall. But if the church had a synergistic view of virtue formation, it should be doing everything in its power to

[25] See pp. 38-40; 195.
[26] See pp. 191.

set limits in place even for one who seems to be displaying spiritual strength and piety. For, in the synergistic view of virtue formation, spiritual strength is the result of actively and constantly engaging with God through His supernatural aids. This means that there is a possibility, even for one who at one time displayed spiritual strength, to slip. In much the same way that church members should watch out for each other, they should also watch out for their leaders.

There are two other reasons why I emphasise the role of the congregation. First, we have emphasised the autonomy of laypeople and their ability to contribute to the life of the church. But with this privilege comes responsibility. They can do much to encourage their church leaders—not just by raising concerns and pointing out shortcomings but by also encouraging the things they do well. In addition, part of understanding that a church leader is not by nature more holy than them involves treating him like a human being, allowing him time to rest, giving him time to improve, and not being unreasonably critical of his skills. They should be concerned for his soul. Once again, in modern times, such a perspective is possible, because laypeople have more opportunities and are sometimes even more educated than pastors when it comes to religious matters. It is the case that some laypeople have accumulated immense wisdom and experience and have a close, personal relationship with God but avoid the ministry because they do not think they have the disposition for it. But this does not mean they cannot, in small ways, “pastor” their pastors. They may not think themselves fit to shepherd a magnitude of souls, but perhaps they could do what they can for one soul, whose words and actions have an impact on many. Second, because Christianity has such a broad concept of the communion of saints, there is a danger that some people would prefer interaction and conversation with saints in heaven than with flesh and blood people on earth. After all, there is less chance of discomfort when fellowshipping with saints who are no longer here, as they cannot “argue back” in the heat of the moment. The problem is that the fellowship of those still living on earth is quite unnecessary to those who have already passed on. Those still in the flesh are needed by their brothers and sisters who are also still in the flesh, and virtue (as Chrysostom often liked to emphasise) is quite empty if it does not do some good for one’s neighbours. By emphasising the active role of church members, the church leader will be giving his flock the privilege to enquire about him, his activities, and the state of his physical, mental, and spiritual health. It is a reminder to everyone not to avoid meaningful, if sometimes challenging, relationships with people in their

local church. Individuality is not, after all, self-sufficiency. It is simply the appreciation of a person's unique qualities, disposition, choices, actions, and journey. It is letting a person know that he is valuable not only for the service he renders, and not only because he is a human being, but because he is a particular human being.

Having said all this, the church leader still has the specific calling to love the flock as Christ loves them, to die for them if need be. But some "deaths" are avoidable, and I am thinking specifically of leaders who forsake the flock, their love for ministry having "died" because they were made to feel used and unappreciated. I am thinking also of the "deaths" of relationships between church leaders and members of the flock who have forgotten to treat each other as friends and siblings and instead treat each other as slaves and owners, maybe even as robots and cash machines, respectively, and not human beings. These "deaths" are avoidable, and balancing individuality and community may be the key.

4. Rethinking Power Between Church and Contemporary Political Society

In chapter 4, I argued that despite significant differences between Chrysostom's society and most contemporary societies, especially in that there is no Christendom of which we can speak, church leaders nevertheless can have the same impact on society that he did. I especially noted the significance of pastoral care in democratic contexts and noted that church leaders must assess the political power of their pastoral influence in order to pastor responsibly.[27] Of course, even among nation-states considered "democratic", there are significant differences in how democratic requirements are understood and in the relationship between churches and the state. The point of pastoral care, as I have repeatedly noted, is that it seeks the good of that which is under its care. If it is right to value the individuality of human beings and of local churches, so should a church leader value the uniqueness of the country in which he is placed to do ministry. Understanding the country's history, culture, and contemporary struggles all ought to inform how he exercises pastoral influence toward members of his flock, particularly when they approach him with questions that impact their relationship with their wider community.

As I mentioned also in chapter 4, Chrysostom's specific experience as bishop of Constantinople allows us to reflect on a key idea: what should the pastoral

[27] See pp. 225-27.

relationship between a church leader and a civil leader look like? I also noted that civil leaders are not only politicians, but, in democratic contexts, include people in positions of power, whether this power pertains to technological power, economic power, voting power, and so on. In fact, the democratic political context requires us to acknowledge that every person ought to be seen as holding power, even if there is variety in the kind of power held and even if some technically have more power and privilege than others. This may not be the case *de facto*, but it is what a modern democratic society is aiming for. And if, as I have argued, it is God who has ordained democracy to be the ruling power in one's nation at least at the present time (noting that Chrysostom claimed God ordained that there *be* powers, not that all people who ever became rulers were ordained specifically), then Christians in a given nation ought to respect the rules and ideals of the democracy in place. Chrysostom would add: insofar as God's laws are not subverted, i.e., insofar as the church is allowed to practice its faith in peace. We will discuss this shortly. But, first, democracy does not simply mean implementing the will of the majority. By its very nature, democracy aims to empower people, so that every person is able to claim and exercise his rights and so that privilege is not limited to one person or to only a small number of persons. The will of the majority (e.g., through voting) is almost like a concession needed for the moment, a way to enforce order because society has not learned to balance power yet (and may never). There are still many who are neglected by the entrenched political systems in place, and there are also many who try to deprive others of their rights. But the aim of democracy is good, and, interestingly, has some similarities with what Chrysostom tried to do for his society. If we recall, Chrysostom tried to bring his congregation to realise that every person, rich and poor, had a substantial contribution to the kingdom of God, and it is for this reason they ought to treat one another with charity.[28] The point, then, is that if we were to think of the relationship between church leader and civil leader from a Chrysostomian perspective for contemporary times, we should not confine our attention to relationships with people who hold government offices or are very influential. Church leaders have to be pastors and moral guides to every member of the public that will let them. Bringing Christ to people in power—in this case, power belongs to all people—means bringing Christ to all. This, and not the imposition of laws, which will only ever be a concession, is the road towards a more just and

[28] See pp. 146-53.

peaceable society.

Having noted that pastoral care has political impact, in what specific ways can church leaders wield this power responsibly? Chrysostom, for the most part, instructed his congregation to be counter-cultural in the way they lived but without being lawbreakers. However, in special circumstances, he resisted the emperor's will and somehow encouraged his church to do the same by standing his ground and encouraging them to persevere under persecution (which, of course, from the viewpoint of non-Johannites, amounted to civil disobedience).[29] We can therefore think of Chrysostom's policy as active reformation (through moral guidance, through encouraging his congregation to use their *freedom*—i.e., they were generally free to use their time, money, strength as they pleased), but only a reactive resistance. That is, he did not seem to directly interfere in political matters unless the sanctuary or help of the church was sought, or the church or members of the church were affected by imperial policy. The latter point does not mean that Chrysostom did not care for people or issues outside the Christian church. But he knew his priorities as a priest and bishop. He did what he could for the poor, for example, within the realm of his priestly responsibilities. Active reformation through pastoral care was his main strategy.

Active reformation is the inevitable result of pastoral care because, in Christian teaching, it is impossible to separate the spiritual and physical spheres. As it was in Chrysostom's time, so it is today. For example, pastors can potentially avoid giving their opinion on political issues, believing that the church should only speak on spiritual topics. They may also discourage their members from participating in optional civic responsibilities (e.g., voting; military service), if they believe that abstaining is the way to somehow escape having to "choose between two evils" (e.g., in voting, if all candidates advance anti-Christian policies). But teaching biblically-based Christian spirituality, especially to people that remain active members of their civic communities—i.e., they own property, run a business, shop in supermarkets, cross national borders, etc.—inevitably makes an impact on civic life. When church ministers teach, for example, that Christians should store treasures not on earth but in heaven,[30] they potentially influence how their members use their money. When they teach them to do all things, including eating and drinking, for the glory of God,[31] they influence a

[29] See pp. 177-87.
[30] Matt. 6:19-21.
[31] Col. 3:17.

person's attitude when he comes to work; how he responds to conflicts with other members of his civic community; what kind of products and services he supports, etc.

The question of money and possession is especially important if, as I suggested earlier, we reverse our view of who holds power in a democratic society. Chrysostom argued that God instituted the powers to keep peace in the city for the flourishing of religion. In a monarchy, the emperor and his civil servants held much of this power. But, in a democracy, there are multiple power players. I am not now talking about the power that every citizen should be accorded, but about the reality that there are those that exercise more power than others, however justly or unjustly they obtained it. Governments face pressure from their constituents, which include not only ordinary labourers and office workers, but CEOs, scientists, media conglomerates, pharmaceutical giants, multimillionaire philanthropists, etc. If the church wishes to flourish, it cannot contribute to keeping the peace of the city by siding with politicians and enforcing, through these, their will on the people, as, for example, by exchanging favours with political candidates, promising them voters in exchange for these politicians advancing Christian-leaning policies in the senate. Where church leaders have pastoral relationships with politicians, they should instead advise them to respect the laws in place and to carry out their responsibilities in accordance with the commitment they have made to the people, with transparency and integrity. Of course, while pastoring, they may inevitably advance Christian ethics, but pastors should avoid instructing politicians on issues in which they may not have training or in matters in which they are not actively involved. This is not to say that other Christians, who *have* had training on a particular issue or are actively involved in public service and discussions related to it, cannot help in these matters. Here again is where lay participation could be of much help, and where the pastor can give appropriately skilled laypeople a platform in church. But pastors should embrace the vocation of counselling their constituents on personal virtue, on how to build a healthy family life, on how to sustain healthy relationships with God and others. They must keep watch that their constituents, especially those that hold positions of great power in their communities, do not participate in any kind of abuse. It is worth insisting on these things because it is sometimes thought that pastors who have opinions on the trending political issues of the day are somehow superior to those who focus on spirituality, discipline, and virtue. But the fact is, the magnitude of work involved in the latter, and the focus required of a pastor to carry out the task, is immense.

More importantly, as I have also noted earlier, church leaders should not favour pastoring privileged people over more ordinary members of the church. This can sometimes happen when a church depends on certain people's generous donations or wants to keep the membership of a particularly famous person. Perhaps God allowed democracy to flourish precisely so that church leaders will not forget that their calling is to pastor the whole flock of God, even "the least of these."[32] The pastor must take time to be with the people—to teach them; as we argued earlier, to manage conversations within the church; to ask after them with genuine concern; to form fatherly and motherly relationships with their flock. This is the way that they can best make a difference in the political arena. This is not to say that political activism has no place among Christians—it is just that this is not the church leader's main task. As Chrysostom reminds us, many things threaten the souls of Christians that a pastor has to watch over. While church leaders can delegate most tasks relating to public civic engagement to lay leaders and theologians who do not double as full-time pastors, church leaders themselves must have a thousand eyes on their members. They must meet with them, pray with them, counsel them, and frequently enquire about their wellbeing.

To close, let us consider a final example of how church leaders can give pastoral care in a politically impactful way. Thinking about economic power, the majority of countries today attempt to operate on at least a partially free-market model. While I cannot comment on the intricacies of such a model, I can reflect on some of its more easily perceived effects on individuals. Taxes and government regulations aside, businesses in free-market economies try to earn money by following the laws of supply and demand. In the eyes of businesses, therefore, an individual is valuable for his buying power. Businesses, big and small, compete for the attention of buyers and do so through advertising. Advertising comes in many forms, but they generally "sell" a vision, whether this be of status, of comfort, of value for money, etc. Some advertisers have even included an ethical spin in their products and services—e.g., friendly to the environment, supportive of charities and local businesses, etc. But the point of advertising is that it reinforces the idea that people make an impact however they spend their money, even if it is just through simple purchases of products and services. There are two interconnected issues here where lessons learned from

[32] Matt. 25:40.

Chrysostom directly apply. The first has to do with “buying power” and what it says about an individual. The other has to do with “selling a vision”.

From an economic standpoint, the poor are as disadvantaged today as they were in Chrysostom’s time, since they have little or no buying power. The difference is that more and more churches today have realised that there are other ways to help the poor besides almsgiving. For example, there are more efforts—not only from Christians—to help them earn a living or get an education. Pro-poor legislations continue to be debated at both national and international levels concerning things like medical care, political asylum, climate treaties, etc. (considering the poverty of countries and not just of individuals). And yet, these very same issues can cause a lot of contention within communities, including the church. Many people fear that mercy and generosity could have a negative impact on their own security. There is a tendency to be protective of what one has built and accomplished, to think that one has gotten to where one is through sheer hard work and through making good choices. There is a hesitation to share one’s resources, one’s country, and one’s opportunities to give perceived “handouts” to the poor. Those in a privileged position may also become disillusioned when a few of those to whom they extended help repay good with evil. All of this is to say that regardless of the laws and policies being debated, from a Christian viewpoint, there can be no lasting positive change in society if people are not convinced that loving the disadvantaged is their God-given responsibility and that it is ultimately not a threat to their security. Church leaders are in the best position to converse with people about this, to convince them that this is true. For this message, as Chrysostom has shown us, is inherent in Christianity. The idea that we can give freely and love freely is anchored on a theology of heaven, on the promise of God’s supernatural security. But who sells this “vision”? It is the church leader, first of all, since he is the example his flock is told to emulate. In fact, if we are right that people have this expectation that even their small contributions, their small purchases, and their small savings are important, they might subconsciously be looking at the pastor as a walking advertisement. Thus, the pastor’s personal spending and church spending come under scrutiny. That is, the church leader speaks about power in society and how heaven stands in relation to it not only through what he says but through the clothes he wears, the gadgets he uses, the movies he watches, the food he eats, etc. The pastor’s choices, whether he makes them in the name of utility, sustainability, abstinence, etc. all speak to his perception of the present civilisation

and how Christians should live in it in view of eternal life. The pastor, whether he accepts it or not, sells a vision of “heaven”. Chrysostom reminds us that Christian ministry is “heaven”, but he also reminds us that Christian ministry is not limited to service done within the four walls of the church. It must be present, even potent, in the simple, mundane acts of daily living, where people make choices considerate of their own welfare and the welfare of their neighbours. Christians can only do this if they are mindful of God’s ever watchful eyes and retain that hope in the promise of His rewards in the resurrection. As Christ says, “When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”[33] This faith in the life to come, as we have learned from Chrysostom, has real and lasting vitality in the form of Christian ministry.

[33] Lk. 18:8.

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