CONSTRUCTING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: THE SERMONS OF CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA, 388-407

By

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<tr>
<td>AAAĐ</td>
<td>Antica Altoadriatico</td>
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<td>CCSL</td>
<td>Corpus Christianorum Series Latina</td>
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<td>Codex Theodosianus</td>
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CONSTRUCTING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: THE SERMONS OF CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA, 388-407

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The sermons of the late Roman bishop Chromatius of Aquileia were only rediscovered in the middle of the last century. Taken with other documents relating to Chromatius and in light of substantial archeological scholarship, the sermons offer a window into the Christianization project which Chromatius attempted to carry out in the northern Italian city of Aquileia, a port on the Adriatic where he served from 388-407. My dissertation explores the nature of his Christianization project in terms of the construction of a Christian Roman identity and the conversion of wealthy elites. The dissertation also includes an appendix with the first translation of Chromatius’s sermons into English.

Born around 335, Chromatius of Aquileia witnessed one of the greatest cultural paradigm shifts in history. He entered a world in which the first Christian emperor had recently died, disputes about gods raged, and pagan temples still dominated the landscape. By the time of his death in 407, the empire could legitimately claim to be Christianized. Temples were closed, sacrifices ended, orthodoxy enforced.

Chromatius’s extant works testify to the nature and goals of his Christianization project. In his effort to create a clearer identity for his church he constructed a history of
heresy which positioned his church as the normative standard for Christianity. He contrasted the Jewish community with barbarians so as to redraw a traditional definition of Roman identity on Christian/Jewish rather than civilized/barbarian lines. The results were an isolation of Judaism as an essentialized ethnicity. Finally, Chromatius framed Christianity as an heir to Roman views of virtue and vice. He posited Christian virtues as the solution to the vices of excess—avarice, luxury and ambition—which had been deemed responsible for the downfall of the Roman Republic. Chromatius fashioned an argument about virtues which was aimed at elite women in particular. Their conversion to his form of Christianity, one centered in the basilica instead of a house, presented the church new wealth and power. The sermons, when read within the local context, reveal a project of Christianization designed to construct Nicene Christianity as the only legitimate center of the cosmopolitan city.
CHAPTER 1
AN INTRODUCTION TO CHROMATIUS OF AQUILEIA

For a millennium and a half Chromatius of Aquileia was just another name in a seemingly endless list of men who filled the bishop’s seat in the formerly great city of Aquileia. Mentioned every few years in the repetition of names when a new man ascended to hold the office, Chromatius was just a historical footnote, a contemporary of luminaries but not important enough to be remembered in his own right. It was only as a result of the diligent scholarship of two French priests in the middle of the twentieth century that his works were returned to their rightful author in a single corpus. Some 1550 years after his death, his name and his writings were recovered and began to be reintegrated into the historical narrative of the later Roman Empire. This study will contribute to that project. The sermons of Chromatius of Aquileia offer a wealth of material that can shed light on the changing religious and cultural landscape of the Italian city in late antiquity. I will examine the nature of the Christianization project in Aquileia in terms of the construction of intertwined Christian and Roman identities and the conversion of wealthy elites as seen through the lens of Chromatius’s sermons.

The study will examine the sermons of Chromatius of Aquileia during his tenure as bishop from 388 to 407. Born around 335, Chromatius witnessed one of the greatest cultural paradigms shifts in history. He entered a world in which the first Christian emperor had recently died, disputes about the number of gods raged, and pagan temples still dominated the physical, if not mental, landscape. By the time of his death in 407, the empire could legitimately claim to be Christianized. The claims of the Bishop of Rome were expanding, and the emerging religious landscape pointed to a worldwide ascendance of Christianity. Temples were closed, sacrifices ended, orthodoxy enforced.
In short, Chromatius watched the world change, and his sermons reveal a new vision for Christianity in a new century. Not content merely to strive after more converts, Chromatius presented success for Christianity as nothing short of utter dominance. Anyone who would mark off his or her own space for religion apart from the corporate Nicene Christian body threatened the whole. Jews and heretics who worshipped in their own separate gatherings ought to be countered. Barbarians who sought to maintain their distinctive identity had to be tamed. And private Christian worship, beyond the control of the bishop, needed to be curtailed. Chromatius was interested in nothing less than the community being whole and homogenous in respect to its religion.

Other than Chromatius himself, the most important element of this story is the city of Aquileia. The seventh city of the empire with a population of perhaps 100,000 around the year 400, Aquileia was a bustling port city on the north end of the Adriatic Sea and a major center of trade between east and west.¹ A cosmopolitan city, Aquileia accommodated soldiers and barbarians, Greeks and Syrians, merchants and farmers, and thus served as a meeting place for diverse cultures and beliefs. It was also home to a substantial Jewish population—an aspect of the city’s identity which arises in Chromatius’s sermons.² Moreover, the city faced the reality of civil war on multiple occasions. Battles which ultimately determined the course of the empire were waged at the city gates three times in Chromatius’s life. Yet more than anything else, the sea and


² David Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe: Volume 1: Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 11-13; Lellia Cracco-Ruggini, “Cromazio di fronte a pagani ed ebrei,” in *Cromazio di Aquileia: al crocevia di genti e religioni*, Ed. Sandro Piussi (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2008), 184-185. The Jewish community in Aquileia has been well researched and is explored fully in Chapter 4.
the trade which arrived via the water was the lifeblood of the city. Aquileia's position as a crossroads enabled Chromatius to maintain correspondence with friends and contacts throughout the empire including such late antique Christian luminaries as Jerome, Rufinus, Chrysostom and Ambrose, among others. Chromatius's sermons provide a lens through which to view the changing religious dynamics of the late antique city and empire.

Forty-three sermons (thirty-one complete) have been attributed to Chromatius of Aquileia. The sermons were rediscovered about fifty years ago by Joseph Lemarié and Roger Etait. A partial commentary on Matthew can also be traced to Chromatius, though I will not be focusing on it in this project. The commentary, written for a small audience, would not have been influential. The sermons have not previously been translated into English, though a French translation and edition appear in two volumes of *Sources chrétiennes*. Chromatius's commentary on Matthew has been published in one Latin edition. The sermons have been edited and reconfigured at various points over the first three decades of their publication. Discoveries of new manuscripts have caused certain sermons to be re-evaluated or added over time. Yet the corpus of sermons has held steady since the early nineties.

I present in an appendix to this

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5 The *Sources Chrétienes* translations were published first and can still be used for reference. In the *CCSL* publication, sermons 33 and 36 were altered to reflect the new discoveries. In addition, a sermon 42 (On the Passion of St. Peter) was added, though the editors (and I) find the sermon to be likely spurious. The *CCSL* supplement, published in 1977, added yet another dubious sermon. This one was a compilation sermon from an early medieval homilarium—a greatest hits of ancient preachers including Ambrose, Jerome and Chromatius. More useful was the updated version of Sermons 21 and 22 in: Raymond Etaix, "Nouvelle edition des sermons XXI-XXII de saint Chromace d'Aquilée," *Revue*
dissertation a full English translation of the extant homilies for the first time. The new translation, coupled with this study of the sermons, offers a new window on Chromatius and thus on his period of late antiquity. Hopefully, this study will promote more engagement with Chromatius and analysis by scholars around the world.

Chromatius’s sermons have been little studied in English and offer a new view of the changing dynamic of civic life in northern Italy at the beginning of the medieval period as well as a window into the culture of Aquileia. The new emphasis on a stronger, more corporate identity for the Christian community could have numerous consequences, not least of which was the relegation of other groups to minority status in the city. The increasingly direct control of the bishop not just in religious but also in urban life would make him not merely the head of a church, but the only just arbiter of any and all power in the city. Fears of barbarian attack, justified or not, fears of corruption, monetary or religious, and fears of outsiders were all joined together in the sermons to point to a single answer: the salvific power of the church of Chromatius. His words reveal the attempt of a local elite bishop to consolidate hard-won power in a single institution—an attempt which reveals the shifting attitudes towards the urban environment and the emerging model of cities in northern Italy at the time.

**Literature Review**

Since the reemergence of Chromatius’s life and works in the 1960s, scholars have published on various aspects of his thought. Primarily in French and Italian, the scholarship reflects many of the concerns of a theologically trained scholar.

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community. Yet several scholars have presented excellent work on the historical implications of his writings. Most notably, Claire Sotinel’s work at the beginning of the last decade on Aquileia and northern Italy in antiquity has done more to advance the relevance of Chromatius for non-specialists than any other published work. She succeeded in placing Chromatius into a historical context better than any previous scholar. Since that time, the two major anthologies published in the wake of the 1600th anniversary of Chromatius’s death in 2007 reveal a breadth of approaches to Chromatius’s life and works and the possibilities for future research. What follows is a brief attempt to outline the major scholars of Chromatius and their individual contributions to the field.

No study of Chromatius would even exist without the work of Joseph Lemarié, so it is only fitting to begin a review of the relevant literature with him. Lemarié was a French Benedictine who spent countless hours wading through manuscripts, transcribing and cross checking. He was the first to recognize the similarities between a group of sermons in the manuscript *Paris Bibliothèque Nationale latin 742* and *5132*. These two groups of sermons contained the beginning of a sermon on the martyrs Felix and Fortunatianus and a reference to Aquileia. Lemarié then compared the sermons in

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7 Sotinel, *Identité civique*.


terms of language, style and content to the extant versions of Chromatius’s tractates on Matthew. From this initial discovery, the first seventeen sermons were identified and published.\textsuperscript{10} The rest of the sermons were compiled from other monastery manuscripts, most notably Mondsee at Salzburg.\textsuperscript{11} This relatively stable collection of 41 (at the time) sermons has been the basis for the works on Chromatius which have been published since that time, and without the work of Lemarié none of what follows would have been possible.

Of course, Lemarié’s scholarship was not limited to transcribing and translating. His introduction of Chromatius also set the tone for later studies. He presented Chromatius as an ascetic, embracing a life introduced by Athanasius in 345.\textsuperscript{12} Ambrose looms large as well throughout the introduction and in the marginalia. The fact that he consecrated Chromatius suggests that Chromatius was his disciple. Consistently, Lemarié interprets Chromatius as adopting Ambrose’s interpretations or approaches to issues of Christianization.\textsuperscript{13} Finally, the threat of barbarians, most notably in the person of Alaric, haunts Chromatius’s final years. From a viewpoint many years later, the crumbling of the imperial structure seemed inevitable to Lemarié’s narrative. Chromatius represented a former glory struggling to survive in a new threatening world.\textsuperscript{14} A French monk writing in the 1960s must have identified strongly with this man who embraced an ascetic life, learned from his elders in the region and then watched as his world was

\textsuperscript{10} Ibid, 12-14.
\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, 14-16.
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid, 43.
\textsuperscript{14} Lemarié, “Introduction,” 50-51.
trampled by barbarians out to destroy all he had known. In Lemarié’s narrative these three forces—Athanasius, Ambrose and Alaric—frame his presentation of Chromatius.

Yet the bulk of Lemarié work on Chromatius focused on his style, doctrine and liturgy.\(^\text{15}\) Perhaps most interesting are his comments on the style of Chromatius. It is simple and never abstract. The Latin betrays his classical training, but he never rises to classical heights in the sermons (the commentary on Matthew is different in this respect). The sermons maintain a more literal style, grounded in analogies drawn from daily life in what seems an attempt to connect with the listeners.\(^\text{16}\) Examples drawn from commercial life in Aquileia abound. His sermons generally follow a standard path of literal explanation of the text, allegorical interpretation, and a moral application. Lemarié emphasized Chromatius’s consistent focus on relevance to everyday spiritual life in his sermons.\(^\text{17}\) Even in the analysis of Chromatius’s doctrinal stances, Lemarié noted that issues of ecclesiology trumped Christology, and Christian life featured more prominently than the sacraments.\(^\text{18}\) On the issue of liturgics, Lemarié makes an interesting assertion that although the cult of the saints does not feature prominently in the homilies of Chromatius, they certainly must have been important to local life.\(^\text{19}\) He suggests that the fascinating sermon on the consecration of a new basilica in Concordia reflects the


\(^{\text{17}}\) Ibid, 60-61.

\(^{\text{18}}\) Ibid, 62-81.

\(^{\text{19}}\) Ibid, 83.
intense devotion to the saints and manner in which these relics acted as connections of
the locals to a broader reality. Lemarié suggests that the translation and interment
must have mirrored what Ambrose did in Milan in 386-387, re-emphasizing a connection
between Milan and Aquileia in terms of liturgy. Lemarié does admit, however, that in
other matters the church and liturgy in Aquileia show more eastern influences than the
does the church in Milan. Yet Lemarié consistently emphasized the connections
between Chromatius and Ambrose. He saw Chromatius as representative of Ambrose’s
victory over Arianism and the Christianization which occurred prior to the fall of the
Roman Empire in the fifth century.

A scholar of the same period with very different interests and approaches to the
person of Chromatius is Lellia Cracco-Ruggini. She was already an established scholar
of northern Italy in late antiquity when Chromatius’s works were first published.
Concerned mainly with the Italian city in the later Roman Empire, she drew on the
sermons as an example of changing urban life. Her first major work was the influential
*Economia e società nell’Italia Annonaria.* Along with a doctoral dissertation on Jews
and Easterners in the region, Cracco-Ruggini’s work helped to change the way late
antique Italy has been conceived. Tracing the economic networks through the
centuries, she proved that there was no abrupt breakdown of commerce or society

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20 *Ibid*, 103-107

21 Perhaps one of the most interesting issues is the orientation of churches. Aquileia mirrored the eastern
churches by having the apse in the east and entry in the west. This approach was not adopted in the
Latin west till the second half of the fifth century, while it was common in Aquileia (and surrounding

22 Lellia Ruggini, *Economia e Società nell’ “Italia annonaria”: rapporti fra agricoltura e commercio dal IV al

23 Lellia Ruggini, *Ebrei e Orientali Nell’Italia Settentrionale fra il IV e VI secolo D.CR.* (Rome: Pontifical
University, 1959).
during either the fifth or the sixth century. Even the Lombard invasions had little to no effect on day to day life in northern Italy. There was a general decline, felt more in certain places than in others, but the region did not suddenly fall to pieces. In more recent years she has carried this thesis into her broader study of Italian cities, suggesting that the cultural changes in the cities were also less drastic than previously imagined, though certainly warranting of further study.²⁴

Her studies of Italian cities influenced the production of several articles on Chromatius. For a conference in 1977, she wrote “Il Vescovo Cromazio e gli Eberi di Aquileia,” attempting to put Chromatius’s sermons into the context of Aquileia at the end of the fourth century. She examined numerous archeological studies about the presence of a synagogue in the city and commercial links to the east suggesting the presence of a Jewish community. The Jewish community in Aquileia was relatively new to Aquileia in the fourth century, brought to the city as a result of trade with the east. This also meant that the community was wealthier than the average inhabitants of the city, a factor which may have caused jealousy.²⁵ Yet her reading of Chromatius compares his words to those of John Chrysostom in the fervor of his anti-Judaism. Cracco-Ruggini reads Chromatius as a missionary bishop seeking to convert the city and surrounding populations to Christianity. Presenting a tripartite scheme of Jews, heretics and pagans in Chromatius’s sermons, she notes that his words against the Jewish community are the harshest, a fact she attributes to the hardened border lines


between the two groups. She suggests that the extensive missionary efforts of Chromatius did not extend to the Jewish community. If the reality was a cosmopolitan world with the mixing of varied ethnic and cultural groups, Chromatius’s words might reflect a fear of this intermixing. She explicitly notes the dissimilarity with John Chrysostom’s Antioch where Christians visited synagogues, emphasizing instead the smaller nature of the Jewish community in Aquileia and the potential of Chromatius to shut off the Jews completely from city life.

Cracco-Ruggini has returned to Aquileia in two other articles. She compared its urban society to that of nearby Concordia in 1987. There she emphasized again Chromatius’s missionary efforts in the surrounding region, a point which would be picked up by Rita Lizzi. Concordia, like other cities of the region, was only elevated to the level of a bishopric around the end of the fourth century, when Chromatius was bishop of Aquileia. And in fact several bishops in the region came from his tutelage in Aquileia. Her most recent work dealing with Chromatius was part of an anthology published to commemorate the 1600th anniversary of his death. In a further study of the economics of Aquileia, Cracco-Ruggini paints the Jewish community in Aquileia as traders in luxury goods. She also suggests that they would have been the envy of poorer Christians. Although she adds wonderful epigraphic research on the

26 Ibid, 379.
27 Ibid, 381.
29 Eusebius (Chromatius’s brother), Heliodorus, Julian, and Nepotian all had ties to Aquileia and Chromatius before taking their roles as bishop in cities near Aquileia. For speculation on the potential ties and grooming of bishop candidates see Chapter 2.
demographics of Aquileia, she maintains her original approach to Chromatius which reads him as an anti-Jewish force, determined to keep the Jewish community perpetually on the margins of Aquileia.\textsuperscript{30}

Rita Lizzi also has written extensively on northern Italy in late antiquity. Her earlier works explored the development of the role of the bishop in late antique northern Italy. She devoted a chapter to Aquileia and Chromatius in her book, \textit{Vescovi e strutture ecclesiastiche nella città tardoantica} and she uses Ambrose as a model for studying the Christianization process in regions of Italy.\textsuperscript{31} The construction of churches, translation of relics, consecration of new bishops, and evangelical preaching all follow Ambrose’s pattern, if some of the details vary. Lizzi views Chromatius as following Ambrose’s actions as if he were a disciple of Ambrose.\textsuperscript{32} She reads Chromatius as much more Eastern focused, however, noting his friendship with Jerome and Rufinus, his commissioning of bishops for cities in Illyricum, and the presence of so many merchants and traders in Aquileia. Lizzi also adopts Cracco-Ruggini’s approach to the Jewish community in Aquileia, though she emphasizes the newness of the community as the reason for the extensive anti-Jewish polemic in Chromatius’s sermons.\textsuperscript{33} Lizzi particularly draws attention to what she labels his “molto simplici” preaching style.\textsuperscript{34} Her approach does not fault Chromatius for being simple in his words, rather she studies


\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid}, 148-150,

\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid}, 163-167.

\textsuperscript{34} \textit{Ibid}, 163.
how the simplicity reflects his ongoing attempt at Christianization in Aquileia that Lizzi presents as the defining movement of the era. She developed this view in an article on Christianization efforts in the region. She presents Chromatius as representative of efforts to convert the “urban upper classes” based on the construction efforts led during his tenure as bishop.\(^{35}\) Here again, Lizzi ties Chromatius closely to Ambrose, emphasizing his actions in the context of broader cultural change in the region as a whole rather than in Aquileia, though she does mention that Aquileia was unique among cities in the region due to its wealth and its eastern connections.

The French scholar Yves-Marie Duval continued the trend of emphasizing Aquileia’s unique eastern orientation. In numerous articles on the relationship between Aquileia and such diverse places as Illyricum, Palestine, Africa and Gaul, he focused not on Chromatius in his own right but rather as a marker of the changing cultural landscape of the region. Duval held that the Arian conflict was not in the past for Chromatius but a real debate continuing in Aquileia during his tenure as bishop.\(^{36}\) His summation of Chromatius’s work on the 1600\(^{\text{th}}\) anniversary of his ascension to the bishopric of Aquileia seems to reflect his continued position: “l’oeuvre de Chromace reste celle d’un homme de 350, plus que de 400.”\(^{37}\) When contrasted to Jerome or Rufinus, Chromatius seemed an older figure, concerned with issues of a different realm. Never the navel-gazing ascetic, Chromatius’s gaze was fixed on the local realities of

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\(^{35}\) Rita Lizzi, “Ambrose’s Contemporaries,” 164-166.


Aquileia. The Jewish community, pagan festivals and the Arian church dominated Chromatius’s sermons because, according Duval, Chromatius had a fourth-century mentality rather than the victorious mindset of the fifth century.38

Giuseppe Cuscito published the lone monograph on Chromatius, a short work examining the sermons and tractate on Matthew for style and substance. He differed from Duval and Cracco-Ruggini in their views on the religious landscape in Aquileia. While they assumed a continued presence of other Christianities in the city (under the broad term “Arians”), he believed that the other groups had been forced out of the city and had no remaining presence of any notable size. This issue is tied as well to the anti-Jewish polemics in Chromatius’s sermons. Cuscito dismisses the polemics as reflective of a monolithic landscape in Aquileia; the Jewish community was the only foil left for Chromatius, thus he attacks them naturally, not out of choice.39 For Duval and Cracco-Ruggini, Chromatius chose to attack the synagogue over other opponents, a choice which demands an explanation.40 Cuscito believes that the Council of Aquileia held in 381 acted as a definitive end point for the Arian controversy in the west, much as the Council of Constantinople did in the east.41

Cuscito has also made an important contribution in the area of archeological studies on the ruins of churches in Aquileia and the surrounding area. Although


numerous studies examine the Theodorian basilica, other churches and the mosaics housed in them, Cuscito covers the totality rather than individual components.\textsuperscript{42} He believes that an expansion of the primary basilica, called the Theodorian basilica after the bishop during its construction, occurred at the end of the fourth century under Chromatius and reflects the new prestige, wealth and peace that the church in Aquileia had obtained. The successive iterations of the basilica in Aquileia, starting small in 314 and expanding at least three times during the course of the century, culminating in the construction of an external baptistery at the beginning of the fifth century, are a fitting analogy for the changes in the cultural and religious history of the city.\textsuperscript{43}

The theme of progressive cultural changes in Aquileia has been the primary narrative for much of Claire Sotinel’s work. Her book \textit{Identité Civique et Christianisme: Aquileé du IIIe au Vie siècle} is the most thorough study of Aquileia, covering the period from the construction of the Theodorian basilica through a schism with Rome under the Byzantines in the sixth century.\textsuperscript{44} She charted how the basilica, with its opulent displays of wealth, contrasted with the nascent minority status of its congregation. The church was wealthy but lacking in numbers. In contrast, by the end of the century, Aquileian Christianity was basking in the Theodosian conquest. Yet the celebratory language masked the diversity which still existed in the city. Though Chromatius’s sermons suggest a city on the verge of total unification, Sotinel argues that they are reactions to


\textsuperscript{44} Sotinel, \textit{Identité civique}, 89-99 and 176-180.
great religious, cultural and ethnic diversity.\textsuperscript{45} She also tends to agree with Cuscito regarding the lack of Arian churches in the city, going even farther to suggest that Arianism was probably never widespread in the Aquieia.\textsuperscript{46} As for Chromatius, Sotinel suggests that he was not as close to Ambrose as earlier scholars suggested. Milan was distant, and the two were in vastly different regions with different concerns. Chromatius could stand on his own without the need for Ambrose to prop him up, unlike some other bishops nearer to Milan.\textsuperscript{47} She is also loath to attribute the construction of any one church building to Chromatius.\textsuperscript{48} Given the vast literature and widespread agreement about the relative timeline of the constructions, it seems safe to allow that Chromatius played a role in seeing the extensive constructions during his tenure carried to fruition, but Sotinel glosses over the subject.

Perhaps most interestingly, Sotinel suggests a new framework for the sermons of Chromatius. It has been generally assumed that his sermons were delivered in the “normal” way—that is in church to a general audience. Sotinel suggests that a few of the sermons and the entirety of the tractates on Matthew may have been designed for a more specialized audience, one composed of devotees of asceticism or even other clerics.\textsuperscript{49} She draws this conclusion from her analysis of the community at Aquileia which gathered around Chromatius and at one time counted Jerome, Rufinus, and


\textsuperscript{46} Sotinel, \textit{Identité civique}, 111-112.

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Ibid}, 182-188.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Ibid}, 220-222.

\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Ibid}, 225-227.
numerous future bishops among its members. The nature of this community has been widely debated with interpretations ranging from proto-monastic community to an ad hoc gathering of friends. Sotinel views the community as something like a modern day seminary, where persons could gather for informal devotion and training in spiritual practices. If not all, then some of the sermons of Chromatius, as leader of this group since at least 370, may well be addressed to these privileged few.

Two other recent works stand out for their contribution to studies of Chromatius. Both are collected volumes of papers given in 2008 for the 1600th anniversary of Chromatius's passing. *Cromazio de Aquileia: al crocevia di genti e religioni* came out of a museum exhibition and conference. These articles, almost all in Italian, offer little new research but superbly summarize the state of the field. The work covers the history of Aquileia, the archeological zone in the city, and its relations with trade and barbarians. On Chromatius, Giuseppe Cuscito offers the best summary of the Christianization narrative in Aquileia. The real strength of the volume lies in its usage of archeology

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51 Sotinel suggests that certainly sermon 41 on the beatitudes and the tractates on Matthew, which have a higher, more classical style, were designed for this special group. Beyond this one, however, it would be difficult if not impossible to determine which sermons were for the ascetic community. *Identité civique*, 223.

and material culture. Again Giuseppe Cuscito summarizes the constructions in the city.\textsuperscript{53} Sandro Piussi adds numerous examples of Aquileian material culture and the famous mosaics in the Theodorian basilica.\textsuperscript{54} The other major volume, \textit{Chromatius of Aquileia and His Age}, comprises twenty-two scholarly essays on Chromatius, yet the majority are concerned either with liturgical or theological issues. The reading of Jonah, the presence of the Bible, the cult of the saints and the Apocalypse of John all merit their own articles.\textsuperscript{55} This volume has done much to advance understating of Chromatius’s sources of biblical interpretation, displaying his reliance on Origen among others.\textsuperscript{56} The present study builds on the work of all these scholars.

\textbf{Organization}

For the sake of scope and brevity, I will limit my analysis to the sermons of Chromatius. His tractates on Matthew are fascinating and deserve a fuller treatment than they receive here or have received anywhere else. But based on my reading (which partially accords with that of Claire Sotinel), the tractates were not written or delivered as ordinary sermons. That is to say that they were not given at regular occasions and certainly were not designed for the general populace but instead for a unique subgroup of intellectuals. They contrast with the sermons of Chromatius, which

\textsuperscript{53}\ Giuseppe Cuscito, “Il gruppo episcopale,” 380-386.


\textsuperscript{56}\ Megan Williams, “Chromatius and Jerome on Matthew,” in \textit{Chromatius of Aquileia and His Age}, 193-226.
were delivered on regular occasions and written in a style befitting a more common audience. This project is a study of Chromatius’s sermons and how they conveyed to a broad audience his attempt to shape Christian and Roman identity in Aquileia.

Chapter 2 provides the historical background necessary for any work on Chromatius. In order to ground the work firmly in the local context of Aquileia, the chapter begins with an examination of the history, culture, economy and religious practices of the city. Out of that context, Chromatius is introduced as a young man in Aquileia. He became involved with a circle of western Christian ascetics and future churchmen that included Rufinus, Jerome, and Heliodorus. After participating in the Council of Aquileia in 381, he was consecrated by Ambrose of Milan. As preacher, patron, peacemaker, and politician, Chromatius endeavored to forge community both within and beyond Aquileia. The chapter explores how he shaped a network which connected him with people and places beyond the city while also re-forging the role of bishop within the city to take advantage of new opportunities which arose. His relationships with major Christian leaders of his day, with an intimate circle of friends and with his audience in his hometown, provide the context for reading his sermons and evaluating the ongoing project of Christianization in Aquileia during the late fourth century.

Chapter 3 explores the rhetoric of heresy in the sermons. Chromatius did not apply labels of “heresy” in a vacuum. They carried memory and history, reflecting institutional power. Although Arians had ceased to wield more than nominal influence and power, Chromatius presented this other Christianity as a potential corrupting force. He used his own personal battles with Arians as memories of “heresy.” These memories
shaped the notion of “orthodoxy,” represented by Chromatius’s church, as normative and with a longer history than any contrived “heresy.” The doctrines at issue in the “heretical” debate, while allowing for a pedagogical moment in the sermon, were not as important as the ability to construct “orthodoxy.” By presenting heretics as rebels, he could claim that a united, not divided, city was the preexistent norm. The recent history of “Arianism” implied a longer history of “orthodoxy.” And so Chromatius’s memories of fourth century intra-Christian battles concluded in Aquileia with a “return” to a newly constructed orthodoxy. He suggested that any threat to that unity, be it heretical or non-Christian, was a danger, and in so doing began to collapse the categories of heretic and non-Christian. In short, the history of ‘Arians’ in Aquileia made orthodoxy authoritative.

Chapter 4 explores the issue of ethnic identity by considering the language surrounding barbarians in Chromatius’s preaching. In the spring of 402, Alaric the Goth laid waste to northern Italy, including Aquileia. Chromatius responded both in his own sermons and by commissioning one of the most important works of Latin Christian literature, Rufinus’s *Ecclesiastical History*. Chromatius addressed barbarians not as an existential threat to the Roman Empire, but as potential conquests for Christianity. By considering how barbarians were represented in the texts of nine other fourth-century writers, Christian and non-Christian, Chromatius’s sermons can be placed into context. It is quite clear that “real” barbarians are not the concern of his (or other writers’) work. Rather, barbarians as a rhetorical trope, a menacing threat which could swoop down at any moment, appeared in the sermons to herald danger but also to display the power of Christianity to cure the latent violence present in the world. Barbarians acted as a marker of the actions which were beyond standard Roman identity. By constructing
“barbarians” as potential Romans through their acceptance of Christianity, Chromatius created a contrast with the Jewish community of Aquileia. He consistently compared even the most anti-Roman peoples, who could be transformed by the restorative power of Christian faith, with the perpetual outsider status of the Jews, provoking real questions about danger from a potential “fifth column.”

Chapter 5 deals with Chromatius’s direct attacks on the Jewish community in Aquileia. The existence of a Jewish population in Aquileia is well documented. And unlike other Christian luminaries of his day, Chromatius made clear to his listeners that he believed the Jews of the local synagogue were the same as the Jews of the gospels. To further reinforce the divide between the two religious communities, he connected Jews with important rituals of the church. The effect of ritual in providing clear boundary lines allowed Chromatius to create more distance and less sharing between the church and synagogue in Aquileia. This movement away from the other religion stood in opposition to the Roman urban context with its long history of a shared religious culture. The rituals and festivals were around the same dates, the practices were similar, and worshippers moved between church, synagogue and temple. Yet Chromatius’s focus on the Jews was solely aimed at dividing the two groups. He also labeled Jews in such a way as to suggest they were not capable of receiving the effects of baptism and fixed in their religion and their sinful nature, unlike other gens or ethnic groups of the period. Chromatius did not merely define Jews as the opposite of Christians; he also implied that they were different from the rest of the human race.

Chapter 6 begins to answer the question of what all this religious demagoguery aimed to accomplish. The ongoing enlargement of the Christian community required
funds, and to convert the wealthy, Chromatius attempted to present Christianity as traditional and in a pattern of elite Roman practice. Arguments about Judaism, heretics and barbarians aligned so as to harness general anxiety and give the fears an outlet in the form of greater devotion to the church. The exclusionary nature of Chromatius’s construction of the Christian faith juxtaposed participation and exclusion. So instead of holding private services in their homes as traditional Roman practice dictated for those who could afford it, elites were newly expected to be active and visible in their local church. Not wishing to be considered as excluded from the community, elites took larger steps into ecclesial life. The shift of elites out of their homes and into the church allowed for more local control of religion and new expectations about its role in urban life.

Chromatius fashioned an argument based on virtues and vices emphasizing values which were dear to the hearts of Roman elites. The argument, aimed particularly at elite Roman women, reflected an attempt to bring the wealth of Aquileia under greater control of the local bishop, Chromatius. Patronage networks would come to center around the church in urban environments as prestige and wealth flowed into it from local elites.

In conclusion, I attempt to pull these various rhetorical strands together in order to make sense of the changing nature of a large Roman city at the beginning of the fifth century. In an appendix, all forty-three translated sermons of Chromatius accompany the study. I hope that I have allowed Chromatius to dictate the project rather than imposing my own story on him. By keeping a tight focus on Chromatius and his words delivered to the people in Aquileia, the prevailing questions of late antiquity, so often shaped by our naturally teleological view, can be kept at bay. Rather than assuming the
eventual triumph of Christianity and fall of the empire, Chromatius’s concerns about the future of his church and not the future of the empire should be clear. The process of Christianization in the city was just as much about the day to day concerns of food, trade, safety and community reign as the long-term issues of empire, migration and intellectual outlook. The task of this study is to attempt to understand the sermons preached by Chromatius of Aquileia and their role in developing a clearer Christian/Roman identity in the local context of Aquileia.
CHAPTER 2
PATRON, PEACEMAKER, POLITICIAN, PREACHER: CHROMATIUS IN AQUILEIA

In the year 404, Chromatius composed a letter in defense of the bishop of Constantinople, John Chrysostom. The letter was sent to the western Roman emperor, Honorius, and then forwarded with praise to the eastern emperor, Arcadius.¹ Chromatius received thanks and praise for his attempt to mediate the crisis from diverse locales including Rome, Milan, Ravenna, Constantinople, Cappadocia and Bethlehem. For a brief moment at the beginning of the fifth century he was the most influential and respected leader in the Latin Christian church. Although the memory of his name and life story lapsed quite quickly after his death, his life presents a study in the changing dynamics of power over the course of the seventy or so years he lived. He wielded a type of power at the time of his death that did not exist when he was born. Instead of a local figure with spiritual but limited judicial power, the role of the bishop had evolved in tandem with the increasingly prominent position of the church in Roman society. Chromatius's life, limited to one unique city of trade, points to the changing dynamics and shifting power bases of late antiquity and the emerging supremacy of the Christian church in the west. He was not a primary force behind such changes or an exemplar of theology for generations to come, but a friend and inspiration to those men whose legacies would shape the intellectual milieu. When placed into a wider context, his writings are suggestive of a man who, in the classical Roman manner, both influenced the world around him and adapted to changing political realities beyond his control.

Family and City

The life of Chromatius revolved around the northern Italian city of Aquileia. Now a small ruin of a town with a population of approximately 5000, at its height in the fourth century, it was a city of 100,000 that billed itself as the second Rome. Founded in 181 BC as a Roman outpost, the city came to prominence as a point where three major trade routes converged.² Located on the river Natiso and protected from the Adriatic by navigable lagoons, Aquileia offered a safe port and an entry point into northern Italy. It also had access to the passes of the Julian Alps, which offered the primary route into the Balkans to the south and the Danube to the north. Rather than a city that grew with new opportunities, Aquileia’s value was tied to its location. The city held significance as a point of contact and defense for the empire. When those trade routes vanished in the sixth century, the city withered. The citizens of Aquileia were always aware that the prominence of their city was based on the external machinations of trade, not on any unique resource it possessed. The city was founded as a frontier outpost and vanished when the trade routes changed. Yet during those centuries when the city prospered, it was a busy, wealthy port connected to all corners of the Mediterranean.

Aquileia’s first moment in the spotlight was in the civil war of 238. As recorded by the Greek historian Herodian, “Aquileia was already a huge city, with a large permanent population. Situated on the sea and with all the provinces of Illyricum behind it, Aquileia served as a port of entry for Italy.”³ The armies of the usurper Maximinus, containing numerous Pannonians and mercenaries from Thrace, attempted to conquer the city as it

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³ Herodian, VIII:2.
was the strategic center for Northern Italy. Herodian went on at length about the commercial value of the city and the amount of wealth it held within its walls, wealth which would ultimately enable the city to withstand the assaults of Maximinus. In addition, the citizens of the city were urged by their governor (in words almost certainly put in his mouth by Herodian) to “win a place in history as the saviors and defenders of all Italy.”

Despite the mythical quality of these words, they reflect the role of Aquileia in the late empire. It controlled the major routes between Italy and the Danube region. Movement from Northern Italy to the east and from Gaul, Rome or Africa to Illyricum or the Danube passed through Aquileia. The failure to take the city led to the assassination of Maximinus by his own troops and their surrender to the people of the city. Yet, he was only the first would-be emperor to lose his life in Aquileia. With access to the sea, rivers into Italy and alpine passes into central Europe, the strategically located port of Aquileia would become a wealthy crossroads where control of the empire was demonstrated. During Chromatius’s lifetime, no less than three would-be emperors would perish after losing their final battle in the hinterlands of the city.

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4 Ibid, VIII:3. The historical event was later dramatized by the Scottish playwright John Home in “The Siege of Aquileia,” performed in Drury Lane in London in 1760. It was not well received (David Hume, a friend of the playwright commented that it was “forc’d”), mercifully played for only a week before being consigned to history and may have contributed to the playwright’s decision to give up writing drama for poetry.


6 Herodian, VIII:5.
By the mid-fourth century the city was a provincial capital with a population of fifty to a hundred thousand. Although the surrounding countryside was a wine-producing region, the primary occupation of Aquileia itself was trade. The city had for sale “a huge quantity of goods of all kinds, including ample supplies of food, drink, clothing, and shoes—in short, everything that a prosperous and flourishing city could provide for human consumption.” In his famous geography of the ancient world in the first century the Greek geographer Strabo reported that the city was an “emporium for the Illyrians living near the Danube.” Archeological work has confirmed the large city center which existed as well as the presence of major complexes of warehouses, or horreum, along the river. Peter Brown has noted that warehouses in antiquity, the storage location for grain, food and goods, are analogous to modern investment banks as the epitome of affluence and indulgence. To be able to hold that much food without needing to consume it defined the city as wealthy, even if it was merely a convenient spot for a market. Numerous scholars have documented the links between Aquileia and diverse places like Africa, Illyricum, the Danube frontier, Syria, Palestine and Egypt. In each

7 Sotinel, 13.
8 Herodian, VIII:6.
9 Strabo, V.1.8.
case, monetary trade provided social links which placed the northern Italian city at the center of a web. Its commercial and strategic value made Aquileia stand out among similar cities of the period.

One consequence of the city’s trade-centered economy was the diversity of its inhabitants. Its demographics suggest that diversity was normative and customary in the city. Connections with diverse regions helped create a less homogenous population than existed in other cities of the region. A sizable Jewish community resided in Aquileia, probably from at least the second century on. The presence of soldiers and the trade connections with the Danube frontier meant that so-called ‘barbarians’ dwelt in the city permanently. The countryside also had large numbers of settled peoples from outside the empire. It seems that a small community of eastern Romans, most likely Syrians, also resided in the city for commercial reasons. For all of these reasons, Aquileia was more than the average Roman city of the period.

The religious history of the city is wrapped up in the demographics and commerce of Aquileia. As Mark Humphries has commented, “Aquileia…boasts the most

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15 Noy, xiii-xiv.
diverse religious profile of any city in northern Italy. It seems that in most cases, the city’s migrant population was involved in the process of dissemination.”¹⁶ Numerous local cults associated with mountain passes, rivers and pre-roman deities survived well into late antiquity. Many of these local cults were subsumed into the worship of gods of the traditional Roman pantheon, but the reverence for the indigenous cults remained well into the fifth century.¹⁷ Into this convoluted religious landscape, Christians introduced their religion sometime before the mid-third century. The Aquileian church would claim that the belief was first brought to the city by the gospel writer Mark, on orders of the apostle Peter.¹⁸ The legend mirrors that of Alexandria, also founded by Mark on orders from Peter, yet it does not appear in any text before that of Paul the Deacon in the mid-eighth century, during a time of conflict with Rome. It seems like the legend was designed to support Aquileia’s claim to apostolic descent and its ability to stand as a counterpoint to Roman authority.¹⁹ Chromatius, along with other writers who dwelt in Aquileia prior to the sixth century, made no mention of Mark or his supposed sojourn in the city, suggesting that they were ignorant of such a tradition.

In reality, Christianity probably came to the city via one or more of the numerous merchants or slaves who passed through the region for commercial reasons. The first record of a church in the city comes from the Council of Arles in 314 where the

¹⁶ Humphries, 38-39.


¹⁸ Paul the Deacon, Liber de Episcopis Mettensisibus, MGH, II.260-270.

presence of the bishop Theodore and his deacon from Aquileia is noted.\textsuperscript{20} Scholars widely agree that this Theodore is most likely the same bishop who built the first basilica in Aquileia, as suggested by the central location of the dedication in the earliest basilica of Aquileia. It reads: \textit{Theodore fel[x], [a]diuuante Deo / omnipotente et / poemnio caelitus tibi / [tra]ditum, omnia / beate fecisti et / gloriose dedicatis/}\textsuperscript{21} The dedication lies in the middle of a vast mosaic 66 by 122 feet wide. The mosaic features the biblical story of Jonah surrounded by images of benevolent sea creatures and other fruits of the earth.\textsuperscript{22} The double basilica, probably constructed between 313 and 325, stands as a testament to the victory of Christians in Aquileia.\textsuperscript{23} Not only had they acquired legitimacy via imperial prescript, but they had acquired another victory, namely wealth. The mosaics clearly demonstrate the affluence of the congregation. No longer forced to hide, Christians were more than happy to display their faith and their wealth.

Interestingly, this basilica was located in the middle of a warehouse complex on the river, a somewhat unusual site, but one that centered the church in the middle of the primary activity of town life.\textsuperscript{24} Chromatius was born into this world. The double basilica of Theodore had probably stood for twenty years. The city had been a major hub for trade

\textsuperscript{20} Sotinel, 74.

\textsuperscript{21}“Happy Theodore, with the help of Almighty God and the flock given to you by heaven, you have blessedly built and gloriously dedicated all these things.” Translation taken from Humphries, 76. Original inscription: Ernst Diehl, \textit{Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae veteres} (Berlin: Apud Weidmannos, 1925), 1863. See picture on next page.

\textsuperscript{22} On the mosaics there is a vast body of literature. For a brief summary see: Sotinel, 76-89. For the best images: Graziano Marini, \textit{I mosaici della basilica di Aquileia} ([S.l.]: Ciscra Edizioni, 2003); a quick online search will result in a wealth of materials as well. For scholarly treatment: Gian Menis, \textit{Il complesso episcopale teodoriano e il suo battistero} (Udine: Arti grafiche friulane, 1986); Giuseppe Bovini, \textit{Le antichita cristiane di Aquileia} (Bologna: R. Patron, 1972); Renato Jacumin, \textit{Il basilica di Aquileia} (Reana del Rojale: Chiandetti, 1990).

\textsuperscript{23} Brown, \textit{Needle}, 39-41.

\textsuperscript{24} Sotinel, 42-43.
in the empire for three hundred years, bringing diversity of opinion and people to Aquileia. And wealth, in the form of food, wine, goods, and mosaics, was what drove the city.

**Chromatius the Aquileian**

No record survives of Chromatius's birth. While one later chronicle suggests that he was originally from Hispania, the idea seems to be a conflation of Chromatius with Paulinus of Nola.²⁵ Based on the fact that he dwelt with his mother, sister, and brother in the 370s in Aquileia, other writers are content to deem him a native of Aquileia. As for the chronology of his life, we are forced to work backwards.²⁶ Two dates are pertinent for this. Chromatius was already a priest in 370. Jerome and Rufinus both independently confirm that Chromatius was the informal leader of a small community of those seeking a life devoted to contemplation.²⁷ Chromatius, along with his brother Eusebius who was a deacon in the church, baptized Rufinus in that year.²⁸ How young could Chromatius have been to have completed his studies (probably in Rome if the others in the group are any guide) and returned home to be ordained? If the age of other bishops at the time of their elevation is any guide, Chromatius could not have been less than 35 and probably roughly 40 years old in 388.²⁹ Yet it is clear that he had

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²⁶ Similar attempts at ascertaining a birth date can be found in: Giuseppe Cuscito, *Cromazio di Aquileia e l’eta sua.* (Padova: Associazione nazionale per Aquileia, 1980), 16-21; Sotinel, 182-183; Carlo Truzzi, *Zeno, Gaudenzio e Cromazio: Testi e contenuti della predicazione Cristiana per le chiese di Verona, Brescia e Aquileia (360-410 ca.)* (Brescia: Paideia Editrice, 1985), 75-80.

²⁷ Jerome, *Ep.7; Chronicon*, 2471.


²⁹ Consider Ambrose was 40-45 and Augustine was 40 at the times of their respective consecrations.
served in the church for an extended period of time, acting perhaps like Augustine did in Hippo as a bishop in waiting, though for twenty years instead of three. If so, Chromatius may have actually been older than his colleagues upon his elevation to the episcopal seat in Aquileia.

Another suggestion comes from Jerome. He referred to Chromatius throughout his life, even in times when they should have butted heads, with a deference that he gives to practically no one else. Jerome’s famously caustic tongue never attacked Chromatius and in fact repeatedly praised him as a father figure. In his early letters, Jerome called Chromatius “blessed.”30 In the midst of the Origenist crisis and the dispute with Rufinus, Jerome stated, “When the reverend bishop Chromatius begged me to keep silence, my wish was to do so, and thus to make an end of our dissensions, and to overcome evil with good.”31 In addition Jerome addressed five prefaces to Chromatius, but the patron/client relationship evident in these makes them less useful for our purposes here. Suffice to say, however, that Jerome remained respectful of Chromatius his entire life. It seems additionally that Chromatius was the elder of Jerome by at least a few years. Jerome’s birth is fixed at 347 by most scholars today and Rufinus at 345.32 Taken with the evidence that Chromatius was a priest by 370, a birth date in the area of 340 seems justified.

30 Ep. 8:2.
31 Apology contra Rufinus, III:2.
32 On Jerome’s birth there is a large debate, though the scholarship has been trending in a particular direction. Besides the 347 date, Prosper of Aquitaine suggested a date of 331 for Jerome. While this evidence by someone who knew Jerome ought to be convincing, taken with the chronology of Jerome’s life there are major gaps, most notably a statement that he was in school in Rome in 363. Unless he was a 32 year old student, this date seems unbearable. For support of the 347 date see: Ferdinand Cavallera, Jerome: sa vie et son oeuvre (Paris: Louvain, 1922), 2:3-12; Megan Williams, The Monk and the Book: Jerome and the Making of Christian Scholarship (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), 268-269. For support of the 331 date see: J.N.D. Kelly, Jerome: His Life, Writings, and Controversies (New York:
The family of Chromatius seems like a western version of the famous Cappadocians. Although no writer made any mention of his father, Chromatius’s mother and sisters are presented as paragons of female virtue, and his brother served alongside him before becoming a bishop in his own right. The close ties of the family to the church in the city are evident from the letters of Jerome. He praised Chromatius’s mother in 375 as “your companion in the practice of sanctity” and like “a widowed Anna.” Likewise, the sisters “have triumphed over your sex and the world, they await the Bridegroom’s coming, their lamps well filled with oil.” Suffice it to say that Chromatius’s family was committed to an ascetic project taking place in the city. Chromatius seems to have been the elder brother, given his higher rank in the statement of Rufinus. The details of the life of Eusebius, Chromatius’s brother, are lost to us. He became a bishop at some point, probably in the same the region, as we will see below. And it is likely that he died before Chromatius since Jerome, in a consoling letter to a mutual friend who had lost a nephew, said, “Let us who have lost a son show the same fortitude with which the blessed father [papa] Chromatius bore the loss of a brother.” The entire family—mother, daughters and sons—displayed their commitment through their children. They gave birth to no notable offspring, but rather to spiritual descendents in the form of a small community which was to gather around them in the


34 Ibid.

35 Rufinus, Apologia contra Jerome, I:4.

36 Jerome, Ep. 60:19.
city and eventually spread out to influence the region and, through their writings, the entire Latin world.

The commitment of the family without any mention of the *paterfamilias*, coupled with the ability to lead a small ascetic community, suggests that Chromatius’s family was endowed with significant wealth. Leading and housing an ascetic community was the privilege of the elite during the fourth century, a means to display wealth before the church.\(^{37}\) Chromatius was treated as an equal by Rufinus and Jerome, both of whom came from elite families. If their lives are any guide, we can theorize that Chromatius was a scion of privilege and was blessed with schooling that befitted his social position.\(^{38}\) It is of course possible that his position mirrors a lesser elite like that of Augustine. Yet even Augustine’s father was a town councilman and had the financial ability to send his eldest son to school in the provincial capital.\(^{39}\) In an analogous situation, Chromatius could have been sent to Rome for his education, returning home upon its completion. If so, he would be unremarkable for his age. Given his social contacts, his respected position, and his familial situation, it is safe to assume that Chromatius came from the upper reaches of late Roman society in Aquileia.

Before departing for his education a unique event took place in Aquileia which Chromatius probably had the opportunity to witness. The mighty Alexandrian bishop Athanasius, exiled from his see in the east during the height of the Arian controversy, took refuge in Aquileia in 345. His presence was part of an extended sojourn in the west under the protection of a sympathetic emperor. But in 345, Athanasius visited Aquileia

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\(^{38}\) Kelly, *Jerome*, 10-17; Murphy, 3-15.

\(^{39}\) Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 151.
and celebrated the Easter Sunday feast with the emperor.\textsuperscript{40} If Chromatius’s family were Christian attendees, which is likely, Chromatius himself, though only perhaps an eight or ten year old boy, celebrated Easter in the church with the most powerful churchman of the fourth century. Athanasius’s visit may have been a minor event in Aquileia. His fame might not have preceded him in the city. Yet some scholars have suggested that his visit, coupled with the Latin translation of the biography of Antony of Egypt, influenced the development of Nicene Christianity in the city; but the evidence is highly circumstantial.\textsuperscript{41} Whatever the case, the Easter service, conducted by the city’s bishop, Fortunatianus, provides a useful reminder of the important position of Aquileia in the schema of the Mediterranean world. The city was poised at the edges of the Latin world, closer to Syria, Egypt and the Danube than any other Latin city. Chromatius would have imbibed the cosmopolitan aura from an early age to the point that any other mode of life would have seemed strange, like a New Yorker being dropped in Nebraska or vice versa. His natural home was a diverse bustling city.

It is safe to assume that Chromatius did leave the city for schooling in Rome, and was likely gone from the ages of 12 to 20, give or take a year. Based on an estimated date of birth in 337, he would have departed in 349 and returned home in 357. Advanced study of Latin classics, rhetorical training, and a rudimentary study of Greek were all certainly part of his education in Rome. In Aquileia, Chromatius might have been exposed to basic Greek, and by his later writings, it seems likely that he knew

\textsuperscript{40} T.D. Barnes, \textit{Athanasius and Constantius: Theology and Politics in the Constantinian Empire} (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1993), 89-90.

Greek well enough to pass in conversation or basic reading, but not well enough to translate, probably similar to Augustine’s knowledge of Greek.\(^{42}\)

If Chromatius returned home before 361, he would have been part of the end of a civil war. Julian, the nephew of the Emperor Constantine, had been placed in the post of Caesar by the Eastern Emperor, his cousin, Constantius II. Proclaimed emperor by his troops in Gaul, Julian set out to overthrow the Eastern Emperor in 361. Having sailed down the Danube and marched in the Balkans unopposed, 23,000 of Constantius’s troops seized Aquileia in June, threatening to cut off Julian’s supply lines to the West.\(^ {43}\) Ammianus Marcellinus recounts the attack and subsequent siege of the city by Julian’s forces. Just as Maximinius had been unable to breech the city walls a century before, so Julian’s troops also failed at their task. In an attempt to starve out the city, the army rerouted the river away from the city to deprive it of water.\(^ {44}\) Nonetheless, the citizens held out for months against the armies of Julian, even when it was announced to them that Constantius had died in Persia. Only when a trusted emissary came and confirmed the news did they relent and open the gates.\(^ {45}\) The city’s resistance was not related to religious or cultural issues, but rather an expectation that Julian, a young and inexperienced commander, would fall to the strength of his cousin. Constantius died at the age of 44, ending the war and leaving Julian as victor by default. Aquileia became the city where two civil wars had ended, though in each case because of an unexpected

\(^{42}\) Chromatius mentions his knowledge of specific Greek words in four sermons: IV:4, XV:2, XXIX:4, XXXII:1.


\(^{44}\) Ammianus, *LRE*, XXI.12.17.

death. The similarities between the two battles, a century apart, are striking even today. As for Chromatius, we are left to ponder whether he was in the city or not during this six month stretch. There is no way to know, but the legacy of the battle and the re-routing of the river, a fantastic feat of pre-modern engineering, must have lingered in the city, to be recalled in the days of Theodosius.

One other change in the years of his youth would have affected Chromatius. Sometime in the mid-fourth century the church in Aquileia was expanded. Under the bishop Fortunatianus, the double basilica of Theodore was extended on the north side to more than double its original size. The church was now a major basilica and reflected the growing influence of the church in the community. The city’s religious leaders were also growing in stature. The bishop Fortunatianus played an important though ambiguous role in the introduction of Arian disputes in Italy during the 350s, probably during the period when Chromatius was away. Jerome describes Fortunatianus in *De Viris Illustribus* as, "an African by birth, bishop of Aquileia during the reign of Constantius. He composed brief commentaries on the gospels arranged by chapters, written in a rustic style." But Jerome also mentions that the bishop was responsible for causing Pope Liberius to sign a semi-Arian creedal statement in 357. Although Fortunatianus’s theological position is unknown, the words of Jerome, who lived in Aquileia for a period, suggest that the bishop was not unsullied by the controversies of his age. Under pressure from imperial prescript, the bishop who had hosted Athanasius for Easter in 345 condemned him in 357. Fortunatianus died the next

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46 Lizzi, *Vescoví*, 144.

47 Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, 97.
year and his writings are largely lost to history, so there is no way to confirm his motives or actual positions. During his tenure, Chromatius was probably not in Aquileia, but concluding his studies in Rome. At that time Pope Liberius was exiled for his Nicene beliefs. His return to his seat in Rome in 357 was rumored to have been accomplished by acceding to the semi-Arian creed produced at Sirmium, the creed that Fortunatianus urged him to take up. Chromatius might have been caught between factions in Rome and support for his hometown. Having seen a popular pope deposed during his studies in Rome and returning home to find the aged bishop who perpetrated the switch dead the next year may have confirmed Chromatius's aversion to the Arian faction.

The Community of the Blessed

At the end of the next decade, Chromatius appears in the historical record for the first time. In 369, Rufinus and Jerome both joined a small group of Christians in Aquileia, where they devoted themselves to an ascetic ideal. Jerome had been inspired at the imperial court in Trier to give up his life. How he came to know and join the group at Aquileia is unclear, but it seems to be more than coincidence that he landed in the city. All of these aspiring ascetics resided under the protection and blessing of the city's current bishop, Valerian. As for the source of the ascetic impulse in the city, two possible sources have been suggested. First, as previously mentioned, Athanasius's

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brief stay in the city could be connected with the diffusion of ascetic ideals. Second, the bishop Eusebius of Vercelli, another influential city in northern Italy, passed through the city in 363 on his way back from Antioch. The bishop had been exiled to the East in 355 for refusing to sign the creedal statement to which Pope Liberius and Fortunatianus of Aquileia had acceded. When he returned he instituted a type of communal living for the clergy of Vercelli. Ambrose wrote that, “For Eusebius of blessed memory was the first to bring together in the West these two differing requisites [monastic severity and ecclesiastical discipline], and though living in the city, observed the monastic institute, and with the government of his Church united the sobriety of an ascetic life.”

Eusebius’s stay in Aquileia, and subsequent creation of a community in Vercelli may have influenced the similar community in Aquileia. Whatever the impetus for such a development in Aquileia, the reality is that an informal ascetic community developed in the city by 370. Rufinus would refer to the group as a monastery (monasterio) in his apology thirty years later, using an anachronistic term. Yet his sentiment was correct. The group in Aquileia was less related to later monasteries in Italy which would pop up throughout the late fourth and early fifth century than it was to the Roman tradition of otium. The community at Aquileia was informal and the best comparison may be the short-lived gathering around Augustine at Cassiacicum from 386-387. The community was focused on a communal life of the mind without a set rule. To be sure, the

50 See above n.39.
52 Rufinus, Apology, I:4.
comparison is not perfect, as Cassaciacum did not involve clerics. Perhaps if we knew more about the community at Vercelli under Eusebius we could draw a better analogy. Yet, the sense of *otium* and communal gathering which reigned at Cassaciacum seems similar to that of Aquileia. The community at Aquileia would also not last long as most of its members would depart by 374, but for the four short years while it did exist, the city was home to one of the greatest collection of Christian writers in antiquity.

All the later references to this group placed Chromatius at its head. Rufinus claimed his orthodoxy was based on following Chromatius, and Jerome spoke of him in similarly reverent terms. As noted by Elizabeth Clark in her work on the Origenist controversy, a dispute which divided Italy into two bitterly opposed camps, Chromatius is nearly the only figure who remained on good terms with both sides. His place at the head of this community is agreed upon by all commentators. Alongside Chromatius was his younger brother Eusebius, who was a deacon in the church. Eusebius acted as spiritual director for Rufinus prior to the latter’s baptism in Aquileia in 370. Eusebius would eventually go on to be a bishop in his own right, though the city he served in is lost to us. Also mentioned in passing as part of the community were Bonosus, Heliodorius of Altium, Jovinus, Julian, Niceas, Nepotian and a monk named Chrysocomas. Four of these (Heliodorius, Jovinus, Niceas, and Nepotian) became bishops later in life, meaning six of the eleven certain members became bishops.

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Bonosus retreated to an isle in the Mediterranean to become a hermit.\textsuperscript{57} Julian was a deacon and spiritual director to Jerome’s sister in 375.\textsuperscript{58} And Jerome and Rufinus became celebrity monks, for lack of a better description.

One other potential member of the community should be mentioned. Evagrius of Antioch, later to be bishop of that city, came to Italy with Eusebius of Vercelli in 363. He called several members of the community friends and seems to have had close relations with them. Upon his departure from Aquileia, Jerome chose to move to Syria with Evagrius and would later count him as a spiritual mentor while living there as a hermit. Rufinus also seems to have known Evagrius.\textsuperscript{59} Perhaps most importantly, Evagrius translated Athanasius’s \textit{Life of St. Antony} into Latin sometime before his departure to the East in 372. Evagrius almost certainly resided in Aquileia for part of this time and it is thus likely that the translation, if not completed in Aquileia, was known to the members of that community.\textsuperscript{60} This would be the only certain work completed in Aquileia during the period, although Jerome mentioned that part of his commentary on Obadiah was begun during his tenure in the city.\textsuperscript{61} Evagrius also seems to have served as a messenger from Bishop Valerian and Pope Damasus to Basil of Caeserea, bearing

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{57} Jerome, \textit{Ep.} 3:4 and 7:3.
\textsuperscript{58} Jerome, \textit{Ep.} 7:4.
\textsuperscript{60} Evagrius, in a preface says he wrote the work for Innocent, who died in 374. Jerome, writing in the Syrian Desert in 375 also noted his familiarity with the Latin version. As all the sources date the translation to the generation after Athanasius, and he died in 373, a date at the very beginning of the 370s, when Evagrius was in Aquileia, seems probable. For the evidence of Evagrius and Jerome see: “Introduction to Vita Antonii,” in NPNF, Series II: Vol IV, ed. Philip Schaff (1894), 189. For Evagrius’s location see the letter of Basil below. Also on the dating: L.W. Barnard, “The date of S. Athanasius’ \textit{Vita Antonii},” \textit{Vigilae Christianae} 28:3 (1974): 169-174. For a slight dissent on the date see: B.R. Brennan, “Dating Athanasius’ \textit{Vita Antonii},” \textit{Vigilae Christianae} 30:1 (1976): 52-54.
\textsuperscript{61} Jerome, “Preface to Commentary on Obadiah,” PL 25:1098.
\end{footnotes}
letters east in 372 before returning to Antioch. Upon Evagrius’s visit, Basil composed a warm letter to Valerian, much warmer than his correspondence with Pope Damasus. Basil confirmed that Valerian shared his anti-Arian sentiments and that they were of one mind about the future.62 While Basil praised Valerian for his work against other Christian groups, Jerome stated in a letter to Chromatius and others that it was by the work of the ascetic community that “the poison of the Arian teaching was once banished from your city [Aquileia].”63 Whoever deserves the “credit,” these twin plaudits, four years apart, confirm that Arians were vanquished in Aquileia, no longer holding any power or sway in the city by the time that the “community of the blessed” broke up.64

It was Jerome who coined this name for the group in his Chronicle, written in 380 while in Constantinople. By 374 about half of the members had gone their separate ways. Rufinus had sailed to Jerusalem and taken up in a true monastery with Melania the Elder. Others left for pilgrimage (Niceas) or to pursue the life of hermits (Bonosus and Heliodorus), with mixed success. Jerome left under more inauspicious circumstances. It seems that he departed in lieu of being run out. His letters are vague, but he wrote to Rufinus, “A sudden tornado tore me from your side.”65 He hints at the cause in letters to the virgins of Haemona and Pope Damasus.66 Yet although they were scattered across the empire, the members of this community remained connected. Close ties existed between group members until their deaths, even if one of the most

62 Basil, Ep. 91.
64 Jerome, Chronicon, 2471.
65 Jerome, Ep. 3:3.
66 Jerome, Ep. 11; Ep. 16:2.
prominent relationships (that of Jerome and Rufinus) soured over time. Chromatius was at the head of this group metaphorically, even decades later. The time in Aquileia under Chromatius seems to have been a formative, defining period for many of these luminaries.

Yet, while Rufinus, Jerome and Heliodorius went off to diverse locales and became bishops, assistants to Popes and founders of influential monasteries, Chromatius remained behind in his hometown as a simple priest. For at least 18 years, he toiled under the leadership of Bishop Valerian in an important city, but without personal distinction. Perhaps he continued to lead a small community devoted to the same principles but without the prestigious members. Jerome’s letter from Syria suggests that Chromatius was abiding by the principles with his family in the later part of the 370s.67 But why did Chromatius not take up a seat as a bishop before 388? Heliodorius, his junior and a follower in the community was ordained bishop in Altinum, not a minor city, by 381. Why was Chromatius held back? No clear explanation exists, but it seems entirely possible that he was groomed for the bishopric in Aquileia. A strong local candidate with the backing of the sitting bishop might prevent schism and dissension when the time came for a new bishop. Perhaps akin to what happened to Augustine in Hippo in 393, Chromatius might have been chosen before he acceded to the episcopal throne. This hypothesis would explain his prolonged stay in the city and his involvement in the Council of Aquileia in 381.

The council of Aquileia was originally intended to be a counterpart to the ecumenical council of Constantinople. Yet the Aquileian meeting was much smaller and

67 Jerome, Ep. 7.
functioned primarily as a vehicle for Ambrose to condemn Arian opponents. Only twenty-five bishops were present at the opening of the council (including Heliodorus). Chromatius, only a priest at that time, was allowed to question the accused heretics on points of Nicene orthodoxy. Ambrose of Milan was certainly running the drama, even though the council should have been led by Valerian as he was more senior and it was in his home. Valerian is only recorded three times in the acts of the council, Chromatius twice. Helidorus only appears once. Only two other priests are mentioned, and neither more than once. Although only a priest at the time, Chromatius seems to have been regarded more highly than his station would suggest. Taken with his long residence in Aquileia, it does seem likely that he was the heir presumptive of the Aquileian see.

Bishops and Emperors

The year 388 brought major upheaval to Aquileia. By the end of the year, Chromatius would be bishop and involved in imperial politics. In Britain the general Magnus Maximus had claimed the imperial title in 383 after defeating Gratian. Theodosius recognized his rule over Britain and Gaul, but in 387, Maximus invaded Italy seeking to seize the rest of the Western empire from the junior Valentinian II. The emperor and his mother, Justina, who had recently been feuding with Ambrose in Milan over Arian churches, fled east to Theodosius. For whatever reasons, Theodosius sided with the young emperor and turned his troops westward to meet the challenge of


70 Ibid, 11 and 44. For more on the council and its place in the narrative of the Arian controversy see Chapter 3.
Maximus. Maximus was ensconced in Aquileia in August when the two armies met on the plain outside the city. Theodosius’s troops routed the westerners and entered Aquileia, finding Maximus on the imperial throne. He was killed there, on August 28, 388, marking the triumph of Theodosius. For the second time in Chromatius’s life and the third time in 150 years, Aquileia was the scene of another defining battle in a Roman civil war. The victory led to the end of any imperial patronage for Arian Christianity.

Theodosius and Valentinian seem to have remained in Aquileia for perhaps a month after the battle as they issued a decree from Aquileia which invalidated Magnus Maximus’s actions. The bishop of Aquileia, Valerian, died sometime around this conquest, and Chromatius, although not yet official, was probably serving as bishop of the city during this period, and thus interacted with both Maximus before his demise and the victors after the battle. Perhaps his experience influenced Rufinus 14 years later to record Magnus Maximus as a devotee of Nicene Christianity as well as Theodosius’s eventual triumph for that sect. After the crisis had passed, the Aquileian church faced a more local issue. The death of Valerian, who had been bishop since 359, meant Chromatius could finally succeed to the position for which he had waited at least twenty years.

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71 There are numerous legends about Theodosius’s motives from religious purity to fatherly concern for Valentinian to a backroom deal for a child bride. Respectively see: Rufinus, *HE*, 11:17; Orosius, *Adversus Paganos*, 7:35; Zosimus, 4:44.

72 CTh, XV:14:6, from Aquileia on 22 September 388.


74 Rufinus wrote that Maximus justified his revolt by the impious actions of Justina in favor of the Arians. Theodosius receives all the glory for the eventual triumph for a supposedly bloodless victory, Maximus is not derided for being a usurper as Eugenius in 394. Rufinus, *HE*, 11:16-17 and 11:31-33.
Before the end of that year, Chromatius officially became bishop of Aquileia. The date is well attested by the actions and presence of Ambrose. Although Ambrose never explicitly discussed his involvement in the consecration, he wrote perhaps his most influential letter from the city. Addressing Theodosius over the issue of overzealous Christians in Callinicum who had burned a synagogue and then been ordered to make restitution, Ambrose made allusions to a synagogue in Aquileia. After his return, he wrote another letter to his sister about his time in Aquileia. What seems odd from a historical perspective is that Ambrose never mentioned his involvement in Chromatius’s elevation. Ambrose confirms his participation in nine other bishops’ consecrations. Why not mention Chromatius? Historical scholarship has always tended to suggest that Ambrose and Chromatius were close and had an important relationship. Only one letter from Ambrose to Chromatius survives. Apparently Chromatius had requested that Ambrose expound on some passages from the Old Testament, and Ambrose responded with an analysis of Balaam drawn from commentaries he had on hand. In her reading of this letter, Claire Sotinel suggests that it is formal and does not reflect a close relationship but rather the customary interactions.
between two well-respected bishops. The reason that Ambrose does not mention Chromatius’s consecration is that the other bishops were selected and put in place largely as disciples of Ambrose. Sotinel contrasts that kind of situation with Chromatius. He was the expected heir in Aquileia and owed nothing to Ambrose for his position. Going even further, I would add that much like Ambrose, Chromatius stood at the center of his own web of bishops that could trace their positions to his community and church. Heliodorus, Jovinian, Nepotian, and Eusebius all sprang from Chromatius’s tutelage. Chromatius was Ambrose’s equal, not his disciple. Milan and Aquileia were in different orbits and not dependent on the other for anything other than acknowledgement.

Chromatius’s strong position in Aquileia was based on his own standing as a long time member of the community. Having been resident in Aquileia for such a long time, he was familiar with the politics, economics and local issues which drove the city. His usage of metaphors related to the sea, trade and victors in battles all drew on experiences common to the citizens of Aquileia. His position also gave him a unique glimpse of Theodosius. Although the emperor is known for his mercurial relationship with Ambrose, it was arguably his minor interactions with Chromatius which shaped the picture of Theodosius that endured. In 402 Chromatius would commission Rufinus to write a continuation of Eusebius’s *Ecclesiastical History*. The new work culminates in the person and actions of Theodosius. Yet Rufinus, who wrote the new books, was in Palestine during all of Theodosius’s reign. Chromatius, on the other hand, saw Theodosius several times after the initial victory of 388. Theodosius and Chromatius

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81 Sotinel, 181-185.

82 For a fuller accounting of the various occupations mentioned by Chromatius see: Mascari, 249-250.
were certainly not close, yet Theodosius made several important stops in Aquileia which brought him into contact with Chromatius. In 391 Theodosius was returning to the East when he stopped in Aquileia for at least a week in June. He issued four imperial decrees from the city, most famously the decree which closed the temples of Egypt.\textsuperscript{83} The decree would result in the destruction of the Serapeum later that year, and for Chromatius, who must have been one of the first church leaders to hear the news, the supposed “defeat” of these pagan opponents must have brought a thrill. Theodosius acted just as the Nicene advocates had hoped. Arianism was banished, temples were closed, and the emperor had just recognized (however ruefully) the authority of bishops in the spiritual realm.\textsuperscript{84} This interpretation of Theodosius’s life would be confirmed three years later.

In 394, Theodosius was facing yet another would-be usurper, this time in the form of Eugenius. Mirroring the revolt of Magnus Maximus, the general had been proclaimed emperor by his troops in Gaul and marched east to confirm his rule by defeating Theodosius. According to some commentators, Eugenius was supportive of re-establishing paganism in the West, though this might be a narrative designed to de-legitimize him.\textsuperscript{85} The battle was slightly farther east than in 388, but still on the plain between Aquileia and the Julian Alps. For the third time in Chromatius’s memory a civil war would be decided outside the gates of his city. At the battle of Frigidus, Theodosius was supposedly aided by a divine wind which blew at the backs his troops coming down

\textsuperscript{83} CTh XVI:10:11. The others in Aquileia during the period are: CTh XIV:2:2, XI:38 and X:17:3.

\textsuperscript{84} Rufinus, HE, 11:18, 19 and 23.

\textsuperscript{85} On the paganism of Eugenius see: Rufinus, HE, 11:33. For a challenge to this narrative see: Alan Cameron, The Last Pagans of Rome (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 74-92.
the mountain and into the eyes of Eugenius’s soldiers.\footnote{Rufinus, \textit{HE}, 11:33.} These types of storms are not uncommon in the region, but the story of divine intervention confirmed God’s favor toward the Nicene emperor. After the battle Eugenius’s remaining troops took refuge in the church in Aquileia. In a surviving letter of Ambrose, he pleaded for clemency for “those who, suing for mercy, have fled to the Church, the Mother of your piety.”\footnote{Ambrose, \textit{Ep.} 62:3.} Chromatius, as bishop of the city, was undoubtedly responsible for having taken in these political \textit{personae non gratae}. Having supported a rebellion, the only hope for these people was the protection of the church. They called upon Ambrose, the most influential ambassador they could muster to present their plea for grace to the emperor. Paulinus records that the emperor granted the request when Ambrose appeared in person in Aquileia. Rufinus mentions that many survived the battle though they suffered great shame.\footnote{Paulinus, \textit{Vita Ambrosii}, 34. Rufinus, \textit{HE}, 11:33.} Chromatius seems to have played a role at the center of this web, watching the delicate negotiations for the lives of the men he was protecting. The mercy of Theodosius, real or merely prudent, seems to have had an effect on Chromatius. His conception of the possibility of a “Christian empire” arises a few times in his sermons. The experience with Theodosius, acting as a responsible victor and showing mercy, may even influence the language he used when discussing the victory of Christ over death and the giving of mercy. Paulinus described Theodosius’s actions in the following terms: “Pardon was easily gained, since the Christian emperor testified that he had been saved through his merits and intercessions.”\footnote{Paulinus, \textit{Vita Ambrosii}, 34.} These words seem to mirror
Chromatius statement that, “Becoming merciful even towards his enemies, by this kind of act he prepares for himself an accumulation of mercy at the coming of the Lord.”

One can imagine that the sight of an emperor granting mercy to his rebellious subjects would provide an example of grace, even if it was only a political calculation. It should be no surprise, then, that when Chromatius called on Rufinus to write a history of Christianity, Theodosius emerged as the protagonist for the “true faith.”

**Leader and Envoy**

At the beginning of the fifth century, Chromatius was beginning to play a larger role in the politics of the imperial church. After the deaths of Ambrose and Pope Siricus in 396 and 399 respectively, Chromatius seems to have taken the stage as the senior ecclesiastical leader in the west due to his age, tenure and location. He interceded in the Origenist controversy, offering shelter to Rufinus from the dogmatic storm which was raging. He expanded the footprint of the church in Aquileia and its province both metaphorically and physically.

Yet the last five years of his life saw him embroiled in two very different crises. As previously mentioned, in the winter of 401-402 an army of Goths led by Alaric crossed the Julian Alps into Italy. For the fourth time in his life, Chromatius saw a civil war at the gates of his city. Alaric was a Roman general and his soldiers had been mercenaries in the Roman army. Although classed as “barbarians” by Roman mores, the army at the gates was thoroughly Romanized, including in its religion.

Aquileia, however, shut its gates and held out as always. Alaric bypassed the

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90 Chromatius, *Sermon* 41:5. All translations of Chromatius are my own.


92 While there is a debate over the religious leanings of the Goths at this time, I defer to the view that suggests they were Arian Christians. On the topic of the Goths as Arians see: J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz,
city and moved deeper into Italy seeking the spoils and titles he and his army desired.\textsuperscript{93} The attack seems to have unsettled the populace more than any previous battle in the region. Chromatius addressed the fear of barbarians in a sermon a few months later, while Alaric and his army were still at large in the region. As the sun rose on Easter morning 402, Chromatius closed his sermon with the appeal, “Let us pray to the Lord with all our heart, all our faith, so that he may deliver us from all invasions of our enemies and all fear of them…Let him protect us according to his mercy and push back the barbarian nations.”\textsuperscript{94} Although the actual threat to Aquileia at this point was minor, Chromatius responded to fears on the ground. He acted as a spiritual leader, offering intellectual answers in the form of Rufinus’s work and personal solace in his sermons.\textsuperscript{95} The danger may not have actually made Chromatius any more influential in the city so much as offered a better record for the actions of leadership he undertook to comfort people. Other events in subsequent years confirm that he held significant, if largely symbolic, influence.

By 404, only three other bishops could compare with Chromatius in seniority: Pope Innocent in Rome, John Chrysostom of Constantinople and Theophilus of Alexandria. Thus, when two of those bishops were at odds with each other, Chromatius

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\textit{Barbarians and Bishops: Army, Church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 53. The suggestion that all the Goths were Arian may well be a later view that we have too readily adopted. As a warning see: Patrick Amory, \textit{People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489-554} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 245-247 For a fuller discussion of the topic, see Chapter 4.


\textsuperscript{94} \textit{Sermons}, XVI:4.

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Ibid}, XVI:3. On this odd passage see Chapter 5.
was naturally drawn into the quarrel. Theophilus had already proven his willingness to stir up trouble by his actions which instigated the Origenist controversy. His alliance with Jerome had resulted in many of the recriminations which had flooded Italy. This doctrinal dispute made its way to the highest levels of power by 403. The position of the patriarch of Constantinople had always been problematic for the archbishop of Alexandria. No less than four patriarchs were deposed by the machinations of the Alexandrian archbishops in seventy years. Now John Chrysostom, who had the ear of the emperor, was increasing the prestige and influence of the patriarchal position along with doctrinal beliefs that were major issues for Theophilus. The result was a series of Machiavellian moves which resulted in the exile of Chrysostom and the permanent casting of Theophilus as power-hungry by historians to come. Without being drawn into the minutiae of the debate, it is sufficient to note that Chrysostom was deposed due to political struggles, both secular and ecclesiastical, much more than doctrinal issues.

At the time that he was deposed after Easter of 404, Chrysostom wrote a letter appealing for help. He sent identical copies to Pope Innocent, Bishop Venerius of Milan and Chromatius. He recited the litany of his problems and appealed to them for support, hoping they would not recognize his deposition and would persuade Honorious, the western emperor, to intercede on his behalf with his brother Arcadius,

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96 Liebeschuetz, Barbarians and Bishops, 196.


the eastern emperor.\textsuperscript{99} In response, Innocent wrote back in support and summoned a synod in Rome. Chromatius, probably near seventy years old, undertook the journey to Rome in the early summer of 405.\textsuperscript{100} He even composed a letter in support of Chrysostom which the synod endorsed. Having swayed Honorius, the emperor composed a letter to the his brother which expressed his support for the patriarch and included the letter of Chromatius (along with one of Innocent) in order to better express the views of the western churches.\textsuperscript{101} The enclosure is unfortunately lost to us, but the reply of Chrysostom is not. From exile the next year, John wrote back to Chromatius in thanks for his support. He says that Chromatius’s words “sounded all the way to where I was.”\textsuperscript{102} The letter is hopeful that John will be able to return, something which would not happen before his death the following year. In the dispute, Chromatius broke no theological ground, but he did prove that Aquileia was a venerated locale which was looked to for leadership in times of dispute.

\textbf{Patron and Friend}

Rufinus was one of two writers with whom Chromatius maintained a life-long relationship. Both Jerome and Rufinus, who were close friends for twenty-five years before their falling out, remained tied to Chromatius.\textsuperscript{103} After leaving Aquileia by 374, they found their ways separately to Palestine, residing in monasteries endowed by

\textsuperscript{99} \textit{Ibid.}


\textsuperscript{101} Palladius, IV.148-154.

\textsuperscript{102} \textit{Ep.} 155, \textit{PG} 52:703.

\textsuperscript{103} Their friendship was noted and mourned by Augustine: “Where is the friend who may not be feared as possibly a future enemy, if the breach that we deplore could arise between Jerome and Rufinus?” \textit{Ep.} 74.
wealthy widows. Rufinus was under the care of Melania the Elder, one of the richest women in antiquity. He never wanted for funds. Jerome, on the other hand, was supported by Paula, a wealthy but not overwhelmingly so woman. Jerome had a constant need of patrons, and so Chromatius seems to have funded Jerome’s endeavors once he became bishop. Jerome, a prodigious scholar, first dedicated a work to Chromatius in 393, a commentary on the minor prophet Habakkuk. The preface begins with the dedication to Chromatius, “most learned of the bishops,” but is clearly a general introduction rather than especially for the dedicatee. Yet that work began a string of translations and commentaries that Chromatius paid for directly or indirectly by supplying scribes and copyists. In the spring of 398, Jerome wrote in the preface to a translation from the Hebrew of the books of Solomonic Wisdom (containing Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Songs), “You have sent the solace of expenses, by which our scribes and copyist having been sustained, so that our talents exert themselves most strongly for you.” Prior to this, Jerome had also dedicated to Chromatius a translation of Chronicles in 396 and a commentary on Jonah in 397. But the preface from the books of Solomon provides more detail about the requests of Chromatius as well as Heliodorus. They had apparently asked Jerome to provide commentaries on Hosea, Amos, Zechariah, and Malachi. Jerome’s statement suggests that an active

104 Kelly, *Jerome*, 121-129.


107 For all these dates, I am drawing from the excellent chronology of Jerome’s life in: Megan Williams, *Monk and the Book*, 267-301.
correspondence (which is now lost to us) was maintained by Jerome and Chromatius.\textsuperscript{108} Even as late as 405 Jerome was still working on the requests of Chromatius by providing translations of Judith and Tobit. The prefaces of these later works are very different, much shorter and more personal, asking for prayers and hoping that the allegedly rough translation satisfies.\textsuperscript{109} It is clear that Chromatius played the role of patron for Jerome’s work. Jerome always treated Chromatius with respect, never being sharp, even when Jerome’s reputation was being greatly threatened by certain Aquileians. He always played the role of junior partner to Chromatius in terms of position and honor.

In 397, Rufinus returned to Italy from Palestine. By 399 he had become enmeshed in accusations of heresy and a division over biblical interpretation which threatened his standing in the church. Rufinus retreated to the safety of Aquileia, under the protective wings of Chromatius. There he set out to defend his orthodoxy, and in the process accused Jerome of heresy. Known as the Origenist controversy, the dispute concerned conflicting interpretations and translations of the works of Origen. While the theological debate focused on the nature of souls before birth and the possibility of post-mortem salvation, the real dispute between Jerome and Rufinus seems to have much more personal.\textsuperscript{110} Jerome wrote his apology in two books against Rufinus, while Rufinus wrote his own apology in response to Jerome. At this point, Chromatius intervened by


\textsuperscript{109} Jerome, “Prefatio” in PL 29:23-26, 39-42.

\textsuperscript{110} I am striving to avoid diving into mundane details of the controversy as only intense students of historical theology seem to appreciate the minutiae of the debate. Indeed, the Pope of the time claimed his ignorance of the issue and strove to avoid being entangled in it. The best survey is still: Clark, Origenist Controversy.
asking both combatants to cease their venom. Rufinus agreed and sent a private letter to Jerome, but Jerome felt he could not remain silent, even though he recognized the wisdom of Chromatius’s advice.\footnote{Jerome, \textit{Contra Rufinum}, III:2.} Crucially, Rufinus defended his orthodoxy based on his adherence to the teaching of Chromatius, and it is from his apology that we have most of our knowledge of Chromatius’s early years.\footnote{Rufinus, \textit{Apology}, I:4.} Rufinus was able to keep his mouth shut for the rest of his life, not writing about Jerome. Jerome, meanwhile, rewrote his \textit{Chronicon} to remove Melania the Elder, and upon Rufinus’s death in 411 he wrote, “Now the Scorpion lies buried in Sicily…and the hydra with its numerous heads has ceased its hissing against us, and time is given for other things than answering the iniquities of heretics.”\footnote{Jerome, “Preface to Ezekiel,” quoted in Kelly, \textit{Jerome}, 257.} Jerome’s reputation as curmudgeonly and ill-tempered is obviously well-deserved. Without the restraint advised by Chromatius, who had died 4 years earlier, Jerome did not heed the adage about speaking ill of the dead.

Rufinus’s friendship with Chromatius seems to have been deeper, although less well documented, than Jerome’s. Rufinus was baptized by Chromatius in Aquileia in 370, and in his hour of greatest trial he returned to the city, remaining there for several years.\footnote{He was in Aquileia from 399 till either 403 or 406. On the stay of Rufinus in Aquileia see: C. P. Hammond, “The Last Ten Years of Rufinus's Life and the Date of his Move South from Aquileia,” \textit{JTS} n.s.:28 (1977): 372-429.} Under the wings of Chromatius he set to work translating numerous texts from Greek into Latin. Although not the equal of Jerome in composing commentaries, Rufinus was an excellent translator, and his translations served as the primary sources for many of the Greek patristic texts throughout the middle ages. Eusebius’s
Ecclesiastical History, Basil’s Rule, and several homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus were preserved in the Latin for centuries. Many of Origen’s homilies and his On First Principles do not even survive in Greek and Rufinus’s work preserved them entirely.\textsuperscript{115}

While in Aquileia, Rufinus produced several works which may have affected Chromatius, including eight sermons of Basil on ascetic principles and nine sermons of Gregory of Nazianzus on a variety of issues including political upheaval and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{116} Rufinus then returned to translations of Origen’s works producing his homilies on the Heptateuch (the first seven books of the Bible) and Romans.\textsuperscript{117} For such a prodigious translator, who prided himself on his ability to render difficult Greek into easily understood Latin, it is ironic that the work which preserved his name was an original one, albeit a continuation. Composed in 403, Rufinus’s Ecclesiastical History comprised a translation and continuation of Eusebius’s earlier work. In the spring of 402, Alaric and an army of Goths laid siege to Aquileia. Unable to take the city, they moved west, invading and pillaging Northern Italy until they were defeated on Easter Sunday outside Milan.\textsuperscript{118} In the wake of the attack Chromatius requested that Rufinus provide something which might distract and console the Christian populace.

In the preface, Rufinus described Chromatius as a skillful physician tending to a populace afflicted by a deadly plague in the form of fear brought on by incursions of the

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{Henri Crouzel, Origen, trans. A.S. Worrall (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 41-47.}
\footnote{Murphy, 115-118.}
\footnote{There are questions about dating on these. Murphy subscribes to a later date of 403-404, while Hammond considers them to be earlier, 400-402. I side with Hammond on this, though not all his conclusions about Rufinus’s departure to the south.}
\footnote{There is a full discussion of these events at the beginning of Chapter 4.}
\end{footnotes}
Although the actions of the Goths may not have been particularly devastating, the popular fear seemed to be of concern to Chromatius. Rufinus’s text is an answer in the form of history to the question, “why do bad things happen to Christian people?” In commissioning the work for an answer in the form of history and intellectual response, Chromatius reveals the two roles he held in tension throughout his life: bishop and intellectual elite. The result was a history of the Christian church which emphasized its miraculous and triumphant nature, culminating in its conquest of Roman society under Theodosius and its spread throughout the rest of the world. The emphasis on the miraculous and the power of “true faith” pointed to the location of real power in the church and not the state. Unlike many bishops of his age, Chromatius never held any job outside the church. He stood at the head of a community which would create great works. The desire to produce commentaries and other writings which advanced his version of Christianity seems to have remained throughout his life. Yet unlike Jerome, Chromatius had the day to day responsibilities of leading an urban church. He fed the poor, funded and built buildings, and preached to the masses. The commissioning of the *Ecclesiastical History* was not a minor act of a patron, but a major request for a work which would aid pastoral care in Aquileia.

**Chromatius the Builder and Preacher**

The more practical side of Chromatius’s role as bishop is on display in a translation of the homilies of Origen on *Joshua* that Rufinus dedicated to Chromatius. In the preface, Rufinus draws an extended analogy comparing the bishop’s contribution to

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the knowledge of the church with the gifts given by the Israelites for the construction of
the tabernacle in Exodus. Rufinus suggests that Chromatius had “in our times the
judgment of Beselehel,” a figure from Exodus 36 who was gifted by God with the
wisdom to construct the tabernacle from all the constituent parts which were donated by
the people.\textsuperscript{121} Referring to this passage in the preface, several scholars have suggested
that Chromatius was responsible for church construction while Rufinus was in
Aquileia.\textsuperscript{122} Chromatius partially confirmed such activity in a sermon given in Concordia
upon the dedication of the newly constructed basilica there.\textsuperscript{123} It is true that the main
basilica in Aquileia was enlarged again sometime towards the end of the fourth century.
A number of other smaller churches also date from the period of the early fifth century in
Aquileia. But not one of these can be directly tied to Chromatius. Circumstantial
evidence can be put forward for the construction of the Church of St. John the Apostle
and the church of the Martyrs, and the expansion of the primary Basilica.\textsuperscript{124} But nothing

\textsuperscript{121} Rufinus, “Preface to Homilies on Joshua,” CCSL 20 (Turnholti: Brepols,1961).


\textsuperscript{123} Sermons, XXVI:1.

definitive can be said. Rather than attempting to tie any one specific structure to Chromatius, it is more useful to note that he almost certainly was responsible for at least one major construction project during his tenure. Chromatius acted as both metaphorical and literal builder of the church in Aquileia. By the early fifth century at least five churches were either standing or under construction in Aquileia, far outstripping the single basilica which existed at the time of his birth. By 407, Chromatius could claim that Christianity had triumphed in numbers and influence as attested by the changing urban landscape.

These churches could function as a pedagogical device for new Christians. The mosaics of the basilica communicated the narrative of Christianity, while the form of the building clearly defined the authoritative structure. The old Theodorean basilica was small, though well decorated space. It was a mere 720m² (20x37), a space that would have positioned the bishop in close range of his listeners.¹²⁵ In contrast, the newer basilica built in the second half of the century was over 2250m² (31x73m) and the length was such as to remove the bishop physically from his audience.¹²⁶ Chromatius probably preached in this newer larger church on most occasions. The preaching would have demanded large gestures and vocal projection in order to communicate effectively to a fairly large, disorganized audience. Sadly, we have no description of Chromatius’s audience or the reception of his homilies. Yet his style and word choice in the sermons provide clues about both his listeners and his own preaching style. Chromatius clearly

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¹²⁵ Tavano, *Aquileia e Grado* 152.

took his task as preacher seriously trying to adapt the content as well as the level of his sermons to the character of his congregation in Aquileia.

First, almost every commentator on Chromatius discusses his simplistic style. His Latin did not reach classical heights. He did not employ allusions to classical authors in the manner of Jerome or Augustine. Joseph Lemarié attributes this to the makeup of the audience, suggesting that the merchants and traders who composed the bulk of Chromatius’s listeners would have been uneducated. If he is correct, the primary audience was an emergent business class concerned with issues of wealth and networking. Chromatius’s choice of illustrations and metaphors subtly confirms the presence, if not domination, of these commercial types. He speaks of weddings and their bands, athletic contests in Aquileia, taxes, and maritime trade. Regarding sea trade, Chromatius compares spiritual peace on two different occasions to a calm sea. Absent are illustrations of rural life. He did make mention of a winepress and the sowing of grain, but his sermons contain no detailed agricultural allusions. The urban character of Aquileia breaks through in the language used by Chromatius.

This last point illustrates one of the key aspects of the sermons: their utility for the listeners. Chromatius did not devote his sermons to dogmatic exposition or allegorical interpretation of the biblical text, though both those components do appear in the sermons. Rather, the homilies seem designed as exhortations to virtue or against vice. In short, the sermons were meant to be practical. Following a standard outline,

127 Among others: Lemarié, “Introduction,” 57-59; Lizzi, Vescovi e strutture, 163; Mascari, 251.
130 Sermon 38:4 and 8:2 respectively.
Chromatius would explain the literal sense of the biblical reading, often repeating it multiple times in a trick of oral communication. He would offer a typological interpretation for the text which he often drew without citation from Origen, Tertullian or some other ancient commentator. But his words were always building up to a moral or practical application. Whether an appeal to be baptized, give alms, fast, abandon vices, or simply believe, Chromatius kept the conclusion, the practical application, always in view for his audience. A room made up of businessmen would want an executive summary, and Chromatius provided it.

The sermons also demonstrate Chromatius’s concern for paideia, the educating of ideal citizens, in a classical sense. The education of the period focused on oratorical declamation as the primary means of persuasion and education. Chromatius’s education would have instilled a classical sense of the need for paideia.131 On this subject, Cicero had suggested that although the Greeks had been concerned with “examples of learning,” the Romans correctly used oratory to present “examples of virtue” in order to teach the citizen proper behavior.132 Closer to Chromatius’s own day, the later second sophistic movement, exemplified by the pagan rhetor Libanius and the Christian preacher John Chrysostom among others, emphasized the teaching of proper actions by the examples of famous men of literature, be they pagan or Christian.133 The

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132 Cicero, *De Oratore*, 3.34.137.

new approach to rhetoric by these fourth century orators shaped a new Christian genre of the sermon, which Chromatius typifies.\textsuperscript{134} The appeal to virtuous action, the usage of legendary characters and situations, and the interpretation of the bible through the lens of Christian \textit{paideia} all illustrate the developing Christian style of preaching which was clearly emerging at the end of the fourth century. Chromatius approaches the biblical text in this manner, seeking to use it as a demonstration of virtue and practical usage for his audience.\textsuperscript{135} His homilies were paeans to virtuous actions. Even when he used his words to condemn other Christians or non-Christians, this frame of interpretation based on practical application of virtue dominates his rhetoric. If Chromatius attacked, it implied the need for his listeners to take heed and avoid the vice mentioned. The chapters which follow examine Chromatus’s sermons as the main tool in his efforts to build Christian community in Aquileia. The labeling of other groups and praise of virtues that dominate Chromatius’s preaching had practical implications for life in Aquileia.

\textsuperscript{134} On the new genre see: Jaroslav Pelikan, \textit{Divine Rhetoric} (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir’s Press, 2001), 19-33; Murphy, 43-64.

\textsuperscript{135} Chromatius does not draw from “pagan” literature, so far as I can tell. This might be an aberration, but it might also be connected to Jerome’s fear of being a Ciceronian. Some scholars have suggested that Jerome’s dream and subsequent swearing off of secular literature occurred in Aquileia or shortly thereafter. His dramatic experience might have affected Chromatius, though this is purely speculation.
CHAPTER 3
MEMORIES OF HERETICS PAST: ARIANS, AQUIEILA AND AUTHORITY

In the spring of 2007 Pope Benedict XVI delivered a homily on the life and writings of Chromatius as part of a longer series on the church fathers. Besides extolling Chromatius for his service in the city of his childhood, he praised the bishop for “withstanding the snares of heresy.” Reflecting specifically on the depth of Trinitarian theology developed in his sermons and commentaries, Benedict praised Chromatius for his devotion to Nicene orthodoxy and ‘true faith.’ This approach seems appropriate given that the first historical record of Chromatius’s own words comes from the acts of the Council of Aquileia in 381. Taken along with the letter of Jerome praising Chromatius for his battles with heretics and Chromatius’s close affiliation with the Nicene warrior Ambrose, the proposition that he faced heretics daily is appealing. Yet all of these assumptions can also be deceiving. The council, the letter, and the writings of Ambrose all hint at the non-existence of any formal Arian church structures in the Latin west which was similar to that in the Greek east. By the time Chromatius was bishop and composed his sermons and commentary, Arianism was likely all but dead in the region of Aquileia. Why, then, did Chromatius continue to press his case against groups he perceived as heretics? Upon further examination, his words about heresy suggest an approach to remembering those other Christianities which ultimately reinforced Chromatius’s position in Aquileia. By remembering, and forgetting, aspects of the history of heresy Chromatius created a history for orthodoxy.

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A History of Pre-Gothic Western Arianism

While the crux of the issue for this chapter hinges on the presence of any ‘Arian’ groups in Aquileia during Chromatius’s episcopate, the earlier history of such factions in the region is slightly more settled.² The language divide between east and west, Greek and Latin, seems to have prevented the clash over doctrinal statements from reaching the western Mediterranean world until 340, some fifteen years after the council of Nicaea. In that year the exiled Athanasius was accepted into communion at Rome. But even this fact and its fallout suggest that the dynamics of the conflict in the west were very distinct from those in the east. While the Greek church focused on doctrinal statements and the relationship of the person of Christ to the godhead, the western churches led by the bishop of Rome and Hilary of Poiters were more overtly concerned with imperial and ecclesiastical power dynamics. The demands of the western churches which were sent to the Greek and Egyptian churches centered on the exile of bishops and rights of judgment and precedence, not the signing of doctrinal statements. While the eastern conflict certainly involved a battle over rights and authority, the western approach to the Arian clash had no doctrinal robe to cover the naked power struggle which occurred in the fourth century. Hilary of Poiters admitted as much when he stated that he had never heard of the Nicene Creed prior to his exile in 355.³ While perhaps an

² I put the term ‘Arians’ in quotes here to distinguish the constructed nature of the term. No person or church referred to itself as Arian. Likewise, the term covers numerous groups which would have probably viewed and dealt with each other as heretical and out of communion. I will use the term here as Chromatius would have recognized it, accepting that this does not reflect any sort of historical reality. ‘Arian’ will denote the groups of Christians which were excluded from Nicene Christianity based on their beliefs about the person of Jesus. It includes groups which are labeled as Arian, Eunomian, Photian, and others I am certainly unaware of. I will not always put the term in quotation marks, but the reader should remember that it is a constructed label which reflects power dynamics of the time.

exaggeration, it does confirm that the doctrinal debate was largely lost on the west in favor of more practical concerns over power.⁴

The introduction of the Arian controversy to the west seems to have sprung from two opposing sources: Athanasius and Emperor Constantius. Upon his exile in 339, Athanasius quickly fled to Rome. He sought the protection of Pope Julius, who assented by writing a letter to his eastern counterparts in support of Athanasius. Following the death of the emperor Constantinus at the hands of his brother Constans near Aquileia in 340, Athanasius’s problem (or the problem of Athanasius) became part of a larger struggle between Constans and his co-emperor and other brother Constantius. After at least three imperial audiences, Constans wrote to his brother in the east requesting that Athanasius be allowed to return with the vague threat of war if this action went unfulfilled.⁵ Notably for our purposes, the third of these audiences occurred on Easter of 345 in Aquilea, from which Constans composed his letter Athanasius reported that he came to the city in the winter of 345 to meet the emperor, celebrated Easter with him in the city, and remained until Constantius relented and allowed him to return to Alexandria in 347.⁶ At no point in his summary did Athanasius mention Arian opposition in the west, confirming a general lack of concern for the dispute in the Latin-speaking world.

The importation of the controversy to the west seems to have come as part of an imperial attempt to unify the empire under one form of Christianity. Noting how western

⁶ Ibid, 89-90.
churches were often refuges for exiled bishops, Constantius, upon his acquisition of the western half of the empire following the death of his brother in 350, called two councils in Arles and Milan in 353 and 355 respectively. These councils forced western bishops to accept an Arian creed from the Council of Sirmium (351) and condemn eastern Nicene bishops, most notably Athanasius. Most western bishops acquiesced, though a few refused and were condemned including Libanius of Rome and Hilary of Poiters. Hilary’s defense seems to confirm that his major objection was not the creed (though he does expound on that issue at length), but rather the imperial interference in ecclesiastical matters. Nonetheless, these councils led to the installation of ‘Arian’ bishops in western sees, most notably in the person of Auxentius of Milan, bishop from 355 to 374. Fortunatianus, bishop of Aquileia in the middle of the fourth century may also have held Arian sympathies and promoted the theology, though the record is unclear and based really on just one remark of Jerome. Whatever the case, the spread of Arianism seems to have been a top down affair and limited in scope.

Historical vision being 20/20, it is clear to the modern reader that western Arianism had reached an apex. After the death of Constantius, Arians were left without a champion in the west. Never as widespread at the popular level as in the east, in so far as the historical record reveals, this particular brand of Christianity relied on the support of elites and the control of important bishoprics. Once that support began to wane the erasure of the group became practically inevitable. On this point, modern

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7 Ibid, 166; also Weedman, 10-13.
8 Hilary, “Liber I ad Constantium,” II:3.
scholarship is in widely held agreement. Among others, Neil Mclynn, Dan Williams, Mark Humphries, William Sumruld, Joseph Lemarié, and Roger Gryson all agree that after the council of Aquileia in 381 and the invasion of the usurper Magnus Maximinus in 388 Arianism ceased to have any real presence in the western churches until the coming of a gothic church structure at the beginning of the next century. While not apparent to contemporaries, Arianism would never rebound in the west from its loss of imperial patronage. Yet the citizens of Aquileia, due to their close proximity to the eastern province of Illyricum, had more contacts with Arians than did other locations in the west. While other Latin speaking cities were insulated from divisive theological ideas, Aquileia had no such illusions of isolation. A bustling port on the Adriatic, Aquileia was also situated on the main highway between Milan and Sirmium, the capital of Illyricum, and equidistant from both these cities of import to the Arian clash at roughly 800 km. Sirmium had hosted the council which condemned Athanasius in 351, and Arius himself was exiled to this region in 325. His choice gave the city an Arian quality in the decades to come and made the region of Illyricum in the modern day Balkans a bastion of Arians in the fourth century. Thus, while in retrospect it might be apparent that Arianism was in decline, from the viewpoint of Aquileians in the second half of the fourth century, the outcome was by no means clear. Close contacts of the city’s


businesses with Arian centers, especially Sirmium, must have given pause to Chromatius and other Aquileians.

We come now to the lifetime of Chromatius. While there is no record that Chromatius ever met Athanasius, the presence of the Nicene leader in Aquileia seems to have left an imprint on the character of Christianity in the city. The ascetic community which gathered from 369 to 372 around Chromatius, who was a priest by that time, reflects this pattern of development. It is this group which Jerome credited with exterminating Arianism in Aquileia in 374 when he wrote to Chromatius, “it was through you that the poison of the Arian heresy was formerly banished from your city.”\textsuperscript{12} While he could certainly have been exaggerating the circumstances, no independent evidence suggests that Arianism was flourishing at the time. However, Jerome’s comment does suggest that Arians were active in the city at some point around the middle of the century. Chromatius’s role in the city suggests a familiarity with ecclesiastical affairs from at least the 360s onward.

While Chromatius’s duties as a priest are unclear during the 370’s, he first appears in the historical record in 381 at the Council of Aquileia. The council, held in September of 381, was called by the western emperor Gratian at the behest of Ambrose. Occurring some two months after the Council of Constantinople, the councils have been held by some as twin pillars in the triumph of the Nicene camp over Arianism, and indeed many major studies of the Arian controversy abruptly end their narratives in 381 with the councils.\textsuperscript{13} Yet this interpretation of the councils does not

\textsuperscript{12} Jerome, Ep. 7:6.

reflect the issues on the ground on two counts. First, “Arians”—be they Arian, Eunomian, Photian, or another variation of non-Nicene Christians—did not cease to exist or advocate for their position. In the east, these communities continued to live, move and act for at least a century as evidenced by the ecclesiastical history of Philostorgius. In the west, the council of Aquileia was called not to put an end to a heretical group, but to condemn particular bishops whom Ambrose had singled out. Indeed, it is even misleading to call Aquileia a council as the number of attendees was less than three dozen. The council functioned basically as a trap set by Ambrose of Milan for Bishop Palladius of Ratiaria, a leading proponent of late fourth-century Arianism. Ambrose presided over the council, which consisted almost entirely of Nicene bishops. The outcome was less a defeat of Arianism than an admission that the group was already dying in the west. Ambrose led the council and in a single day had Palladius declared anathema. Chromatius’s words are recorded twice in the record of the council. He first accused Palladius: “You have not denied that he is a creature, you have denied that he is mighty. You have denied everything which the Catholic faith professes.” Later he rather confusingly suggested that the laymen should speak in condemnation of Palladius, though all editions note that the text is corrupted and unreliable here. While these two quotes offer little in substantive revelation, Chromatius’s presence as a presbyter at the council demonstrates his involvement with theological controversies of his day and suggests he was already being groomed for the

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17 Ibid, 52.
bishopric he would inherit seven years later. Here we should remember that the council was a local synod which did not concern itself so much with rooting out heresy but rather with the condemnation of two lone bishops who had run afoul of Ambrose.\(^\text{18}\)

Aside from the political conflicts of Ambrose with Justina, the empress in Milan in 386, after this point Arians do not appear in western sources other than in their generic association with barbarians. Even in the final gasp of Arianism in the west in 386, when the Empress demanded the usage of a church for Arians, the association with Ulfila the Goth and the role of Gothic soldiers gave the sect an ethnic quality. In the west, Arianism is presented by the sources as an outsiders’ sect. Eastern Greek speakers and Gothic soldiers were the primary targets of rhetorical attacks during the confrontation.\(^\text{19}\) The developing conflation of Arianism with ‘barbarian’ ethnic identity coincided with the loss of imperial support, though this might be a chicken/egg situation. In 388, the empress Justina was forced to seek the favor of Theodosius, and in so doing ended her support of Arians in Milan. Several different motives are attributed to Theodosius and Justina, but the outcome was that Arianism ceased to enjoy any imperial patronage.\(^\text{20}\) With a loss of political support and the increasing association of Arianism with barbarian Goths, the movement sputtered out practically overnight.\(^\text{21}\) Never as widespread at the popular level in the west, the loss of patronage was fatal for

\(^{18}\) For a fuller account of the council with all its political maneuverings and the response of the condemned Palladius see: Gryson, *Scolies*, 121-142; Dan Williams, *Ambrose*, 154-190.

\(^{19}\) See the condemnations of Stilicho by writers about barbarians in Chapter 4. Also: Orosius, *Adversus Paganos*, VII.37.1; Jerome, *Ep* 123:16-17.

\(^{20}\) Zosimus, IV:44; Sozomen, V:14; Theodoret V:15.

\(^{21}\) Williams, 227-232.
the movement. After the events of 388, Arianism was treated as an ethnic religion, unique to soldiers and their families.

**Heretics in Aquileia?**

From this brief historical overview, it seems reasonable to conclude that the presence of Arian Christians in Aquileia during the end of the fourth century was limited if not non-existent. Much of my argument about the rhetorical convention of heresy is predicated on the belief that rival groups did not actually inhabit the same space. Chromatius might have dealt with competing Christianities earlier in his life as a priest in Aquileia, but by the time of his episcopate, the divergence from his form of Nicene Christianity was minimal. Of course, this explanation has left some scholars understandably dissatisfied. How could a Christian group cease to exist practically overnight? If Chromatius was faced with rival claimants for his congregants or churches, his rhetoric could be interpreted very differently. And in fact, this question has affected the work of several scholars. While Joseph Lemarié and Roger Etait accepted a decline, if not erasure, of Arians in the region of Aquileia, Yves-Marie Duval and François Thélamon have both suggested that Arians were still present and active in the region and city, even if lacking an earlier vitality.

Notably, Yves-Marie Duval has suggested that Arianism could not have vanished in Northern Italy so quickly. While its numbers certainly declined, the references to Arianism in Chromatius’s sermons and tractates indicate continued existence and

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practice. One canard is to understand Chromatius’s words on the divinity of Christ as an example of his battles with rival groups. Pope Benedict XVI took this tack in the homily mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, extolling Chromatius’s tenure as bishop for its orthodoxy based on doctrinal statements. In a similar vein, Francois Thélamon suggested in 2001 that perhaps the anti-Jewish rhetoric in Chromatius’s sermons, specifically regarding unbelief in the divinity of Christ, should be understood not as anti-Jewish rhetoric but as reflecting the rivalry with other Christian factions like the Arians. Her point follows a growing trend to reinterpret anti-Jewish rhetoric as intra-Christian rhetoric. In this vein, Maria Doefler recently examined Ambrose of Milan’s rhetoric about Jews and Arians in his *Expositio secundam Lucam*. She argues quite persuasively that Ambrose used rhetoric about Jews, a community with which he probably never had any interaction and was only really aware of based on his reading of the biblical text, to attack other Christian groups during the 380s. The rhetoric of Ambrose painted Jews as defined by their denial of the full divinity of Christ and thereby rendering themselves the same as Arians in his eyes. The focus on the unbelief of the Jews in the divinity of Christ should be read as a ploy to attack Christians of different

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stripes, most notably Arians, for being more like Jews. Ambrose’s writing reflects the tension between rival Christianities, even in his words about Jews and pagans. In light of several notable instances of interaction between Chromatius and Ambrose (including the Council of Aquileia, Ambrose’s presence at Chromatius’s consecration, letter writing, and shared commentaries) the possibility of a comparable reading to that of Doefler should be considered with regard to Chromatius’s sermons. Might Chromatius’s repeated mention of and focus on the unbelief of the Jews in the divinity of Christ be implicitly attacking Arians in Aquileia and not Jews? This approach would result in a very different way of interpreting Chromatius’s sermons. Instead of being focused on other religions in the city, he might be purely battling other Christian groups. While I sympathize with this reading of anti-Jewish texts and think it could be a fruitful avenue to pursue in other regions, based on the textual and archeological evidence, it seems that the Jewish community in Aquileia was not insignificant at the time. Chromatius seems to be actively attacking Jews with his anti-Jewish rhetoric, not using them as a rhetorical stand-in for alternate Christianities. Arians had ceased to be a potent force in the city, if they had ever been.

Indeed, most scholars concur with the traditional narrative of Arian decline in the west, surprising or unsatisfying as it may be. Namely, following the twin councils of Aquileia and Constantinople in 381, Arianism lost all traction in the West and receded dramatically until revived as an ethnic religion associated with the Goths. Among others, Neil Mclynn, Dan Williams and Roger Gryson agree that after the council of Aquileia


27 See Chapter 5.
and the invasion of Magnus Maxmimus in 388 Arianism ceased to have any institutional presence in the west until the coming of a gothic church structure at the beginning of the next century.\textsuperscript{28} Under Chromatius’s tenure as bishop from 388 on it seems safe to accept the thesis that Arians were not present in Aquileia in any kind of substantial numbers. Indeed, I would venture that Arianism did not really decline because there was nothing to decline from. Arian Christianity in the west was always founded on imperial patronage and support, never enjoying the popular support which it had in the east. By the 380s the group was identified with foreigners, be they Greek or Goths. Such an identity would not inspire large adherence in Roman Latin cities at the end of the fourth century. The obvious question, however, remains: Why did Chromatius continue to press the case against a non-existent group?

A point of warning is useful here. It can become all too tempting to fall into a teleological approach with Chromatius’s sermons. It is possible that he did fear the return to Aquileia of the most widespread alternative Christianity of the fourth century. From the position of the twenty-first century, the Trinitarian controversies seem natural and conclusive, but from Chromatius’s position, the Nicene question was only as settled as the belief of the current emperor. While it may appear that he was merely condemning a defunct group, he might have viewed his words as reinforcing the wall of separation which kept abstract evils at bay. We should take care to avoid viewing Chromatius’s rhetoric of heresy and orthodoxy through a teleological prism.

References to Heresy in the Sermons of Chromatius

Perhaps the best place to begin is with Chromatius's mentions of specific persons and groups he deems heretical. While there are numerous references to 'heretics' vaguely construed, specific citations of other groups are rarer, usually associated with a particular point of doctrine which Chromatius was emphasizing. For instance, he used Photinus as a rhetorical placeholder to designate a person who fails to confess both natures of Christ:

Otherwise we cannot be saved, unless we believe in both natures of Christ. Consequently, not a few heretics who confess only the humanity of Christ, denying his divinity, such as Photinus, hold his feet but do not possess his head, because they have lost the head of their faith. But we hold rightly to both things in Christ, because we confess both sides.  

Here, heresy functioned as a rhetorical and pedagogical tool for the listening audience. By associating a name, and a name within memory for Chromatius, with the doctrine denoted as false, he gave the doctrine extra resonance. It denoted the doctrinal issue as settled after a struggle. It also emphasized the desire of the church to fight for the 'right' belief. He presented a similar aside in a sermon dedicating relics of St. Thomas in a newly built church: “Yet while Thomas proved by the sight of his eyes and the touch of his hands that Christ had been resurrected in the body, neither Marcion nor the Manicheans wanted to believe the Lord was raised in his body. But what did Thomas say after he felt the hand of the Lord? 'My Lord and My God.'” Here again, heretics were presented in a passing aside. By giving a name to the objection, Chromatius suggested the crucial importance of the doctrine being presented. The perceived attacks of heretics served to confirm the truth of the church. For this reason, the

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29 Sermon 11:4. All translations of Chromatius are my own.
30 Sermon 26:4.
memory of heretics had to be preserved by the institutional church as a justification for its past and future victories.

The only mention of Arius himself comes in a sermon on the Apostle John. Chromatius says that, “Arius filled himself with bitterness by not believing that the Son proceeded from the Father.” As we will see, the trope of a heretic corrupting his own person is very common in Chromatius’s sermons. What is interesting in this particular context is that the previous sentence makes a similar complaint about Photius: “Photius, who denied that Christ is God, was full of bitterness.” Throughout his sermons Chromatius consistently presented heretics as static, with unchanging essences, much as other patristic writers had approached Judaism. While this tactic may have functioned as a rhetorical device to deny intellectual legitimacy to other Christianities, the approach also served to connect groups which disagreed vehemently under a single label of heresy. While Chromatius did encounter ‘heretics’ earlier in his life, he minimized the doctrinal development of these alternative Christianities. He put little space between Arius and Photius, for example, focusing simply on their denial of Christ’s divinity. As mentioned previously, he did the same thing with Marcion and Mani, two very divergent writers. By eliminating any discussion of the actual beliefs of other groups, Chromatius controlled the discourse about them.

31 Sermon 21:3

32 Ibid.

33 Interestingly, Chromatius does not exhibit the same tendency in his rhetoric about Jews. He referred to Jews as members of the community and, while he attacked them for their denial of Christ’s divinity, he did not descend into attacks on Jewish immorality or other common patristic tropes. See: Thelamon, “Les Vaines,” 114.
One place where Chromatius’s critique of Arians, the group with which he seems to have had the most personal experience, appears in the sermons is in his references to the trinity. Of course, not every mention of the trinity or the divinity of Christ should be read as a critique of Arianism. On certain occasions, however, the language surrounding the doctrine is clearly set in opposition to alternative perspectives without naming them. For instance, twice while explaining baptism Chromatius explicitly noted the necessity of belief in the trinity. “No true baptism, nor remission of sins, is present where the truth of the trinity is not. Nor can the remission of sins be given if one does not believe in the perfection of the trinity.”

Groups which differ from Chromatius’s church on the issue of the trinity and the divinity of Christ are presented as lacking salvific power. The doctrine of the trinity bestows an authority on Chromatius, an authority which empowers him to forgive sins. Again in another sermon: “We are unable to be cleansed or purified from sin except by the mystery of the trinity.”

While not explicitly mentioning Arius or Arians in these sermons, the sermons seem to reference the debates of the previous decades. Baptism performed by a group other than the church holding authority in Aquileia, namely Chromatius’s, was invalid and useless.

Related to this point, Chromatius mentioned Arian groups indirectly once more in relation to the trinity. He said: “This cord of three undoubtedly represents the trinity, which cannot be broken because faith in the trinity is incorruptible. This is the faith which heretics frequently tried to corrupt; but they corrupted only themselves. True faith in the trinity must necessarily remain uncorrupted. As Solomon rightly said, ‘A triple cord

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34 Sermon 34:2.
35 Sermon 3:8.
cannot be corrupted." While he edited the book of Ecclesiastes himself to emphasize corruption over being broken (as the Vulgate reads), he juxtaposed the supposed attempts of heretics to attack the ‘true faith.’ Indeed, the most common presentation of heretics by Chromatius involved their assault on the supposedly pure and uniform nature of the true church. Heretics were presented as those who tried to tear people away from the true church and sought to destroy the unity of faith that reigned prior to their attacks. This ‘history’ of heresy was based on a dialectical narrative of uniformity and corruption. While Chromatius certainly affirmed that heresy corrupts the individual, he most often presented the motive of heretics as an attempt to corrupt the wider church. In the previous quotation, while Chromatius remembered heretics as those that tried to corrupt what was once pure, namely the church as a body, they only managed to destroy their own selves.37

Among other descriptions, Chromatius managed to call heretics “bitter,” “corrupt,” and “poisoned.” All of these character traits fit the paradigm Chromatius was advancing, namely that heresy is an attempt to destroy the true faith. Speaking of the apostle John, Chromatius noted:

[T]hose who receive the words of John in a wicked sense rouse the bitterness of heresy for they turn the sweetness of faith into the bitterness of treachery. That is why these are shown to be in the mouth and those in the intestines. In the mouth are the Catholics, whom God blesses; in the stomach are heretics from which they are expelled.38

36 Sermon 4:1. The scripture quote is from Ecclesiastes 4:12.

37 Within this rhetoric is a sense that heresy pits the individual against the corporate body. The church is always presented as a community, whereas heretics are individuals attempting to pry people away.

38 Sermon 21:3.
Apart from the descriptive language of heretics as being separated from the body in a violent fashion, Chromatius was careful to frame the actions of heretics as a response to the church, not as equal movements. He constructed heresies as new movements departing from the established faith. Heretics were presented as innovators, departing from that which was believed already by everyone. Of course, this particular section was likely a veiled reference to Arius. The Latin historian Rufinus, who wrote at the behest of Chromatius, recorded the story of Arius’s death in his Ecclesiastical History written in Aquileia in 402. He wrote:

Arius, hemmed in by a crowd of bishops and laity, was making his way to the church when he turned aside as a call of nature to a public facility. And when he sat down, his intestines and all his innards slipped down into the privy drain, and thus it was in such a place that he met a death worthy of his foul and blasphemous mind.  

Chromatius’s passing attack on Arius served to reinforce the notion that heretics were corrupt and rotting from the inside, destined to die in ignoble fashion. One can imagine that Chromatius’s sermon might have provoked laughter at the passing reference to Arius’s ironic death. But the legend and popularization of the tale reinforced the central narrative about heresy: heretics, corrupt in their actual bodies, introduced discord and disease into the formerly healthy body of the Christian church.

**Memory, Heresy and Forgetting: Heresiological Discourses**

At this point, before returning to the sermons of Chromatius and their approach to heresy, it is useful to consider how rhetoric about heresy functions. Talal Asad, in a

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formative piece on medieval heresy from 1986, postulated that “‘Heresy’ is first and foremost the product of a power process.”\textsuperscript{41} The label of heresy is constructed and applied by the dominant power structure and, indeed, cannot even exist without such a power structure. Certainly no one thinks of him or herself as a heretic; the label is only applied pejoratively. This is not to say that valid doctrinal differences do not exist. Rather, the discourse about right and wrong belief under the label of heretical reveals the power structure and its goals. The authority and ‘truth’ of the church is constructed by proving the ability to define those outside and punish them. “Every time a Christian suspect is tried by the inquisitorial process, and sentenced, or cleared (for most suspects were cleared), the authority of the church is affirmed. Every time heretical beliefs and practices are defined or identified as error, the single Truth is maintained.”\textsuperscript{42} Following Asad’s article, numerous scholars analyzing Christian discourse have posited that the charge of heresy very often reflects an attempt by an established power structure to construct and control borders.\textsuperscript{43} The labeling of outsiders as deviant serves to define those inside the power structure, while also strengthening previously extant differences. Yet, Averil Cameron goes further in her most recent works on the subject. She suggests that attempts to employ the term ‘heresy’ must also reflect intent to construct orthodoxy and render it normative.\textsuperscript{44} That is, presenting difference and

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\textsuperscript{42} Asad, 357.


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division as deviant not only implies a unity but also renders uniformity as normative. The continuation of these labels, long after they lose any relevance, serves to reinforce the supposed historical narrative. This approach to the relationship of heresy and orthodoxy follows from the work of Michel Foucault who quite eloquently challenged the traditional notions of power in the following terms: “We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it ‘excludes,’ it ‘represses,’ it ‘censors,’ it ‘abstracts,’ it ‘masks,’ it ‘conceals.’ In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth.”

By deploying ecclesiastical power to demonize opponents, even just the memory of these opponents, bishops and preachers created a dichotomy which framed one side, orthodoxy, as tradition and the other, heresy, as innovation.

Orthodoxy was constructed not simply by drawing a line in the sand, but by moving the goalposts. Difference of opinion was framed as an innovation, unity being preexistent. The definition of orthodoxy as ‘that which has always been believed’ is a backwards projection based explicitly on the label of heresy. The memory or history of a heresy suggests an ideal unified past which ‘orthodoxy’ can then claim. Without a history of heresy, there can be no history for orthodoxy. Thus, the existence of different groups within the Christian tradition is presented as a step away from the norm. The Christian constructs a narrative of uniformity as a foil for the heretic. In addition, toleration of other groups would have no history either, rendering toleration as an innovation. The suggestion that heresy was a corruption of an earlier established unity is inherent in this rhetoric.

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The process of building such an understanding of heresy and orthodoxy is one of collective or social memory. Much of memory theory builds on Maurice Halbwachs’s approach to collective memory. Most theorists have agreed that his approach to the “collective mind” rendered the individual as an ‘automaton’ rather than an agent and is unhelpful.\textsuperscript{46} Halbwachs, however, does offer an excellent starting point for thinking about the formation and effects of collective memory (though I prefer and will use “social memory” to emphasize the manner of its construction). First, he emphasizes that memory is processed through language. Social memories are constructed by narrative, ritual and commemoration, in short by giving voice to and sharing thoughts aloud (though visual arts as well as verbal means may be used here.)\textsuperscript{47} As aptly captured in a modern critique, “Social memory, then, is articulate memory.”\textsuperscript{48} These memories have been voiced, processed and accepted by a community. They are established only by interpersonal commemoration, not by personal remembrance.

Halbwachs’s second point is that social memories fit into a larger schema of the world and often provide some component of a group’s identity in relation to its own past. The memories which are chosen and commemorated provide an entry point into the group’s history for its own members. In her work on religious memories Elizabeth Castelli observes that “Social memory offers one important way for groups to situate themselves temporally and topographically.”\textsuperscript{49}

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\item \textsuperscript{46} James Fentress and Chris Wickham, Social Memory (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), ix.
\item \textsuperscript{48} Fentress and Wickham, 47.
\item \textsuperscript{49} Elizabeth Castelli, Martyrdom and Memory: Early Christian Culture Making (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), 12.
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offers groups a place in the world. For this reason, much like the cult of the saints or martyrs, the maintenance and construction of memories and histories of ‘heresy’ is important for the ecclesiastical institution. In this context I would suggest little distinction between the terms memory and history, recognizing that both are constructed. While ‘history’ carries a positivist connotation of ‘what really happened’ and ‘memory’ can be viewed as more subjective, it is important to recognize the close connection between the two. Of course various groups, be they called orthodox or heretics, contest history and memory leading to a battle over the same koine of signs and symbols. Elizabeth Castelli and Thomas Sizgoirch have written on the means by which Christians and others used the notions of piety, martyrs, holy men, and violent action to shape the ideas of history and memory of a Christian past. This approach is not limited to Christianity either. Daniel Boyarin reports that rabbis of the sixth century in Babylon created a history – a foundational myth – based on pluralism to differentiate themselves.

Thus, discourses are based not just on maintaining borders by demonizing those outside, but also by constructing a center, orthodoxy. The focus of any study of identity must be on the dialectical nature of the construction instead of simply on borders. Especially in Chromatius’s sermons, memory and history merge into a single category. Chromatius never distinguished his knowledge of history from his memory of heresy.


51 Castelli, Martyrdom and Memory; Thomas Sizgorich, Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

52 Boyarin, 155.
The social memories of other Christianities which he participated in forming reflected the tensions of late fourth-century Aquileia and also constructed the perception of the Nicene church. Heresy, specifically Arianism, was remembered in a narrative based on the assumed track of heresies which offered members of the orthodox church a defined place in Christian history. Chromatius’s dissemination of memories, and the rhetoric he used to commemorate heretics and their actions, produced a power structure in Aquileia which put him at the top in all religious discourses.

For instance, Chromatius remembers heretics as part of a genealogy of heresy. Like Eusebius and other earlier writers, Chromatius tended to see all heresies as connected and similar. In doing so, he crucially forgot the past in order to frame the present. A large body of literature in the last decade has addressed the act of political forgetting. Most of it deals with intentional acts of remembering and glossing over in the twentieth century. Chromatius does not fit into this theoretical approach well, but the effects of his act of forgotten history are the same. By remembering heretics and presenting their history in a certain manner, he chose to forget other aspects of their context, character and past. This act of remembrance was then transmitted to his congregation and settled into social memory. Of course, these choices need not happen consciously to create the same result:

Personal as well as communal remembrance of the past a priori requires conscious or unconscious decisions concerning which of its surviving impressions should lie fallow…Such judgments suggest, by the same

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token, the operation of either conscious or unconscious reasons for remembering particular things in particular ways.\textsuperscript{54}

The placement of particular groups into a larger schema of history forgets the notable differences between them. The remembrance of all heretics as sharing certain characteristics forgets the passions which gave rise to the debates. Finally, the remembrance of a unity in the original church forgets the vast differences and divisions which were normal in the history of Christians and Christian communities since their beginning.\textsuperscript{55} Chromatius’s acts of social memory, both those he constructed and those he drew from popular anecdotes, resulted in the placement of the local church in Aquileia into the long spectrum of Christian ‘orthodoxy.’

The rest of this chapter will be concerned with examining how Chromatius presented his history of heresy in Aquileia. He explicitly invoked the names of Arius and Photinus in one sermon, while elsewhere he mentioned Manicheans and Marcion.\textsuperscript{56} Contemporary groups and those long past were treated in the same manner. All of them were cited in the past tense, conveying a sense of finality to their objections. This approach, which treated conflict as a problem somewhere else, seems to confirm that the ecclesiastical situation in Aquileia was without significant division during Chromatius’s tenure. Yet a lack of disagreement did not stop Chromatius from condemning heretics. Heretics were used as a rhetorical device to propagate orthodoxy.


\textsuperscript{55} The list would be too long here. For the earliest examples of difference within the church, I would suggest the debate in Acts 15 over the need for gentiles to adopt Mosaic law, the differences between Paul and Peter in Galatians 2, the issue of eating meat sacrificed to idols in Romans 14, and the railing against ‘false teachers’ in Jude and 1 John.

By showcasing those issues on which heretics disagreed with the church, he could emphasize the orthodoxy of his church, be it the divinity of Jesus or the relationship between members of the trinity. ‘Heresy’ functioned as a kind of rhetorical dog whistle to alert the listeners to the importance of certain doctrines.

Associated with the denial of Christ’s divinity and the incarnation, ‘heresy’ presented an opportunity for the bishop to clarify doctrine and teach his congregants in the guise of history. Yet even more than clarifying doctrine, the continued propagation of anti-heretical discourse reinforced the authority of Chromatius as bishop to arbitrate religious matters in Aquileia. The history and memories invoked suggested that orthodoxy was normative. Division, dissent and deviation from the normative, orthodox church were rebellions against the proper authorities. Christianity, with a supposedly long tradition of normative belief and practice, was presented as anything but new or innovative. Chromatius presented his church to the citizens of Aquileia as a home of stability and a sanctuary from dangerous innovations.

**Chromatius’s History of Heresy**

It might be possible to overstate the role that memory of heretics had in this rhetoric. Yet subtle clues suggest that Chromatius was drawing on his personal memories of heretics. He was part of the council of Aquileia in 381 which deposed and exiled the bishop of Sirmium, Palladius. Jerome credited him with fighting and defeating Arians in the city. Aquileia itself probably provided more contacts with Arians than nearly any other western city as its port constantly brought easterners to the city. Indeed, archeological evidence suggests that a small church in town was actually Syrian based
on the eastern names of almost all the patrons. As mentioned in the Chapter 2, Athanasius even called Aquileia home for a period. All of these facts suggest that Chromatius would be able to draw upon memories, real and constructed, of an orthodox childhood shaped by the pious Egyptian leader and an adulthood battling ‘false’ Christian groups. Out of his life, he could construct historical memories of heresy which presented orthodoxy as normative. The likelihood that no other Christianities were left in Aquileia meant simply that rather than pressing the case against actual opponents, he could continue to construct his history unimpeded by argument. Rather than focusing on correct doctrine and persuading congregants, he could use the memory of heresy to buttress his own authority. And as his authority in the Christian arena grew it might begin to bring him sway beyond intra-Christian debates. To do so, he would present the presence of alternative forms of Christianity as an innovation that introduced division for the first time.

Of course, this approach to heresy is not unique to Chromatius. It can be found even in the book of Acts, which Chromatius used precisely to that end. The idea of uniformity, without dissension, as a norm in earlier history is quite present. More than once in his sermons Chromatius quoted the passage from Acts 4:32 affirming that “All the believers were one in heart and mind.” He suggested that there was a ‘natural’ state of the church which had been lost or corrupted. He admitted that his church failed to live up to this standard, but that Christians should be “strangers to envy, to discord, to

57 David Noy, *Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe: Volume 1: Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), xiii-xiv.
58 *Sermons* 1:7 and 31:4; *Tractates* XVII, XXX, XLVI, XLVII.
dissension." Unity is presented as the hallmark of the true church in stark contrast to those who dissent or sow discord. With heretics consistently presented as a corruption, the contrast with the ‘heretics’ who rebelled against the settled ‘orthodoxy’ will quickly be apparent. By preserving memories of heretics, and remembering them as rebels who failed, Chromatius was ‘remembering’ a unified church in an original pristine state. Memories or histories of heretics teach the listeners that orthodoxy is normative. Heresy was remembered as both morally deviant and a deviance from the norms.

A false memory of those who seduced believers from the church was reinforced again by Chromatius in an extended metaphor from a sermon on Matthew 6. “Bad are the eyes of those whose mind is on wicked things and whose faith is perverse; who walk not in light, but in darkness… if the teacher is perverse and has been a heretic, he is clearly a teacher of this kind, his life an example of his infidelity.” Here Chromatius began his sermon with an attack on heretics that reinforced their corrupted nature. Yet, as the sermon continued, he associated those who walk in darkness with the devil, and the devil with an unusual interpretation of Jeremiah 17:11 that he seems to have taken from Ambrose:

For it is written: “The Partridge will cry and gather together those little ones who were not her own; but in the last days, they will abandon it and in the end she will be a fool.” But we ought to know why the devil is called a partridge. The partridge, namely the earthly bird, attracts the chicks of another with its seductive voice and boasts of these young birds that belong to another, as if they were her own young. But as soon as these same seduced little ones recognize the voice of their true parent, at once they leave the false father and follow the true parent.

59 Sermon 31:4.
60 Sermon 6:2.
While Chromatius does not explicitly call ‘heretics’ partridges, earlier in the sermon he did equate both with the devil and with those who walk in darkness. For a listener, the connection would have been obvious. Heretics, led by the master of heretics, seduce children away from their true home. The true home obviously existed before the partridge called away the children. Not only was orthodoxy superior to heresy, but it existed prior to the heresy and was the original. Describing heresy as a copy implies that there must a true, pure original from which to steal.

Another example of this narrative is found in Chromatius’s most well known sermon, *On the Eight Beatitudes*: “[P]eacemakers are those who…corrected the rebellious ways of the heretics, and who made unity and peace out of the discord within the Church.”62 Here, heretics were designated rebels. Rising up against the proper authority, heretics were presented as a threat to the true faith of the church. Those who rebel lack legitimacy, while the established powers have the authority to put down rebellions. Opposed to these rebels were those who created unity and peace in the face of discord. Again, Chromatius constructed orthodoxy around the central narrative of unity and pre-existence, by ‘remembering’ that heretics introduced discord into a previously unified body.

The emphasis on heretics introducing division was fleshed out in a sermon on the word ‘Alleluia.’ There, Chromatius suggested that the word ‘Alleluia’ means ‘Lord, bless us all together’ in the Hebrew.63 Based on this reading he emphasized that heretics, being essentially divisive, could not properly claim or use the word. Going

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62 *Sermon* 41:7.

63 *Sermon* 33:1.
further, Chromatius linked those who departed or divided the church with the author of division, the devil:

The response of Alleluia does not belong to heretics, or schismatics, or all the opponents of the unity of the church...It is the property of Christ to gather into unity; the devil scatters to diverse places. Therefore, whoever loves the unity of the Church follows Christ. Whoever delights in division follows the devil because the author of division is the devil...For that reason we ought to shun and avoid discord, of which we know the devil is the author. Instead we should follow the peace and unity of the church so that we are able to respond rightly, and with merit, ‘Alleluia,’ which means ‘Lord, bless us all together.’

Once again, he suggested that division was only a reaction to unity. The narrative was one of breakdown rather than upward movement, i.e. unity being created out of variety. Even though Christ gathered into unity, the emphasized action was the scattering and dividing executed by the devil. Also here, the vague category of heretic and schismatic (which notably does not otherwise appear in Chromatius’s sermons) was equated with ‘all the opponents of the church.’ We should note also the beginning of a shift to expand the argument about ecclesiastical authority beyond intra-Christian disputes. The usage of the satanic persona to denote anyone who infringes on the unity of the church, a state established by Christ himself, develops the authority of the bishop. As the protector of his flock, Chromatius could claim authority over any religious group which threatened the unity of the church, be they other Christians or not.

Here the context of Aquileia—particularly the absence of any Arian or other Christian group in active opposition to Chromatius’s church—is important. The excessive rhetoric on the nature of heretics as corrupted, poisonous, and divisive seems out of touch with an environment which was experiencing no present problems.

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64 Sermon 33:2
of this type. A connection between the rhetoric and the reality must exist. The language could not have been empty signs without any reference to the culture of Aquileia. Religious rhetoric, as any symbolic language, must be able to convey meaning to its receivers and thus be rooted in a phenomenological reality. Even though the understanding of the words might be very different from what Chromatius intended, some common experience must be shared by himself and his congregants upon which he could draw. Thus, the fact that Arians were not present in Aquileia may provide a clue to the rhetoric. It is of course possible that Chromatius’s life experiences may have provided him with a fear of other Christianities returning to his hometown. Yet it seems just as likely that the victories over heresies could be deployed as a credibility statement on the truth of the ‘orthodox’ church. As noted earlier, rhetoric against Jews seems to have been intended very often for other Christian groups. In this instance, the opposite situation might have been taking place. The rhetoric about heretics and the victory of the church in restoring unity may be intended for those beyond the Christian community. At a moment when a single empire-wide Christianity had emerged dominant and was supported by imperial power, Chromatius may represent a shift from trying to dominate mainly Christian circles to wielding authority in a wider realm. His rhetoric reflects the construction of a narrative which advocated unity under the umbrella of the church. Heretics, and the ability of the church to label and condemn such groups, showcased the authority and might of the church. Out of this victory, Chromatius could reasonably make a claim to control all religious activity in Aquileia in order to re-assert ‘normative’ unity. Having established his credentials as the most powerful man in the religious arena, Chromatius could draw the rewards of power, which is wealth and authority, into
his church. The argument of unity under the control of the bishop would be crucial to carrying forward a project of Christianization.

One clear connection that appears in the sermons is between heretics and Jews. Chromatius tended to link the two categories together at various moments. Because Arians and Jews shared a denial of the divinity of Christ, Chromatius had no trouble linking the two communities together in his rhetoric. For instance, in a sermon on the expulsion of traders from the Temple in John 2, Chromatius adopted an interpretation from Origen for the whip Jesus made, saying:

In that whip of cords is signified, according to what Solomon tells us, “A cord of three is not easily broken.” This cord of three undoubtedly represents the Trinity, which cannot be broken because faith in the Trinity is incorruptible. This is the faith which the heretics frequently tried to corrupt; but they corrupted only themselves.

Chromatius had no trouble suggesting that the physical whip Jesus made of three cords acted as the purifying force of the trinity. Chromatius framed the very thing that the heretics denied as their punishment. He tied the anti-heretical language into a longer tradition though: anti-Jewish polemic. The very next passage reveals the focus of the whip of three: the synagogue.

So with such a whip of cords all those...who conduct themselves in a manner prohibited are condemned by none other than the ruling trinity...The chairs of the Synagogue have been destroyed so that the chairs of the Church can be sanctified in Christ. The priestly honor has been removed from the Synagogue and given to the Church. For the Synagogue no longer

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65 I previously discussed how Chromatius employs the label of ‘heretic’ and ‘Arian.’ For a discussion of ‘Jew’ and ‘Jewish,’ see Chapter 5 on Judaism in Aquileia. The label reflects the presence of a Jewish community in Aquileia, but it may also encompass Christians or pagans that attend the synagogue for services.

merits to possess the priestly duty because it did not receive the Lord Christ, namely the chief priest.  

Chromatius linked the Jewish rejection of Christ with the attempt of heretics to corrupt belief in the trinity. While the suggestion that Christianity superseded Judaism was normal in Christian writings of the time, the link between the actions of Jews and heretics on this doctrinal point suggests a connection in the rhetorical discourse as well. The labeling of heresy demonstrated the authority of the bishop in Aquileia. Chromatius, by virtue of his position, had the authority to condemn other Christian groups. By linking Jews with other Christian factions, he mixed what is typically thought of as different categories. A connection of the categories would bring Jews into a Christian realm, making them much like other Christian groups. By thinking of Jews within the category of “heretics,” even if not equating the two, Chromatius could begin to extend the power of orthodoxy.

The connection between Jews and heretics is demonstrated in another passage, this time from a sermon on Psalm 14:1: “The fool has said in his heart there is no God.” Chromatius, in an audacious but unsurprising interpretation, interpreted the Jews and heretics as the subjects of this passage. Both groups rejected the Nicene position on the trinity. In the second paragraph, Chromatius said:

In short, as it is said in the tenth psalm of the persona of the people of the church, “In the Lord,” he says, “I put my trust; how can you say to my soul: flee to the mountain like a bird,” in the sparrow is signified a transgressor or apostate, who left the house of God, which is the church...The Jewish people had done so a while ago, who left the temple of God, which was at Jerusalem, to offer sacrifices in the mountains, as the prophetic scriptures reveal.  

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67 Sermon 4:2. Italics my own.

68 Sermon 9:1. The scriptural quotation is Psalm 11:1.
Although the term heretic does not appear in this particular passage, the Jews were connected with apostates who leave the church. Again, Chromatius expanded the category of problematic Christians to include Jews. The unity of the church, which is paramount for the power of orthodoxy, could be threatened by those who leave or opt out. Chromatius’s authority over Jews was not the same as over those who identified as Christians. But if the categories could be merged, or more correctly, if Judaism could be subsumed under the category of heresy, then Chromatius’s authority, won through battles over no longer extant Christian groups, would apply.

The direct connection can be seen again in the end of the passage about Arius and his infamous passing. Immediately following his point about the expulsion of heretics from the intestines, Chromatius continued:

Arius filled himself with bitterness by not believing that the Son proceeded from the Father…. All heretics, who attack or destroy the faith of his preaching, are filled with bitterness according to John. Saint John intends the sweetness of his preaching for Catholics but the bitterness for heretics. He intends the sweetness for the faith of the church, bitterness for the treachery of the synagogue, which did not want to receive the preaching of John.69

Chromatius connected the bitterness of Arius, which resulted in his ironic but fitting death, with the synagogue. Both groups suffered from the same disease. Their rejection of the ‘true’ preaching by ‘orthodox’ Christians signified by John and contained in Chromatius’s church resulted in their bitterness. The synagogue, described as treacherous, was presented as possessing similar characteristics to those of the heretics: rebellious, corrupting, and poisonous. Chromatius managed to neatly create a category of treacherous, corrupting, embittered groups which threaten the sweet unity of

69 Sermon 21:3.
the church with division, discord and deviance. Never minding that Arius and the groups identified with him had vanished from Aquileia, Chromatius continued to maintain the history and memory of heresy in such a way that validated his own church’s authority in religious realms even beyond other Christian groups. A history of Arians (and Jews) as rebelling against or departing from the true church of God promoted the notion that orthodoxy and the unity it commanded was the normative position, not one constructed by power dynamics of the fourth century.

**The Author(ity) of Orthodoxy**

Chromatius’s continuous application of labels of heresy reflected a subjectification of other Christianities by his version of orthodoxy. But even more than dominating these groups and suggesting the boundaries of permissible belief, practice and adherence, Chromatius was narrating a history which established orthodoxy. Just as labels of heresy had to be created and applied, so orthodoxy had to constructed. Most clearly it was done by ‘remembering’ the bitter rebellions of heretics from the original church. This history of heresy implied a pre-existent body which orthodoxy claimed as its own. This version of a unified Christianity appears in Chromatius’s sermons, but even more in Rufinus’s history.\(^\text{70}\) In one sermon, Chromatius claimed that

> At first, after the ascension of the Lord, the church was few in number. But afterwards, it developed until it filled the entire world, not just the cities but the many nations. It is believed among the Persians, it is believed in India, it is believed in the entire world. It is neither the fear of the sword, nor the fear of the emperor which has brought all these nations to adore Christ; rather faith in Christ has rendered them peaceful.\(^\text{71}\)

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\(^{70}\) For a full examination of Rufinus and his relationship to Chromatius, see Chapter 4.

\(^{71}\) *Sermon*, 30:3.
Chromatius emphasized the universal quality of the church along with the subjection of the world into a peaceful unity. As a description of orthodoxy, this passage stresses the agreement on matters of faith and practice, not by imperial fiat but by common consent. Considering that Theodosius issued more than one injunction against pagans and heretics from Aquileia, including the famous law which resulted in the closing of the Serapeum in 391, Chromatius’s narrative takes pains to connect the currently held beliefs with those of the original members of the church following the ascension. The emphasis on unity, a unity founded prior to any noted dissent, empowered the ‘orthodox’ church as authoritative.

As a bulwark against future issues, the continued condemnation of heresy functioned as a warning. It offered no place for sacredness outside of the institutional power structure. The only option for anyone claiming the identity of Christian was to remain with Chromatius and within his church, not to act independently. Unity and orthodoxy were made nearly synonymous. He says in the sermon on the word ‘Alleluia’:

> And so we are blessed by God if we are found all together, that is remaining in the unity of faith, in the harmony of peace, in the affections of love...Hence if discord, if division, if dissension are among us, we do not merit the blessing of God. How are we able to respond Alleluia, which means in our father's language, “Lord, bless us all together,” when we are not found together?[^73]

The blessing of God would only fall on those who remain in unity with the orthodox church. Dissent, discord and deviation were all condemned as being unblessed. Any person or group which was based on these characteristics, which heresies (and possibly Jews, as we have seen) were described as possessing, was a threat to the

[^72]: CTh, 16.10.11.
[^73]: Sermon 33:2.
orthodox church and its unity. This contrast worked because orthodoxy, constructed as the predecessor and antithesis of heresy, was based on its claim to a natural united state.

In the sermons of Chromatius, orthodoxy was constructed as a preexistent state. Labels of ‘heresy’ were not applied in a vacuum. They carried memory and history, reflecting institutional power. Chromatius of Aquileia drew from his own personal battles with Arians as memories of ‘heresy.’ These memories portrayed ‘orthodoxy,’ represented by Chromatius’s church, as normative and possessing a longer history than any contrived ‘heresy.’ The doctrinal debate surrounding ‘heresy,’ while allowing for a pedagogical moment in the sermon, was not as important as the ability to point to an ‘orthodoxy’ which was preexistent. In Aquileia, Chromatius was attempting to confront pagans and Jews as Christianity became the dominant religion. By presenting heretics as rebels, he could claim that unity, not a divided city, was the norm. He suggested that any threat to that unity, be it heretical or non-Christian, was a danger, and in so doing began to collapse the categories of heretic and non-Christian. The city ought to reflect its church and also seek increasing unity under a single religious umbrella, not tolerance of diverse practices. The memory of fourth century intra-Christian battles concluded in Aquileia with a ‘return’ to orthodoxy. In short, the history of ‘Arians’ in Aquileia made orthodoxy authoritative.
CHAPTER 4
“UNLIKE IN TONGUE, UNLIKE IN DRESS OR ARMS?” THE PLACE OF BARBARIANS IN A CHRISTIAN WORLD

In the spring of 402 AD, Chromatius conducted the Easter vigil in what must have been the most unusual Paschal service of his career. The previous winter, Alaric the Goth had invaded Italy from the Balkans. After crossing over the Julian Alps, he briefly laid siege to Aquileia before moving on to the Po valley and Milan. In the wake of the attack on Aquileia, Chromatius remarked in the Easter Vigil sermon on April 5 that Jews and pagans were joining in the Christian feast, seeking the hand of God to save them from the invaders.¹ Little did they know that Alaric would be defeated the next morning, Easter Sunday, by Roman forces outside of Milan. This event was Chromatius’s closest encounter with so-called “barbarians,” yet the rhetoric contained in his sermons is rife with hints of the peoples who stood as the antithesis to the citizens of the Roman Empire.² In this respect, Chromatius both continued the Roman tradition of dividing the world between Roman and barbarian and challenged traditional understandings of the spread of the Roman Empire. When taken with the Ecclesiastical History of Rufinus, written in Aquileia in 402-403, Chromatius’s view of these peoples suggests an outlook which eschewed the pessimism about the world found in later Christian writers like Augustine. For Chromatius, barbarians served as markers of improper religiosity. This idea implied that barbarians could be tamed by Christianity. This perspective posed a

¹ Sermon 16:4.

² I am using the term “barbarian” as it was the most common generic term for people living outside of the Roman Empire. I realize that like the term “heretic,” it is pejorative and not reflective of any sense of shared identity. As this chapter is concerned with Roman attitudes towards outsiders, I am using the term to emphasize the perceived gap between Rome and the rest of the world, best summed up by usages of the term ‘barbarian.’
challenge to the traditional roman-barbarian dichotomy which would result in a
callenge for Aquileia’s Jewish community as well.

**Enemies at the Gate: Barbarians in Aquileia**

While the siege of Alaric in 402 was probably Chromatius’s most direct encounter
with an army we term barbarian, the presence of people from outside the Roman
Empire was certainly not unusual in northern Italy throughout the late fourth century.
The myth that barbarians were outside, unknown peoples who suddenly decided to
migrate into the empire must be dispelled. Rather, these various groups (which were
linguistically, socially, and culturally distinct from one another) gradually increased their
interactions with and dependence on the Roman Empire, resulting in their incorporation
into its political realities. Two particular dynamics of barbarian assimilation had direct
bearing on northern Italy. First, the increasing use of foreign mercenaries in the Roman
army introduced new peoples throughout the empire. Since the time of Marcus Aurelius,
increasing numbers of outsiders had served as soldiers in the Roman army.³ By the late
fourth century, Ambrose noticed the not inconsequential presence of barbarian soldiers
in Milan and their support of Arian Christianity.⁴ By the time of Chromatius, entire units
in the army based around certain tribal identities with their own leaders served
separately in the army.⁵ Indeed, in 402 Alaric’s army was met by a Roman garrison of
Alan cavalry stationed in Italy.⁶ While fighting a “barbarian” army, the “Roman” army

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itself was composed primarily of these barbarians. Citizens of the empire would not have been strangers to barbarians in the military, nor would barbarian soldiers have been strangers to Roman culture.

But beside this increasing interaction in the military sphere, barbarians had been moving across Roman frontiers into the empire for decades, living alongside natives and becoming integrated to varying degrees with Roman culture. In 334 Constantine had some 300,000 Samartians settled throughout the empire, including a number in northern Italy. The emperor forbade barbarians to intermarry with Roman citizens in 370, though the necessity of the law and its repeated proclamation suggests that it was widely ignored. In addition, other sources reveal that as early as the late third century barbarians acted as laborers in unpopulated, “wild” regions as part of a governmental attempt to produce cut-rate wine. Certainly, barbarians had been part of Roman life for decades by the time of Chromatius. They served in the army, not just as low level soldiers but as generals, most notably in the person of Stilicho, the son of a Vandal and a Roman who acted as regent for the underage emperor Honorius from 395-408. In short, barbarians were not new or unusual at the time of Chromatius, but invasion and the threat of barbarian armies was new.

Following the defeat of the emperor Valens at Adrianople in 378, the Roman world seems to have taken serious notice of the Goths for the first time. The fallout from the battle challenged the place of Rome in the world. Along with practical political and

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7 *Excerpta Valesiana*, I,32, quoted in: Cracco-Ruggini, “Rome and the Barbarians,” 208; see also 619n2.


military questions, deeper issues about the cultural superiority of Rome and its version of Christianity emerged. The defeat also proved a major blow to Arian Christianity as an institution as no Arian emperor would ever again assume the throne, sounding the death knell for the sect. While the rise of Theodosius to power seemed an answer for the new questions about the future of Roman hegemony, the new emperor managed merely to hold the Goths at arm’s length during his reign, leaving the situation at his death in 395 much as he found it upon his ascension in 379. In fact, a number of the same Goths who defeated Valens in 378 served under Theodosius in various campaigns from 382 to 394. The Goths, like other barbarians, were not strange outsiders, but an integral part of the Roman political world, switching alliances from one emperor to the next in order to secure the best outcome for themselves.

Alaric, the leader of the Goths, exemplifies this desire for personal gain in the Roman style. After the death of the emperor Theodosius in 395, Alaric desired a position as a Roman general, not a commander of barbarians only. Though our knowledge of Alaric is limited, he was likely an Arian Christian and a veteran of the Roman army for a number of years, The records of the period have left Alaric’s motives ambiguous, though many have been speculated. It might have been a new ‘homeland’ for the Goths, or simple material gain, but the most reasonable motive seems to have been an attempt to gain personal honors in the Roman style. Whatever the case, Alaric was marauding through the Balkans at the end of the fourth century, but in 401 he

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left Illyricum, crossed the Julian Alps, and invaded the west for the first time. That winter
that he laid siege to Aquileia before moving on to threaten Milan.\textsuperscript{13} He faced little initial
resistance before being brought to battle at Pollentia on Easter Sunday by Stilicho.
There, Alaric was defeated not by Stilicho, who being Christian declined to fight on
Easter, but by the pagan chieftain of the Alans, Saul. The irony of the various religious
identities was not lost on commentators of the time.\textsuperscript{14} After summering near Verona,
Alaric and his army were defeated again, and this time retreated back across the Alps
into Illyricum. This point in time is when Chromatius requested the translation of the
\textit{Ecclesiastical History} from Rufinus. The invasions and concomitant problems provoked
new questions about barbarians in relation to the new Christian Roman Empire,
questions which the bishop of Aquileia felt compelled to address.

The term “barbarian” (\textit{barbaricus}) appears directly only three times in
Chromatius’s sermons.\textsuperscript{15} On these occasions it acts as an adjective modifying either
captivity or nations. Chromatius never spoke of a \textit{barbaricum}, a place beyond the
borders of the empire which was wild or uncivilized. Rather, the general term \textit{barbaricus}
seems to refer to people and their actions. Much more commonly he speaks of “all the
nations” or “all peoples” of the world (\textit{omnes gentes}). At these points, he echoes the
biblical divide between Jews and Gentiles, but he is also clear that \textit{gentes} or nations
specifically denoted the barbarian kingdoms. Given that his city was besieged by an
army led by a supposedly subjugated people, the emphasis on ‘nations’ would have

\textsuperscript{13} This itinerary is confirmed by Claudian, \textit{De Bello Gothico}, 233-266 and Jerome, \textit{Contra Rufinus}, III:21.

\textsuperscript{14} Wolfram, 96. Orosius dwelt on the contradictory religious positions of the armies and their commanders

\textsuperscript{15} Sermon 12:2, 12:3, 16:4.
carried connotations of barbarian nations like the Goths, Alamanni, Isaurians, and Persians, among others.

In response to the obvious fears of the citizens of Aquileia Chromatius commissioned Rufinus to translate and continue the *Ecclesiastical History* of Eusebius. Rufinus acknowledged the request and the motivation for it in the preface to his work, which he dedicated to Chromatius: “[Y]ou have sought some remedy to protect from cruel death the people God has entrusted to you, a remedy by which ailing spirits may be diverted from the thought of impending evil and give their attention to something better.”¹⁶ The books which Rufinus added to Eusebius’s *Ecclesiastical History* focused on the spread of Christianity beyond the borders of the Roman Empire. In each case Rufinus told stories of nations formerly considered barbarian accepting the Christian faith, often by means of female or servant confessions to rulers.¹⁷ The repeated anecdotes of barbarian conversions in the wake of the attack by the Goths seem designed to emphasize a future promise contained in Roman Christianity rather than the ability of the empire to ward off attacks. Given the context of the composition and the long personal connection between Rufinus and Chromatius, I believe that Rufinus’s additions to the *Ecclesiastical History* provide a lens through which to read Chromatius’s sermons, particularly on the subjects of barbarians, kingdoms, and world power. Chromatius’s emphasis on the nations coming to his faith and his references to “all the nations” being converted seem less an appeal to distant eschatological hope than an echo of Rufinus’s history and its representation of the current geo-political reality.


A meaningful reading of Chromatius’s approach to barbarians requires some introduction to his rhetorical context. He did not preach in a vacuum but made use of a wide array of verbal cues which carried significant baggage. For instance, the phrase *omnes gentes*, while literally referring to “all peoples,” primarily denoted barbarians in the writings of many late fourth century authors. At the risk of what might seem to be a long digression, a comparative examination of diverse uses of barbarians by fourth-century contemporaries, both Christian and non-Christian, will set the context for analyzing Chromatius’s own adaptations of barbarian rhetoric. Although no common feeling toward barbarians existed among the varied writers, they do share a common application of barbarians as a rhetorical tool. Barbarians, whether viewed positively, negatively or neutrally, were a signifier of proper Roman identity. Christian and non-Christian writers alike used the barbarians as markers of correct religious practice for a Roman. A brief examination of varied approaches reveals how barbarians functioned in the rhetoric of Chromatius’s contemporaries. A closer analysis of Rufinus, the lens for Chromatius, concludes this rhetorical overview and provides an entry into an analysis of the sermons. I hope to show how Chromatius both adapted and departed from traditional formulations to construct a Roman rhetoric of identity suited to his own particular vision of Christianization.

“Unlike in tongue, unlike in dress and arms?” Attitudes about Barbarians

The Latin words denoting terms of identity (*gens, nation, regnum*) are vague in their meanings, not dissimilar from one of their modern counterparts, ‘race.’ *Gens* is the most commonly used term, followed by *natio*. The semantic range in antiquity went from
‘family’ to ‘kingdom’ including ‘tribe,’ ‘race,’ ‘lineage,’ and ‘nation.’ Modern scholars still debate the possible applications of the differing terms as seen in disputes over the difference between *gens*, *natio* and *populos* in Tacitus, just to use one example. It does seem that by the end of antiquity, *gens* and *natio* were roughly synonymous, both referring to a unique group of people that lay outside the borders of the empire. Law, language, lineage and custom were all possible markers by which to distinguish a *gens*, according to Isidore of Seville in the seventh century, but no single element was definitive (as skin color would be in the modern American category of race). Perhaps most importantly for the study of Chromatius, *gentes* in the plural always denoted only those groups that lay outside the Roman Empire. This usage holds true for Isidore as well, but also earlier for Paulus Orosius and most other writers of the period contemporaneous with Chromatius. Each of these authors used the varied terms to refer to those people modern scholars tend to lump together as barbarians. Drawing from Herodotus, ancient writers maintained a classical list of peoples which were viewed as outsiders to the civilization of the Roman Empire. Yet by the end of the fourth century, a variety of attitudes toward these barbarians existed. Ranging from conservatives who maintained that barbarians were to be dreaded and kept at arm’s length to more liberal voices that welcomed barbarians into the empire provided they

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20 Goetz, 44.

assimilated, both pagan and Christian writers of the fourth and fifth century
demonstrated the complexity of the political debate taking place in the empire.  

Non-Christian Authors

The works of Ammianus Marcellinus, Claudian, and Eunapius, all pagan
contemporaries of Chromatius, provide a rhetorical context for examining the bishop’s
own representation of barbarians. These authors all wrote their works while Chromatius
was serving in Aquileia. Though they held different views of barbarians, all three writers
use the category of barbarians to mark the boundaries of proper Roman identity.

Barbarians were the classical other, and they established the limes of Rome. Ammianus
Marcellinus, considered the last non-Christian Roman historian, wrote a continuation of
Tacitus which brought the narrative through the battle of Adrianople (378).  

While he maintained many of the negative stereotypes of classical Roman writers on barbarians,
Ammianus also bestowed praise and respect on barbarians who assimilated and were
currently defending the empire. While he treats the Huns as “quite abnormally savage"
with “no fixed abode,” he explains that the Goths desired “a dwelling far from all

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knowledge of the barbarians [the Huns].” And the Goths only attacked the Romans when “bewildered by ill-treatment.”

In contrast, the poet Claudian harbored no love for barbarians, even though his patron, Stilicho, had a Vandal father. Claudian maintained the classical description of the Huns and other barbarians as ugly and warlike. Barbarians might have their uses in the empire, but they ought not to be trusted fully, as evidenced by a troop of Alan cavalry at the battle of Pollentia, which, according to Claudian, was about to flee and desert until rallied by Stilicho. This general disdain for barbarians was perpetuated by Eunapius, an easterner who published his history around the year 404. He was a sophist from Sardis and probably the most anti-Christian of all the writers examined here. As for his attitude to barbarians, scholars have suggested that he “shows overt racism” towards non-

24 Ammianus, LRE, XXXI:2, XXXI:3 and XXXI:6.

25 Claudian was court panegyrist from 397-404. He is known as the greatest poet of his age and probably the last Latin poet of his stature. He acted as chief propagandist for the emperor Honorius and, more importantly, the general Stilicho. The most comprehensive work on the historical context of the poet is still: Alan Cameron, Poetry and Propaganda at the court of Honorius (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970). A revisionist approach, which views Claudian less as a political figure and more as a poet emphasizing his carmina minora over the panygeries, appeared recently: Marie-France Guipponi-Gineste, Claudien: poète du monde à la cour d’Occident. (Paris: De Boccard, 2010).


27 De Bello Gothico, 594-597.

28 His history, though only in fragmentary form most likely due to its anti-Christian vitriol, was at its time the standard history of late antiquity in Byzantium.

Romans. And indeed, Eunapius described barbarians as ugly “like insects,” “filled with anger and madness and killing,” and “eager for war and fighting and slaughter.”

Yet open hatred of barbarians was not absolute. Ammianus clearly suggested that those barbarians who were loyal to Rome and served it, such as Frigeridus and Merobaudes, merited praise. In each case his judgment rested not on a racial or ethnic identification, but rather on Ammianus’s view of wisdom and ability, for Romans, just like Huns, were condemned as bestial at certain points. In contrast, when Claudian was forced to acknowledge the contributions and peacefulness of certain barbarians in the empire and army, he viewed them as a sign of Rome’s glory, not of assimilation. The theme of empire and imperial power over its weaker local inhabitants runs like a scarlet thread through Claudian’s panegyrics. Even Eunapius depicted a good barbarian, and it is in his story that a clue to the rhetoric of the period lies. According to Eunapius, the Goth Fravitta split from the rest of his people and embraced Roman life, refusing to take a gothic vow to remain an eternal enemy of Rome. “He openly declared that he worshipped the gods after the ancient fashion and he had no inclination towards deceit and evasion, but in his way of life revealed a soul that was

30 Blockley, 21; See also in support of this view: Rohrbacher, 232-233.
32 LRE, XXXI:9; XXXI:10; XXX:10.
33 Barnes, Ammianus, 107-111.
34 On Stilicho’s Consulship (400 AD), I:148-169.
transparently pure.”36 He is later described as a general of the Romans, and “he easily destroyed the brigands so that the word ‘brigandage’ almost disappeared from the lips of men.”37 His life contrasted with that of the other Goths who were pagans but pretended to be Christians in order to gain entrance into the empire.

If barbarians marked the limits of acceptable Roman identity, the notion that barbarians could become proper Romans, an idea suggested by each writer, allows the reader to mark what defines “Romanness.” For Ammianus the ultimate judgment comes from a passage on the Huns: “They are totally ignorant of the distinction between right and wrong, their speech is shifty and obscure, and they are under no restraint from religion or superstition.”38 The mark of civilization for Ammianus was the acceptance of Roman mores. So when the Goths “ask respectfully,” they display their mark of assimilation. Barbarians were not inherently evil or wild; rather the uncivilized man was wild. Only through the spread of Roman mores could barbarians be conquered.

Although Claudian does not explicitly describe or even admit a process of Romanization, it lurks behind all his works which honor the general Stilicho, the son of a Vandal father. Stilicho played the role of calming hero in Claudian’s recounting of the battle of Pollentia, dispelling fear and calling his soldiers to battle. Claudian put words into Stilicho’s mouth which claimed that if the Goths were not challenged and defeated the entire rationale of empire would crumble: “Reflect that all the fierce peoples of Britain and the tribes who dwell on Danube’s and Rhine’s banks are watching and stand ready. Win a victory now and be conquerors in many an unfought war. Restore Rome to

36 Eunapius, History, Fr. 59.
37 Eunapius, History, Fr. 69:2.
38 LRE, XXXI:2.
her former glory; the frame of empire is tottering.\textsuperscript{39} For Claudian, Rome acted as a mother to childlike tribes throughout the world, bringing civilization and safety.\textsuperscript{40} Claudian presented barbarians as objects of victory, a foil to Roman greatness. They could be civilized, but only by force.

As mentioned above, the one good barbarian that Eunapius presented, Fravitta, served to provide a contrast with the rest of the Goths who entered the empire through religious trickery. In a long passage, which is worth reproducing in full, Eunapius explained the supposed deception:

Each tribe had brought along from home ancestral objects of worship together with their priests and priestesses, but they kept a deep and impenetrable silence upon these things and spoke not a word about their mysteries. What they revealed was fiction and sham designed to fool their enemies. They all claimed to be Christians and some of their number they disguised as their bishops and dressed them up in that respected garb and...brought them forward. Thereby they were able to get access to and appropriate what they rendered unguarded by swearing oaths which they held in contempt but which the emperors greatly respected. They also had some of the tribe of so-called 'monks,' whom they had decked out in imitation of the monks amongst their enemies. The imitation was neither laborious nor difficult, but it sufficed for them to trail along grey cloaks and tunics to both become and be accepted as evildoers. The barbarians used these devices to deceive the Romans.\textsuperscript{41}

This passage from Eunapius’s fragmentary \textit{History} is telling on several counts. First, he provided another example of the treachery of barbarians, to the extent that they hid their own religion on a nationwide scale. Second, the Romans who had fallen into the trap of the Christian religion were made foolish due to its constraints. Finally, the description of monks revealed what was perhaps the most important interpretive lens. Elsewhere in

\textsuperscript{39} \textit{BG}, 568-572.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{On Stilicho’s Consulship}, II:150-153.

\textsuperscript{41} Eunapius, \textit{History}, Fr. 48:2.
the history Eunapius related the story of the destruction of the Serapeum in Alexandria in 391. He wrote with dripping sarcasm, “They fought so nobly against the statues and the votive offerings that they not only conquered but stole them also.” He described the perpetrators as “the so-called ‘monks,’ men in appearance but swine in their way of life.” Eunapius clearly drew a link between the monks of Egypt and the barbarians acting as monks. Fravitta, the good Goth, remained true to his ancestral religion and served Rome. The barbarians who adopted Christianity (even if as a sham) destroyed the empire and rebelled against its authority, just as the Roman monks did to the Serapeum. Eunapius deployed barbarians as the imitators of the true destroyers, namely Christians. Barbarians, ever the rhetorical other of ‘True Rome,’ now adopted the guise of the internal enemy.

Though coming from different contexts within in the empire and representing somewhat different perspectives, these three fourth-century pagan writers all approached barbarians as the definitional other for Rome. The rhetoric surrounding barbarians could not be absolute, for it had to provide a marker of how one could pass beyond the boundary of proper Roman practice and become a “barbarian.” Ammianus, Claudian and Eunapius all constructed Roman mores and culture as the indicator of identity, though they defined the limit differently. Each writer used stories of barbarians to demonstrate the dangers facing their world. Ammianus feared the collapse of Roman mores, Claudian worried about the tottering defenses of the empire, and Eunapius, the convinced anti-Christian, used a story of barbarians to suggest the danger of Christians,

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42 Eunapius, History, Fr. 56.
particularly their monks. Barbarians, *omnes gentes*, were the clearest sign of what defined Roman identity and what actions were beyond it.

**Christian Authors**

With regard to barbarians, Christian writers at the end of the fourth and beginning of the fifth century largely followed the same rhetorical patterns as their non-Christian counterparts. They maintained classical ideas about barbarians, but the primary goal of their presentation was to present the limits of being Roman. Drawing from standard tropes, Christian writers generally presented barbarians as wild beings intent on destruction. The Latin Christian poet Prudentius, who wrote at the very beginning of the fourth century, did not love the barbarians, harshly judging their style and traditions: “barbarian foe…with strange arms and dress and hair goes roving through my captured city, carrying off my young men to bondage across the Alps.” Similarly he referred to Alaric as a tyrannus, “attempting to wipe out Italy…and dress our toga-clad nobles in skins.”$^{43}$ Similarly, John Chrysostom called the Goths, “the most barbarous of humans” and described them as “wolves.”$^{44}$ Ambrose viewed them less harshly, though they were actors of God’s vengeance like the nation of Gog in the book of Ezekiel.$^{45}$ Jerome said of the barbarian invasions: “Wolves were set upon us, not wolves of Arabia but of

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the north, who overran vast provinces in no time at all.”

Three years later Jerome would write, “May Jesus avert from the Roman world the farther assaults of these wild beasts!” And on the cusp of the sack of Rome in 409, Jerome was still pounding away on the same warning drum: “The whole country between the Alps and the Pyrenees, between the Rhine and the Ocean, has been laid waste by hordes.” He placed the blame on Stilicho: “This humiliation has been brought upon her not by the fault of her Emperors who are both most religious men, but by the crime of a half-barbarian traitor.”

Here Jerome seems to have viewed the barbarians as a beast-like people intent not on conquest but simply on destruction. He drew a line between Roman and barbarian, seen clearly in the description of Stilicho.

Yet Jerome seems to hold in tension two conflicting thoughts. Obviously he adopted the classical view of barbarians as destroyers. Yet he also rejoiced that Christianity was spreading to the formerly barbarian peoples. He wrote, “Every man of note in Gaul hastens here [Bethlehem]. The Briton…leaves the setting sun in quest of a spot of which he knows only through Scripture and common report. Need we recall the Armenians, the Persians, and the peoples of India and Arabia?”

He went on to mention other peoples of Africa and Asia. Yet while there were Christians in these places, Jerome’s point here (and elsewhere where he waxed on in this manner) was

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46 Ep. 60:16 from NPNF 2:6. The quote at the beginning of this subsection, “Unlike in tongue, unlike in dress and arms?” comes from Aeneid 8:848 quoted in Ep. 60:4. In the Aeneid, the quote refers to peoples conquered by Augustus displayed on the shield of Aeneas. This quote was used by Eusebius (Praep. Evang. I.4.3.) to claim that Augustus was divinely ordained to institute a peace which enabled Christianity to spread. See: J.H.D. Scourfield, Consoling Heliodorus: A Commentary on Jerome, Letter 60 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 108.

47 Ep. 77:8.


49 Ep. 46:10.
that Christianity was by no means limited to the Roman Empire. He made a similar claim in 403 when he wrote:

> From India, from Persia, from Ethiopia we daily welcome monks in crowds. The Armenian Bowman has laid aside his quiver, the Huns learn the psalter, the chilly Scythians are warmed with the glow of the faith. The Goths, ruddy and yellow-haired, carry tent-churches about with their armies: and perhaps their success in fighting against us may be due to the fact that they believe in the same religion.\(^5\)

How Jerome knew this we cannot say. The appearance of diverse would-be monks on the threshold of his monastery in Bethlehem could be genuine. His claims about far-off peoples carry less credibility. Yet it is certain that he used a rhetoric which portrayed barbarians as potentially Christianized and tamed. Rome could not make the wild beast calm, but the Christian faith could still him. One example comes from an exceptionally long letter on discrepancies between Jerome’s translation of the Old Testament and the Vulgate. This letter is addressed to two Goths studying in Constantinople, and Jerome opened by rejoicing that barbarians were seeking his knowledge.\(^5\) Perhaps in his most simple and revealing moment, from 396, Jerome wrote simply that, “Without knowledge of his creator, every human being is no more than a beast.”\(^5\) Jerome suggested that Romans and barbarians carry no essential difference. The real division was between Christians and non-Christians.

Other Christian contemporaries of Chromatius held a similar view. Prudentius presented barbarism as the lack of civilization rather than a perpetual state due to any ethnic or geographic characteristic. The Romans “once were barbarous but had their

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\(^5\) Ep. 107:2.


\(^5\) *Ep*. 60:4. This follows the quote from Vergil, "Unlike in tongue…"
savagery subdued and became civilized.” For Prudentius, the taming of wild mores was not a product of Roman culture, as it was for Eunapius or Claudian, but the work of God, for “God taught nations everywhere to bow their heads under the same laws and become Romans.” Ambrose claimed that “The spreading of the gospel is already happening; already the Goths and the Armenians have believed in it, and so we are coming to the end of the world.” The tension between these two positions, barbarians as wild and as Christians, is perhaps best illustrated in a sermon delivered by John Chrysostom. Sometime during his tenure in Constantinople he preached a sermon to Goths in a church set aside for their use. The church was officially Nicene, though it may have also held Arian services. Chrysostom’s sermon reveals both the existence of a Gothic church structure and his own tragic attempts to engage the Goths.

The Goths were settled in Constantinople as part of the imperial army, though some probably had their families with them. Under the control of the general Gainas, they were kept at arm’s length, not fully trusted by the inhabitants of the city. The church seems to have conducted services in the native language of the Goths and used


54 *Contra Symmachum*, II:602-604.


57 I am grateful to Jonathon Stanfill for pointing me to this sermon and letting me see his conference paper on the subject: Jonathan Stanfill, “John Chrysostom’s Gothic parish and the politics of space”, paper presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies, University of Oxford, August, 2011.

When he visited the church Chrysostom spoke Greek to the congregants, though it may have been translated into Gothic. In his words, Chrysostom relates how it was not unbecoming for the church to be filled with Goths since there were many biblical examples of barbarians coming to God. Abraham was a barbarian before he was called. The Magi who came to give gifts to the Christ child were Persians and thus barbarians. Chrysostom reveled in the fact that the Christian faith had spread to various barbarians and the scriptures had been translated in Thrace, Samartia, Scythia and India. Yet there is a hint of Chrysostom’s discomfort, perhaps lingering disquiet, in his words officially confirming the membership of Goths in his church. After reading a passage from Isaiah about the wolf and the lamb eating together, Chrysostom suggested that this very thing was happening before his eyes: “the most barbarous of humans standing alongside the sheep of the church, sharing with them a common pasture and a single fold, with the same table before all.” Even in an affirmation of their shared membership, he described the Goths as wolves, distinct from his sheep. The “most barbarous of humans” remained set apart even in their inclusion because of a long held prejudice. Chrysostom rejected official discrimination, but perpetuated difference in his sermon. It seems that this very church would also become the site of death, as some time later during a revolt, many Gothic soldiers took shelter in the

59 Kelly, *Golden Mouth*, 143.


church seeking sanctuary. Denying them this right, the citizens burnt the church to the ground with hundreds or thousands of Goths inside. Chrysostom was silent on the subject of the church burning, except to say that he approved of the expulsion of the Goths.64 Apparently the sheep and wolves could not lie together. The sheep proved to be much too violent a creature to be trusted.

Jerome also seems to hold in tension these two conflicting thoughts. Barbarians were Christians and a sign of the triumph of his religion. Barbarians were also a destructive force representing the possible end for the haughty Roman Empire. One possible resolution of the contradiction lies in an odd passage in which Jerome tweaked a bible verse. Rewriting Galatians 3:28 to fit his own day, Jerome declared, “And since even in the flesh, if we are born again in Christ, we are no longer Greek and Barbarian, bond and free, male and female, but are all one in Him.”65 Jerome inserted the dichotomy of Greek and barbarian in place of Gentile and Jew as the original text reads. Jerome was able to understand that Romans and barbarians could both be Christian, but this commonality did not render them equal or necessarily peaceful. Just as men and women were certainly not equal in his world, so Romans and barbarians would not be equal (or lay down their arms) until the next world.

These four Christian writers faced the difficulty of reconciling long held ideas about barbarians with the universal claims of their church. Barbarians had represented the other for so long that now a new marker for Roman identity was required. For Christian writers, then, a new dynamic emerged which built off the former Roman-

64 Liebeschuetz, Barbarians and Bishops, 192. J.N.D. Kelly thinks that Chrysostom did not approve the actions and spoke against it, those his words are lost, due to a brief and vague passage in Zosimus: Kelly, Golden Mouth, 160.

65 Jerome, Ep. 75:2
barbarian dichotomy. The divide between good and bad for Prudentius was not Roman-barbarian, but Christian-pagan. “Life is common to all,” he wrote, “but merit is not.”

Alaric failed due to his paganism, not his barbarian spirit, though Prudentius would suggest that they were one and the same. He held barbarians to be just as human as civilized people; the difference was in the soul, not the body. Prudentius acknowledged a real divide between those who dwell in and out of the empire, but he suggested that the larger divide was between Christians and non-Christians. For Prudentius as for Jerome and Chrysostom, being Christian was the new marker of acceptable Roman identity.

**Rufinus**

Jerome’s caustic personality won him few friends, but it probably led indirectly to the writing of the greatest Latin ecclesiastical history for centuries. Rufinus of Concordia returned to Aquileia after a feud with Jerome had threatened his standing in Rome and Milan. Aquileia was a city of refuge under his patron and friend, Chromatius. While residing there, Rufinus translated the history of Eusebius and added two books of his own to the work. Without the invectives of Jerome at his heels, Rufinus might never have returned to Aquileia and thus been available to compose his *Ecclesiastical*

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66 *Contra Symmachum, II:*709.

67 Mark Humphries, “Rufinus’s Eusebius: Translation, Continuation, and Edition in the Latin Ecclesiastical History,” *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16 (2008), 146-152. Rufinus’s translation was the standard version of Eusebius through the middle ages and was used as a source by every other major historical writer in the fifth century (Orosius, Augustine, Paulinus, and Gennadius of Marseilles). The *EH* also holds the distinction of being one of the few known works of the period translated from Latin into Greek. It then was used as a source for Greek historians (Socrates, Gelasius and Mark the Deacon). Francis X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345-411): His Life and Works* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1945), 162-175.
History. A scholarly tradition based on the words of the ninth-century Byzantine Patriarch Photius exists which holds that Rufinus did not compose his two books of the history, but merely translated them from Gelasius of Caesarea. The idea persists even though no major scholar in the last fifty years has held to this position. Though Rufinus was largely a translator (no mean feat), he was fully capable of producing original works of his own when the time called for it.

Rufinus related in his preface that he translated and composed the Ecclesiastical History in response to the invasion of Alaric in 401. The work, he explains, was to be “a remedy by which ailing spirits may be diverted from the thought of impending evil and give their attention to something better.” Indeed the problem of the barbarians underlies the whole history. An invasion of barbarians that professed some form of Christianity seemed to pose both a physical and spiritual danger to Chromatius and Rufinus in Aquileia. Rufinus formulated a text which did not so much address the concerns as challenge the problem. Instead of a simple Roman-barbarian dichotomy, Rufinus introduced a Christian/non-Christian (or heretic) division of the world. The ferocity of the barbarians and the failure of Roman emperors had the same cause:

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69 Murphy, 160-164; Rohrbacher, 100-101; Thelamon, Païens et chrétiens, 18-21.

70 HE, preface.
insufficient conversion. Rufinus gave three examples of barbarian peoples converting to Christianity (always Nicene). In the first, two boys survived a shipwreck and were enslaved in Axum (modern Ethiopia). The connections with Roman merchants gave them status in the palace, and their influence led to freedom for Christians to pray “in the Roman way.” Athanasius ordained the elder brother as bishop to the people, and his efforts led to many conversions. The second story follows immediately in the text and relates the conversion of the Georgians. In this anecdote, a woman captive was able to perform miraculous healings. Her ability came to the notice of the king and queen, who believed and built a church. In both these cases, a Roman captive converted the royalty of a barbarian kingdom. A church was made and conversions followed. Priests were sent from the Roman Empire, but otherwise, no connection with any official Roman mission existed. The barbarian nations became Christian through the means of individual efforts, not any political conquest. These two national conversion stories were placed in Rufinus’s narrative amid the beginnings of the Arian crisis back in the empire. Rufinus contrasted the spread of Nicene Christianity beyond the borders of the empire with the internal division over the Arian crisis.

In the second original book, Rufinus only related one story of barbarian conversion, that of the Saracens. The queen, Mavia, attacked the empire in the 370s,

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71 Thelamon, Païens et chrétiens, 154-156.

72 He also expanded the original writing of Eusebius on the spread of the apostles to include Matthew and Bartholomew going to Ethiopia and India respectively. Humphries, “Rufinus’s Eusebius,” 159.

73 HE, X:9-10.

74 HE, X:11.

75 HE, X:1-6, 12-28, with the death of Arius in 14 (related in detail in chapter 3 of this work).
and forced the emperor, Valens, an Arian, to send a Nicene bishop to her people.\textsuperscript{76} In the narrative, the story follows immediately after an example of persecution of Nicene Christians by Arians under the power of the emperor.\textsuperscript{77} Valens, the emperor, died at Adrianople at the hands of the Goths because, according to Rufinus, he waited too long before he began “to redirect his military efforts away from the churches and toward the enemy.”\textsuperscript{78} Here, the Saracen barbarians under Mavia were presented as having a truer faith than the Roman emperor. The non-Nicene form of Christianity exhibited by Valens resulted in ferocity and an untamed spirit. Valens, the “half” Christian, exhibited insufficient conversion and a barbaric spirit. In this situation, the religious identity defined the ethnic identity, that is, proper religion made a person whole, while improper religion created a barbarian.

For this reason, Rufinus presented the Goths as the equal of Arian emperors, not a racially distinct people or the tool of God. Perhaps this is why he omitted Ulfila and Theophilus, both of whom led successful Arian missions.\textsuperscript{79} Rufinus’s answer to the problem of the Gothic invasion was complete conversion to Nicene Christianity. He used his stories of barbarians to suggest that complete conversion of a people must flow from power (i.e. good king or emperor leads to good conversion). Even if some Goths were Christian, they did not have the Nicene leadership or church structure to render the entire people peaceful. Barbarians could and would convert when offered the “true faith.” Ultimate conversion to Nicene Christianity would accomplish what no

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\textsuperscript{76} \textit{HE}, XI:6
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{HE}, XI:5.
\textsuperscript{78} \textit{HE}, XI:13.
\textsuperscript{79} Thelamon, \textit{Païens et chrétiens}, 149.
\end{flushleft}
emperor ever could—true peace. Rufinus used stories of barbarians to suggest that the power of the church was greater than that of the empire, and the conquest of the world would be accomplished by Christian captives, not victorious emperors.

Summary

These writers held various approaches to thinking about and presenting barbarians in their writings. Eunapius represents one end of the spectrum, the eternal juxtaposition of barbarians and civilization. Yet, even writers who professed a neutrality or more positive spirit towards barbarians, like Jerome or John Chrysostom, reiterated stereotypes about their ferocity and beastlike nature. For every writer, however, barbarians were an outside group representing potential: potential destruction or victory or salvation. How writers used barbarians, at what points, with what motivation, and to what ends is suggestive of each writer’s unique diagnosis of Roman ills at the beginning of the fifth century rather than actual barbarian actions or threats. The construction of barbarians reflects the attitudes of the writers on the subject of Roman identity. Barbarians were consistently used as a marker of what was outside and what was inside the acceptable limits of proper behavior. When barbarians were presented as good (e.g., in Prudentius or even in Eunapius’s mocking passage), they denoted those Romans who acted in such a way as to make themselves more barbaric than actual barbarians. And in many cases, barbarians set the limits of acceptable practice in the religious realm as well, presenting a contrast with persons who refused to acquiesce to “proper” action, whether Christian or non-Christian.

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80 Eusebius also trims the sections from Eusebius’s original related to Constantine. The Edict of Milan, for instance, disappears from Rufinus’s translation. The obvious conclusion is a relegation of the Roman empire in the triumph of the Christian faith. Constantine was no longer the savior in Rufinus’s version, a key difference from Eusebius which reflects the changes of the fourth century. Humphries, “Rufinus’s Eusebius,” 155.
Chromatius and the Gentes

Much like his contemporaries, Chromatius spoke about barbarians by drawing from classical tropes and using them as a definition for Roman identity. Like other Christian writers, Chromatius’s construction of Roman identity vis-à-vis barbarians reflected an identity which was now decidedly Christian for him. It is tempting to assume Rufinus’s position in the Ecclesiastical History to be Chromatius’s as well. After all, Rufinus wrote the work at the behest of Chromatius, while living under his supervision. More than one scholar has, if not substituted one’s view for the other, conflated their opinions. Chromatius’s sermons must be read on their own, yet it is useful to think of how Rufinus’s words provide context for Chromatius. The Gothic problem was ever present in the minds of the Aquileians after 378, though only one invasion during Chromatius’s tenure came by Aquileia (if we distinguish between Alaric’s Goths and barbarians armies under the control of western usurpers like Magnus Maximus). In this sense, the “barbarians” were much more of an abstract threat, always on the fringes of the empire, potentially destructive. People do not fear a normal death, they fear an extraordinary one, much like the fear of flying is far less justified than a fear of driving, but much more common. In that way, barbarians, representing a fantastical dread, always lingered as a fear, even before the gothic invasion. This fear gave the rhetorical deployment of barbarians extra potency. What Chromatius said about barbarians cannot (and should not) be used to draw conclusions about the nature of barbarians or the actual threat they posed. Rather, the manner in which Chromatius presented

81 Chauvot, 455, Thélamon, 23, 151-152.
barbarians, both as a terrifying danger and a marker of the unacceptable life, is the object of our study.

**Glimpses of barbarians**

Chromatius presented barbarians in two manners, much like Rufinus and Jerome: deadly and/or converting. Previous scholarship has largely focused on the first aspect, concerned with the political history of barbarian and Roman armies in the region during the time of Chromatius. While confirming that members of the Christian community in Aquileia experienced violence from barbarians but was never in systemic danger, scholars have tended to read Chromatius for direct words about barbarian actions and not for his use of them as a rhetorical trope. The most explicit words of Chromatius are those from sermon 16. In the wake of the invasion of Alaric and the Goths in 401, after stating that Jews and Pagans were joining Christians for Easter, Chromatius appealed to the community:

> Let us pray to the Lord with all our heart, all our faith, so that he may deliver us from all invasions of our enemies and all fear of them. He does not look at our merits but considers his own mercy. He condescended to deliver the children of Israel, not for their merits, but in consideration of his own mercy. Let him protect us according to his mercy and push back the barbarian nations (barbaras nationes).

Chromatius clearly acknowledged the fear in Aquileia, praying that God would treat the city as he had Israel, and fight for them against the barbarians nations. This theme was again echoed in a short passage from sermon 37. “Therefore, let us call on God with

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83 *Sermon* 16:4.
our whole heart and in all faith so that he might free us from all tribulations: famine, war, death, captivity, and from all danger. The threat of barbarians for people of antiquity was more than just invasion. It brought along hunger, famine, possible captivity. The armies that the Aquileians feared were no different than any other, yet the simple term "barbarian" seemed to coalesce all the frightening possibilities into one dreaded persona.

One other brief mention demonstrates the adaptability of barbarians and other common fears to religious language. In a sermon explaining the theological work of Christ, Chromatius compared barbarians with the devil and Christ with Rome. The captivity of people before their conversion was similar to those taken captive by barbarians. “For man had incurred the domination of the devil long ago, similar to barbarian captivity; man had abandoned his first master and been taken captive by a ruse of the enemy.” Barbarian captivity must have been familiar enough to his listeners to inspire fear. Just as the barbarians could raid a city and steal off with hostages, so the devil did the same with humanity. Yet just as hostages were often bought back, so Christianity offers the solution to the captive problem.

We are called redeemed by Christ rather than purchased, as the Apostle says: “He redeemed us by his blood.”…He procures that which he had and lost, he is said to redeem not to buy, for he redeems his own and redeems that which he already had. This is why Romans who have been freed from the captivity of barbarians by the paying of a ransom are not called bought but redeemed.

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84 Sermon 37:2.
85 Sermon 12:3.
86 Sermon 12:2. The internal quote does not seem to be from any particular verse. It is similar to Romans 5:9, Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14.
Just as people who are bought back from captivity are redeemed (redemere) not bought (emere), so Christ accomplished the same thing spiritually. The usage of barbarians in this spiritual sense made them placeholders for the devil. Clearly a negative connotation surrounded the notion of barbarians. They were feared and seemed a constant threat on the fringes of the empire. What is not clear from Chromatius’s writings is who exactly the barbarians were. Instead they were a trope primarily defined by their warlike and violent nature.

Yet Chromatius did not stop there. Much like Jerome and Rufinus, barbarians were not only violent beasts bent on destruction, but also potential fellow Christians. Barbarians were presented not as simply irreversibly violent, but lacking knowledge of God. Upon their conversion, a change of spirit also created a change in body and life, rendering the former terrors peaceable and pacific. The language Chromatius used sounds like the rhetorical excesses of other writers, because it was designed to convey not the facts, but the spiritual change which could only occur by the power of the (Nicene) church, not any power the empire possesses.

[The church] developed until it filled the entire world, not just the cities but the many nations. It is believed among the Persians, it is believed in India, it is believed in the entire world. It is neither the fear of sword, nor the fear of the emperor which has brought all these nations to adore Christ; rather faith in Christ has rendered them peaceful....When they came to the faith and confessed the name of Christ, no longer do the nations fight, for all acknowledge the one king of all, Jesus Christ. Under this king, there is no enmity between peoples; all of a common accord honor, adore and venerate him. It is for him that they lay down their wild passions and glory in his grace.87

According to Chromatius, the spread of the church was the only force able to subdue the barbarous nations. It is remarkable how much this reads like a passage from

87 Sermon 30:3.
Rufinus. The emperor was not portrayed as a strong enough power to counter the barbarians. It reads as a rebuke to those who would trust in an emperor or Roman army for safety. So while the words may reflect actual conversions happening beyond the borders of the Roman empire, it also accomplishes a pedagogical task in the structure of the sermon. The presentation of barbarians, the quintessential other, as being tamed not by a strong emperor but by an active church represents the new construction of Roman identity that rhetoric about the barbarians was being used for by Chromatius and Rufinus. Roman identity was portrayed as inextricability bound up with Christian identity, a reality that not even Eunapius, the most anti-Christian contemporary writer of Chromatius, could deny.

**Barbarians as Markers of Roman Identity**

In his words on the spread of Christianity to barbarians and the ‘nations’ more generally, Chromatius emphasized the knowledge of Christ as the transforming power which changes the temporal world. With this knowledge came access to peace. Crucially, Rufinus, Jerome, and Chromatius never presented barbarians as rejecting the preaching of Christ. In the passage above from Sermon 30, barbarians were made peaceful upon their reception of the knowledge of Christ. In this fact they did not differ from other peoples of the nations: “The faithless and sinful do not deserve to have our god as their god, him of whom they despise and ignore the faith and knowledge….But according to his favor and grace, he is revealed to those who guard his precepts faithfully.”

88 We see little here in terms of choice. For Chromatius as for Rufinus, conversion was suggestive of enlightenment, and access to the knowledge of Christ

was practically conversion. This approach to conversion which emphasized knowledge of god and the good seems drawn from the works of Origen.\textsuperscript{89} As discussed in chapter two and earlier in this chapter, Rufinus was the primary translator of Origen and provided Chromatius with numerous sources from which to draw.\textsuperscript{90} Chromatius certainly adapted the Alexandrian’s ideas to his own world. Chromatius’s adaptation of Origen on the subject of conversion suggested that people who sinned were simply ignorant, not evil.\textsuperscript{91} The remedy for this situation in which humanity finds itself is the spread of the knowledge of good, embodied in the person of Christ.

Of course, one great problem with this approach to thinking of the power of conversion remains. What about those who gain knowledge of Christ and reject it? It is from his presentation of barbarians that the construction of Roman identity springs. Chromatius constructed barbarians as a foil for those who have knowledge of good and choose to reject it. He never presented the nations (\textit{gentes}) but rather only the Jews as rejecting Christ. This contrast raises questions about the position of the Jews. How could they have knowledge of Christ (as Chromatius confirmed repeatedly, accusing them of knowing Christ was God and killing him still), and not believe? The contrast between those who were ignorant and violent and those who knew and were violent produced a moral judgment against the Jews. If they had never recognized God in


\textsuperscript{90} Megan Williams has published an article about the possibility of finding a lost commentary of Origen on Luke in Chromatius’s commentary on Matthew, a work which illustrates the close tie between the two thinkers well. Megan Williams, “Chromatius and Jerome on Matthew,” in \textit{Chromatius of Aquileia and His Age}, eds. Pier Franco Beatrice and Alessio Persic (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 193-226.

\textsuperscript{91} For Chromatius’s words on the issue of the eradication of sin via knowledge of god see: \textit{Sermons} 3:2, 3:8, 12:4, 12:7, 12:8, 14:1, 15:5, and 27:1.
Christ, they were innocent of deicide in Chromatius’s system, just like the ignorance of the barbarians. But whoever knew his culpability and still committed evil was guilty of a far greater crime. Thus, barbarians acted as a rhetorical accusation against the Jews. They were violent but did not know better, while the Jews rejected Christ, but knew better, according to Chromatius. By presenting the two groups side by side, he suggested that the greater threat to Aquileia and the Roman world lay not beyond the frontiers, but inside the city walls. Christian was practically synonymous with Roman in this construction of identity. For Chromatius, the lack of a Christian identity called Roman identity into question.

Chromatius’s sermons contain numerous instances of comparison between barbarians and Jews, both direct and indirect. Chromatius was most explicit about the differing knowledge in Sermon 33.

[W]e ought to accept what was said of the people of the nations [populo gentium] and of the Jewish people. In short, there was made a distinction between them which is: “He raised the helpless from the dirt and lifted the poor from the dung heap.” The man who is called ‘helpless’ has nothing; but the poor man is who seems to have something. And so in the ‘helpless man’ we recognize that the people of the nations are signified who altogether had nothing, because they received neither the prophets nor the law. But the ‘poor man’ is the people of the Jews who seem to have had something in the law and the prophets, the merits of the patriarchs and the grace of the judges. Yet the poor man lay in the dung heap because he laid with fleshly vices in the filth of sins and in the error of the nations. But the people of the nations, who we recognize were signified by the helpless man, laid in the dust because they used to worship idols of the earth and had no hope of heaven in the whole of the earth.92

The nations are those who had no knowledge of God prior to the spread of the church. The Jews, on the other hand, had numerous sources of knowledge of the good, yet rejected Christ. The contrast in the sermons suggests the superiority of the people of

92 *Sermon* 33:3. The internal quote is from Psalm 113:7.
the “many nations” to the Jews. Barbarians were made tame by a knowledge which the Jews willingly rejected, according to Chromatius. The barbarians became Christian while the Jews became more and more impious due to their “intentional ignorance” of the person of Christ. Chromatius used his construction of barbarians as converts to his religion to single out the Jewish community. Rufinus presented barbarians as properly Christian in contrast to Arians and Eunapius contrasted the proper piety of the Goth Fravitta with the actions of Christians. Chromatius compared the acceptance of Christian preaching by barbarians with the rejection of Christ by the Jews.

Chromatius commented on Psalm 14:1, “The fool has said in his heart there is no god,” by suggesting that the Jews embodied this verse in their denial of Christ. “[M]any fools lived in the past who did not believe in the existence of God or said they did not. Most of all, the prophet complains of the folly and infidelity of the Jewish people.” The unbelief of the Jews in Christ was their great failing for Chromatius. By this action, they separated themselves from the rest of the people of the nations. Barbarians, the people of the gentes, stood as more acceptable and more knowledgeable than the Jews in the sermons of Chromatius. Barbarians, already established as a primal fear for the people of Aquileia, presented a contradiction: Who was more dangerous, non-Christian neighbors or Christian invaders? Like a modern preacher warning about ‘moral lapses’ at a time of national crisis, Chromatius suggested that Jews were ultimately more worrisome than barbarians and used barbarians to signify to his congregation the potential danger.

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93 Sermon 9:1.
Chromatius was clear that the cause for the supplanting of the Jews by the gentes was the Jewish rejection, not a divine imperative. In a sermon on the life of Joseph as a type of Christ, Chromatius impressed on his listeners the narrative of barbarians recognizing Christ when Jews rejected him.

The Jews offered thirty pieces of silver for the Lord, the Ishmaelites twenty of gold for Joseph. The Ishmaelites paid more for the servant than the Jews for the Lord. The Ishmaelites respected in Joseph the image of Christ, the Jews had contempt for the truth which was in Christ. Therefore, the Jews offered a meaner price for Christ, for they placed a meaner price on the passion of the Lord.94

The Ishmaelites, barbarians for sure, were presented as having a greater respect for an image of Christ than did Jews for the real Christ. Chromatius used a prefiguring of Christ to express the inclusion of barbarians in sacred knowledge. Those who recognized Christ are to be respected, while those who rejected him brought judgment upon themselves. And the Jewish rejection was presented as unique. In the previous paragraph, Chromatius said, “The Ishmaelites who bought Joseph were carrying various spices with them in order to represent that the nations coming to faith would spread the diverse works of justice throughout the entire world.”95 Chromatius reinforced the point that barbarians would cease to be barbarians when the church comes to them. The narrative of the worldwide spread of the Christian religion continued to be juxtaposed with the rejection of the Jews.

The Christianization of barbarians made the Jews stand out as the ‘only’ non-Christian people. The rhetorical construction of barbarians as previously violent but tamed upon their reception of Christianity contrasted with the representation of the

94 Sermon 24:4.
95 Sermon 24:3.
Jews. The comparison suggested that the Jewish community, not the barbarian army, should be viewed as the antithesis of normalized Romanitas. Chromatius was re-drawing the traditional Roman-barbarian dichotomy as a Christian-Jew dichotomy. He contrasted the gentes with Jews in numerous other passages which would be redundant to reproduce here. Suffice it to say, he clearly presented a contrast between the infidelity of the Jews and the acceptance of the peoples. As the term gentes denoted barbarians more than any other group, the comparison, in the midst of a real crisis, seems designed to provoke greater outrage at the presence of Jews in the city. Like blaming hurricanes or terrorist attacks on homosexuality, Chromatius targeted a misunderstood minority group in an effort to explain the evil which had befallen the city and thereby provide greater legitimacy for his own church in the wake of the crisis.

One final example of comparison is worth drawing out. From a sermon on Good Friday, Chromatius explained that the reed which was placed in the right hand of Christ, mocking him for being a supposed king, stood for the gentes: “The reed, which is the people of the nations, is placed in the right hand of the Lord because he has in his left hand now the people of the Jews, who persecuted Christ.” The gentes are shown to be at odds with the Jews. Chromatius never advocated violence or social rejection of Jews in his sermons, but his words seem to hint at the impossibility of full Jewish participation in society. When the whole world looks to the church, instead of the empire or emperor, as its protector, who would protect the Jews? Using gentes, Chromatius hinged the future upon rejection or acceptance of Christ. The nations would recognize

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96 See: Sermons, 9.6; 12:1; 10:4; 32:3; 33:4, all of which provide direct contrasts between Jews and gentes.

Christ with the knowledge of God, which the Jews had already rejected. In all of this rhetoric, it is crucial to realize that Chromatius was reinforcing a narrative in which the Jews knew that Christ was God and chose to have him crucified despite their knowledge. This narrative, which had roots in the New Testament, developed over the centuries, alternately emphasizing the role of the devil or the ignorance of the Jews at different points. In his sermons Chromatius presented no third party urging or deceiving the Jews to action. Rather, he depicted the Jews as free moral agents with full knowledge of their actions. This development in thought, which would not come to full fruition until the later middle ages, represents a shift in standard anti-Jewish tropes. Some of the roots of a more modern form of anti-Semitism can be seen in the rhetoric which Chromatius gave voice to in these sermons. We cannot draw a red line from him to the 20th century, but in the broad progression of anti-Jewish rhetoric, Chromatius went places in his construction of proper Roman identity and the exclusion of Jews from not just religious but civic life which had not been explored before.

A note of caution is warranted here. It has been suggested in other places that anti-Jewish rhetoric of the period is really anti-Arian rhetoric in disguise. For many Christian writers, the rejection of the full divinity of Christ by the Arians was no different than the Jewish rejection of Christ. Several scholars have convincingly argued that Christian writers were attempting to claim that Arian Christians were not fully Christians but acting like Jews. The rhetoric was never directed at real Jews but was merely an

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attack on Christians who denied the full divinity of Christ. Chromatius could be doing something similar in his sermons. Yet for reasons developed in the previous (and following) chapters, Chromatius seems to have been interested in an actual Jewish community in Aquileia and not primarily in Arians. Arians no longer held any substantial presence in Aquileia, while Jews did. Yet even on this point, one must concede the possibility that Chromatius was painting with broad strokes in his rhetoric. The accusations of Christ denial could be intended for both Jews and Arians. His words could reach his listeners on multiple levels. They might understand the face value of Jewish rejection, but also realize that any sect of Christians who disagreed with Chromatius on the person of Christ was acting like a Jew. Yet here the “Jew” was already being identified as the antithesis of a full, respectable member of the community. In any case, it is certain that the rhetoric did the Jews no favors and ultimately was taken seriously by many Christians.

By using the term “barbarian” in this chapter I have attempted to reflect the nature of the dialogue at play in late antiquity. The various groups of people who entered the Roman Empire were not a concern of most Roman writers, Christian or not. Instead, “barbarians,” in an ill-defined sense, operated as markers of the other, the quintessential opposite to civilized Roma. How this other group acted defined what was right and wrong for the Romans. Attitudes toward barbarians were negative, but they always assumed the possibility of change, for the threat of a Roman losing his mores and turning wild was certainly possible. At the beginning of the fifth century, the issue of proper religious practice, be it traditional or a version of Christian, haunted the

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Century Syria (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2008). For a full discussion see chapter 3 of this work.
construction of barbarian (and thus Roman) identity. In his various references to barbarians, Chromatius presented them as new converts to the preaching of his religion. In a tradition stretching back to Tacitus’s *Germania* he constructed barbarian identity, as simple and virtuous. Proper Roman identity required acceptance of this knowledge of God. Anyone who rejected it, and Chromatius was clear that the most common offenders were the Jews, was an outsider in the community, rejecting his Romanness.
CHAPTER 5
“AN ABANDONED NEST”: JEWS IN AQUILEIA

In the summer of 391, Emperor Theodosius stopped in Aquileia on his journey back to Constantinople from Milan. While there he issued a law ordering the closure of all pagan temples throughout the empire. Chromatius must have been one of the first persons to hear the news propagated. It must have seemed a momentous occasion of victory for the fifty plus year old bishop. With the perceived threat of heresy having faded and the once imposing pagan religious structure disestablished, Chromatius should have felt confident in the position of Christianity in Aquileia and throughout the empire as a secure and stable bulwark, the sole arbiter between the human and the divine. Yet with the former obstacles successfully overcome, Chromatius aimed his venom at the oldest adversary of Christian writers, the Jews. Throughout his sermons, Jews and the synagogue emerge as the chief threat to the Christian community. As seen in Chapter 4, Chromatius consistently painted Jews as active opponents of the church, seeking to deceive and devour Christians. His juxtaposition of Jews with not just Christians but Romans was not an aberration, but a calculated project of alienation. His war of words against against the Jews reflected the attempt to end the diverse religious culture of Aquileia which existed at the end of the fourth century. More than just a rhetorical other, the Jews of Aquileia seem to have comprised an actual community which interacted regularly with Christians in the cosmopolitan city. Chromatius chose his words carefully to isolate the Jewish community in Aquileia and paint them as the last holdouts against an otherwise unifying religious wave.
Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity

The rhetorical use of Jews in antiquity has been well established. Almost every major Christian writer before Chromatius attacked Jews in his writings or sermons. Paul, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Origen, Tertullian, Eusebius and countless others maintained the rhetorical trope of Jews as guilty of deicide.1 The reasons for these attacks have been debated by scholars for years. As a rhetorical tool, the attack on Judaism served more than one purpose. While arguing for the superiority of Christianity over its older sibling, the rhetorical bombast served primarily to differentiate the religious community. But before exploring how Chromatius constructed the divide between these two groups, and more importantly to what ends, we must consider the possible functions of rhetorical assaults on Jews by Christians in antiquity. An examination of rudimentary ethnic and identity theory will lay the groundwork for considering how Chromatius discussed Jews and the Jewish community in his sermons.

Any discussion of ethnic theory must begin in 1969 when the social anthropologist Fredrik Barth proposed a now classic definition of ethnicity. He posited that the borders of groups were definitive. The area marked off might change, but the

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borders represented the continuity which preserved the notion of the group. Barth also separated culture from ethnicity, insisting that the two ideas did not overlap. He argued that ethnic identity is used to define a certain group’s sense of togetherness. Whether based on traditions, geographical proximity or shared origins, these notions need not be real so long as they are believed. Barth’s approach makes group formation a positive rather than negative act of creation. His view holds that to maintain its existence any ethnic group needs to defend its borders constantly. Without constant definition of “the other,” the self will cease to exist. Of course these definitions are often presented as fixed categories of kinship, blood, or descent. It is important to remember that kinship ties are constructed and accepted just as much as any “subjective” marker of identity like religious belief, clothing, or language.

While Barth’s approach has been influential, especially in the area of boundary maintenance (as will be seen in a consideration of Daniel Boyarin’s work), some of his work seems too dependent on modern, western notions of society. By separating culture and ethnicity, Barth preserved the modern notion of “religion” which Talal Asad has so vigorously argued against. Asad sees the assumption of the separation of sacred and secular, as in post-reformation Christianity, as problematic for the study of

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religion. While Asad is correct to note the difference in post-reformation Christianity, the idea of “religion” as a universal essence capable of moving from culture to culture dependent on its discourses of power and subjugation did not begin during the sixteenth century. This notion of “religion” can be traced back to the twin births of Judaism and Christianity. The addition of ethnic thinking and terminology to religious discourses formed conceptions of religion as a category which facilitated the possibility of conversion and exclusion.

Just as ethnic groups are constituted by borders and appeal to a common essence based on shared history and traditions, so the idea of religion is formed by a similar claim to “true faith.” The creation of “religion” is achieved by labeling hybrids and heresies which dialectically locate true essences, as evidenced by the process described in Chapter 3. Thus religion is essentialized in much the same manner as other constructs like “nations,” “ethnicities,” and “races.” As for the specific contrast between Judaism and Christianity, Daniel Boyarin has posited that the modern conception of “religion” came from the creation of difference between Christians and Jews in discourses of purity. Boyarin locates the development of Jewish religion in conjunction with the increasing Christianization of the Roman Empire. He holds that Jewish-Christians (a problematic hybrid conception) were the norm rather than the exception for the first two and maybe three centuries. The construction of essences (both Christian and Jewish) which defined each end of the spectrum followed an attempt to create social cohesion and difference through labels of heresy (minut in Hebrew). “The idea of race [or religion] shows itself to be highly dialectical; it only works

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when defined against potential intermixture, which also threatens to undo its calculations altogether.\(^6\) The very idea of “religion” is defined, according to Boyarin, not against other religions, but against hybridity. Hybrids threaten the essentialized definitions which only work when ‘pure essences’ are believed to exist. Positioning heretics between the two groups locates a center for each which is associated with “true” religion. Rowan Williams sees this process of labeling as a reaction of a group which has lost or abandoned a geographic or ethnic definition.\(^7\) Yet this definition is drawn too tightly from Christianity, accepting the universalizing missional claim which is unique to that religion. It need not be the only case in which heresy is posited.

We must next turn to the question of how Christianity and Judaism went about defining the other religion and thereby their own being. Naturally there is wide disagreement about the process and reality of the split between Judaism and Christianity. The debate hinges on questions of the ability to move between the two groups, their recognition of each other, and the relationship between rhetoric and reality. The traditional narrative of the division between Judaism and Christianity assumed an early split based on the expulsion of Christians from Jewish synagogues. Henry Chadwick suggested that the destruction of the temple in 70 AD ended any connection between the two groups and “emancipated” Christianity.\(^8\) This position mimicked the suggestion of Adolf von Harnack that the destruction of the temple ended any


relationship between Christians and Jews. The reality of the split seems to be confirmed by the clear definitional categories which existed in Ignatius’s letter of the early second century. More recently, numerous scholars have begun to question the nature of the split between Jews and Christians. Rather than a clear divide, scholars have begun to suggest that the two religions slowly parted from each other. The separation was probably definitive only by the beginning of the fourth century. Prior to that date, the two religions shared a culture, converts, ideas, and minority status. Each influenced the development of the other in a kind of symbiotic relationship.

Daniel Boyarin demonstrates that *logos* theology was prevalent in Judaism, Hellenism, and Christianity in the first two centuries. Christianity did not have a unique claim to the idea. Judaism had been in dialogue with the Hellenistic world since the third century BC. It is anachronistic to clearly divide ideas such as *logos* into Jewish or Hellenic arenas. Boyarin’s approach represents a correction of much scholarship on two fronts. First, the complexity of the ancient world must always be reasserted. Ancient texts attempt to paint stark boundaries between groups. The reality was far more fluid with people maintaining in balance multiple identities, even though writers such as Justin Martyr or Lactantius might paint this as impossible. Boyarin refuses to acknowledge differentiation between orthodox and heresy and so his range of

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10 Ignatius, *To the Magentians*, 10:3.

11 For a history of this shift in the scholarship see: Annette Reed and Adam Becker, "Introduction: Traditional Models and New Directions," in *The Ways That Never Parted: Jews and Christians in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Eds. Adam Becker and Annette Reed (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 4-16.

12 Boyarin, 55-57.
Christians is larger. He similarly denies these categories with respect to Jews, suggesting that there was considerable overlap between the two groups – overlap which Christian apologists and Jewish leaders attempted to whitewash. Second, the rebuttal of a Christian-Jewish division counters notions of Judaism as a static, ethnic based religion which has not evolved since the second century. Boyarin rejects notions of Jewish history which emphasize its uniqueness and tolerance. He sees this narrative as a foundational myth formed in later centuries to create hegemony.

Judith Lieu offers a slightly more tempered approach. She postulates that ‘identity’ is a construct based on the acceptance of a traditional or historical past. Of course, this history is constructed and shaped to clearly define borders. Indeed, the history of other groups is constructed as something to reject in self-definition—as Christians do with Jewish history. Lieu considers how Christians accepted both their name and their separation from Jews. She challenges the simplicity of this separation. Yet evidence from the ancient world (like the modern in fact) suggests that there was little actual separation between Jews and Christians. Indeed, the existence of supposed “Jewish Christians” marks the problem for scholars. Lieu rejects the hybrid label as it suggests that there was a true essence of both Judaism and Christianity which these persons combined. People existed in both camps simultaneously, just like people

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13 Boyarin, 28.
14 Boyarin, 197-200.
were Roman, Greek, Christian, and Jewish all at the same time. The only substantive divergence was one produced by labels of difference.

While Lieu focuses on the similarities, she also notes the rhetoric of difference which produced border lines. Indeed, Boyarin seems too quick to look for similarities and overlook the differences. While he is right that the reality on the ground was a convoluted amalgamation of religious practices for the average person, the border lines between the two religions (and really between three competing groups – Christian, Jewish, and pagan) were recognized. What Boyarin seems to neglect is the reality that individuals can—and did—hold more than one identity, identities that often were seemingly contradictory. The ability to hold conflicting positions which are turned on and off depending on the social situation has been well documented.\(^\text{17}\) If we accept the ability to hold multiple, conflicting identities, then people can move back and forth between church, synagogue and temple without necessarily seeing the three as either overlapping or undefined.

Upon closer examination, the religious culture of the Roman Empire lacked clear definition at the end of the fourth century. While church, synagogue and temple were unique locales with distinctive worldviews, rituals and leadership, people could and did move between them freely. Numerous early Christian writers attest to this fluidity. As early as the beginning of the second century, Ignatius of Antioch wrote in two of his six letters about Christians who attended the synagogue, worshiped on the Sabbath and

kept the law. “It is absurd to profess Christ Jesus, and to Judaize,” he wrote. “For Christianity did not embrace Judaism, but Judaism Christianity, so that every tongue which believes might be gathered together to God.” Whether his statement reflects a sect which had not fully separated from Judaism, or the intermixing of belief structures, the clear implication is that individuals were able to maintain mixed religious identities which did not fit into any single category, even in the face of opposition by church leaders. It seems that every major Christian leader wrote about the constant ‘problem’ of Christians attending synagogues and embracing Judaism. In the second century, Justin Martyr decried the fact that Christians visited synagogues. In the third century, Origen candidly admitted that his parishioners went to the synagogue by saying, “You bring that which you learned from the Jews yesterday into the Church today.” More than a full century later, the most famous record of Christians who attended synagogues and followed Jewish customs came in the form of a series of sermons by John Chrysostom while he served as a preacher in Antioch, only a year or two before Chromatius became bishop in Aquileia. Chrysostom complained that Christians venerated the holy days of the Jews, celebrated Easter according to the old means (pre-Nicaean) of computing (which rendered it more Jewish), and worshipped in the synagogue.

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18 To the Magentians 10:3. On the observation of the Sabbath see: ibid 9:1. On the issue of Christians keeping the law and preferring the circumcised to the uncircumcised, see Epistle to the Philadelphians, 6:1.

19 Justin Martyr, Dialogue with Trypho, 47.

20 Origen, Homilies on Leviticus, 5:8:3

21 John Chrysostom, Discourses against Judaizing Christians. For the celebration of Jewish festivals see: 1.2, 1.5, 3.4, 7.1. For the date of Easter: 3.3-4. For the honor accorded to synagogues see: 1:3-5. It should be noted that Chrysostom complains that Jews do not return the favor by worshipping in churches on Sundays (4.3).
While this tendency of Christians to attend synagogues has led many scholars to see the two religions as not fully separate until the fourth century, I would argue that simple intermixing does not mean that the religious structures were related. The late date of John Chrysostom’s diatribes suggests that separation of the religious structures was not the issue at stake. Rather, the cultural and potential spiritual benefits of attending both places of worship outweighed the potential threat of being in the wrong. A Christian had much more to gain through contacts within the community and greater spiritual satisfaction from attending the synagogue than he or she stood to lose in status at the church (where one could also attend and potentially reap the same benefits twice). Only later, following imperial prescript in the fifth century, did the synagogue become more of a risk than a potential benefit.22 Confirming this point is the fact that Christian writers from the second to fifth century report that pagans also attended synagogues. Defending Christians from the accusation of being innovators, Tertullian responded that pagans had assimilated the Jewish rituals and feasts.23 Pagans were always willing to accept another deity into their lives, and it seems that they were welcomed in the synagogue to respect the god of the Jews. Commodianus, a fourth-century poet, wrote:

What! Are you half a Jew? Will you be half profane? Whence you shall not when dead escape the judgment of Christ. You yourself blindly wander, and foolishly go in among the blind. And thus the blind leads the blind into the ditch. You go whither you know not, and thence ignorantly withdraw.... You go forth before the doors, and thence also you go to the idols.24

22 It is hard to fix a date for the cessation of this practice as various factors of geography and local custom were crucial. I would point to the act forbidding construction of new synagogues in 415 and the law against intermarriage of Jews and Christians from 388. Respectively: CTh XVI.8.22 and III.7.2.

23 Tertullian, Ad Nationes, 1:13:3-4.

24 Commodianus, Instructions, ANF Vol 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), XXXVII.
Further confirming the fact that pagans were apt to join Jews on the Sabbath are the words of Cyril of Alexandria in the fifth century. He noted that throughout Palestine and the Levant men were neither fully pagan nor Jewish but a mixture of both.\textsuperscript{25} Christians were not the only ones attracted to the synagogue. Pagans found the festivals and services beneficial. Combined with the increase of listeners in Christian services during the fourth century (persons attending Christian churches but declining to be baptized), and the rare anecdote of a Jew visiting a church, it seems that the religious culture of the late antique world was not clearly demarcated.\textsuperscript{26} People could and did move between religious communities seeking whatever benefits they could glean.

In short, it seems that Jews and Christians (along with pagans) coexisted in a religious culture where it was not unusual for members to comingle. While there was increasing definition between the religions (and their various sects), individuals could cross over these boundary lines as late as the beginning of the fifth century. And so at the time of Chromatius, it seems that Christians could often be found in synagogues. Pagans had been indulging in the occasional visit to synagogues for centuries and seemed to be maintaining the tradition with no need for change. And pagans and Jews would visit churches on Sundays. The presence of a person at the particular place of worship did not signify their adherence, merely their reverence. The convoluted religious culture of late antiquity, where pluralism still ruled, necessitated greater definition in the view of many church leaders. Their quest for purity was reflected in the anti-Jewish rhetoric which was so common during this period. Most famously, John Chrysostom

\textsuperscript{25} Cyril, \textit{On Worship in Spirit and Truth}, 3.92.3.

dwelt at lengths on the evil nature of the synagogue. Yet even there, his real target was not Jews, but Christians who attended synagogues. Chrysostom sought to provide definition for his listeners—listeners who might very well have included Jews. Chromatius, particularly in his well-attended sermons, sought to do the same. He attempted to separate the church from the synagogue, not just in terms of beliefs, but to separate the church from the entire basis of religious culture which permitted and implicitly encouraged the free movement of peoples between differing places of worship. If he succeeded, it would leave the church as the only game in town for anyone who cared about appearances in their religious practices.

**The Presence of Jews in Chromatius’s Sermons**

Chromatius mentions Jews in eighteen of his forty-two sermons, that is, in about forty percent of his sermons. On deeper analysis, however, Jews prove to be even more important. When identifying sermons according to their relationship to the liturgical calendar, ten sermons stand out as being from feast days like Easter or the Christmas-Epiphany season. References to Jews appear at a much higher rate in these sermons. The sermons fall into two clear groups associated with the Easter and Christmas seasons. First, sermons 14, 16, 17, 17a, 19 and 20 are clearly identifiable as paschal sermons preached either at the Great Vigil or during Easter Week. Secondly, a group of four sermons can be dated to the Christmas-Epiphany season. Sermon 32 is on the nativity of Christ and was probably preached at Christmas on December 25, a festival which began to be celebrated in Rome at the beginning of the fourth century and slowly

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27 Depending on the counting there are 44 or 45 sermons attributed to Chromatius according to J. Lemarié and R. Etait. I discount sermon 7 (it is a fragment of only 2 lines), sermon 42 (admittedly dubious according to the editors), and sermon 43 (also dubious). For this reason, I exclude them from the count.
spread eastwards by the end of the century.\footnote{On the celebration of Christmas in the fourth century see: Timothy Barnes, \textit{Constantine: Dynasty, Religion and Power in the Later Roman Empire}, (Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 85 Also Lemarié concurs in the probable festival origin of these sermons and their usage in Christmas celebrations. I agree both based on internal evidence and for another reason which will be mentioned below.} Sermons 21 and 22 are on the life of St. John the Evangelist. His feast day was celebrated in the west on December 28 from an early date.\footnote{Lemarié, "Introduction," 87.} Sermon 34 is explicitly about Epiphany and Christ’s baptism, perhaps reflecting the change which took place liturgically in Aquileia during Chromatius’s tenure.

In these ten sermons associated with feast days, Jews are discussed at length in six of them. While we might expect roughly the same rate as in the larger corpus, Jews appear in feast day sermons sixty percent of the time while in non-feast sermons thirty-nine percent of the time. Although this is a small sample size, it seems that Chromatius was more likely to use the Jews as a rhetorical device in his sermons on major feast days. This statistical oddity prompts the obvious question. Why might Chromatius have preached on the beliefs of the Jews and their supposed threat on the days that the Church was rejoicing in its greatest triumphs (Christmas and Easter)? The answer is multi-faceted and an excellent jumping off point for an examination of the relationship Chromatius describes between Judaism and Christianity in Aquileia at the beginning of the fifth century.

In the sermons associated with the festival of Easter, it is not surprising that Jews would be mentioned. Preaching on the passion of Christ naturally led to mention of the Jews based on the gospel narratives. Yet when he broached the role of Jews in the death of Christ Chromatius was fairly tame compared to his treatment of Jews in other
places in his corpus. Sermons 19 and 20, both on Good Friday, contain only passing references to Jews. In Sermon 19, Jews were mentioned as playing a role in the death of Christ, but their participation is not unique. Chromatius said, “The present reading of the gospel displays the injuries which our Lord and Savior suffered at the hands of the Jews and the Gentiles for the salvation of humanity.” Instead of blaming the Jews uniquely, Chromatius took pains to present Jews and Gentiles as equally responsible for the death of Christ. There is one other mention of Jews in the sermon, which Chromatius noted that Christ “has in his left hand now the people of the Jews who persecuted Christ.” This short statement stands as the only negative reference to Jews in the two sermons on the passion of Christ.

References to the Jews in the sermons from the Easter Vigil were also fairly tame by the standards of late antique authors and even Chromatius. Sermons 15, 16, 17, and 17a all come from the Easter Vigil, yet sermons 15 and 17a do not mention Jews at all. Sermon 17 contained references to the standard trope of the unbelief of the Jews and their crime of deicide. “[T]he Jewish people did not want to believe,” Chromatius affirmed, “and for this reason incurred death.” And again, “[The Sun] was covered by darkness, lest it be compelled to take part in the crimes of the Jews. The sun shuddered at the great crime of the Jews.” But even here, the rhetoric is short and not essential to the sermon. Chromatius did not dwell on the Jews or their actions. Perhaps even more surprisingly, sermon 16 has only one mention of Jews. Chromatius commented that

30 Sermon 19.1
31 Sermon 17.1
32 Ibid, 17.2
Although the Jews and even the pagans seem strangers to this celebration, they are not without joy, because they are conquered by a secret grace and goodness which comes from the name of Christ who reigns over everything. Many Pagans and Jews celebrate the festival of our vigil as their own even with glad hearts, if not with religious practices.\footnote{Sermon 16:3.}

Chromatius reported an astonishing fact here. Pagans and Jews were present in the Easter church service in Aquileia! Even though they were not converted, they joined in the festival of the night, remaining until the Eucharist along with the catechumens.

Based on what is known of late antique religious culture, it is certainly not surprising that non-Christians, particularly pagans, would join in a major religious festival. The fact that Jews would participate is remarkably and, frankly, questionable. While numerous records of Christians and pagans attending synagogues exist, the mention of Jews in a church is exceedingly rare. Besides a few occasional reports from the east, where the Jew was typically portrayed as heckling the preacher, Jews did not have an interest in Christian rituals. Chromatius’s words should not be taken as definitive proof of Jews in church. Yet, here, at the Easter vigil, he was uncommonly generous to Jews. He affirmed that they reap the benefits of Easter with glad hearts. He took pains to include both Jews and pagans in the festival.

Lest the reader begin to get the sense that friendliness to the Jews was normative for Chromatius, a quick glance through the non-Easter sermons reveals a rhetorical abuse which was frequent and brutal. Even in the other four homilies associated with festival days, Chromatius was not kind. In sermons associated with the Christmas season, Chromatius openly declared his appraisal of the Jews. Describing the events of Christmas Day, he preached:
But the Lord was placed in the manger, “because there was no place in the inn.” In the inn, the synagogue is signified for, prejudiced by the error of unbelief, it was not worthy to receive Christ into itself. But we rightly understand the inn to be the synagogue because just as the diverse races meet in the inn, so the synagogue has become the inn of all unbelief and all errors, and so Christ could never find a place there.  

The synagogue was identified not just with a rejection of Christ, but with an embrace of all other sorts of errors. The synagogue had nothing to redeem it from perfidy for Chromatius. Again from St. John’s day (Dec 28), he declared: “He intends…bitterness for the treachery of the synagogue, which did not want to receive the preaching of John.” A major theme on the treachery of the synagogue appears here, a theme which will reappear in seven other sermons.

In Lenten sermons, Chromatius was also venomous. He continued the theme of treachery, dwelling on the figure of Christ in Joseph from Genesis:

The Jews offered thirty pieces of silver for the Lord, the Ishmaelites twenty of gold for Joseph. The Ishmaelites paid more for the servant than the Jews for the Lord. The Ishmaelites respected in Joseph the image of Christ; the Jews had contempt for the truth which was in Christ. Therefore, the Jews offered a meaner price for Christ, for they placed a meaner price on the passion of the Lord.

Chromatius was not only vicious during Lent, but also at moments of great ritual importance like baptismal instruction and during fasts. The examples of such viciousness could go on and on. Of all the references to Jews in his 42 sermons, only two adopt a positive tone. Both appear in Easter sermons. In non-Easter sermons, Chromatius went to great lengths to expound on the useless nature of the synagogue,

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34 Sermon 32.3.
35 Sermon 21:3.
36 Sermon 24:4.
37 For baptismal instructions see Sermon 14. For Fasting see Sermons 3, 25 and 28.
the treachery of the Jews, and the adoption of the nations in their place. For some reason, however, Chromatius did not wish to insult Jews during the festival of Easter. It begs the obvious question: why was Chromatius nicer at Easter? While a conclusive answer is beyond our reach, three possible explanations come to mind.

First, Chromatius might have been responding to ritualized violence in the community which occurred against Jews around Easter. He may have wanted to tamp down violence in the community and not inflame passions which ran high during the commemoration of the crucifixion. Yet the earliest recorded example of violence at Easter time comes from Toulouse in 1018.\textsuperscript{38} Even though scholars believe this was not the first outbreak, the likelihood of the practice being six hundred years old without any comment stretches credulity. For all the rhetorical attacks on Jews in Christian writings and sermons, actual documented violence against Jews in the western half of the Roman Empire was extremely rare before the seventh century.\textsuperscript{39} In fact there is only one documented case in the west before the time of Chromatius. Ambrose admitted to Theodosius that some Christians in Rome burnt a synagogue in the 380s.\textsuperscript{40} Besides this, there is no record of violence against Jews in the West prior to 400.\textsuperscript{41} Shortly after Chromatius’s life, the Jews of Minorca were attacked by a Christian mob in an incident


\textsuperscript{40} Ambrose, \textit{Ep.} 40:23. The issue of the synagogue in Aquileia is dealt with in the next section. As I am not including it here, I obviously do not count its possible burning as an incidence of violence.

\textsuperscript{41} The record for the East is not particularly long either pre-400. Lellia Ruggini, \textit{Ebrei e Orientali nell’Italia Settentrionale fra il IV e il VI Secolo D.Cr.} (Rome: Pontificale University, 1959), 205-208.
which is remarkable for both its violence and uniqueness.\textsuperscript{42} Nothing else like it is recorded from antiquity. In fact, several scholars write about the relative calm which reigned in late antique urban cities. Paula Fredriksen explains the heightened rhetoric against Jews in patristic discourse against a backdrop of generally peaceful mundane interaction:

\begin{quote}
It would be a mistake…to see [Christian leaders’] condemnations as a reliable measure of the actual separation of these communities or as an accurate index of a more general hostility. On the contrary: the vitality of habitual contacts, both social and religious, between Christians and Jews…probably accounts for much of the shrillness and the obsessive repetitiveness of patristic invective.\textsuperscript{43}
\end{quote}

Based on the general scarcity of evidence of violence in Italy in Chromatius’s day, and the absence of any other evidence in his sermons of violence in Aquileia, it is safe to say that his tempering of abuse to Jews at Easter was not related to the threat of violence.

The second possible explanation assumes that Chromatius accurately reported that Jews attended the Easter Vigil and responded to their presence by attempting to convert them. This possibility is strengthened by the evidence of one Peter the Jew. An epitaph found in a chapel in Grado (the port of Aquileia, about 4 miles from the city center and under the diocese of Aquileia) reports that the deceased had converted from Judaism. The epitaph reads:

\begin{quote}
Here rests Peter, also called Papario, son of Olympius the Jew, and the only one of his race who deserved to reach the grace of Christ. In this holy
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{43} Fredriksen, \textit{Augustine}, 101.
building he was buried worthily on July 14th in the fourth year of the indiction cycle.\textsuperscript{44}

The inscription has been dated to the first half of the fifth century, based on the construction of the church and the dating system.\textsuperscript{45} While certainly not representative of the wider Jewish community, it does suggest that conversion of some Jews to Christianity was not unknown. Given the close proximity and date of this inscription to Chromatius’s episcopate, it is entirely possible that the language employed at Easter, while not completely devoid of vitriol, was noticeably more collegial in an attempt to convert the Jews attending the Christian services around Easter.

The problem with this theory is that in several of his own sermons Chromatius suggests the impossibility of Jewish conversion. If he was so concerned with trying to convert Jews that he tempered his language at Easter, why did he suggest at other points that Jews were hopelessly lost and could not partake in the grace of baptism? Commenting on baptism, he explained, “In fact the Gentiles came and were cured; the Jews there did not want to come: thus they remain in perpetual disease.”\textsuperscript{46} He confirmed the Jewish rejection of baptism later in the same sermon saying “only the Jewish people refused…the benefit of such waters.”\textsuperscript{47} And lest the reader think that Chromatius only dealt with historical Jews, he went to great lengths to connect the Jews of the Bible with the Jews of the modern synagogue for his listeners. In sermon 13, he clearly affirmed:

\textsuperscript{44} David Noy, \textit{Jewish Inscriptions of Western Europe: Volume 1: Italy (excluding the City of Rome), Spain and Gaul} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 13.

\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Ibid}, 14.

\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Sermon}, 14:1.

\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Sermon}, 14:3
[I]t was not the walls of the city which killed the prophets, or stoned him who had been sent, but the people of the synagogue. It is they who killed the prophets long ago and they who stoned the just. But perhaps they say the Jews now are not responsible for the blood of the prophets or the death of the just because they were not there at that time. But when they do not believe the words of the prophets or the just about Christ, then it is like they are now stoning the just and killing the prophets.

Chromatius explicitly stated that the Jews of the synagogue in Aquileia were just as responsible for the death of Christ and the prophets as the Jews of the Bible. His approach broke down the wall between rhetorical Jews based on biblical accounts, on the one hand, and the friends and neighbors in Aquileia, on the other. If Chromatius was trying to convert Jews listening to his sermons, it was a rare occasion and certainly not in keeping with his usual approach.

Finally, this second explanation leads to a third related possibility. As previously documented, the urban religious environment of late antique Aquileia allowed for movement between places of worship. It may be that Chromatius, while not always friendly to Jews, respected their presence in Aquileian religious culture to a point, in keeping with Roman traditions. A shared religious culture was a marker of Roman urban life. Certainly pagans and perhaps Jews participated, if only in a limited manner, in major Christian festivals. It is certain that Christians did the reverse. They attended the synagogue and participated in the feast of the Kalends. Perhaps Jews, though certainly at a lesser rate than Christians, also participated in other religious celebration in Chromatius’s Aquileia. Based on other evidence from the sermon, it seems likely that Sermon 16 may date from the Spring of 402 when the city had just survived an attack

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by Alaric the Goth and his army.\textsuperscript{49} If this was the case, pagans, Christians and Jews may have sought the help of each other’s gods in face of a perceived existential threat. When death was on the line, the source of salvation mattered less than the possibility that it existed. The Jewish community of Aquileia was part of the same culture and shared the same concerns and approaches to religious life as all other citizens of the city.

\textbf{Jews in Aquileia}

Attempting to trace the presence of Jewish groups in late antiquity is difficult. While we can be reasonably certain that Jews were living and worshipping in Aquileia throughout the fourth century, attempting to estimate their numbers or influence is more difficult. The accepted narrative suggests that Jewish spread throughout the Empire roughly coincided with the spread of Christianity.\textsuperscript{50} Yet one exception is found in Aquileia from the first century BC. An inscription records a Jewish freedman named L. Aiacios Dama who worked in the customs house.\textsuperscript{51} Despite the early arrival of Jews in Aquileia, however, few records of Jewish life survive, just as in most of the rest of the West. The seminal work on the subject, Lellia Cracco-Ruggini’s \textit{Ebrei e Orientali nell’Italia}, offers far-reaching evidence, both textual and archeological, for the existence

\textsuperscript{49} At the end of the Sermon 16 he says, “Let us pray to the Lord with all our heart, all our faith, so that he may deliver us from \textbf{all invasions of our enemies} and all fear of them…May he push back the barbarian nations, and operate in us what Moses said to the children of Israel: “The Lord fights for you, and you remain silent.” He fights, and He conquers. If he has pity and he forgives our sins, not according to our merits, but according to his clemency, it is because he is accustomed to mercy even to the unworthy. So that he deigns to do this, we ought to pray as much as we can. For he said through the prophet: “Call upon me in the day of tribulation; I will deliver you and you will praise me.” Sermon, 16:4. See Chapter 4 for background on this sermon and more on a possible link between Jews and Barbarians in Chromatius’s rhetoric.


\textsuperscript{51} Noy, 11-13.
of extensive Jewish communities throughout Northern Italy in the fourth century and after. She links Jews to trade networks and follows the standard archetype of the merchant Jewish trader.\textsuperscript{52} The work may very well suffer from its proximity to anti-Semitic rhetoric of the early twentieth century, as she assumes that Jewish wealth would have provoked Christian envy and incited preachers to inflame religious devotion into pogroms. More recent scholarship has tended to interpret anti-Jewish rhetoric of Christian leaders as limited to rhetoric and not necessarily reflecting actual violence.\textsuperscript{53} Cracco-Ruggini herself has pulled back from her mid twentieth-century interpretation of violence, but she maintains some ultimately questionable positions on the existence of a synagogue in Aquileia.\textsuperscript{54}

The question of the synagogue in Aquileia is wrapped up in larger Jewish and imperial issues. The point of agreement for scholars seems to be that there was a synagogue in Aquileia in the fourth century. Beyond this, the issue is hazy. A tradition exists that the synagogue burned to the ground in 388 while Ambrose was in Aquileia to consecrate Chromatius as bishop of the city following Valerian’s death on 26 November.\textsuperscript{55} A sixteenth-century author of a chronicle of Aquileia and its surrounding region wrote that the places of the Jewish synagogue in Aquileia had been burnt on the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[\textsuperscript{52}] Ruggini, \textit{Ebrei e Orientali}, 236-241.
\item[\textsuperscript{53}] On the rhetoric of violence between Jews and Christians see: Lieu, \textit{Image and Reality}, 250; Fredriksen, \textit{Augustine}, 79-104.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
orders of Ambrose. In this version, Ambrose was at the head of a Christian mob he whipped up to destroy the synagogue. While this is a wonderful story and especially interesting given the situation in Europe in 1521, the actual historical value for a study of fourth century Italy rather than sixteenth century Venice strains the limits of acceptable evidence. Suffice to say, the actual evidence is more limited. We do know that Ambrose was in Aquileia in 388, presumably to consecrate Chromatius (a fair leap of faith in itself). While in Aquileia, Ambrose received word of the destruction of the synagogue in Callicinum and the punishment imposed on the bishop of that city. Ambrose composed two letters while in the town, most notably the letter to Theodosius asking that the punishment be rescinded. In the midst of this letter, Ambrose asks that the emperor punish him for burning a synagogue “here.” On this lone adverb, the debate turns. Cracco-Ruggini holds that Ambrose is literally confessing to leading a mob to destroy the synagogue in Aquileia in accordance with the legend. The issue of synagogue destruction may have been related to the imperial politics of the moment as well. Theodosius himself may have been in Aquileia at the time, having just defeated the western usurper Magnus Maximus. In one letter Ambrose refers to Maximus as becoming a Jew, and some scholars have taken this statement as a suggestion that


57 Based on Ambrose Ep. 40 and 41. For more on the relationship between Ambrose and Chromatius, see Chapter 2.

58 Ambrose, Ep. 40.8

59 Ruggini, Ebrei, 200.

60 Maximus was killed in Aquileia by Theodosius’s army on August 28 of 388. Cf. Zosimus, 4.44-46; Orosius, 7.35.1-5; Theodoret, 5.15.
Maximus was closely associated with Jews and surmised that in the wake of Maximus’s defeat, synagogues were vandalized due to this association. In this reading, Theodosius’s own soldiers might have destroyed the synagogue in Aquileia following his nearby victory over Maximus.

Neil McLynn, however, reads the passage as an extended metaphor, in which Ambrose was associating himself with the church everywhere. McLynn suggests that no actual violence took place, and indeed, most scholars tend to agree. Beyond the destruction of a synagogue in Rome in the 380s and possibly the actions of Bishop Stephen in Minorca in 418, no violence against Jews is recorded in the western half of the empire during this period. It is also possible to read Ambrose’s letter as suggesting that the synagogue in Aquileia was burned as an “act of divine providence.” In this reading, Ambrose asked Theodosius, quite impudently, why he should not be punished for being in town when this happened. Again, this reading is interesting, but it does not follow the tenor of the letter clearly. Cracco-Ruggini’s conclusion about the destruction of the synagogue is problematic, no matter what legends written in sixteenth-century Venice say.

So what are we to conclude about the presence (or lack thereof) of a synagogue in Aquileia during the tenure of Chromatius? I agree with McLynn that Ambrose did not take part in any synagogue destruction. It follows from the commercial trade and the

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61 For Ambrose’s letter: Ep. 40.23. “Was it not the very reason why Maximus was abandoned, that before he set out on his expedition, hearing that a synagogue had been burnt at Rome, he sent an edict thither, acting as if he were the guardian of public order. Wherefore the Christians said, ‘No good awaits this man. That king is become a Jew, and we have heard of him as a protector of order.’” On the pro-Jewish character of Maximus see: Lellia Cracco-Ruggini, “Il vescovo Cromazio e gli ebrei di Aquileia,” in Aquileia e l’Oriente Mediterraneo, AAAd 12 (Udine: Arti Grafiche Friulane, 1977), 365.

epigraphic evidence of Ruggini and Noy respectively that a sizable Jewish community
thrived in Aquileia. Even if the synagogue did burn as a result of natural circumstances,
there is no reason to conclude that it was not rebuilt or that the Jews ceased to meet
during the tenure of Chromatius. He most clearly uses the synagogue as a reference for
the Jewish community, not the physical building, in Aquileia, just as one would use the
term church to connote the corporate group of people defining themselves as
Christians, even if they met in a house or other building. Based on the presumed size of
Aquileia and the evidence previously cited, one would reasonably expect to find a
synagogue in Aquileia in the 390s.

**Anti-Jewish Language in Chromatius’s Sermons**

Use of the synagogue as a substitute for the Jewish religious community was of
course a common rhetorical device in antiquity. Chromatius devoted significant attention
to the synagogue as the former home of the chosen of God. In one of his more creative
allegories, he described the synagogue as an abandoned nest, her chicks the prophets
and apostles taken by Christ:

This noble traveler, when he was in the body of our flesh, went along the
road of this world, and finding a bird with chicks in the nest, which is the
synagogue in the nest of the law with its children, took the chicks and left
the mother….Hence we read what is said in the psalms: “The sparrow has
found its home and the dove its nest, where it might lay her young.”63 We
understand the house to be the church and the nest the synagogue. The
nest is a temporary thing, just as the synagogue had grace for a time, so
long as it had with itself in the nest the little ones, which were the prophets
and apostles. But when they were withdrawn from the nest by Christ and
given to his bride, which is the church, the synagogue was left as an
abandoned nest.64

63 *Psalms* 84:3
64 *Sermon*, 1:2.
Chromatius was clear in his super-sessionist ideology: the church replaced the synagogue as the home of true worship. Chromatius did not suggest here that the replacement was the result of error or unbelief on the part of Jews (though he certainly did elsewhere as the following pages show). Rather, it was the temporary nature of the nest itself. The synagogue was never meant to be permanent. It was always merely housing the prophets and apostles temporarily until Christ came. Grace came from the saintly inhabitants rather than from proper behavior or belief. This approach clearly follows from other religious beliefs about “saintly contagion,” such as that found in the cult of the martyrs. The saintly contagion was so strong as to even extend grace to the synagogue for a time. Yet after this manner of grace was removed by Christ, the synagogue was left as an abandoned nest, no longer serving any purpose.

With the withdrawal of the individuals who imparted God’s favor, the synagogue was left empty to be filled. In the place of the saints, their opposites filled the void according to Chromatius. Speaking of the inn from the nativity story which was too full to give space to Mary and Joseph, Chromatius suggested that the inn which refused Christ was a type of the synagogue. “But we rightly understand the inn to be the synagogue because just as the diverse peoples meet in the inn, so the synagogue was made the inn of all unbelief and all errors, and thus Christ could never find a place there.” Instead of remaining empty, Chromatius identified the synagogue as the new home of all errors. More than simply unbelief, the synagogue perpetuated errors of belief and practice. Set in juxtaposition to the nations of the world, Chromatius portrayed the

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66 *Sermon, 32:3.*
synagogue as being a home to every former error of religion when the nations abandoned their idols for faith in Christ and the church. The errors of the diverse peoples (gentes in the Latin) are not erased from the earth but transferred into the synagogue. Chromatius would return to the comparison between the Jewish community and peoples outside the Roman Empire on numerous occasions, with Jews always on the wrong end of the comparison.67

While Chromatius described the synagogue as a home to errors of belief, he did not indulge in any of the common slanders on Jews for their debauchery and immorality.68 It is easy to miss what Chromatius was not doing in the midst of his attacks on Jews, but he did not connect Jews with sexual impropriety, evils lusts, love of sin, or the like in his sermons. While it is impossible to prove that he never did this, his sermons stand in stark contrast to those of other contemporary preachers. Most notable and useful for this purpose is the work of John Chrysostom. Preacher in Antioch from 386-388, his sermons are roughly contemporary with those of Chromatius. His preaching on the topic of Jews and Christians who attended synagogues has been called, “the most horrible and violent denunciations of Judaism to be found in the writings of a Christian theologian.”69 Chrysostom impugned the synagogue for drunkenness, gluttony, dancing, greed, and being a home to both prostitutes and

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67 For more on this theme of the juxtaposition of the Jews to the soon to be converted barbarians (nations) see Chapter 4.


effeminate men.\textsuperscript{70} Of course, these accusations were common ones used against any opponent. Chrysostom accused the emperor Julian and heretics of many of the same vices. These rhetorical blows were part of a stock dramatic invective in antiquity, not only used by Christians.\textsuperscript{71} Yet the commonality of the attacks makes it all the more remarkable that Chromatius did not employ them. He did mention the unbelief, the rejection, and the problematic nature of Jews, but he never presented them as morally inferior. Their sub-status within Aquileian society rested on the split in the religious community, not on their sinful practices. He did, however, maintain one long held trope about Jews: their active persecution of Christians.

Continuing the theme of the evil of the synagogue, Chromatius developed one of the most common patristic tropes, that of Jews as persecutors.\textsuperscript{72} Relating the story of Elijah, he said, “Elijah, who suffered persecution at the hands of that most evil woman, Jezebel, stood for a type of the Lord, who suffered persecution by the synagogue, a sacrilegious woman.”\textsuperscript{73} While continuing the Christ-killer motif, the accusation also tied the synagogue into a history of persecution of Christianity. Thus, Chromatius portrayed the opposition between the two religious communities as emanating from the Jews, not the Christians. He continued the rhetorical pattern with a long diatribe against the Jews.

\textsuperscript{70} Wilken, 118-123.


\textsuperscript{72} This trope appears as far back as the New Testament (Acts 12:1-3; 2 Cor. 11:23-26; Gal. 4:29). Later writers such as Justin Martyr (\textit{Dialogue with Trypho}, 133), Tertullian (\textit{Scorpiace}, 10), and Origen (\textit{Contra Celsus}, 6:27) perpetuate it. Modern scholars are disinclined to believe that there was widespread persecution of Christians at the hands of Jews. See: Judith Lieu, \textit{Image and Reality}, 180 and 281.

\textsuperscript{73} Sermon, 25:4
But what was unique in this instance was that he connected current Jews inhabiting Aquileia with those of the biblical past:

After many rebukes which he had made of the impiety of the scribes and Pharisees, our Lord and Savior said..."Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kills the prophets and stones those who were sent to you." That which is rebuked here under the name Jerusalem is not the walls of Jerusalem, but the inhabitants of the city, or rather the synagogue of the Jews, which is very often called Jerusalem. For it was not the walls of the city which killed the prophets, or stoned him who had been sent, but the people of the synagogue. It is they who killed the prophets long ago and they who stoned the just. But perhaps some say the Jews now are not responsible for the blood of the prophets or the death of the just because they were not there at that time. But when they do not believe the words of the prophets or the just about Christ, then it is as if they are now stoning the just and killing the prophets....Thus we are right to say, even today we see the Jews persecuting the just and killing the prophets since they do not believe the words of the just and the prophets about Christ.  

Taken together, these two passages from two different sermons provide a picture of the approach Chromatius took to the synagogue. He tied the synagogue to nefarious characters in the Bible but also affirmed that they practiced the same treachery in the present day. The suggestion that Jews actively persecuted Christians both throughout history and in the present would have served Chromatius’s aim of ending the religious culture of antiquity which was built on a modicum of toleration for difference, if not an embrace of it. How could a believer visit a synagogue if the synagogue was trying to persecute his religious community? Even if it did not reflect reality, the trope of persecution, which Chromatius repeated here, aimed to further divide the two religious communities.

In the same vein, Chromatius attempted to make clear to his listeners that the synagogue could not be compared to the church. “The synagogue of the Jews cannot

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74 Sermon, 13:1. The internal quote is from Matthew 23:37.
be called the church, because it refuses to believe in the incarnation of Christ from a virgin and to hear spiritual preaching.” Just in case any of his listeners might visit the synagogue (as was probably the case), Chromatius made clear that the two institutions were not the same. Yet his need to make this statement reflects the reality that some maintained the two were indeed compatible, if not even the same. To prove his point about incompatibility, all that Chromatius had to fall back on was the unbelief of the Jews. Unbelief—a willing unbelief it should be noted—is the single most common theme in all Chromatius's references to Jews. The fact of Jewish unbelief in Christ's divinity should have been no surprise to Chromatius’s listeners. He contrasted the unbelief of the Jews with the opposite response he desired to summon from his listeners: “So by not wanting to believe in this life [which is Christ], the Jews incurred death; but we ought to believe in him so we can evade death.” Chromatius presented the Jewish rejection of Christ as the antithesis of the church. This willing rejection was portrayed as a knowing choice of death as opposed to the church’s stand. And while Chromatius

75 Sermon, 30:1.

76 Sermon, 17:2.

77 Some scholars have suggested that the label of ‘Jew’ when combined with a focus on unbelief in Christ, may have been related to Arianism or other Christian groups which were labeled heretical. In this way, the group was identified with the primary anti-thesis of the church, the synagogue. See: David Brakke, “Jewish Flesh and Christian Spirit in Athanasius or Alexandria,” Journal of Early Christian Studies 9 (2001): 478. I do not believe that this was the case in Aquileia. Arians and other ‘heretical’ groups seem to have vanished or dwindled to negligible numbers in Aquileia by the time of Chromatius. And unlike Milan, there was a sizable Jewish community in Aquileia. Thus, I think it is safe to conclude Chromatius is concerned with Jews and not other Christians. See Chapter 3 for the explanation. For a contrary view see Thelamon, “Les vaines illusions”, 97-114.

78 The evolution of the portrayal of Jewish unbelief in patristic sources is the topic of Elaine Pagels’ excellent work, Origin of Satan. Pagels demonstrates a shift in rhetoric from the New Testament to later writers which slowly assimilates the Jewish rejection with the work of Satan. Rather than being deceived or ignorant about the nature of Christ, the Jews were portrayed as willingly committing deicide. Since Chromatius never mentioned the devil and Jews in close proximity, let alone as deceiving them into deicide, it is safe to place him towards the end of the continuum.
mentioned the unbelief of the Jews at numerous other points in his sermons, I will pass over most of them and move to one particularly interesting aspect of their unbelief.\(^{79}\)

In the sermons of Chromatius, the unbelief of the Jews was presented in stark contrast to the belief of the nations. In one sermon that typified this contrast Chromatius remarked, “While the Jewish people were questioning and doubting the coming of Christ, the Gentiles came before them and received the first healing; they who were first in healing, became first in the faith.”\(^{80}\) Laying aside the wondrous fact that the first Christians were apparently Gentiles and not Jews, Chromatius placed the Jewish rejection of Christ into a context where they are isolated from the rest of humanity. If Jews do become Christian, it is after the fact, behind the Gentiles, resulting in a world which is dominated by Christians while the Jews are relegated to second place status. This particular sermon was on the pool of Bethsaida, which Chromatius turned into an allegory for baptism. Immediately prior to his previous statement contrasting the precedence of Gentiles in healing and faith with the unbelief of the Jews, Chromatius explained:

The water of the pool of Bethsaida was only able to heal once a year while the grace of baptism of the church runs each day, overflowing each day through the kings, races, and innumerable people of the nations who enjoy its gift. Only the Jewish people refused to acknowledge the benefit of such waters.\(^{81}\)

The waters of baptism, which the Jews rejected, according to Chromatius, had washed every other person on earth including, most notably, the kings of those nations. The rhetoric served to suggest that the Jews are excluded not only from the salvation of the

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\(^{79}\) For the other references see: *Sermons*, 1:3, 4:4, 9:1, 9:2, 13:1, 14:3, 17:1, 17:2, 27:2, 32:4.

\(^{80}\) *Sermon*, 14:3.

\(^{81}\) *Ibid.*
Christian religion, but also from association with the established power structure. Chromatius's rhetorical representation of the unbelief of the Jews would have separated them from the rest of the world. Yet the emphasis on baptism would also recall the recent baptism of those listening. This sermon was delivered during the week following Easter and was intended primarily for those who had been baptized on the previous Sunday. The sermon served as an explanation of the ritual which had just taken place to those who had gone through the waters. In short, Chromatius was not merely suggesting that the Jews believed differently, but that they were now divided by a ritual wall.

**Jews and Ritual**

Far more than belief, rituals define and bind a community. Rituals serve to express the nature of group identity. The act of designating insiders and outsiders shows how rituals can function as a creative exercise of power. And the repetition of the calendar with its rites reinforces the initial act of adherence to a community, deepening the connection. Rituals serve to mark important occasions and provide deeper meaning to otherwise mundane events. Rituals often act as signifiers of important social or cultural beliefs. In particular for Aquileia, it is worth noting the festivals of Easter and Christmas along with the rituals of baptism and fasting. All of these followed a set calendar, a calendar which was becoming more and more controlled by the church. Robert Wilken expresses this tension in *John Chrysostom and the Jews* when he says:

> Few things are more important to religious life than the calendar and the celebrations of festivals on the proper dates…This is why the debate over

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82 This theme will be continued and expanded as the subject of the following chapter.

the date of Easter in the early Church was not simply a minor dispute over calendar. It was a dispute about religious and communal identity….Conflicting religious ideas may be able to coexist alongside of one another, and often do, but religious practices, by their very nature, force a choice.\(^\text{84}\)

Rituals follow an established course of time which provides the participant a link both to the historical community and to the natural world. Yet they do more than simply mark time or express conceptions of the world. Rituals identify those inside and outside of the group. Ritual action is not merely a symbolic expression of deeply held beliefs but a productive process designed to generate new self identities.\(^\text{85}\) By participating in rituals, that is acting, receiving and watching, the participant internalizes a conceptual framework which surrounds and gives meaning to the ritual. Catherine Bell notes that, “In [fasting and feasting rites] people are particularly concerned to express publicly—to themselves, each other, and sometime outsiders—their commitment and adherence to basic religious values.”\(^\text{86}\) This internalization of the ritual results in the formation of new identities based in the community. The ritual functions both as a creative act and as an exercise of the power of the religious community in its labeling of good and bad, inside and outside.

We can see the power of rituals at work in Aquileia during the Lenten season when Christians were fasting and at Easter when baptisms were performed. Yet both of these occasions were bound up with Jewish festivals. Fasting was inherited from the

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84 Wilken, *John Chrysostom*, 77-78.

85 I am greatly indebted to Talal Asad for this formulation. See: Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, 63.

Jews, and many Christian fasts mirrored Jewish fasts.\textsuperscript{87} Thus, members of both communities were fasting at the same time. Likewise, Easter was always close to Passover, though the dating by this point had changed so that they could never fell on the same day.\textsuperscript{88} When Chromatius was bishop, both religious communities were celebrating their festivals during the same week. The close proximity of rituals, not only demonstrated the religious culture of late antiquity was shared between Jews and Christians, but also occasioned an opportunity to use ritual to create separation between the two groups.

To continue on the topic of baptism, Chromatius connected Jews to Christian baptism in several instances. He did not do so with heretics, pagans, or any other group. Baptism, the ritual of belonging within the Christian community, was placed in stark opposition to the rejection of the Jews. As seen in the sermon cited above, Chromatius contrasted the Jews with those eager to receive healing. While belief remained an abstract idea, never perfectly defined, the action of the ritual could not have been ignored by those who just underwent it or witnessed it. Chromatius connected the baptism which these new congregants had just undergone (and the witnessing of it by those who had previously been baptized—an important part of the ritualized drama) with the resistant nature of the Jews. Thus, Chromatius used baptism to create even greater difference, a difference which was more tangible than a simple description of unbelief.


The contrast between Jews and Christian baptism is continued in another sermon entitled “On Alleluia.” Chromatius developed an allegory contrasting the church and the synagogue as child bearing women:

For a long time the synagogue had a husband, which was the law that ruled over it. But it was unable to bring forth the fruits of justice and thus the sons produced were useless. But the church, which was barren and sterile for a long time, has now become fruitful. Each day it conceives a fetus of righteousness, gives birth to salvation, and produces countless sons of God, because each day God produces sons from the Church. They are conceived when they come to belief; regenerated through the washing of water, they are born by the baptism of God.⁸⁹

Here the synagogue was presented as the sterile woman who could not reproduce the baptism of the church. The association of Jews with sterility, along with disease and death in other statements related to baptism, clearly presented Jews as flawed from a physiognomic standpoint due to their lack of baptism. Baptism was the ritual which stood as the defining line between Jews and Christians. Whereas belief was concealed in the mind, ritual was physical and visible. So the difference of the Jews was depicted as a physical one when it was compared to baptism. The supposed physical difference, even one of disease, served as a means of division between the religious communities. The fact that Chromatius expounded upon this separation extensively only makes sense if there was actual interaction between Christians and Jews in Aquileia which threatened to muddy the clear boundaries of the two communities.

Further confirming this probability is the discussion of the parable of the marriage feast from Matthew 22. Chromatius explicated the parable with specific reference to the response of the Jews:

⁸⁹ *Sermon*, 33:4.
Therefore, when the Jewish people refused to come to such a great wedding feast, the king sent his servants to the street corners, saying: “Go and invite as many as you can, call them to the wedding. They went out,” he said, “and they gathered together as many as they could find and the wedding was filled with guests.” Therefore, because the Jews refused to come to this wedding, all the nations, from which we come, were invited there.\textsuperscript{90}

Chromatius continued to contrast the Jews with the nations based on the rejection of Christ and the subsequent embrace by Gentiles. It is notable that Chromatius explicitly claimed that his own community's identity was formed from the group which was invited due to the Jewish rejection. After clearly positioning Jews in opposition to those listening, he continued explaining the parable and the role of his listeners in it:

But we ought to fear, or at least be careful, lest when the king enters into the marriage hall, he sees us reclining and says to us what is said in the present reading: “Friend, how did you come not having a wedding garment?” And he commanded that he be taken away by his hands and feet. The wedding garment is the saving grace of baptism, which shines with the whiteness of faith, not the splendor of wool….Therefore, he who does not receive the grace of baptism or having received it loses it, does not have this kind of nuptial robe. Those who do such he shall find, and they will be ejected from the wedding and chased into the outer darkness. Therefore we ought to guard our nuptial garment, which we received through the grace of baptism by faith in Christ, intact and without any kind of blemish, in order to be worthy of the spiritual banquet in the Church and to earn a spot in the future kingdom of heaven with the saints and elect of God.\textsuperscript{91}

Though this passage does not mention Jews, the close proximity to the previous one is crucial. He related the robe which was acquired in baptism to salvation. Yet when he impressed upon his listeners the importance of guarding the robe from baptism, Chromatius provided no direct object which might threaten it. Instead of mentioning any particular sin or vice, the only threat presented in the sermon, just a few lines earlier in

\textsuperscript{90} Sermon, 10:4. The internal quotation is from Matthew 22:9-10.

\textsuperscript{91} Sermon, 10:4. The internal quote is Matthew 22:12.
fact, was the Jews. The close proximity of the Jews, in the sermon and as an institution, in fact the only opposing force to Christians presented in the sermon, clearly suggested that Jews were dangerous to Christians. The sermon opened with the clear statement, “By his many and diverse parables, our Lord and Savior proved the Pharisees and chiefs of the Jews guilty.” And the section immediately before the baptismal part of the sermon ended with another strong contrast:

By the killing of the bulls for the wedding of his son, the Gospel indicates the judges and prophets, who were killed by the Jews, because they announced that the son of God was to come and suffer in the flesh....However, the fattened calf signifies those infants in Bethlehem who were killed by Herod, because they merited to die for the name of Christ.

Chromatius clearly associated the Jewish community with a threat to Christian salvation, primarily in the form of loss of their baptism. He presented the ritual of baptism as a buffer between Christians and Jews, so long as Christians maintained their separation from Jews. While Chromatius did not call for Christians to completely shun Jews, as would Maximus of Turin a decade later, the implications were clear. Jews did not just believe differently but were a threat to those serious about their salvation.

Another ritual which Chromatius used to divide Christians from Jews was that of fasting. As Lent was a time of fasting and preparation for Easter, Chromatius naturally

92 Sermon 10:1.
93 Sermon, 10:3
94 Maximus of Turin, Sermon, 63:3.
95 It should be noted that Chromatius’s interpretation of this passage may be drawn from Origen’s Commentary on the Romans, 8:6, though there, Origen is much more positive about the fate of the Jews, suggesting that they will be saved at the end times. Origen’s Commentary survives only in Latin, thanks to the translation Rufinus made while in Aquileia. Ronald Heine, Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 202.
spoke of fasting during this period. Even here he connected the practice to the Jews. In fact, of the nineteen times he mentioned fasting in the sermons, fourteen of the occasions occurred in sermons where Jews were discussed. The remaining five references were all in one sermon. For instance, in Sermon 25, Chromatius encouraged his listeners, “because we are filled with such spiritual food, we ought not to complain about the burden of fasting.” Yet earlier in the same sermon on the benefits of fasting and its role in proper religious life, Chromatius attacked the Jews for their abstinence from certain foods. “God fed his servant Elijah in the desert by the ministry of ravens, who brought bread in the morning and meat in the evening to him,” he preached. “What does this say about the Jews who think that in this world they must abstain from foods which the law has declared in mystery to be impure?” Again in the same section, he declared, “[T]he Jews believe it is good to abstain from impure food, but they, who are filled with the impurity of sins, are never clean.”

Chromatius attempted to contrast the fasting of the Christians with the abstinence of the Jews. The Christian ritual, even though it might appear similar to a practice of the Jews, actually constructed a clear difference between the two religious groups. By limiting the ability of his congregants to make connections on a religious level with Jews, Chromatius was attempting to make the ritual of fasting a clear divider for the church.

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96 Sermons 3, 25 and 28 contain discussions of Jews and fasting in close proximity. Sermon 35, on Susanna, contains the other five references to the practice.


98 Sermon 25:3.

99 Chromatius does not allow that the Jews fast. Their “abstinence,” in his words, was not the same as fasting, thus he denied them legitimacy. Fasting for the wrong reasons made the fast illegitimate for Chromatius. This would have been crucial since many Jewish and Christians fasts aligned on the calendar. Stökl, “Whose Fast Is It?” 263-267.
The ritual of fasting serves especially well to mark those of a particular religious community because it cuts them off from the most basic connection with other people, sharing food. Catherine Bell notes a modern analogue in the practice of Ramadan: “[F]asting sets Muslims off as a distinct community (umma) in contrast to their non-Muslim neighbors.” Likewise in the ancient world, those Christians who were fasting could not entertain or dine with non-Christians. The ritual created clear lines which could visibly set apart a religious community. Those who participated in the ritual were marked as inside the community, while those who did not were clearly outsiders.

Conclusion

Chromatius devoted many words to the Jews in Aquileia. He made clear to his listeners that the Jews of the local synagogue were the same Jews who had stoned the prophets and murdered god. And to further reinforce the divide between the two religious communities, he connected Jews to important rituals of the church only to denounce their rejection of these defining practices. The effect of ritual in providing clear boundary lines enabled Chromatius to emphasize greater distance and less sharing between the church and the synagogue in Aquileia. This movement away from the other stands in opposition to the typical Roman urban environment which had long maintained a shared religious culture. Rituals and festivals were celebrated around the same dates, practices were similar, and worshippers moved between church, synagogue, and temple. In contrast, Chromatius’s focus on the Jews was aimed at dividing the two groups. Although his anti-Jewish rhetoric was tamer at Easter, it seems to be an aberration rather than the norm. Chromatius was interested in defining the Jews not

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100 Bell, 124.
simply in opposition to Christians, but also as the opposite of the rest of the human race. Taken with his words contrasting them with barbarians and creating a Roman-Jewish dichotomy, a project of alienation in Aquileia was underway.
CHAPTER 6
ADAPTING ROMAN AND CHRISTIAN IDEALS: SPIRITUAL VALUES FOR A NEW AQUILEIAN ELITE

Having explored the manner in which Chromatius labeled heretics, Jews and barbarians, we now turn to the related question of what Chromatius intended to accomplish with his radical rhetoric. One might say that the demonization of minority groups and consequent border definition was its own reward, providing a sharp foil for the identity of the church. Chromatius had already secured his church as the only legitimate arbiter of spiritual currency as the Roman city of Aquileia entered the fifth century after the birth of Christ. Yet like any good business executive, Chromatius would have demanded that his church “always be closing.” As he explicitly noted in this regard, “the church is called…a house of spiritual business, where not earthly but heavenly wealth is leant.”¹ The pursuit of greater profits, in the form of greater spiritual dedication, was the only thing that would keep the church from declining.

This chapter sketches the rigorous spiritual practices Chromatius introduced to his church. His promotion of chastity, fasting and almsgiving reflect a changing religious spirit which was sweeping through the elite of the Italian peninsula during the period. These spiritual disciplines would shape the form of Christianity for the next few centuries in the western world. The new disciplines, however, were not unrelated to the liminal actions of the bishop examined earlier. Just as Chromatius had marked off his church from other Christians and religions, so he sought to provide markers for those who would be elite within the Christian community. At the same time he also endeavored to draw in those who had questioned the reality of his project: the creation

¹ *Sermon* 4:3.
of an urban religious community. He framed Christianity as a continuation of classical traditions in order to appeal to elite sentiments. He oversaw an expansion of the church’s authority into private lives, an expansion which would produce tangible material benefits if executed.

New Modes of Being Christian: The Creation of Ascetic Communities

In the years after the Constantinian revolution, Christian churches slowly began to grow in numbers, but even as late as 350 very little separated the average Christian from the average pagan.² It was only in the second half of the fourth century that definition of what it meant to be Christian, which Chapters 3, 4 and 5 partially explored, really began in earnest. Separation from non-Christians and from ‘wrong’ forms of Christianity became the calling card for clergy, best evidenced by the Trinitarian disputes of the fourth century which pitted church against church. Separation had always been a sign of holiness and purity, and the claims of those who participated in the splits of the fourth century follow this pattern. By casting out heretics or non-Christians, the Christian leader could make a claim to holiness which provided spiritual currency. Of course, this process could work in reverse, as evidenced by the biography of Antony.

The Vita Antonii described the life of a monk of Egypt and presented his ascetic values in such a way that many Christians of the following decades abandoned their lives to follow the same course of self-denial in the Egyptian desert.³ Athanasius wrote the work as a justification for his stance against the Arian bishop of Alexandria and the

emperor Constantius. The ascetic charisma of Antony gave credence to the holiness of Athanasius. What Athanasius might not have expected was the reception of the book in the west as a guide to holiness. After the initial writing around 358, the book was quickly disseminated throughout the western churches by monks and supporters of Athanasius. It caused a firestorm of emotions and was quickly translated into Latin, probably by Evagrius of Antioch during his sojourn in Aquileia around 372. Around the same time several prominent Christian bishops went to the east and upon their return introduced new approaches to communal religious practice. Hilary of Poitiers and Eusebius of Vercelli both established forms of ascetic communities in their hometowns upon return from the east. No single event was definitive for the introduction of ascetic ideas to the west; rather each of these actions reflected the developing religious culture of the period.

At the end of the fourth century, many western Christians from the senatorial or equestrian classes began to be drawn to the ascetic ideals of Antony, if not to the exact way of life. Jerome and Augustine were both so moved by the *Vita Antonii* that they vowed to follow the monastic life, though neither could ultimately follow through. What seemed to happen with “ascetic converts” was mostly an adaptation of the traditional

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5 See Chapter 2n58 for a discussion of this possibility.

6 Phillip Rousseau, *Ascetics, Authority and the Church* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), 84-85. I hesitate to call these communities monastic as the term carries to many medieval connotations which did not yet apply. I would limit the usage of the term to a community whose adherents had to take a vow to join and lived under a shared rule. None of these communities in Italy shared these features. For that reason I follow Rousseau in using the less institutional term of ‘ascetic.’

Roman ideal of *otium* to Christian ends. For example, Augustine called his time at Cassiciacum, “*Christianae vitae otium*.” Melania the Elder devoted her widowhood to study of the scriptures. She spent vast amounts on books and support for supposedly ascetic study. Jerome took to the Syrian desert, but spent most of his time in the library of Evagrius of Antioch before founding his own monastery in Palestine with the widow Paula. Paulinus of Nola renounced his wealth, but used it to support his studies. Melania the Younger also used one of the greatest fortunes in the empire as the basis for study. None of these ascetic converts sought to emulate Antony by fleeing naked and alone into the desert. Rather, they mirrored the example of Cicero and retreated into a life of contemplation.

It was this spirit which inspired the community that gathered around Chromatius in Aquileia in the second half of the fourth century. It was not, strictly speaking, a monastery or coenobitic community. Jerome and Rufinus’s respective monasteries in the east were much more formal and organized. The community at Aquileia seems to have been more informal. Taking into account the mixing of genders and the transient nature of the adherents, the community stands as an excellent example of a growing approach to spiritual retreat. Perhaps the best explored similar instance was the time spent by Augustine at Cassiciacum. Not a monastic community but rather a philosophical retreat, the group gathered around Augustine displays clear links to the

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10 For an excellent synopsis of the changes, see Markus, 35-43 and Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 260-262.
earlier Roman practice of *otium cum dignitatae*. The informal nature of the community was marked by how quickly it could be dispersed, just as happened at Aquileia in 374. In this way, the two groups fall not in the tradition of monastic development leading to Benedictine monasteries, but in private, elite worship which dominated the fourth century.

One of the most innovative lines of scholarship from the past decade has been the exploration of how the walls of the church came to define Christians. The quip of Marius Victorinus in reply to a bishop who had not seen him in church, “Do walls then make a Christian?” illustrates a common practice of the fourth century. As wealthy, power connected members of society converted to Christianity, they converted their social networks as well rather than converting to the network of the church. The mark of the upper class in Roman society was membership in the *ordo*. This regulated group of town councilors was made up of those wealthy enough to carry the burden of a responsibility to the city. It was not a large segment of the population, the “*ordo*,” but it controlled the wealth and beneficence of Roman cities. These “elites” maintained their privilege and aloofness preferring to worship in their homes and practice their faith in private rather than in the public space of the church. Kim Bowes and Kate Cooper have both provided excellent examples of this practice through archeological and textual studies. Roman elites had no inclination to abandon their strong social privilege for a lesser place in the local church. The result was numerous independent house churches.

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12 Markus, 28. For an extensive discussion of this topic see: Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 45-50.

and loosely organized ascetic communities under the control of their patron rather than the local bishop. Coupled with the continued imperial support for local bishops which rendered them independent of the need for local financial support, a split developed between wealthy practitioners of Christianity and the ecclesiastical structure.\textsuperscript{14} Bowes, Cooper and Brown all posit that the decline in imperial support (or power, depending on how it is viewed) led to the need for bishops to reign in those rogue elements in order to secure their support. To do so, they created a unique, hopefully appealing, space for them in the local church.

Writing before Cooper or Bowes, Claire Sotinel suggested that the community in Aquileia headed by Chromatius shared characteristics with these independent, private, wealthy house churches.\textsuperscript{15} This connection provides a useful corrective to the scholarship which, over the course of several decades, attempted to fit various small communal groups into a pre-monastic tradition. While the term ‘ascetic’ might be useful to describe the values these groups shared, it becomes anachronistic and unhelpful to debate whether a certain community was monastic or part of a tradition which culminated in Benedictine monasticism.\textsuperscript{16} Instead of focusing on the later monastic

\textsuperscript{14} Brown, \textit{Eye of a Needle}, 50. Kristina Sessa’s new book, \textit{The Formation of Papal Authority in Late Antique Italy} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011) only came to my attention as this manuscript was being completed, but it also seems to deal with this subject very well.


\textsuperscript{16} Giovanni Spinelli, “Ascetismo, monachesimo e cenobitismo ad Aquilia nel secolo IV,” in \textit{Aquileia nel IV Secolo}, AAAd 22 (Udine: Arti grafiche friulane, 1982), 300. Much older scholarship fell into the trap of using medieval terms to explore antique practices. For example, the highly creative and forward thinking work of Aurelia Scholz is marred by her forced attempts to fit the community into a later paradigm. Scholz was a German nun writing her doctoral dissertation in 1934, but it remained unpublished until 1970. Aurelia Scholz, \textit{Il «Seminarium Aquileiense»}, trans. G. Brusin, MSF 50 (Udine: 1970), 5-106. Charles Pietri rightly identified the elite nature of the Aquilian community and its heritage of euergetism, but is caught up in monastic labels. Charles Pietri, “Une aristocratie provinciale et la mission Chrétienne: l’exemple de la Venetia,” in \textit{Aquileia nel IV Secolo}, AAAd 22 (Udine: Arti grafiche friulane, 1982), 129.
patterns, scholars should view the communities as a continuation of ancient patronage networks. Gift giving, support for intellectuals, and the importance of familial ties were all classic tropes of the Roman elite. The ascetic community at Aquileia led by Chromatius seems to have fit into this pattern. The family of Chromatius, his brother, sister and mother, were all highly regarded members. Their support of intellectual works, even decades later, reflects the expectations of an elite family. And while no record of gift giving to the church remains, as I will explore below, the explosion of church construction in Aquileia at the end of the fourth century mirrors what happened in Rome roughly a decade earlier. For all these reasons, I argue that the ascetic community at Aquileia, which produced numerous bishops, writers, written texts and ascetic monks, functioned as an elite family constructing a patronage network. They acted in ways that were expected of proper elite Romans of that, or any, age.

The networks which sprung up around major figures like Symmachus or other Roman elites have been well documented. Christians did not abandon the practice either as the family of Paulinus of Nola and Melania the Elder and Younger provide excellent examples of how a Christian patronage network could and did function.

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17 Brown, Eye of a Needle, 53-71.

18 See Chapter 2 on the family of Chromatius and the relationship with Jerome and Rufinus, both of which dedicated multiple work to the patronage of Chromatius.


Chromatius’s family was elite yet less well to do than Paulinus or Melania, he could function in a similar manner on a smaller scale. What was unique about the community in Aquileia and Chromatius, however, was their association with the local church. The ascetic community paid homage to the bishop Valerianus during his tenure, and Chromatius took the position of bishop rather than remain in a life of otium.\textsuperscript{21} In light of the boom in church construction and extensive records of Christian euergetism at the end of the fourth century, Chromatius’s actions suggest a new step in the process of Christianization which was taking place throughout the west at the time.\textsuperscript{22}

The shift towards a more publicly integrated Christianity was the significant change of the late fourth century. As Roman elites took on greater public roles in the church, they slowly transformed cultural attitudes about religion in favor of a single ‘church’ rather than numerous religious institutions. Instead of having private services in their homes as traditional Roman practice dictated for those who could afford it, elites were increasingly expected to be active and visible in their local church.\textsuperscript{23} And as private worship declined, the public acceptance of synagogue, temple and church disappeared in favor of a unitary religious landscape. The shift of elites out of their homes and into the church allowed for greater local control of religion and new expectations about its role in urban life. Patronage networks would come to center around the church in urban environments as prestige and wealth flowed into it from local

\textsuperscript{21} See Chapter 2 for more on the relationship of the community to Valerianus and Chromatius’s role in the city.


\textsuperscript{23} Bowes, 63-102.
elites rather than from the emperor. But what caused this cultural shift? We have seen previously how fights over forms of Christianity gave the local bishop greater privilege and standing. Arguments about Judaism, heretics and barbarians aligned so as to unite the general anxieties and give the fears an outlet in the form of greater devotion to the church. The growing authority of the church in Aquileia, especially in the person of the bishop, provided the impetus for a shift towards greater control of private lives. The final factor in drawing the elites of Aquileia under the control of the church was the opening of new forms of theology and spirituality within the church that appealed to elite tendencies.

**Chromatius on Perfection**

At the end of the fourth century, some Roman Christians found themselves embroiled in a controversy with astrologers about the nature of the universe and human free will. It was in response to these rather elite concerns that the works of Origen were translated into Latin by Rufinus. The works of the third-century Egyptian caused upheaval in the elite Christian circles, with some holding tightly to his ideas about human perfectibility and others rejecting his ideas. The sermons of Chromatius do not explicitly cite Origen. Yet given his relationships with Jerome and Rufinus, he was clearly exposed to the Alexandrian’s works. Further, Megan Williams has shown that Chromatius was likely dependent on Origen in the composition of his *Tractates on Matthew.*24 Thus, while it is impossible to say when Chromatius might have been borrowing from Origen, his familiarity with Origen’s theology throw light on some of the theological underpinnings of his sermons. Chromatius adapted Origen’s thought on

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virtues and perfection. The theological ideas and the ascetic impulses they often inspired could attract the persons from whom he was seeking support.

**Chromatius and Origen**

In 397, Macarius, a Roman noble, requested that Rufinus provide him with an answer for the *mathematici*. These astrologers held that the fate of the world and all people was written in the heavens, unable to be altered by the agency of men. As an answer, Rufinus chose to translate Origen’s *Peri Archon* or *On First Principles*. His translation ran afoul of certain persons in Italy, and then Jerome, who branded him a heretic. Much of the question of the orthodoxy of Origen surrounded the origin of souls and universalistic questions. Rufinus, to protect his reputation, fled from Rome to Aquileia where he lived from roughly 399-405. While there, he continued translating Origen’s work. Although un-embroiled in the controversy, Chromatius had easy access to the ideas of Origen, and it seems he adapted the theological ideas about the change which occurs after salvation.

One of the major themes of Origen’s work that Chromatius adopts is the clear agency of every person for good or evil. “The cause of diversity among rational

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26 On the debate over Origenism the standard work is still: Clark, *The Origenist Controversy*..


creatures arises not from the will or judgment of the Creator,” Origen affirmed, “but from the choice of their own free will.” Although acknowledging the tragedy of the fall in Adam, Origen held a much more positive anthropology than later writers like Augustine. The incarnation of Christ had served as proof that the human form, body and soul, could be perfected. He described sanctification, the process by which a Christian moves upward along the path of salvation, in Greek terms of illumination and ascent.

Those who have become worthy to reach this stage [of salvation] through the sanctification of the Holy Spirit nonetheless pursue the gift of wisdom by virtue of the power that is exercised by the Spirit of God...That of the father, which furnishes existence to all, is found to be more brilliant and majestic, when each person...arrives at the higher grades of proficiency.

In this passage, Origen described a hierarchy of salvation. Each level of salvation would bring a Christian closer to God. And as in Plato’s system of forms, God corresponds to a higher reality. The soul is able to climb upwards thanks to the moral purity created in it by the Holy Spirit. Origen further expounds on the process: “Once the untiring work of the father, Son and Holy Spirit commences to lead us though each grade of proficiency one by one, we can with difficulty, if at any time, set our eyes upon the holy and blessed life.” Origen held that it was possible to achieve a union with God by advancing though grades of moral proficiency denoted by Christian virtues. Although Origen was unclear about the timing of this union, (be it in this life or the next), the notion that the mind

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30 Origen, On First Principles, 2.9.6.
31 Ibid, 2.6.2-4.
33 Ibid.
could reach perfection was certainly present in his works.\textsuperscript{34} For Origen, the Christian was in control of his or her moral development. The source of virtue was the indwelling of God following baptism, but the working out of that virtue was practice in daily life.

Chromatius attempted to spread these Origenistic ideas of perfection to the urban elite he was trying to attract to his church. His language on the topic betrayed his familiarity with the world of these privileged citizens and their longstanding views on virtue and vice. Chromatius adopted the idea of achieving perfection through the accumulation of virtues. For instance, Chromatius compared the eight beatitudes to:

\begin{quote}
[T]his ladder of Jacob, whose top reached from the earth to heaven. Whoever climbs to the top finds the gates of heaven, and entering through them, stands joyously without end in the sight of God, praising the Lord with his holy angels throughout eternity.\textsuperscript{35}
\end{quote}

He presented the eight virtues laid out in the Sermon on the Mount as building on one another. In the Latin the term for this “ladder” is “scala,” a ladder made of many steps (\textit{gradus}). Each step was a level which had to be mastered before ascending to the next.

The imagery of ascent is prevalent throughout Chromatius’s sermons and tractates. The motif of the ladder occurs in another sermon in which the acquisition of virtue after virtue represents progressive steps in the climb to heaven:

\begin{quote}
The ladder which is planted on the earth and extends to heaven is the cross of Christ, which gives us access to heaven and leads us up to heaven. On this ladder, many steps of virtues have been inserted, by means of which we ascend to heaven. Faith, justice, modesty, holiness, patience, reverence and all the other good things that are virtues are the rungs of this ladder, by which we will reach up to heaven if we ascend faithfully.\textsuperscript{36}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{34} In his preface to the \textit{Commentary on Romans}, for example, Origen referred to Paul as a fully integrated person, i.e. someone who had achieved this harmony and ascended to the third heaven (something Paul claimed in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4). Origen, \textit{Commentary on Romans}, Pref.

\textsuperscript{35} Chromatius, \textit{Sermon} 41:10.

\textsuperscript{36} \textit{Sermon} 1:6.
The nature of the ascent is less abstract here. Chromatius named specific virtues which must be obtained before reaching the summit. Like Origen before him, Chromatius spoke of the process of salvation in the language of ascent judged by the acquisition of moral virtues. Virtue was not necessarily the means by which one got into heaven, but it was the earthly measure of one’s progress on the climb. Virtues were a result of the transformation of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. They were only possible after baptism.

Chromatius contrasted the life before baptism with a life of virtue. “If we are strangers to the vices of this world, to carnal desires, then we are buried in the potter’s field, which is the Church of Christ, but buried happily because we are dead to this world but we live in Christ…Buried to vice, we rise again in virtue.”37 After being baptized and buried in regard to the vices of the world, the new Christian could and must begin to live a virtuous life. The acquisition of virtues, their practice and their merits became the central features of the Christian life, like air or food. “But the divine virtues are necessary, like vegetables, so that one can recover the health of salvation,” Chromatius affirmed.38 Without virtue(s), it was impossible to please God. Salvation was independent of them, coming through the gift of grace in baptism. Yet failing to carry out the transformation which had occurred in the new spirit was akin to rejecting the gift of grace. The goal of the Christian was not just heaven, but harmony, harmony with the divine, the good and the beautiful. The only question left was how to acquire those virtues. Chromatius spent much of his sermons on the importance of certain virtues,

37 Sermon 20.
38 Sermon 12:8.
virtues which fit into the ethos of Aquileia and furthered his construction of a more centralized Christian community.

**Origenism Applied in Aquileia**

Chromatius’s adoption of Origen’s theology on sanctification opened new avenues of religious practice and new questions for his church. In the east, many followed the theology to what might be its logical conclusion. Origen mutilated his own body to save it from sin. Antony fled the sinful city after putting his sister in a convent. Pachomius and his monks built a new holy, city in the desert. Even in the Latin world and in Aquileia a number of prominent individuals renounced their normal lives to seek refuge either in the desert, or remote islands.³⁹ Others in Italy feared that the application of the theology in the quest of personal perfection might create a split in the Christian community between a kind of spiritual elite and the laity.⁴⁰ Chromatius attempted to spread Origenistic ideas of perfection to the urban elite he was trying to attract to his church. His language on the topic betrayed his familiarity with the world of these privileged citizens and their longstanding views on wealth, luxury and ambition. Chromatius adapted Origen’s thought and the ascetic impulses it often inspired to better attract the persons from whom he was seeking support.

As Peter Brown has recently demonstrated in his work on wealth in the later Roman Empire, the Christian perspective on riches throughout the fourth century was

³⁹ Jerome went to the Syrian desert for two years before returning to society. The monk Bonosus, who was part of the Aquileian community in the early 370’s, became a hermit on a small lonely isle in the Aegean sea. Jerome, *Epistle* 3:4.

⁴⁰ This fear was best exemplified by Jovinian. He attacked the idea of a spiritual elite denoted by their self-denial, emphasizing the centrality of baptism and grace over spiritual virtues. Jerome wrote *Adversus Jovinianum* to defend the importance of virginity and monastic values. Jovinian’s works are lost now and his argument is only preserved through Jerome’s response. See: Markus, 39-42; David Hunter, “Resistance to the Virginal Ideal in Late-Fourth-Century Rome: The Case of Jovinian,” *Theological Studies* 48 (1987): 45-64.
not all that original or distinct from the traditional Roman view.\textsuperscript{41} For centuries, Romans had idealized the founders of the city for their moderation, temperance and lack of personal ambition. Numerous writers shared the opinion that the introduction of luxuries, desires for new-found pleasures and general greed had sapped the energies of the city and rendered it weaker, resulting in the decline from republic to empire. Cicero, Seneca and Tacitus all displayed similar contempt for wealth and luxury in their writings. Cicero wrote, “Sick minds are characterized by hollow and deep desires for wealth, glory, irresponsible use of power and depraved pleasures.”\textsuperscript{42} Seneca and Tacitus, among others, wrote further on the dangers of wealth and luxury.\textsuperscript{43} Even as late as 390, Ammianus Marcellinus pleaded with Roman elites to return to the “sobriety of the ancients.” He deplored the “craving for ostentatious banquets and ill-gotten gains.”\textsuperscript{44} Romans were no strangers to screeds against greed. Displays of luxury were in poor taste. Rather, the wealthy were expected to be liberal with their wealth and good fortune. The noble citizen was expected to provide for his city, not his own appetites. It was this tradition of virtues that Chromatius would tap into and Christianize as signs of inner transformation.

By framing Origen’s ideas with classical Roman tropes about the proper behavior of the elite, Chromatius could accomplish three ends. First, he used Origen to temper the wildness of the ascetic wave sweeping through Italy and made it palatable for the

\textsuperscript{41} Brown, \textit{Eye of a Needle}, esp. 53-71.


\textsuperscript{44} Ammianus, \textit{LRE}, 31.5.14.
average elite Roman. Among Christian theologians, Origen would have been most attractive to Roman intellectuals in his attempt to Christianize Plato. The wild asceticism of Antony was not approachable for the average Christian. Chromatius’s “ladder to perfection” offered the same end without the need to run naked into the desert and fight demons in a cave for twenty years. Thus, the second accomplishment of developing Origenistic thought was the remaking of the Roman city as a potential place of holiness. In a remarkable sleight of hand, Chromatius brushed aside concerns about life in the city, assuming it was the natural home for Christians and a welcome place to pursue a Christian life. No withdrawal from the city was required to achieve perfection, only withdrawal from the indulgences of the city, the same luxuries which had been condemned by the pagan orators and philosophers.

Finally, Chromatius was able to frame Christianity as a continuation of the classical tradition. He never explicitly cited Cicero, Seneca or any other Roman philosopher, but he was clearly following in the footsteps of the traditional Roman writers. If the proper use of wealth had been for support of the city, in the newly Christian empire the support of the church should supplement if not replace such giving. Roman families had long gifted their home cities with various buildings and endowments. The church would become a new home for the old tradition of Roman euergetism. Yet even more than that, Origen’s theology could offer an answer to the grand problems of Roman society. The spread of decadence and ostentatious luxury was cast as the downfall of Rome. Christianity, with its ethos of poverty in this world, could provide an answer. Notably, the church did not call for true poverty, but a sharing of goods. Antony took literally what most understood to be figurative. No bishop of
antiquity called on his listeners to sell everything they owned. Rather, most Christian leaders spoke of the need to share with the community.

A call to the sharing of all possessions, although seemingly revolutionary, actually had a long history in the Mediterranean world. Chromatius returned frequently to Acts 4:32, the passage where the apostles are described as “of one heart and soul, and they held all things in common.” Chromatius lamented that this famed sharing was lost to Christians of his own day and urged his listeners to follow the example of the apostolic community. Yet, even here, in what might seem a revolutionary call to a kind of communalism, Chromatius drew from a long practice of associating utopian societies with shared goods. David Mealand has traced just a few of the more well-known examples of this approach to utopian wealth in Greek and Roman literature. He notes Cicero, Pythagoras, Zeno, Ovid, Aristophanes (though to mock the belief), and Seneca all repeated the truism of shared goods among friends. Both Plato and Aristotle used very similar phrasing to that of Acts 4:32 in the Republic and Nicomachean Ethics respectively. In fact, Mealand seems to suggest that the passage in Acts might be inspired by the Greek approach. If so, Chromatius’s Christianity offered a way forward that addressed the perceived problems of Roman society with an answer firmly rooted in both classical and Christian traditions while at the same time maintaining the position

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47 Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, ix.8.2 and Plato, Republic, iv. 424a, among other locations cited in Mealand.
of the wealthy elite. Chromatius always remembered that in Aquileia, “where earthly advantage is not neglected, one must strive even more after a heavenly profit.”

**Christian Virtues in the City**

In his longest and most famous sermon, “On the Eight Beatitudes,” Chromatius expanded on all eight admonitions and how they were interrelated. It was in this sermon that he developed an analogy about the eight “blessed are…” statements which corresponded to the steps on a ladder reaching up to heaven. The analogy shows up in another sermon, and the general motif of climbing to heaven can also be found throughout his homiletic corpus. No systematic approach to the steps emerges in the sermons, however, as Chromatius used the motif in a much more ad hoc manner throughout his works. Generally Chromatius focused his words about virtues and vices on three issues drawn directly from Roman society: wealth, luxury and ambition. The conquest of these three vices would result in the ascent of a Christian.

**Avarice vs. Liberality**

Perhaps the easiest of all sins to attack, avarice, or greed, drew the fire of Chromatius on repeated occasions. As laid out earlier in the chapter, the stigma of miserliness was not unique to the Christian church, but common to Roman society. Wealth was not in itself a vice, and there was no need to avoid it. Rather it was crucial that the Christian be the master of his wealth, and not the other way around. Clearly, Chromatius stated, “[I]f someone is sick with the lust of avarice, which is a burden exceeding every sickness of the soul…he may know that he cannot otherwise be

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49 For the ladder: *Sermon* 1:5,6. For the motif of steps to heaven see: *Sermon* 1:4, 15.5, 29.3, 42.

healed unless a compassionate person arises from the miser and a liberal one from the greedy.⁵¹ In a passage where Chromatius was listing a variety of sins which impair spiritual development, he described the hoarding of wealth as the worst spiritual disease. In the middle of the passage he cited I Timothy 6:10, which reads in his Vulgate, “Greed (cupiditas) is the root of all evils,” not the more common “love of money is the root of all evils.” Yet this sermon was not a screed against the upper class, for the answer was never to take and redistribute. Rather, Chromatius called on the wealthy to self-regulate. The greedy man must become liberal, the miser compassionate. Poverty itself was not a virtue for Chromatius.

Indeed, Chromatius did not defend the poor as blessed of God. In his sermon on the steps to heaven citing Matthew 5:3 (Blessed are the poor in spirit), Chromatius vehemently warned against thinking God simply loves the poor for being poor. “He [Christ] does not say simply or confusedly ‘blessed are the poor,’ but rather he adds: ‘poor in spirit.’ For not all the poor are happy, because it happens often out of necessity, sometimes as a result of poor behavior, and even out of the anger of God.” Chromatius suggested that poverty was a natural aspect of the world and would always be present. Like wealth, poverty was neither good nor bad. It was not necessarily to be praised and honored, but also not to be derided. Elsewhere, Chromatius stated: “[I]f we are poor in this world, we should not be depressed, because the sacred apostles were poor in this world. Do you want to become rich out of poverty, or rather in your very poverty to be rich? Be just, be faithful, be pious, be charitable, and with God you will have great

⁵¹ Sermon 12:7.
Chromatius went to great lengths to present poverty and wealth as equal states. Both offered the chance to be just and charitable, though it would seem to be much easier to be charitable out of wealth than poverty. And while poverty could be framed by Chromatius as possibly justified by poor behavior, wealth never carried any association with divine punishment.\(^{53}\)

Furthermore, the acquisition of grace was often compared to precious stones or gems. Chromatius called the virtues gems which any person would want to acquire.\(^{54}\) The analogy upheld the idea that the acquisition of wealth was natural and beneficial, not problematic. At no point did Chromatius suggest that business (\textit{negotio}) was illegitimate. Quite the opposite, he often used the language of trade and merchants to describe the church. Profit, trade and markets were based on reason to Chromatius, not a surprising position given the nature of Aquileian commerce.\(^{55}\) He never described wealth in negative terms. On the contrary, wealth could function positively in the spiritual ascent. By sharing or giving it away the Christian could take that all important step towards heaven: "\textit{[B]lessed are the poor of spirit, those men who make themselves poor in spirit and will for the sake of God…voluntarily giving out their own funds.}\(^{56}\) Actual poverty was neither necessary nor useful for the Christian. Instead, liberality and generosity, both of which required money, were necessary steps on the path to heaven.

\(^{52}\) \textit{Sermon} 5:5.

\(^{53}\) "For not all the poor are happy, because it happens often out of necessity, sometimes as a result of poor behavior, and even out of the anger of God." \textit{Sermon} 41:2.

\(^{54}\) \textit{Sermon} 26:4, 41:10.

\(^{55}\) \textit{Sermon} 41:1.

\(^{56}\) \textit{Sermon} 41:2.
Continuing in this vein, Chromatius drew on the Greek tradition noted earlier which was replicated in Acts. After citing Acts 4:32 on the sharing of goods among the apostles, Chromatius asked, "Why do they consider their earthly goods divisible, whose heavenly goods are indivisible? So when we see our brothers in need, especially Christians, we ought to freely give of our property." Just as Plato and Aristotle had suggested that between true friends or brothers everything should be shared, Chromatius suggested that any true Christian would follow the example of the apostles. He assumed the ability to share property with those in need of it, but notably, he had to explicitly say, "especially Christians" as an added descriptor to "brothers." The need to clarify this point suggests that he expected the wealthy to give out of their abundance to all in the city. This assumption corresponds with Roman expectations for the elite. Elsewhere Chromatius acknowledged that, "The heretics run according to their poisoned statement of faith…they run according to almsgiving, but they will not achieve a crown." Christians of other churches gave alms. Giving was expected of the wealthy, be they Christians of Chromatius’s church, another church, or non-Christians. What Chromatius was concerned with for his audience was promoting the kind of utopian community described in Acts and in Greek philosophy. It was not enough to give alms; alms needed to be given to Christians in particular. Christians were expected to give in this manner: "in order to be in communion with the saints and the elect of God, of whom the divine scripture testify <…> so that we can have a portion in the kingdom of God."  

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57 Sermon 1:7.

58 Sermon 28:2.

59 Sermon 1:7. The editors note that a portion of scripture is lacking from the manuscript. They suggest it was probably Acts 4:32 again (All the believers possessed one heart and one soul).
Giving away a portion of wealth to other Christians on earth transferred the wealth to riches in heaven.\(^6^0\)

In calling the wealthy to act as benefactors for the rest of the Christian community, Chromatius dressed the church in classical Roman garb. Even his words describing the apostles as founders of the church whose spirit had been lost seem to echo the traditions which surrounded the founders of Rome.

But I am afraid that the well-known agreement and charity among the faithful which existed in the time of the apostles may be our condemnation since we preserve neither agreement nor peace nor charity because of our zeal for greed. They used to view property as common; we want to make the things of others our own.\(^6^1\)

Greed and avarice had corrupted the church in a manner which seems to parallel classical arguments about the decline of Rome. The supposedly increasing focus on self at the expense of the church or city resulted in dissension and weakness. The salve for such a disease was the opposite virtue, namely liberality. Yet for Chromatius the nature of giving centered around the future community of glory, not the earthly community:

\[W\]e ought to be strangers to covetousness and desire, strangers to envy, to discord, to dissension. We ought to study peace, concord and agreement so that we might have eternal life in common with such men of whom it is said: ‘And all the believers were of one heart and soul, and they held all things in common.’\(^6^2\)

Overcoming greed and avarice would produce the reward of the ideal community, though one not of this world. The wealthy could act as benefactors of the church on earth and receive the reward of being identified as like the apostles in heaven. The

\(^{60}\) On the widespread nature of this assumption and practice: Brown, *Eye of a Needle*, 72-90.

\(^{61}\) *Sermon* 31:4.

\(^{62}\) *Sermon* 31:4. The internal quotation is Acts 4:32.
poor, although also expected to be generous, were limited in their ability to give away their more limited wealth and thus reap the benefits of generosity. Of course, as in all communities, the high minded rhetoric of the leader did not reflect the reality of the people. Chromatius complained, “The poor complain of their lack and their need, but no alms are given. And we are astonished if we have to suffer diverse tribulations, when we all have a hardened spirit.” Aquileia had people in need, but the wealthy did not do enough to respond. Chromatius reproached his listeners for their self-interest, caring only for their own problems, and not recognizing the needs of others. It was this kind of self-indulgence, which I gather under the term ‘luxury,’ that we turn to next.

**Luxury vs. Denial**

In every age, those with wealth seek out ways to display it. Whether it be with extravagant houses, expensive clothing or lavish parties, the urge to flaunt one’s wealth with ostentatious displays seems to be timeless. During the Roman Republic, the *Lex Oppia* and *Lex Fannia* banned displays of wealth in clothes and dinner parties respectively for periods of time. Although these laws began as economic measures, they quickly gained traction as control of traditional Roman values and were defended by Cato the Elder. The laws were repealed after a time, but a conservative streak always remained in Roman society standing in opposition to opulence. Christianity became a natural heir to this tradition while adding its own spin. By the Christian era, luxury was not just corrupting the values of the city, but the very souls of those who indulged themselves. Chromatius warned that Christians “should not forsake the life

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63 *Sermon* 3:1.

above to return to earth, that is the desires of our house, this earth, to fleshly desires and to worldly selfishness. ⁶⁵ A focus on consumption, be it in the form of material goods, food or sexual indulgence/appetite, threatened the perfection of the Christian and stood between him or her and concord with the Christian community. The Christian should rather focus on self-denial, overcoming the desires of the human body and winning a victory for the soul in perfection.

One subject Chromatius discussed in several sermons was fasting. Part of a long held practice in the Jewish world, fasting, as discussed at the end of Chapter 5, served to separate the wheat from the chaff. Fasting prevented social interaction with others who did not limit themselves at mealtime(s). Aside from the natural desire to eat, the faster had to overcome a social stigma. Chromatius acknowledged that fasting was difficult. “[W]e ought not to complain about the burden of fasting.” ⁶⁶ On another occasion he noted, “But perhaps some say that they are unable to fast on account of their stomachs.” ⁶⁷ Somewhat uniquely here, Chromatius recognized that overcoming the demands of the body was difficult. He even assumed a tone of sympathy here that does not reoccur on the subject of sexual desire or desire for goods. ⁶⁸ Yet his sympathy was not enough to mask the perception of idleness which follows from these complaints. Chromatius followed up, dripping with sarcasm, “But is it on account of your stomach

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⁶⁵ Sermon 3:5.
⁶⁷ Sermon 3:2.
⁶⁸ Taken with the images of the fish out the sea and the harvest in the church at Aquileia and his words elsewhere about food and eating spiritual vegetables, I like to imagine that food was Chromatius’s personal weakness in a way other vices might not have been.
that you do not give alms? Give alms, and redeem your fasting.”⁶⁹ The church at Aquileia seems not to have taken well to the practice of fasting. Interestingly, earlier in the same sermon Chromatius noted, “Fasting has been prescribed recently, but few have fasted. People proceed to church and attend to idle talk or earthly business rather than to prayers.”⁷⁰ Apparently, a set fast had been established, but it had failed to take hold with the majority of the church. Rather than spiritual food the desires of the body and the world had proven normative for the congregation.

In another sermon, Chromatius felt the need to rebuke those who did fast. “Truly, to abstain only from food, is not fasting. For this reason, when we fast, we ought to abstain by all means from vices.”⁷¹ Apparently the irony of practicing other vices while fasting was lost on some in the church at Aquileia. Chromatius felt the need to clarify:

Finally, chastity and purity are supported when we fast. For we fast…not only to deprive ourselves of nourishment, but to separate ourselves from all carnal vices which are passions of the flesh, lust of the mind, depraved thoughts, hatred and envy, gossiping and complaining, fury and anger and from all similar vices and sins.⁷²

Chromatius had to clarify that the denial of ostentatious consumption was not the goal itself. Rather the objective was the subjection of the physical body to the soul. For traditional Roman mores consumption was the problem, while Christianity located the issue inside a person’s soul. Chromatius might have been attempting to subtly shift long-held attitudes about luxury. Although the Christian and Roman virtues had the same end—denial of luxury—the reasoning behind the value was greatly different. The

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⁶⁹ Sermon 3:2.
⁷⁰ Sermon 3:1.
⁷¹ Sermon 35:4.
⁷² Ibid.
salvation of the soul rather than the preservation of the city was on the line. We should also note that fasting could be a sign of wealth. Not to eat would not be fasting if one were too poor to afford bread for the day. Rather the choice—to be able to have food and yet choose to go without—was the important issue. The rich, who could be sure there would be food when the fast was completed, could partake in the practice with much less risk than the poor. Taking part in a public fast could be merely a new way to demonstrate the resources one possessed, though in much less ostentatious fashion.

The more traditional focus of attacks on declining mores was on women’s dress and modesty. Like numerous other preachers of the period, Chromatius advocated virginity for women. Yet in contrast to Ambrose, who returned again and again to the superiority of the virgin, Chromatius almost always framed his approach to gender in more abstract terms. For instance:

If any man flatters himself because he is handsome in body or any woman boasts about her fleshly beauty, he should follow the example of Joseph and she the example of Susanna. They are chaste in body and modest in soul, and so are not only beautiful to men, but are so even to God. There are three examples of chastity in the church which everyone ought to imitate: Joseph, Susanna and Mary. Joseph for the men to imitate, Susanna for women, Mary for virgins.

Virginity stood alone as a uniquely gendered status, separate from that of other women. Yet it was not emphasized. The term ‘virgin’ in Chromatius’s sermons, when it did not

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74 Sermon 24:2
directly refer to Mary the mother of Jesus, appeared as a type of the church as a whole. Only in the above case, and one other (“[The church] has virgins and widows”) did Chromatius speak about the potential unique role for feminine spirituality which has been so widely documented in this period.\textsuperscript{75} His relative silence should not be taken to imply that Chromatius or Aquileia was unique on the subject. Jerome confirmed the virginity of Chromatius’s sister and the presence of a community of virgins nearby to Aquileia. Yet the absence of virginal rhetoric in the sermons, in favor of general admonitions to chastity, suggests a selective approach to listeners on Chromatius’s part. The focus on the example of Susanna, the ideal married, older woman speaks to the audience Chromatius was chasing.

The approach to married women was explicit at the end of sermon thirty-five in the example drawn from the biblical story of Susanna:

[I]f you desire to please God, follow the example of Susanna. Be chaste, be pure, be of honest morals, do works of justice, and you will be sufficiently beautiful not only in the sight of God but also beautiful in the sight of men. This beauty will please even a husband, if he finds his wife beautiful in acts and fair in mind.\textsuperscript{76}

Susanna offered an example of a chaste woman in marriage. Chromatius set her apart as the example of moderation and purity in the face of temptation to the contrary.\textsuperscript{77} Much like the Roman tradition of Lucretia, who preserved her honor by committing suicide, Susanna was willing to see her own death rather than act dishonorably. Her

\textsuperscript{75} Sermon 24:3.

\textsuperscript{76} Sermon 35:2.

\textsuperscript{77} The story of Susanna comes from a Greek addition to the book of Daniel. She was a beautiful young wife who was blackmailed by two older men. She refused their advances, keeping her honor, and so the two men claimed they witnessed her meeting a young man. She was sentenced to death for her crime of adultery, but Daniel insisted that the two men be examined separately. Their stories contradicted each other and they were put to death, while Susanna’s virtue remained intact.
honor was, according to Chromatius, all the adornment she needed. The women of his church should follow her example, not attempting to make themselves beautiful for the world. "Hence, those elegant women who think that they are beautiful only if they put on ornaments of this kind, despite the teaching of the apostle, are wrong. Why do you desire to adorn yourself with rings or beautiful clothes when you ought to be adorned with faith and holy morals?" Luxury, in the form of jewelry, corrupted the soul. Chromatius must have been addressing himself to a specific subset of the population here. Only those with wealth enough to afford jewelry and notable clothes could benefit from this admonition. The campaign against luxury, which had its roots in antiquity, shows Chromatius’s attempt to speak to wealthy women. He offered them a home in the church. Their marital status did not prohibit them from leading a holy life. What could be problematic was the desire to show wealth through luxury. Chromatius, although with slightly different reasoning, agreed with the traditional Roman diagnosis of society’s ills. Just like Cato the Elder five hundred years earlier, Chromatius warned against the dangers of ostentatious dress. Luxury, like avarice, could be the death knell of the soul and must be guarded against for the community to thrive. Chromatius was merely relocating the central locus of communal survival from city forum to Christian basilica. The final vice of elite Romans was one that is slightly harder to quantify, yet Chromatius took it on and reframed it for the benefit of the church.

**Ambition vs. Modesty**

The sin of ambition (*ambitio*) was held as grievous in antiquity. The man who sought high office or public honors in unseemly fashion was held to be unworthy of

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78 *Sermons*, 35:2.
them.\textsuperscript{79} So feigning disinterest or acting humbly was required of all politicians (an expectation which appears not to have changed in the intervening centuries). Ambitious men were perceived as seeking only the advancement of their own careers and families rather than the best interests of the city. As a result, Roman elites were expected to act modestly in regard to high office, not bribing or buying votes, even though it was clear that they sought fame and honors.

Chromatius referenced this common view in a sermon on the humility of the apostles. “Those who strive after the honors and offices of this world are rendered notorious for it.”\textsuperscript{80} The contrast in this passage is with Simon Magus, who tried to buy the power the Holy Spirit from Simon Peter. Simon Magus was henceforth regarded as the arch-heretic of Christianity, someone who was so corrupt that he tried to purchase what should be free.\textsuperscript{81} Chromatius suggested that Simon was akin to those Romans who were openly ambitious in their quest for high office. To purchase an honor rendered that honor meaningless. Instead, the pious citizen, who in humility sought truth and goodness for his community, would be rewarded with honor or salvation depending on the community, Roman or Christian. The approach of Chromatius to high office was classically Roman in its ambivalent nature. High office, or salvation in the Christian world, granted everything an elite man would have wanted, yet if he sought it in the wrong manner he disqualified himself. Ambition was the sin which could label a man

\textsuperscript{79} Fergus Millar, \textit{The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic} (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 216.

\textsuperscript{80} Sermon 2:4.

unfit for society. Chromatius transferred its effects to the church. There, ambition rendered a man unfit for service or grace.

Chromatius confirmed the bias against ambition when he spoke about the ritual act of foot washing. “He washed the feet of his disciples, so that you do not disdain to wash the feet of your fellow servants. You cannot flatter yourself for your riches, or your birth, or your honors, because he who deigned to do this task is Lord of all honors and powers.” This kind of rhetoric was not unusual in Christian preaching. The sermon was addressed to catechumens seeking baptism and dwelt on several examples of persons expressing their humility and unworthiness and being rewarded for their modesty. The role reversal, the notion of the first being last, is central to the Christian message, but it was not foreign to the Roman world. The farmer general who handed back power, best exemplified by Cincinnatus, was a classic trope of Roman political discourse. Chromatius confirmed his acceptance of such ideas in an interpretation of the first beatitude.

‘Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.’ The meek must be peaceful in mind and sincere in heart. The Lord illustrates clearly that this is no small merit when he says: ‘they shall inherit the earth.’… Meekness is a stranger to pride, to boasting, to ambition.” In this passage, Chromatius defined meekness not as weakness but rather as a strong soul overcoming natural human desires of fame and fortune. The powerful, those who would lead the world, were those who lacked the very ambition to do so.

Chromatius’s description of the person seeking perfection in his church aligned with many traditions of Roman society. The well-regarded man was expected to

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82 Sermon 15:1.

83 Sermon 39:1. The internal quote is Matthew 5:4.
overcome his baser instincts and not be tainted by the lust for power, money or food. Elite women were not to display their wealth in ostentatious jewelry or clothing, nor by throwing large banquets of gluttonous consumption. These vices were denigrated not only by Christian teaching, but also by Roman expectations for the well-born. In his presentation of the path to perfection, Chromatius described a road which was well-traveled by Roman elites. They could use their wealth for the benefit of the church and its poorer members. The control of luxuries, both food and material goods, reaped a benefit and did not brand them as *nouveau riche*. Holiness was not limited to virgins, but open to married women as well in keeping with the example of Susanna. And humility in not expressing ambitions of high office could be rewarded with honors. Rather than denigrating fame seeking, the church in Aquileia expected its members to be ambitious for perfection, seeking the honors of heaven and the riches of grace. Chromatius used the language of business to describe the actions of a Christian and the church. The elite Christian was expected to re-direct his interests from pursuing public or financial gain to pursuing gain for the church and his own perfection. In Aquileia, a port city dependent on commerce, Chromatius adopted the language of business for his church. He described his work as bishop as a “spiritual business” with “heavenly profits.”

**Creating a Christian Community**

Chromatius’s only known sermon until 1960 was his sermon “On the Eight Beatitudes,” now labeled sermon forty-one. While all the others were mislabeled or left anonymous, his name stuck to this one. The sermon was given on the market day as Chromatius began, “The assembly of people and the crowds for market day gives us,
dear brothers, the opportunity to relate the speech of the gospel.\textsuperscript{84} In an analogy which he used in at least two other sermons, Chromatius described the mission of the church as a business, hawking its wares to a hungry people.\textsuperscript{85} Comparing his work to the market outside the church doors, Chromatius said, “Not inappropriately will I also set out the merchandise that the lord has committed to me, the preaching that is assuredly from heaven…to conduct business and to make a profit.” There was no condemnation of commerce or trade, rather a suggestion that the church should mirror the inner reasoning of the market: “[T]he market contains within itself reason, so that each, according to his need, sells what is superfluous to him or buys things that are wanting.”\textsuperscript{86} The church in Aquileia was located in the commercial district, among warehouses full of goods from distant locations.\textsuperscript{87} Chromatius used the language of business, \textit{negotio}, to describe the actions of the Christian in the world. His approach was not born of an attempt to professionalize the church or involve it in secular affairs, but rather to relate to the language of his listeners. Many of the donors of the church may have been newly wealthy merchants who came from abroad to live in the city.\textsuperscript{88} The commercial nature of Aquileia was an inescapable reality for the church and must always be present in any analysis of Chromatius’s words. The language of profit and goods, when used to describe the actions of the Christian, would have related to the

\textsuperscript{84} \textit{Sermon} 41:1.

\textsuperscript{85} For the other sermons see: 4:3 and 26:4.

\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Sermon} 41:1.


\textsuperscript{88} Vuolanto, 248-250.
audience in a similar way as the attacks on classical Roman vices like ambition and luxury. But even more than that, the language allowed Chromatius to describe a Christian vocation, one which was concerned with the acquisition of grace, a never-ending business venture which enabled the climber to ascend the “ladder to heaven.”

One of Chromatius’s most vivid examples comes from a sermon given to dedicate a new basilica in the neighboring town of Concordia. Explaining how a relic of St. Thomas had come to Concordia, Chromatius told a story about “one merchant, a Christian and very religious, [who] went to India for the cause of business, to bring back precious stones or goods.” When he arrived in India, it was revealed to the trader where the body of St. Thomas was buried. Upon receiving this heavenly information, the “merchant of God, despising earthly gain, began to think only of heavenly gain. He found a better reward than that of the precious stones he had sought.” The relic was regarded as the most precious cargo, producing a greater profit than any gem or unique good of the far east. The piety of the merchant was such that he earned treasure in heaven for his actions. The adaptation of the language of business and profit to the church reinforced the diatribes against avarice, luxury and ambition. Instead of just avoiding those vices, the pious Christian should earn treasure, honors and titles in heaven. The acquisition of virtues, be it one’s own through good works or the virtue of the apostles through their relics, provided the stairway to heaven.  

89 Sermon 26:4. I am unsure where Chromatius heard this story as it is not contained in Rufinus’s work or any other ecclesiastical historian that I am aware of.

90 On the merits of the apostles being present in their relics according to Chromatius see: Sermon 26:2 and 31:3.
The concept of turning earthly treasure into heavenly treasure became popular at the beginning of the fifth century, according to Peter Brown. Numerous prominent Romans attempted to give away vast fortunes in an effort to win heavenly rewards for themselves. Chromatius was never so bold in his preaching and was clearly part of an earlier generation. He recognized the dangers of wealth, as noted throughout his condemnation of luxury and avarice. Yet there was no urging of divestment or necessity to give away riches. Instead, the concern was with the acquisition of heavenly treasure through the avoidance of vice and the cultivation of virtue. Alms might be part of that, but only a part. In this way, Chromatius harkened back to the classical world and not the Christian era. He compared the benefit of the gospel to earthly goods: “[I]f it is a joy for merchants to gain the present and perishable, we ought to be glad and greatly rejoice all together, since we find such pearls of the Lord today, to which no worldly goods can compare.” These heavenly virtues, the eight beatitudes, were presented as precious stones throughout the sermon, stones which together constituted a ladder to heaven. “Indeed, where earthly advantage is not neglected, one must strive even more after a heavenly profit.” Chromatius suggested that the treasure of heaven was found not in giving away riches but in acquiring virtue. This approach set a much lower bar than might be found only a few years later when Melania the Younger and her husband

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92 On the potential for corruption in the church, Chromatius was concerned about individuals seeking profit. The question of the church possessing wealth never seemed to enter the equation for him. See: *Sermon* 4:2.

93 *Sermon* 41:10.

94 *Sermon* 41:1.
attempted to give away entire estates and rooms of gold.\textsuperscript{95} For Chromatius, the cost of virtue was not set so high as to be unreasonable to most people.

Chromatius considered the acquisition of virtue as the natural outcome of the Christian life after baptism. Yet he also patterned the acquisition of virtue after the traditional Roman approach. Virtue required human agency, not just divine blessing, to obtain. To the elite of the Roman world, Chromatius presented a church which could promise advancement and honor. In its continuation of Roman values, the church could replace the city as the home for proper promotion of personal fame. The transition in Aquileia from a focus on urban to ecclesial involvement is reflected in the boom of church building which occurred around the turn of the century under Chromatius’s tenure.\textsuperscript{96} As wealthy Christians brought their religious practices (and funds) under more direct control of the bishop, Aquileia’s sacred landscape developed from a single basilica to at least five churches and an expanded main basilica in the space of roughly twenty years. Although none of these churches can be dated more exactly than the rough period around the turn of the century, it is clear that a windfall came into the church in a short period of time. Chromatius’s words, directed at elite women in particular, reflect a changing pattern of Christianization.

The ascetic community which gathered around Chromatius might also reflect the rising elite involvement in Christianity. Required to give up neither their wealth nor hometown, the group was representative of the growing dominance of the elite in the Christian churches of the empire. The community placed five of its members in nearby

\textsuperscript{95} Brown, \textit{Eye of a Needle}, 291-300.

bishoprics, displaying its control over the new levers of power. The entry of the elite into the public life of the church contrasted with the earlier assumption about the private practice of the religion in the home. Taken with the rhetoric about other churches and religions in the city, the approach to the elite suggests a goal of consolidating authority in the person of the sole bishop, Chromatius.

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97 See Chapter 2n56 for details of this spreading web.
CHROMATIUS died in 407. Although he had seen four armies surround his city without it falling, the city did finally succumb in 452. Aquileia had held out for three months in the face of the Huns, and the general Attila was ready to quit the city before noticing a flight of storks leaving Aquileia. He pointed out that the abandonment of the city by birds surely meant it was ready to fall, and the army renewed its attacks successfully. Aquileia was crushed and never returned to its former importance or glory. The center of power shifted to Venice over time, and the river silted up, leaving a formerly crucial port five miles inland. With the decline of the city, the memory of Chromatius had no standard bearer. His works were diffused and mislabeled over time, but his ideas were appropriated and certainly influential. Pope Leo I borrowed passages from his commentary on Matthew in one of his sermons. Chromatius’s own sermons were widely read in monasteries as part of collections, even if they were not attributed to him. Yet there may well be a more nefarious reason for the near erasure of Chromatius from the written record.

After the sack of Aquileia in 452, Pope Leo I wrote to the ecclesiastical leadership of the city to condemn the continued devotion to the heresy of Pelagianism which had taken root among the city’s clerics. Leo commanded that the bishop of

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3 Pelagianism, named for the British monk Pelagius of the early fourth century, is typically associated with a denial of the doctrines of original sin and predestination. Pelagius held that Augustine’s doctrine of grace and original sin had too low a view of humanity and could result in fatalistic behavior. He was condemned by Augustine, Jerome and Pope Zosimus in 418. Nevertheless, his ideas remained common, especially in the west throughout the early middle ages. The best treatment is: B.R. Rees, *Pelagius: A Reluctant Heretic* (Wolfeboro, NH: Boydell Press, 1988). For an exposition of his theology and its dependence on the translations of Origen by Rufinus which were made in Aquileia see: Theodore De
Aquileia hold a synod to get rid of any priests or deacons who subscribed to this heretical teaching.\textsuperscript{4} The idea that Pelagianism had lingered in Aquileia may be true, and its survival might be related to Chromatius and his influence. To be sure, Chromatius produced his ideas before Pelagius wrote or Pelagianism was even debated. Yet several scholars have suggested, quite convincingly, that Pelagius made use of Chromatius’s writings, both his sermons and his commentary.\textsuperscript{5} Further, it seems that the two were not far removed from each other. Certainly, Pelagius was active in the church at Rome in the first decade of the fifth century when Chromatius visited for the council that condemned the exile of John Chrysostom. Pelagius was hosted by a circle of influential leaders in the Roman church who also took in Rufinus when he left Aquileia around 405. While not certain, it seems not unlikely that Chromatius would have visited his old friend Rufinus.\textsuperscript{6} Through this conduit, the writings and ideas of Chromatius might have passed to Pelagius. This is certainly not to say that Chromatius was a proto-Pelagian or would have supported Pelagius’s full-blown ideas, given the chance. But the Origenist controversy had begun over an attempt to refute deterministic philosophy, and those who sided with Rufinus and Origen were concerned about determinism, much as Pelagius would be fifteen years later. If Chromatius’s ideas contained suggestions that

\textsuperscript{4} Leo, \textit{Epistle} 1:2.


\textsuperscript{6} Rufinus and Pelagius were both hosted by Melania the Younger and her husband Pinianus. On the social networks which could have tied Chromatius and Rufinus to Pelagius see: Elizabeth Clark, \textit{The Origenist Controversy} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 11-42. On the issue of Pelagius’s time in Rome see: Peter Brown, “The Patrons of Pelagius,” \textit{J.T.S.} n.s. 21 (1970): 56-73.
human perfection was a goal and deterministic grace was problematic, he could have
been retroactively consigned to the Pelagian camp. This argument is in no way
conclusive, but merely an attempt to suggest why Chromatius’s writings were saved
under other names so soon after his death. His association with Rufinus and Pelagius
might well have been threatening to the survival of his works.

The disappearance of Chromatius’s sermons was aided by the reality that he
was not especially remarkable in his own actions, writings or lifestyle. But what made
him unremarkable to medieval monastics renders him a wonderful focal point though
which to study the changing world he inhabited. He achieved prominence by remaining
faithful to his hometown and advising his friends. More than anything, his life provides a
guide to the changing dynamics of a rapidly developing world. Old institutions were
fading away while new ones struggled to establish their legitimacy. Born in the 330s
under the reign of Constantine, Chromatius lived through political and religious
transformations which would shape the new medieval world. He shepherded one of the
first ascetic communities in the Latin world. He oversaw the vast expansion of the
Christian church in Aquileia and the end of established paganism. He witnessed four
attempts to overthrow the emperor outside the walls of his city. He was a friend, a
patron, a bishop and a leader as required, but this also meant he had to sometimes be
an opponent, rhetorician or divider to accomplish his objectives.

The study of Chromatius’s sermons reveals how he went about the task of
forming a cohesive Christian community. Although filled with rhetorical attacks on other
groups in the city, the sermons provided his listeners with practical actions which would
increase their sense of belonging to a community. If the church had an outsized number
of merchants, who hailed from distant venues, a sense of belonging to the community held an even greater appeal than it might in other circumstances. Chromatius played to these desires for community and safety in his homilies. The attacks on the Jewish community and the admonitions to virtuous acts were part of the same rhetorical strategy. Belonging to the community required the individual to define him or herself against the Jewish community and to separate from it. Ritual actions which defined community life and provided the virtues necessary to belong inculcated the necessary divide, both in belief and body, from non-Christians. The fear of oncoming barbarians only added to the urgency to join the community.

Chromatius’s life tracked the vast changes in Christian fortunes during the fourth century. His “Horizons of the possible,” to borrow a phrase from Peter Brown, shifted all the way from Christianity as a religion among equals to the seeming eventuality of an entirely Christianized world. The Roman scion of privilege fulfilled his civic duty by becoming a bishop and leading his city through time of distress. It should come as no surprise then that he merged Roman and (Nicene) Christian identities in his sermons, for these were the two identities he carried. As a would-be ascetic with a network of writers throughout the empire that he patronized and the purifying bishop who devoted his sermons to paideia, Chromatius embodied the Christianization of typical Roman roles for an elite member of society. His words and actions in Aquileia reflect much of the change happening in the Roman world at the time. The city was far from entirely Christian, and the general populace seems to have liked it that way. Yet Chromatius

sought to construct his Christian community by alienating those who remained outside.
The identification of outsiders as rebels, non-Romans, and diseased would have
provided a valuable impetus for belonging. Exclusion would be a death knell in a city
based on commerce like Aquileia. Chromatius was a spiritual merchant, selling a
community which offered a readymade network and a safe harbor both in this life and
the next.
SERMON 1: ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES WHERE THE APOSTLES HEALED A LAME MAN

1. The Law and the Prophets not only predicted the coming of our Lord and Savior in humility by their words, but they also described it by symbolic examples. Among the mysteries of the truth to come, it is even said in the law that if a traveler on a journey found a bird with her chicks on the road he might take the chicks, but leave the bird. According to the situation and the literal sense, the order to take the little ones but leave the mother, who might produce offspring again, seems just. But this kind of precept, following the allegorical sense, displays a rather great mystery to come, which we know was clearly accomplished in the coming of Christ.

2. In that traveler of which the law spoke, the Lord was signified, who, in order to enter into the journey of human life, was born into a body from a virgin. This noble traveler, when he was in the body of our flesh, went along the road of this world, and finding a bird with chicks in the nest, which is the synagogue in the nest of the law with its children, he took the chicks and left the mother. He separated the apostles from the synagogue in order that he might transfer them from the nest of the law to his home of the church. Hence we read what is said in the psalms: “The sparrow has found its home and the dove its nest, where it might lay her young.” We understand the house to be the church and the nest the synagogue. The nest is a temporary thing, just as the

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1 Unless otherwise noted the text used for these translations was from: Chromatii Aquileiensis Opera, eds. and trans. Raymond Étaix and Joseph Lemarié, CCSL, 9A (Turnholti: Brepols, 1974), All translations (and any errors) are my own.


3 Psalms 84:3.
synagogue had grace for a time, so long as it had with itself in the nest the little ones, which were the prophets and apostles. But when they were withdrawn from the nest by Christ and given to his bride, which is the church, the synagogue was left as an abandoned nest.

3. We say this for the reason that at the time of the coming of Christ in the flesh, out of the innumerable multitudes of the Jewish people, very few believed. This was foretold by Isaiah when he gave evidence to it by saying: “If the sons of Israel were numbered they would be as the sands of the sea; but only a remnant will be saved.”\(^4\) By the remnant, he designated the apostles, or all the others who believed at the time of the apostles from the Jewish people. It is of those that you, dearly beloved, heard in today’s reading. For when Saints Peter and John had demonstrated a clear sign of divine power in the lame man, “on that day, five thousand people believed.”\(^5\) But of this wonderful sign and the five thousand men, the Lord himself had predicted it before through the prophet by saying: “Behold, here I am with my children that God has given me. And they will be made wonders in the house of Israel by the Lord of the Sabbath who lives on mount Zion.”\(^6\) And that these signs were to come, the same prophet demonstrated to us as well by saying: “Then the eyes of the blind will be opened and the ears of the deaf will hear, and the lame will leap as a deer.”\(^7\) And we know that this prophecy was fulfilled in this very lame man, who, since birth, had never walked.

\(^4\) Isaiah 10:22.  
\(^6\) Isaiah 8:18.  
\(^7\) Isaiah 35:5-6.
4. But if we reflect, we can see a kind of mystical secret presaged in the lame man. For this blind man was sitting in the Beautiful gate of the Temple, looking to Peter and John when he received healing. And we, for a long time before we came to the knowledge of Christ, were truly lame, because we were limping on the path or righteousness. For we were lame, not in the steps of our body, but in the gait of our interior being. The one who is a stranger to the path of righteousness and to the path of truth, even if his feet are good, is entirely lame, because his spirit and soul are deformed. The path of faith and truth is not trod by physical steps, but by the steps of the internal person. Hence, without a doubt, we were lame to the path of righteousness for a long time, when we were ignorant to the true way of salvation and life, the Lord Christ. But once we arrived at the beautiful gate of the temple and we looked upon the faith of the apostles of Christ, then the steps of our internal being were established so that we might no longer limp in the way of iniquity, but with regular steps, we walk on the path of righteousness. For we come, or rather we are brought by Christ, to the beautiful gate of the temple, where the lame are healed. The beautiful gate of the temple is the preaching of the gospel, through this is the temple of God adorned with a beautiful spirit, which is the Church. In this church whoever has an impaired mind or a lame soul receive the healing of salvation.

5. The beautiful gate of the temple received the lame and returns them whole, just as the preaching of the gospel receives the lame and the weak who are brought there, but it restores health to them. Do you want to know what this beautiful gate is? Listen to David in the psalm: “Open to me the gates of righteousness and I will enter in them and praise the Lord.” And he adds: “This is the gate of Lord, through which
righteousness will enter." He says that there are many doors in the law and prophets, but all the doors lead to one gate which is the preaching of the gospel which is the true door to Christ. In fact, it is through the law and the prophets that we come to the preaching of the gospel, which properly speaking is called the “gate of the Lord,” because it is for us the entrance to the kingdom of heaven. Listen to what Jacob the patriarch said in Genesis: “When Jacob had seen a ladder planted on the earth and extending to heaven, and God standing over it, he said: This is the dwelling of God and this is the gate of heaven.” The preaching of the gospel is the gate to heaven because through it we have our ascent to the Kingdom of heaven. Our Lord and Savior first unlocked this gate to us by the key of his resurrection. For the sake of opening the gate of heaven to us he was resurrected in the body and ascended to heaven in the body. This gate, until the time of the Lord’s resurrection, had been closed and locked to all.

6. Therefore, the way is opened by the resurrection of Christ. Thus it is not without reason that the patriarch Jacob reported that he saw in that place a ladder whose top stretched to heaven and the Lord standing over it. The ladder which is planted on the earth and extends to heaven is the cross of Christ, which gives us access to heaven and leads us up to heaven. On this ladder, many steps of virtues have been inserted, by means of which we have our ascent to heaven: faith, justice, modesty, holiness, patience, reverence and all the other good things that are virtues are the rungs of this ladder, by which we will reach up to heaven if we ascend faithfully; we know that this ladder signifies the cross of Christ. Similarly, just as, that the ladder

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8 Psalm 118:19-20.
9 Genesis 28:12a, 17b.
keeps two places together, the cross of Christ holds together the two testaments, and the steps hold in themselves the precepts of heaven, by which we ascend to heaven.

7. You have heard in the present reading, how much charity and accord there was among the believers under the apostles. “All the believers possessed one heart and one soul. No one called anything his own, but they held everything in common.” 10

Here is true belief in God, here is life lived faithfully for the Lord. Why do they consider their earthly goods divisible, whose heavenly goods are indivisible? So when we see our brothers in need, especially Christians, we ought to willingly share our property, as if in common, in order to be in communion with the saints and the elect of God, of whom the divine scripture testifies <…> 11 so that we can have a portion in the kingdom of God.

Amen.

10 Acts 4:32.

11 The editors note that a portion of scripture is lacking from the manuscript. They suggest it was probably Acts 4:32 again (All the believers possessed one heart and one soul).
SERMON 2: ON THE READING OF THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, WHERE IT SPEAKS OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN

1. In the gospel, our Savior said much for the instruction of our faith. Among other things he said: “The kingdom is heaven is like a father of a family who sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, someone came and over sowed tares and fled,”¹ and so on. Here, the Lord names himself the father of the family. By this word, he shows the strong motivation of his love for us, since he indicates that he is not only master but father of his family. By this name, ‘father of the family,’ he refers to himself. In the title, ‘master,’ there is the emotion of fear; in the title, ‘father,’ there is truly the affection of love. The lord showed this clearly through the prophet, when he said: “If I am the Lord, where is the fear due me? If I am a father, where is my honor?”² He calls himself master so that we might fear; but father, so that we might love him.

2. Therefore, this father of the family sowed in us good seed, which is the word of faith and of truth, which he planted in the furrows of our soul by the plow of his cross so that righteousness might take root in our souls, and we might bring forth fruit worthy of the faith. But, on the contrary, the enemy over sowed tares, which is the seed of iniquity and lack of faith. How the enemy was able to over sow seed of this kind was shown clearly to us. It says, “When men were sleeping,” then the enemy over sowed tares in whomever he found sleeping, that is those held in the sleep of unbelief. Truly he is not able to secretly snatch those who keep watch in faith. Indeed, if long ago had Adam, in whose heart the Lord first sowed good seed, kept watch in the commands of the Lord, the enemy could never have seized him <…>. But after he found Adam sleeping, in the

¹ Matthew 13:24-25.
² Malachi 1:6.
sleep of negligence, at once he over sowed his tares, so that instead of the fruit of life, he would bring forth the fruit of death.

3. We have brought forth this comparison for the present reading, because when the Lord, through his apostles, sowed the word of truth and faith everywhere, the devil, on the contrary, sowed his tares on those worthy of him. In fact, you, dearly beloved heard in the present reading how Simon the Magician, after the word of God had been sown in him, received the seed of the devil. Through the preaching of Phillip, as the text showed in the present reading, he believed and was baptized in the name of Christ. But at once, the devil made him a vessel of destruction. For, when he had seen the Holy Spirit being given by the laying on of the apostles's hands to those who had been baptized, it says: "He offered them much money, saying: 'Give me this power, so that anyone I lay my hand will receive the Holy Spirit.' Then Peter said to him: 'Let your money and you be destroyed, since you thought you could purchase grace with money.'"  

4. The apostles, have not kept the grace of God in order to sell it. Rather, they bought back the entire world by the blood of Christ. The apostles were not allowed to receive earthly money for the grace of Christ, because they bestowed on the believers the treasures of heaven. It had been said to them in the gospel: "You have received freely, so give freely." If someone seeks the honors and offices of this world, they are made remarkable <…>, how could the apostles sell the honor of heavenly grace, which they had received freely? Hence he rightly said to Simon: "Let your money and

4 Matthew 10:8.
5 The manuscript text is continuous here, but the ideas make no sense. It seems a lacuna is appropriate.
you be destroyed, since you thought you could purchase grace with money. In this affair, there is no part or lot for you." And although Simon was unworthy of heavenly grace and guilty of the most serious charges, Saint Peter, however, showed him the way to repair his salvation. For he added: "Repent from you wickedness, and pray to the Lord; perhaps this memory of your heart can be forgiven. I see that you are in the bond of iniquity and the bitterness of gall." Regarding the Holy Apostle, he wants none to perish, and so he showed him the path of salvation. But Simon’s mind was so blinded by this treachery that not only did he not repent at all of such a crime, but he even committed many more crimes thereafter against the apostles and the church of Christ, as the book of Acts tells.

5. In this, we know clearly that the raven who, long ago, was sent out from the ark of Noah to be lost is a type of Simon. He had been received into the ark of Noah, which is the church of Christ, when he believed and was baptized. But afterwards, after his baptism, he was unwilling to be changed by the grace of Christ, and so, being unworthy, was sent out to his loss. The ark of Noah, which is the church of Christ, cannot hold onto people like this. In fact, even Judas Iscariot was received into this ark; but because he did not deserve to be changed, or rather, he remained like a raven in the blackness of his sin, and he was sent out from the boat of the apostles, like the ark of Noah, bringing upon himself the flood of eternal death.

Hence let us beg the Lord Jesus that none of us be found a raven in the church of the Lord and perish, since we have been sent outside of it. A raven is any impure

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7 Acts 8:22-23.
person, any pagan, any heretic, who does not deserve to be in the church of Christ. If any of us are still a raven in mind, which I do not believe, he should pray to the Lord, so that he might me changed from a raven into a dove, that is to say from unclean to clean, from profane to faithful, from unchaste to pure, from heretic to catholic. In fact, god can make a dove from a raven, he who changed water to wine, and who, as it is written, raised sons of Abraham from the stones. Otherwise, we cannot continue to remain in the church of Christ, unless we are made into spiritual doves.

6. In fact, long ago, the dove sent from the ark returned at once to that same ark. Whoever is a spiritual dove cannot withdraw from the church of Christ. Do you want to know which ravens the Lord made into doves? Consider the thief who was crucified with Christ, he was a raven completely blackened by his sins. But after he confessed Christ on the cross, he was changed form a raven to a dove, that is from unclean to clean, from blasphemer to confessor, from thief of the devil into a martyr of the church. Therefore, do you want, o man, to be a dove? Be in the church of the Lord without the gall of malice; be without the bitterness of sin and you will rightly be called a dove of the Lord. For by nature, the dove has no gall or bitterness. But, if you should remain in the impurity of the flesh or in the blackness of sins like the raven, even if you should lie hidden within the church, you are outside of it. You seem inside from a human perspective, but in the eyes of God from whom nothing in hidden, you would find that you are outside. Let us throw out, therefore, all the blackness of sins from our hearts, all the uncleanness of the flesh and all the bitterness of malice, so that truly we may merit being always in the ark of Noah, which is the church of Christ. Then it may be said of us
what is written: “Who are these, who fly as clouds and who come to me as doves with their young?”

7. Finally, the Ethiopian eunuch was also found to be a dove in the present reading, as you, dearly beloved, heard. He had come to Jerusalem and, returning, he was sitting in his chariot, reading the prophecy of Isaiah when the Spirit said to Phillip, “Go near and stand by the chariot.” And he went and stood near, and Phillip said to him: “Do you think you understand what you are reading?” And the eunuch said: “How can I understand, if there is no one to explain the scriptures to me?” And when Phillip sat with him, he explained the prophecy of scripture that he had read, showing and indicating the Lord Jesus Christ. And when Phillip had explained this to him, at once the Eunuch believed him and said to Phillip: “Here is water; what is there which prevents me from being baptized?” Phillip said to him: “If you believe, you may. And he said: I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. And they descended into the water, and Phillip baptized him.”

8. Therefore, this eunuch was chosen as a dove, but Simon the magician was rejected as a raven. This is because one believed with his all his heart and all his faith, but the other came doubtful in spirit and full of treachery. For this reason, the one was received, the other rejected. One esteemed, one damned. Therefore, since we have been called to the knowledge of god, to the grace of Christ, with all our heart and all our faith we ought to believe in Christ in order that we will not be rejected with those full of

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8 Isaiah 60:8.
10 Acts 8:36-38.
doubt and impiety, but merit to be received with the saints and elect of God into future 
glory by Christ the Lord. Amen.
SERMON 3: ON THE CENTURION CORNELIUS AND ON SIMON PETER

1. How much piety the centurion Cornelius had for God you, dearly beloved, have heard. This man, although he was still a pagan, applied himself to fasting and prayer. Hence he rightly merited to see an angel of the Lord in his house, saying to him, just as the present reading retold: “Cornelius, your prayers have been heard, and your alms have risen as a memorial before God.”¹ But I do not know whether any of us deserves to hear this from the angel, we who are devoted neither to fasting, nor to prayers, not to almsgiving. Fasting has been prescribed recently, but few have fasted. People proceed to church and attend to idle talk or earthly business rather than to prayers. The poor complain of their lack and their need, but no alms are given. And we are astonished if we have to suffer different tribulations, when we all have a hardened spirit. Let us then amend our negligent ways and return to the Lord with our whole heart. Let us persevere in fasting and prayer and almsgiving in order that we might deserve to hear what the angel said to Cornelius: “Your prayers have been heard, and your alms have risen as a memorial before God.”

2. But perhaps some say that they are unable to fast on account of their stomachs. But is it on account of your stomach that you do not give alms? Give alms, and redeem your fasting persevere in prayer, purifying you spirit, and it shall be credited to you as fasting. But if you do none of these things, how can you think that you will be without sin in the time to come, how can you believe that the Lord will bless you, when you do not liste to this precept of the Lord. Therefore it was said to Cornelius by the angel: “Your prayers have been heard, and your alms have risen as a memorial before

God.” If, therefore, we wish our prayers to be heard by the Lord, we ought to commit ourselves to good works and almsgiving, just as even Saint Cornelius did, who deserved to be heard by the Lord. And more so, Saint Cornelius, when he persisted in his prayers, was still a gentile; for not yet had he believed in Christ. Cornelius is presented to us as very blessed, since he, who even before believed in Christ, fulfilled the commands of Christ. Thus, it is appropriate that such a man as he was the first to believe from the gentiles.

3. Of Cornelius, the Lord had already shown to Saint Peter a figure, where he said: “Go to the sea, and throw in a hook. Take the first fish you find, and open his mouth and you will find a gold coin.” We know that this had been fulfilled by Cornelius. For he himself was the first fish to come out of the sea on the hook of Peter, because he was the first, during the time Peter was preaching, to believe out of the gentiles. In the hook, the preaching of the divine word as signified, which Saint Peter was commanded to take to the people of the gentiles, just as the sea. Of which, Cornelius was, happily, the first taken. For he, as I said, during the teaching of Peter, was the first from the gentiles to believe. Finally, in his mouth, before he was caught by Peter, was found a gold coin. For even before he believed, he kept the justice of God according to the natural law, serving God by fasting, prayer and almsgiving.

4. Thus, when Saint Cornelius, even before he had the faith, was serving God so faithfully, Peter, it says, was in Joppa, staying with Simon the tanner. “And around the sixth hour, he went up on the roof to pray. And when he prayed, suddenly he began to

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2 Chromatius attaches Saint very liberally. Ambrose and Augustine are more conservative in their usage. Cesarius of Arles follows Chromatius in this matter.

3 Matthew 17:27.
hunger. And a trance fell upon him. And he say an object descending from heaven, a
great white cloth, tied at the four corners, and in it were all kinds of four-footed animals,
reptiles, wild beasts and birds of heaven. And a voice came to him saying: ‘Peter, get
up, kill and eat.’ And he said: ‘By no means, Lord, for no common or unclean thing has
ever entered my mouth.’ And the voice said to him: ‘What the Lord has made clean, do
not call common.’” It continues: “This happened three times, and the vessel was
received into heaven. And behold, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the house of
Simon, asking is Peter was staying there. And the Spirit said to Peter: Go down and go
with these men without doubting, because I sent them.”⁴ Peter was shown this
revelation by the Lord for the reason that Christ was calling all the gentiles to his grace,
so that Peter did not hold the gentiles who would believe as impure and unworthy, when
there had been more Jews who had stood out as corrupt while having the law, than the
diverse peoples who had sinned without the law. Certainly, it was incorrect that the
coming of Christ profited only the Jews with salvation. For he wanted to suffer, he who
was creator of the world and lord of the universe, in order to save the entire human race
and give them life. Indeed, the death of Christ became the redemption of the entire
world.

5. But now, let us consider the circumstances of this revelation and its mysterious
properties. It is not reported to us without a reason that Peter went up the roof to pray at
the sixth hour. Was there nowhere in the house that Peter could pray? Or was it that he,
who continually kept the fast, became very hunger and impatient of food at the sixth

hour of prayer? Both mysterious and spiritual are the meaning of these acts. Let us look at each in turn.

Saint Peter, for the sake of prayer, went up on the top of the house. In the high place, clearly, because, by his faith, he sought the things above. He could not stay in the lower places, whose conversation was in heaven, as the apostle said: “But our conversation is in heaven.”\(^5\) Listen to what the Lord said in the gospel: “Let him who is on the roof not come down to take those things which are in his house.”\(^6\) The one on the roof is he whose life is heavenly and who has been removed from earthly conversation. It is of such people that the Lord commanded not to come down from the roof or their house. This means they should not forsake the life above to return to earth, that is the desires of our house, the earth, to fleshly desires, to worldly selfishness.

6. When he was on the roof, Peter, at the sixth hour, began to hunger. Clearly Peter, as the reading told, was not hungering for earthly food, but for the food of human salvation, because the salvation of believers is the nourishment of the saints. In fact, it was the sixth hour when he hungered; it could not have been any other time that he hungered but in the sixth hour. For in the sixth hour the Lord was crucified, by which the apostles began to have a hunger for the salvation of humanity. Thus, Peter was hungry not for earthly food, but to save the souls of those who believe in Christ. That this is so, the reading declared in order. For Peter saw immediately a vessel coming down from heaven, a great white sheet tied in the four corners, in which were all kinds of four-footed animals, reptiles, and wild beasts. Then it was said to him: “Get up, Peter, kill

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\(^5\) Philemon 3:20.

\(^6\) Matthew 24:17.
and eat.”⁷ In this vessel that he saw coming down from heaven, a sign of the church was shown, which truly descends from heaven, as John says in the Apocalypse: “And I saw a New Jerusalem coming down from heaven.”⁸ Therefore, this kind of vessel was contained by four corners because the preaching of the gospel, on which the church rests, is fourfold. The great and beautiful sheet is shown to us as such because the church of Christ is white and beautiful, having the beauty of heavenly life and the whiteness of saving baptism. Peter recounted that he saw in the vessel all kinds of different animals, which were four-footed animals, beasts, serpents and birds of heaven. This is because the church of Christ received all the believers who came to it out of the entire human race. For a long time, we were four-footed animals, when, as animals, without any notion of our salvation, we were living in this world and looking forward not to heaven but to earth. We were savage beasts when we plundered the goods of strangers and gratified our anger by biting and attacking innocents just as beasts with the teeth of malice and iniquity. And we were serpents, when our language divided by deceit and poison. We were birds when we were wandering to and fro with a divided mind.

7. But what was said to Peter? “Get up, kill and eat.”⁹ We are not able to participate in the food of salvation unless we die to the former life. In general, it is st vain and foolish to believe that the Lord was ordering Peter to eat serpents and wild beasts. As if, during his time of prayer, Peter had with him an earthly sword! Clearly Saint Peter had with him a sword, but divine, which is the Holy Spirit, through which he received the

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⁸ Revelation 21:2.
command to sacrifice. This sword, the Holy Spirit, kills in us by its sharpness the savagery of malice, the desires of the flesh and of the blood, if we merit to die to this world by such a sword, then we can live for God!

8. Finally, Peter said: “By no means, Lord, for no common or unclean thing has ever entered my mouth.” And the voice said from heaven: “What the Lord has made clean, do not call common.” We are cleaned in coming to the Church of Christ of all uncleanness, by faith and by his grace through his mercy. And it recounts that the vessel came down from heaven three times and then it was received again. This is because we are unable to be cleansed or purified from sin except by the mystery of the Trinity. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, the grace of baptism is delivered; we are made clean from all the stain of our sins. Recognizing the great mercy which has been given to us so that we might, despite our unworthiness, be called to his grace, we ought to live and converse piously and justly in the sight of Christ. Then, when he comes in glory, we will not be put with the impious or the unclean, but with the saints and elect of God, who will receive the promises of the kingdom of heaven and the reward of eternal life. Amen.

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SERMON 4: ON THE TRADERS CAST OUT OF THE TEMPLE

1. When he went to the temple of the Jews, our Lord and Savior saw an illegal business happening, that is, those that sold the sheep, oxen and doves, and the changers of money sitting there, as we heard in the present reading, he made a whip of cords, and he cast them all out, and he overturned the chairs of those that sold, saying to them: “My house will be called a house of prayer and you have made it a house of business.”¹ The Jews, forgetting their divine religion and faith, had made in the temple of God a house of business. For that reason they were all cast out, and cast out by a whip of cords. In that whip of cords is signified, according to what Solomon tells us, “A cord of three is not easily broken.”² This cord of three undoubtedly represents the Trinity, which cannot be broken because faith in the Trinity is incorruptible. This is the faith which the heretics frequently tried to corrupt; but they corrupted only themselves. True faith in the trinity must necessarily remain uncorrupted. As Solomon rightly said, “A triple cord cannot be corrupted.

2. So with such a whip of cords all those who act against the law were driven from the temple of the Lord because all those who conduct themselves in a manner prohibited are condemned by none other than the ruling trinity. While the chairs of those who sold doves were destroyed, the ones who sit in their chairs with the air to teach the people as if they were invested with the authority of the high priest. The chairs of the Synagogue have been destroyed so that the chairs of the Church can be sanctified in Christ. The priestly honor has been removed from the synagogue and given to the

¹ Matthew 21:13 (John 2:16).
² Ecclesiastes 4:12.
Church. For the synagogue no longer merits to possess the priestly duty because it did not receive the Lord Christ, namely the chief Priest.

But let us see, or rather, let us beware, lest any man among us be found to sell the sheep or oxen or doves in the temple of the Lord. Sellers of sheep who declare innocent those that pay; sellers of oxen who disperse the grace of God for a bribe, while the scripture says, “You have received freely, give freely.” This is why the ruined money changers in the temple are shown; so that those who do the work of God for money may think.

3. Indeed, the church is called a ‘house of business,’ but a house of spiritual business, where not earthly but heavenly wealth is leant; it is not obtained on the interest of an earthly coin, but on the interest of the heavenly kingdom. In short, we read a saying of the Lord in the Gospel: “Why didst you not give my money to the table of the money changers, so that I also may come and collected it with interest would?” Each day, the Church of God lends to us money in the form of the divine word, the heavenly doctrine. We make a profit of it if we return it to the Lord with interest of salvation and faith. The apostles did all their business with this money, and they gained the entire world for God.

4. When our Lord and savior had driven out of the temple all those unlawful vendors, the Jews said to him, as we heard in our reading: “What sign do you show us that allows you to do these things?” He responded to them, “Destroy this temple and I will rebuild it in three days.” And they said to him: “This temple took forty six years to

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3 Matthew 10:8.
4 Matthew 25:27.
build, and you, in three days, will raise it?” And the evangelist adds, “But he was speaking of the temple of his body.”

How great is the unbelief and the treachery of the Jews! They saw heavenly signs and divine miracles performed, and they demanded a sign from the Lord. They had only been given the small signs of a virgin giving birth, shepherds had heard voices of the heavenly army singing of the birth of the Lord, adored the Lord as a child in a manger, and a new star. But even more than birth, the Lord offers his resurrection as a sign, saying, “Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days.” But when the Lord has spoken of the temple of his body, the Jews thought he was speaking about a temple of stone. Of course, it is no wonder if the Jews of a temple made of stone misunderstood this saying of the Lord, who in all things have a heart made of stone. But the Lord spoke thus not about a temple of stone, but the temple of his own body. For the proper temple of God is the body of Christ, in which the majesty of the Lord deigns to reside. And more, it was said that the temple was built in forty-six years because the name of Adam when written contains the Greek language equivalent of the number forty-six. The temple which was broken down in the passion, the Lord raised up on the third day, because on the third day he rose again in the body, victor over death.

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6 John 2:19 (Matthew 26:61).
SERMON 5: ON THE WORDS OF THE LORD: BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

1. In order to give his disciples the blessing of heaven, the Lord took them up a mountain with him. This is reported to you in the present reading of the Gospel. “Jesus went up onto a mountain with his disciples, and, when he had extended his hand over them, he said, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.’” And so on.¹ Not without reason did our Lord and Savior give his blessing to his disciples on a mountain. Certainly not of the ground, but on a mountain; not in the lower places, but in the higher. Therefore, if you want to receive heavenly blessings from the Lord, climb the mountain, that is seek the life above, and you will deservedly obtain the blessings desired. But if you act in an earthy way and live in an earthly way, you will not be able to receive a blessing from the Lord. For it is not written without reason, “For He is the God of mountains not of valleys.”²

2. Certainly, God is the God of every place and every creature, because it is He who created all and made all. But these words of the prophet have a great spiritual depth, that “He is the God of mountains and not of valleys.” For God has deigned to be the God of these men and women who are raised by the faithfulness of their merits to high and heavenly regions in the manner of mountains, that is in the manner of all the saints. The Patriarchs are mountains, the prophets – mountains, the apostles mountains, and the martyrs, mountains. Our God is presented as the God of all the saints, Hence we read the words of the Lord, “I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” And he adds, “I am not the God of the dead but of the

¹ Matthew 5:1.
² I Kings 20:28.
living.” By no means does God deign to be God of the valleys, that is of sinful and unfaithful men, who like the valleys will be drowned at the bottom. The faithless and sinful do not deserve to have our God as their God, Him of whom they despise and ignore the faith and knowledge. According to his divine power, He is God of all his creatures, for he is creator of all of them. But according to his favor and grace, He is revealed to those who guard his precepts faithfully.

3. Finally, that mountain on which the Lord granted blessings to his disciples presents a type for the church, which is compared to a mountain because its way of life is in the heights; and as a great mountain it will press down the earth, which is earthly life, not with a load of rock, but with the weight of sanctity. Do you want proof that the mountain signifies the church? Listen to what the divine scripture says: “Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord and who can stand in his holy sanctuary?” Of course it cannot be an earthly mountain about which it is said, “Who can ascend the mountain of the Lord?” for this kind of earthly mountains, not only people but also beasts are wont to climb on. But he speaks properly of the mountain of God, of the heavenly mountain which is the church; only the blessed reach its heights of faith and heavenly life. One climbs such a mountain, not with the exertions of the body, but with the faith of the inner mind.

4. And so let us always remain on this highest mountain of faith, acting spiritually in order to merit to receive the Lord’s blessings of the Gospel, where it is said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is yours” and so on. They are ‘poor in

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3 Psalms 24:3.
4 Matthew 5:3.
spirit’ among whom there is no pride of the devil, they are not puffed up by a swelling of malice, but keep themselves with a humble spirit in good faith. Certainly, they are also poor in spirit because they keep away from riches of the world, from a thirst for the world, and from all worldly thoughts. Such people as these are happy, This is demonstrated by the saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the Kingdom of Heaven is yours.” For the people of this world, they seem poor, but they are rich for God. They do not have the riches of the world, but they possess the blessing of heaven. They do not enjoy the riches of this world, but they receive the riches of heaven and the treasures of immortality without end. And so, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs, the Lord declares in his saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is yours.” Such a blessed poverty and overflowing with such a great gift! In this poverty the apostles were glorified first, who seized the heavenly riches.

5. Consequently, if we are poor in this world, we should not be depressed, because the sacred apostles were poor in this world. Do you want to become rich out of poverty, or rather in your very poverty to be rich? Be just, be faithful, be pious, be charitable, and with God you will have great riches, which neither the treasury, nor the thief, nor even death can snatch away. Therefore we have great savings in heavenly riches, if we preserve the commandments of the Lord and the faith of Christ, then these riches are eternal. And so, hear what the prophet Tobias said to his son: “Certainly my sons, we lead a poor life; yet we have all good things if you fear God.”

Therefore, let us fear God with all our heart, and we will merit to possess all good things.

5 Tobit 4:23.
SERMON 6: ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW, WHERE HE SAYS: THE LIGHT OF YOUR BODY IS THE EYE

1. After having instructed his disciples greatly in heavenly matters, our Lord and Savior said in the present reading as your love just heard: “The light of your body is your eye. If you eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light. If your eye is bad, your whole body will be wicked.”¹ The light of the body is understood as the sense of intelligence and the faith of the heart. And if in us this is clear and bright, without doubt all our bodies will be illuminated. This is why the light is presented as a symbol of faith, for just as light illuminates the steps of those walking at night, lest they fall into pits or stumble over some obstacle, just as in this world of night, the brightness of the whole of our life of faith illumines the steps, with the light of truth leading, we are prevented from falling into the pits of sins or on the stumbling blocks of the devil. And so Judas Iscariot, who did not have the light of faith in his heart, fell into the pit of eternal death, while for the Lord of life, he received the reward of death.

2. And for that reason he added: “If your eye is bad, your whole body will be wicked.” Bad are the eyes of those whose mind is on wicked things and whose faith is perverse; who walk not in light, but in darkness. Of them, John wrote in his epistle: “Whoever hates his brother, in him is darkness, and he walks in darkness, because the darkness has blinded his eyes, and he does not know where he walks. However, whoever loves his brother, he remains in light, just as he himself is in the light.”² But we can perceive that the eye of the body, which is the most sensitive of its members, also signifies the head of the Church. If your faith is clear and if your way of life shines

¹ Matthew 6:22-23.
² I John 2:10-11.
brightly, without a doubt the whole body of the Church is illuminated. But if the teacher is perverse and has been a heretic, he is clearly a teacher of this kind, his life an example of his infidelity, the whole body can be effect by this darkness. For the true light of faith is not able to shine in such a people, in which the darkness of the error of the night has dwelt.

3. And rightly so the Lord added in the present reading: “No one can serve two masters. Either hating one and loving the other; or cleaving to one and despising the other.” And adding more: “You cannot serve God and Mammon.”3 He shows us two masters here, God and the devil. But God is the true Lord; the devil is a false master. But as much as there is a difference between true and false, there is so great a difference between the Lord and the other. The true Lord is the creator of nature; the false one, the devil alters nature. One is the author of salvation, the other the author of destruction. One leads men to heaven; the other drowns them in hell. One draws me into death; the other redeems into life.

4. And God, indeed, even though he is Lord of all because all things were created by Him, and he has dominion over all things flowing from the law of his power and the virtue of his nature. However, he deigns to be Master of those who faithfully serve the commandments of the Lord and guard them. But the devil, we understand to be the master of those whom he has seduced from the true God and father and subjected to a most terrible slavery of sin and by the control of his iniquity, he is made their master under a perverted law.

For this reason therefore, the devil is perversely called master. Whence it is not without reason that the prophet calls him partridge. For it is written: “The Partridge will cry and gather together those little ones whom were not her own; but in the last days, they will abandon it and in the end she will be a fool.”\(^4\) But we ought to know why the devil is called a partridge. The partridge, namely the earthly bird, attracts the chicks of another with its seductive voice and boasts of these young birds that belong to another, as if they were her own young. But as soon as these same seduced little ones recognize the voice of their true parent, at once they leave the false father and follow the true parent. So also we were seduced a while ago by the persuading voice of the false parent the devil. But after we recognize the voice of God, the true parent, by the preaching of the gospel then we leave behind the devil, the false parent, in order to follow our father, the true and eternal God.

5. There is another reason why the devil has the name ‘partridge.’ When it sees men from a distance, the partridge cover itself with leaves, lest he be seen. So also the devil covers the cunning of his malice, like under foliage, lest the fraud be understood so easily by men. Hence these words of Paul: “We are not ignorant of his wickedness.”\(^5\) Therefore, just as a false father, so also the devil is shown to be a false master, because in both we recognize the seducer. But unhappy is the soul which has such a master and such a father. But whoever follows such a master does not deserve to have the true God as master. For this reason the Lord said in the gospel: “You cannot serve God and mammon.” Therefore, if we serve the works of justice, if we obey the divine

\(^4\) Jeremiah 17:11.

\(^5\) 2 Corinthians 2:11.
precepts, without a doubt we have God as master, for we are slaves of his will. On the other hand, if we serve the works of injustice, luxury, avarice, inchastity, fornication, then we submit ourselves to the domination of the devil, and we render sterile the passion of Christ who freed us from the unjust domination of the devil. But let the Lord preserve us, not allowing us to turn from the dominion of Christ to that of the devil, for when the Son of God deigned to suffer and be crucified for us so that he might deliver us from the profane dominion of the devil. Consequently being the author of our life and our salvation, we ought to faithfully serve in all things, so that we might come to the dominion of kingdom of heaven. Amen.
Today is the heavenly birth of the martyrs Felix and Fortunatus, who adorn our city with their glorious martyrdom…
SERMON 8: FOR THE ASCENSION

1. The solemnity of the present day holds the grace of a great festival. For forty days after the resurrection, which your love heard in the present reading, our lord and savior, present in the sight of his disciples ascended with his body into heaven. For he was received into a cloud, the eyes of the disciples watching as the present reading recounted, and so he ascended into heaven. The clouds hastened to serve Christ, not to help him, but to present to Christ a service, and to display the service due to its Lord and creator. Ascending into heaven, Christ had no need of the help of a cloud, He who had created clouds with the world. So he says through Solomon, speaking in the role of Wisdom: “When he prepared the clouds, I was there; and when he fixed the clouds above, I was settled before Him.”

2. Indeed, the Son of God now ascended into the clouds to heaven to the stupefied astonishment of the apostles, as the present lecture retold, but he ascended now not for the first time. For since the beginning of the world, he himself has descended often from heaven and ascended. But now for the first time he ascended to heaven with a body. And this is why the apostles wondered, because Christ ascended to heaven with a body when he had descended without one. But was it a surprise that the apostles were in wonderment when the powers of heaven were also astonished? For this is what Isaiah revealed when he spoke in the role of the citizen of heaven: “Who is this that comes out of Edom? The red of his clothes comes from Bosor. He is beautiful in his robe, beautiful like the full pool of the winepress.” We interpret Edom as ‘earth’ and Bosor as ‘flesh.’ This then seemed to the angels to be a wonderful thing that

\[1 \text{ Proverbs 8:27-28.}\]
he, who had been born on the earth to a virgin according to the fleshly nature and had been seen to suffer and die in the body, ascended to heaven with his body. Also we must make mention of the winepress, in order to demonstrate the suffering on the cross that the lord suffered. For in the passion of the cross, Christ has been crushed as on the wood of a wine press so that he might pour out his sacred blood for us. It is why the red of the clothes is said to “come from Bosor.” Because he is shown to be “beautiful in his robes.” The red of the clothes pertain to the flowing of his blood; the appearance of the robe to the glory of the resurrection, because in this body he arose gloriously from the dead, having shed his glorious blood for us. This is what the Church says of Christi in Song of Songs: “My brother is white and red.” He is called red on account of his fleshly passion; white on account of his glorious resurrection. For he, who was shown as cast away and humbled in his passion, appeared in his resurrection as bright and glorious. Jeremiah also demonstrates for us this mystery of the divine and the flesh in Christ when he says: “The breasts will disappear from the rocks or the snows from Lebanon.” In the ‘breasts of rocks’ he reveals his incarnation from a virgin, but in the snow of Lebanon he displays the whiteness of the divine light. And so we he was transfigured on a mountain, as we read in the gospel, his clothes became just like snow, because the clarity of his glory shown forth. It is not without reasons also that it is said of Christ above: “The red of his clothes comes from Bosor.” Not a single garment, but ‘clothes.’ For Christ is the prince of martyrs; and for that reason it is said of him: “The red of his clothes comes from Bosor,” because he is surrounded by a crown of martyrs like clothes of red.

2 Jeremiah 18:14.
3. But let us return to the subject at hand. For even the heavenly virtues marveled at the ascension of Christ into heaven, saying: “Who is this that comes out of Edom? The red of his clothes comes from Bosor. He is beautiful in his robe, beautiful like the full pool of the winepress.” For, in fact, the heavenly powers saw a new thing: the Son of God ascending with body into heaven. And they said for that reason: “Who is this that comes out of Edom?” It was astonishing for the angels, for the supernatural powers, because he is flesh about which it had been said to Adam: “Dust you are, and unto dust you shall return,” henceforth he was not dust, but his body ascended to heaven. What profit does the devil take from his wickedness? Our earthly body, which he did not want to see reigning in paradise, reigns in heaven. For the ascension of the Lord to heaven was, indeed, the astonishment and happiness of the angels and the joy of the entire world; but for the devil it was confusion and his true condemnation. David also revealed this admiration of the angels for the ascension of the Lord to heaven in the psalm, when speaking in the role of the angels he pronounces these wonderful words: “Lift up your gates, o Princes; be opened, eternal gates, and let the King of Glory enter. The Lord is strong and mighty in battle.” For the supernatural powers were stupefied, the angels who were present at the resurrection of the Lord marveled, and they called out back and forth so that the gates of heaven might be opened for the Victor Christ returning to heaven after his battle of his passion. For he had conquered the devil, conquered death, destroyed sin, put to rout the legions of demons and arose victor of death.

3 Genesis 3:19.
4. Therefore Christ ascended to heaven with his body after the triumph of his passion and the victor of the cross. The angels rendered to Him the service to which he was due. When Christ ascended with his body to heaven, some angels preceded him, other followed, displaying appropriate obedience to so great a king and so great a victor. If after a victory all run with praises to meet a human king, how more do all the angels and heavenly virtues have to run to meets Christ, the eternal king, who as conqueror ascended to heaven with his body after he triumphed over the devil and vanquished death.

Nor should it be a surprise that the angels and heavenly powers came out to greet Christ returning to heaven, when the Father himself came to meet him, just as the present Psalm shows when it speaks in the role of the Son to the Father: “You have held my right hand, in your will you have lead me, and you have received me in glory.”\(^5\)

For the Father received with glory the Son returning to heaven, which he placed in his right hand just as it says in the psalm: “The Lord said to my lord: Sit by my right hand.”\(^6\)

For how could the love of the Father be greater, or the glory bestowed any more powerful than to sit in the right hand of the Father? And for that reason the psalmist rightly adds in the present psalm, in the role of the Son: “For what remains in heaven? And what, besides you, do I desire on the earth?”\(^7\)

For he wanted to suffer on earth and received death in the passion in order to save the human race. He wanted to ascend with his body to heaven. He sits at the right hand of the Father. Therefore the throne of

\(^5\) Psalms 110:1.

\(^6\) Psalms 73:25.

\(^7\) Psalms 73:24.
the majesty of the Father and Son is one because there is no difference in honor
between the Father and the Son, no distinction of dignity, but love of piety alone

Since the flesh of our nature ascended to heaven this day in the body of Christ,
we ought to celebrate the solemnity of this day. And we ought to act in the present life,
so that in the future life, in the heavenly kingdom, we may deserve to be made
partakers in glory of the body of Christ.
SERMON 9: ON PSALM 13, OF FOOLS AND MADMEN

1. In this psalm, the prophet complains in these terms, “The fool has said in his heart, there is no God. They are corrupt and make themselves cursed in their sins.”

We see here that many fools lived in the past period, which did not believe in the existence of God, or said they did not. But most of all, the prophet complains of the folly and infidelity of the Jewish people. Moreover, in the thirteenth psalm the prophet clearly shows us the personality of the same Jewish people; for Ishmael, son of Abraham, who prefigured the Jewish people in all manners, when he was thirteen years old, took the sign of circumcision. Just as in the tenth psalm, for the sake of the Ten Commandments of the law, the person of the people of the Church is clarified, because it fulfills the precepts of the Law, thus, in this Psalm, the thirteenth, the type of the Jewish people is proved, that Ishmael, because, as we have said, when he was thirteen years old, took the sign of circumcision.

In short, as it is said in the tenth psalm of the persona of the people of the church, “In the Lord,” he says, “I put my trust; how can you say to my soul: flee to the mountain like a bird,” in the sparrow is signified a transgressor or apostate, who left the house of God, which is the church, to flee to the mountains, that is, to cross over to the worship of idols. The Jewish people had done so a while ago, who left the temple of God, which was at Jerusalem, to offer sacrifices in the mountains, as the prophetic scriptures reveal. But the people of the church: who are confident in the Lord, cannot be carried away to the mountains in this way, which he makes quite clear by saying: “In the

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1 In the modern bible, this is now Psalm 14.
2 Psalms 14:1.
3 Psalms 11:1.
Lord I put my trust; how can you say to my soul: flee to the mountain like a bird.” The witnesses are to us finally, so many martyrs, who, when they were forced to pass over the mountains of this kind, that is, to the worship of the idols in times of persecution, they, more easily than from the body of Christ, departed from the faith; more easily from the world than from the church of God. For the martyrs are not carried away in their death from the church of Christ; rather they receive it, considering it as death for Christ’s sake, as it allows them to remain perpetually in the Church of Christ. Because death of the martyrs is the beauty of the Church and a crown of virtue.

2. Of the people, therefore, of the Church, this saying is a prophecy. But as for what he says about the Jewish people, he heard in the present reading Your Choosing, “The fool has said in his heart: There is no God.” And how we see. As soon as they were out of Egypt, the same thing: the people of the Jews ... did not believe in the Lord with their hearts. And as Moses was long on the mountain, they made themselves a calf to adore, saying: “These are your gods, O Israel, which led you out of Egypt.”\(^4\) Certainly if they had believed in God with their hearts, they would never have offered prayers, after such great acts of God, to things made by hands of men. Therefore the people of the Jews in all things it is shown are foolish and unwise, while they also, leaving the living and true God, desiring the gods of the nations; while holding in contempt the heavenly manna, they desired the cucumbers, the melons, and the flesh of the Egyptians; They think more of the servitude of Egypt than the freedom of good faith; more of the wonders of the demons than the wonderful works of God.

\(^4\) Exodus 32:4.
3. But to their folly, most of all, the same people of the Jews betrayed him in the night when he saw the wisdom of God Christ is come in the flesh, and refused to know him; with the divine agency thereof, and they had contempt in the hearing of him and for his wonderful works. The blind received their sight, the deaf heard, the lame were healed, the paralyzed were healed, the lepers were cleansed, the dead were raised, and amid all this the same people of the Jews were great fools, while they are not to be moved to the faith of Christ by the wondrous works, and not only would not be moved, but in addition, rose up to the condemnation of the Lord and Savior. Hence, it is not without reason that following in this same psalm <…>. Thus, it says this: “Their throat is an open tomb; they have dealt deceitfully with their tongues, the poison of asps is under their lips.”\(^5\) If we reflect, we will observe why he says, “their throat is an open tomb.” The tomb does not contain in it anything except bodies of the dead. Thus rightly are the Jews compared to a tomb, just as a tomb holds nothing except the bodies of the dead, thus also the Jews <…> the dead works of the flesh and soul, have become tombs in their own lives, containing within the squalor and filth of sins. Do you want o understand why the Jews are called tombs? Listen to the saying of the Lord in the gospel to the scribes and Pharisees: “Woe to You! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which appear to men beautiful on the outside but on the inside are filled with dead bodies and all kinds of squalor. And so you appear to men just outwardly, but within you are full of perversity and iniquity.”\(^6\)

\(^5\) Psalms 14:3.

4. And so it is clear, according to the words of the Lord, the Jews are properly called ‘open tombs’ and ‘fools in their hearts.’ But we ought to consider this point: the psalm says not only of ‘throat,’ but “Their throat is an open tomb.” Assuredly we observe that this is not said without reason. For those waiting for death shall be call ‘empty tomb.’ Rightly then are the throats of Jews called empty tombs, because they also open their mouth and welcomed the death of the Savior, saying to Pilate: “Crucify, Crucify!”

Hence it is not without reason that in the present Psalm, the word of the prophet testifies that they are also serpents: “they have dealt deceitfully with their tongues, the poison of asps is under their lips.” Hence in the gospel, John reproaches their impiety, saying: “Serpents, you breed of vipers, who describes to you how to flee from the wrath to come?”

They are not called serpents in general, but specifically, a “breed of vipers.” For among serpents, the race of vipers is the only kind which is not born from an egg, but break out of their mother’s womb. And once the children are born, at once they murder their mother. And so now the Jews are called the children of vipers because, by reason of their impiety, they killed their mother, the synagogue. What do I say about the mother? Nor did they spare their own children when they said: “His blood be upon us and upon our children.”

5. Since the Jewish people were to become such a great sacrilege, the prophet cries out correctly in the end of psalm: “Who will give salvation to Israel out of Zion?

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8 Matthew 23:33.
9 Aristotle, History of Animals, V:34; Pliny, Natural History, X:62.
10 Matthew 27:25
When the Lord turns back his people from captivity.”¹¹ In this clearly the psalmist prayed for the coming of our Lord and Savior. He knew that otherwise the human race could not be liberated from the captivity of the devil, except through the incarnation of Christ. For that reason, he adds: “Who will give salvation to Israel out of Zion?” For he who deigned to be born of a virgin in order to save the human race, gave not only salvation. For having thrown down the devil and defeated death, he liberated us from our captivity in the hands of the devil, so as to make us sons of God and co-heirs of his glory.

6. Thus it is not without reason that the prophet adds at the ends of the psalm: “Let Jacob rejoice and let Israel be glad.”¹² Not certainly the fleshly Jacob or Israel which has appeared rebellious and impious against its Lord and Savior, but the spiritual Jacob, namely the people of the church, which we are. For long ago, because of his faith, the patriarch Jacob received both of these names. For the patriarch Jacob, when he was coming out of his mother’s womb, supplanted his brother and was called Jacob. Later on, because he received the blessing of the first born, he was called Israel. We know by clear reason that both these names are correctly for us. For first, when we come to belief and are born out of the womb of our mother, the church, we are made Jacob, that is supplanters. For we supplant by our faith the prior treachery of our brothers, that is the Jews, and thus from the less, we are made first. And if we believe, we receive the birthright of our brother, because we believe in the first born son of God in whom the Jewish people were not willing to believe. And so we are called Israel, that is ‘those who have seen God’ in spirit, because we look at the only begotten son of

¹¹ Psalm 14:7a
¹² Psalm 14:7b
God, who was born for our salvation with the eyes of faith. To whom be honor, glory and power, world without end. Amen.
SERMON 10: ON THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW WHERE IT SPEAKS OF A KING WHO MADE A WEDDING FEAST FOR HIS SON

1. By his many and diverse parables, Our Lord and Savior proved the Pharisees and chiefs of the Jews guilty. After the parable of the father who leased his vineyard to tenants, he presents in the present reading a parable of a king who makes a wedding feast for his son, which your love heard: “And he sent his servants out so that they might request those that were invited to come to the wedding feast. But they did not want to come; they went away, some to the country, others to his business. Others laid hands on His servants, and overcome by violence, killed him.”

2. In this present parable, we realize that the king who makes a marriage feast for his son represents God the Father who, because of our salvation, celebrates the spiritual marriage of his only begotten son. And how are we to understand these nuptials, if not, by the Holy Spirit, Christ the bridegroom becomes one with his bride, the Church? Immaculate and unbreakable are these nuptials, because they do not consist of carnal love but of spiritual grace. And so the Church is shown to be a virgin bride, as Paul says: “For I engaged you to one spouse, to present a pure virgin to Christ.”

According to this example, one cannot call a virgin one who is married. But according to the heavenly mystery, the church is shown to be a bride, while remaining a virgin. She is called a bride, because through the Holy Spirit she has been joined to Christ; she is called a virgin because she remains intact and uncorrupted by sin. God the Father is the author of the marriage of these. The Holy Spirit is a witness, the angels, ministers, and the apostles the bearers of invitations. And if you inquire about the spiritual pageant of

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1 Matthew 22:3, 5-6.
2 2 Corinthians 11:2.
these marriage you will find that it is the marriage chamber of heaven, of which it is written: And he, as a bridegroom, emerges from his nuptial chamber.”

3 The chorus of the sacred virgins obtains the first place in these nuptials, of which we read in the scripture: “The virgins will be brought to the King after her.”

4 These nuptials have their harps, their instruments, their cymbals. This is the harp of the law, the instruments of the prophets and the cymbals of the apostles, about which we read in the scriptures: “Praise him with strings and instruments; praise him with resonating cymbals.”

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6 3. And now, let us examine the parable itself. Therefore, in this marriage of his Son, the Father first invited the Jewish people. He sent to them judges, he sent prophets. But “they,” he says, “refused to come.”

6 He sent servants a second time, more numerous than the first; These are the apostles and the preachers of the gospel, saying to them: “Go and tell those invited: Behold I have prepared the meal. The Bull and fattened calf have been killed. Come to the wedding feast.”

7 For in the dinner is signified the mystery of our Lord’s passion, in which Christ is the food of eternal life and of salvation. He himself is the bread of life which descended from heaven and gave life to this world. It is also good that the remembrance is made of a noontime meal – not supper, but midday (for meal is normally given at the sixth hour) because the sixth hour was when Christ was crucified for the salvation of the human race so that he might present to us the heavenly food and spiritual banquet of his passion. By the killing of the

3 Psalms 19:5.

4 Psalms 45:14.

5 Psalms 150:4-5.

6 Matthew 22:3.

bulls for the weddings of his son, the Gospel indicates the judges and prophets, who were killed by the Jews, because they announced that the son of God was to come and suffer in the flesh. Now, the judges and prophets are rightly called bulls because they brandished the horns of justice against the iniquity of the Jewish people. However, the fattened calf signifies that those infants in Bethlehem who were killed by Herod, because they merited to die for the name of Christ.

4. Therefore, when the Jewish people refused to come to such a great wedding feast, the king sent his servants to the street corners, saying: “Go and invite as many as you can, call them to the wedding. They went out,” he said, “and they gathered together as many as they could find and the wedding was filled with guests.”

Therefore, because the Jews refused to come to this wedding, all the nations were invited there, out of which we are, we who came to the grace of Christ. For the excuses of the Jewish people could not be allowed to perish such a great wedding feast. This is why we ought to give thanks for this mercy, because we were invited unworthy to such a great wedding. But we ought to fear or at least be careful lest when the king enters into the marriage hall, he sees us reclining and says to us what is said in the present reading: “Friend, how did you come not having a wedding garment?”

And he commanded that he be taken away by his hands and feet. The wedding garment is the saving grace of baptism, which shines with the whiteness of faith, not the splendor of wool. <…> for white and snowy is the garment of Christ, which follows from the grace of baptism, which the apostle says: “You who have been baptized in Christ, you have been clothed

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8 Matthew 22:9-10.
9 Matthew 22:12.
with Christ.”\textsuperscript{10} Therefore, he who does not receive the grace of baptism or having received it loses it, does not have this kind of nuptial robe. Those who do such, he shall find, and they will be ejected from the wedding and chassed into the outer darkness. Therefore we ought to guard our nuptial garment, which we received through the grace of baptism by faith in Christ, intact and without any kind of blemish, in order to be worthy of the spiritual banquet in the Church and to earn a spot in the future kingdom of heaven with the saints and elect of God. Amen.

\textsuperscript{10} Galatians 3:27.
SERMON 11: ON THE WOMAN WHO ANOINTED THE FEET OF THE LORD

1. The present reading reported to us that when the Lord sat down at a banquet with Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, “Mary,” the sister of Lazarus and Martha, “took a pound of genuine aromatic ointment, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and she wiped them with her hair, and the whole house was filled with the odor of the ointment.”¹ This saint Mary, as we read many times in the gospel, pleased Christ greatly by the immensity of her faith. In the preceding passage, in which she wept for the death of her brother, she made the Lord to weep as well; for she moved to pity the author of pity himself. And even though the Lord was about to raise Lazarus from the dead, he wept with the weeping Mary, so he might demonstrate his piety and Mary’s worthiness. That the Lord wept for Lazarus shows forth his goodness, that he raised him from the dead, his power. In his tears he displays the mystery of his assumed body; in raising Lazarus, he declares the power of his divinity. Previously then she brought forth tears of pity from the Lord, but here she displays her own devotion towards the Lord. She brought forth an entire pound of precious aromatic ointment and anointed the feet of the Lord and wiped it with her hair. Take heed of the religious devotion and faith of this holy woman. Others sat down at the table with the Lord; she anointed the feet of the Lord. Others traded words and conversation with the Lord; she, in the silence of her faith, wiped his feet with her hair. The others seemed to be in the place of honor, her in service. But the service of Mary was greater for Christ than the place of honor at the table.

¹ John 12:3.
2. Your love heard what the Lord said of her in the present reading: “Truly I say to you, wherever the gospel shall be preached in the entire world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”\(^2\) What kind of a service this holy woman performed, that it is preached in the entire world and every day at that. Take heed of the humility of this saintly woman. She does not begin by anointing the head of the lord, but the feet; although it refers that afterward she anointed the head of the lord. Therefore she anointed the feet first and then the head. She began with the feet so as to be worthy to approach the head. For just as it is written: “Whoever exalts himself will be humbled and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.”\(^3\) And so she humbled herself in order to be exalted.

And so she wiped the anointed feet of the lord not with a towel but with her hair, so as to exhibit a greater service to the Lord. In this wiping of the feet with her hair, she sanctifies her head by his feet. For she sanctified whatever was able to touch the body of Christ, which is the source of holiness. She rendered a greater service so as to earn a greater grace, just as one who is thirsty receives water of the fount running from on high, so this holy woman, received the beauty of sacred grace, in order to quench the thirst of her faith.

3. According to a truly allegorical or mystical reckoning, that woman served as a figure for the whole church which offered to Christ its full devotion and complete faith. This woman took a pound of authentic aromatic ointment. In a pound, there is twelve ounces. Therefore the church, who received the teaching of the twelve apostles,

\(^2\) Matthew 26:13.

\(^3\) Matthew 23:12.
possesses a measure of this kind like precious ointment, which it received like precious ointment. For what is more precious than the teaching of the apostles, which contains the faith of Christ and the glory of the kingdom of heaven? Indeed, it is mentioned that the whole house was filled with the fragrance of that perfume because the whole world has been filled with apostolic teaching. As it is written in the scripture, "Into all lands their voice has gone out and their words to the very limits of the world." Now, the precious ointment has in itself the different types of spices, which are fragrant, because the apostolic doctrine has diverse graces of the spirit, by which it displays the fragrant smell of their odor. Nor is it really a wonder if the precious ointment signifies the apostolic teaching, when we read that the name of our Lord and Savior is also expressed by this kind of thing. For we read the words of Solomon speaking in the role of the Preacher: "Your name is emptied perfume." Not without reason is the Lord called by the name ‘emptied perfume.’ For oil, just as your love knows, as long as it is contained within a vase retains the power of its odor. But when it is spread around or emptied, then the smell of its fragrance spreads far and wide. And so our Lord and savior, when he was reigning in heaven with the Father, was ignored by the world, which did not know him throughout the ages. But when he consented, for our salvation, to empty himself, so that he might receive a human body and descend from heaven, then the sweet fragrance of his name spread to the entire world. This ointment is that which the prophet spoke of in the psalm: “It is like ointment on the head which comes down on the beard, even on the beard of Aaron, which comes down onto the edge of

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5 Song of Solomon 1:3.
his garments.”⁶ This ointment flowing down from the head to the beard of Aaron and from these to the edge of his clothes is that flowing all over the body of the church.

4. But let us return to the subject at hand. In the pound of aromatic ointment which is precious perfume, the teaching of the apostles is signified which the Church received. For the church had no other way to come to Christ except the apostolic doctrine. But look at the mystery of faith which has been before in that woman. She did not anoint the head of the Lord first, but his feet. The feet of Christ represent his sacred incarnation, for he deigned to be born of a virgin at the last times. But in the head is represented the glory of his divinity, in which before all time he proceeded from the father. Therefore before the church came first to the feet of the Lord, and then to the head, because if it had not learned of the incarnation of Christ from a virgin, is never would have been able to know the glory of his divinity, which is from the Father. That is why we read in the scripture of the lamb, which was offered, under the Law, in the same mystery of Christ: “You shall eat the head and the feet at the same time.”⁷ It means that we believe in both natures of Christ, that he is man and he is God. God from the Father, man born from a virgin. For the head, as we have said, signifies his divinity which is from the Father; the feet, his incarnation from being born of a virgin. Otherwise we cannot be saved, unless we believe in both natures of Christ. Consequently, not a few heretics who confess only the humanity of Christ, denying his divinity, such as Photinus, hold his feet but do not possess his head, because they have lost the head of their faith. But we hold rightly to both things in Christ, because we confess both sides. We hold his

⁶ Psalms 133:2.
⁷ Exodus 12:9.
feet because we believe in his incarnation from a virgin and we his head, because we confess his divinity flowing from the Father.

5. But in the hair of that woman which wiped the feet of the Lord is shown the people of the Church, which venerate the incarnation of Christ and the apostolic doctrine. But these hairs are those which we read about in the Song of Songs, where it is said to the Church: “Your hair is like a flock of goats which are unveiled on the slopes of Gilead.” But rightly does the hair signify the people of the Church, because just as hair is for the woman the greatest decoration, so the believing people adorn the Church of Christ. But we are also able to recognize in the hair the signification of virtues of the soul, and in the precious ointment, works of mercy. Therefore if the work of mercy and piety exist in us, it is like we anoint the feet of the Lord with precious perfume. Hence, when we are merciful to the poor, we anoint the feet of the Lord, who said: “To the extent that you act to the least of mine, you do to me.” If some virtues of the soul exist in us, it is like we wipe the feet of the Lord with our hair. For Christ is refreshed and renewed by all the virtues of our souls; in all pursuit of faith, in all the works of justice, mercy and piety, because he is the author and founder of all good works.

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8 Song of Solomon 6:5.
9 Matthew 25:40.
SERMON 12: ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS

1. As you, dearly beloved, heard the Blessed apostle Paul in the letter written to the Romans argued and proved that not only for the sake of the Jews, but for the peoples (gentes), the Son of God became incarnate from a virgin. For the law had predicted this, and the prophets had announced it in advance. For it was not appropriate that the Son of God should descend from heaven in order to save a single people, he who created all peoples (omnes gentes). It was first sent to the Jews based on the merit of the patriarchs, out of whom they are descended. But because they rejected the great gift which was offered to them, salvation was given to the diverse people and nations, as Paul the apostle says of the Jews: “It was necessary to announce to you first the word of God, but because you judged yourself unworthy of eternal life, behold that we are turning to the gentiles.”

2. And so the coming of Christ gave salvation to all peoples and redemption to the whole of the human race. For he who redeemed us was he who created. He was saved was he who made. For it is not without reason that we are called redeemed by Christ rather than purchased, as the Apostle says of himself: “He redeemed us by his blood.” He does not say ‘buy’ but ‘redeem.’ For that which is property already is redeemed, while that which is other’s must be bought. If one procures a field or slave which he did not have before, he is said to buy. If, on the other hand, he procures that which he had and lost, he is said to redeem not to buy, for he redeems his own and

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1 Acts 13:46.
2 This does not seem to be from any particular verse. It is similar to Romans 5:9, Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 1:14.
redeems that which he already had. This is why Romans who have been freed from the captivity of barbarians by the paying of a ransom are not called bought but redeemed.

3. Therefore because man was the work of Christ – for according to the will of the father, man was made in his image at the beginning of the world – it was shown that man was redeemed rather than bought by Christ because he who redeemed man was he to whom man belonged, and he himself who had created man. For man had incurred the domination of the devil long ago, similar to barbarian captivity; man had abandoned its first master and been taken captive by a ruse of the enemy. But we are redeemed by the blood of Christ and freed from the captivity of the devil so that we might return to our original Lord; and we ought not to abandon now to incur a return to the captivity of the devil, from which we will not deserve to be freed. For the price was not a small one which the son of God deigned to offer for our redemption – his sacred blood. If we make light of the grace of such a great redemption, we deceive ourselves. The Son of God was not crucified once for us so that we might expect another redemption. This is why the apostle exhorts us to have before our eyes the grace of this great redemption so that we may faithfully obey the author of our redemption and our salvation.

4. Now let us see what the apostle, in the previous part, set forth in a profound and spiritual sense, when he says: “There is one who believes he may eat all things. But he who is weak, let him eat vegetables.” It is not a small question that the Apostle proposes here. But let us see if we, with the help of God, can explain this in part. The Apostle is not speaking here of the weakness of the flesh or the health of the body; rather he speaks of weakness of the mind and the health of the soul. For this weakness

3 Romans 14:2.
is present where the mind is troubled with sin; and true health is present when the soul
does not tire from the illness of sin. Greed, avarice: these are diseases of the soul. The
lust of unlawful desires is the weakness of the mind. Rage, anger, vanity, envy and
other vices are the diseases of the soul and wounds of the mind, which bring the soul
even to the danger of salvation and the death of sin. And so, whoever is sick in this kind
of sin, even if he is whole in body, is sick all over. He who is sick in mind, is sick in his
soul. But he who is an alien from these vices, even if he is sick in his body, is most
healthy in mind, because God desires the health of our mind more than that of our body.

5. Do you want proof? The pauper Lazarus, as we read in the gospel, was
always sick in his body, even to death. He was full of wounds, but he was most healthy
in spirit because he did not suffer the illness of sin. In short, when he died, he was
received by the angels and led into the bosom of Abraham. On the other hand, the rich
man, at the door of which the pauper Lazarus lay, was healthy and whole in his body,
but was totally sick in spirit, because he suffered from the grave illness of sin. He had
even the fever of desire, the fever of greed, and many wounds of sins. And so, once he
was dead, he was lead to a place of torment. O blessed sickness of Lazarus! Such
unfortunate health of the rich man! This one is led to refreshment and rest, the other to
his penalty. This one to the eternal kingdom, the other to everlasting punishment. We
have brought this up so that you may know that the health of the soul is more necessary
than the health of the body. While the sickness of the body does not hinder the salvation
of the soul, the sickness of the soul, if not cured by good works, makes body and soul
strangers to salvation. The health of the body is good and desirable, but preferable is
spiritual health, which surpasses the health of the body, because the health of the soul
is the salvation of the body. These things show how great a difference there is between
the health of the body and soul. One cures the body with the medicine of this earth; the
soul with the medicine of heaven. For curing, one treats the body with an application of
oil; the soul is revived by the divine words.

6. But now let us return to the saying of the apostle: “There is one who believes
he may eat all things. But he who is weak, let him eat vegetables.”4 Therefore, whoever
is healthy in faith, in knowledge, in heavenly precepts, in works of justice, without a
doubt eats, in spirit, all that the law and faith contains. He hears the law, he eats the
law, because the teaching of the law is the food of the soul. He hears the prophets, he
eats of the prophets, because the preaching of the prophets is the nourishment of the
soul and the refreshment of the mind. He hears the gospel, he eats eagerly of the
gospel, he hears of this Christ speaking of the bread of heaven which descended in
order to refresh the hearts of believers. He hears the apostle, he eats eagerly of the
apostle, because he is refreshed by the teaching of the apostle. Thus, the soul eats
faithfully of all this, because it is refreshed by all the words of divine scripture, which is
the food of the faith and the words of truth. Just as someone who eats, in the physical
sense, many different foods at an opulent and rich banquet; so if the soul eats faithfully
and richly from the words of Christ, it is refreshed and satisfied.

7. “But he who is weak,” he says, “let him eat vegetables.” Everyone who is
afflicted by the sickness of sin is ill. He is not able to eat anything because his soul does
not accept the divine mysteries. But let him receive the proper precepts of the
commandments as if they were vegetables so that he may be strengthened and able to

4 Romans 14:2.
recover his health and thus be strong enough to eat everything. If some of us, in their souls, are bound by the infirmity of sin, we ought to hurry to the healing of salvation, in order to be worthy to receive the solid food of faith and justice. Becoming true spiritual athletes, we can overcome and conquer the enemy strengthened by the food of justice, the food of truth, the food of salvation, receiving the crown of life and reward of eternal life. But let us look closer at this: Suppose someone is sick with respect to his soul from the lust of the flesh, the precept of chastity and modesty is necessary for him, because the health of the body is a modest spirit, so that he can be healed from the sickness of sin from which he suffers; because a modest spirit is the health of the body. Again, if someone is sick with the lust of avarice, which is a burden exceeding every sickness of the soul, as the apostle says, “greed is the root of all evils,” the command concerning works of mercy is necessary for such a person in order that he may know that he cannot otherwise be healed unless a compassionate person arises from the miser and a liberal one from the greedy. Again, if anyone suffers from the disease of anger and rage, the precept of patience is necessary for him so that he might be cured from the disease of anger. Further, if anyone suffers from the disease of envy or hatred, this principle of charity and brotherly love is suggested to him so that his soul can be healed. For otherwise, no man can be healed in this way unless he excludes hate from his heart and receives brotherly love. Because just as love is of God, so hate is of the devil; for God is the author of love, the devil is the inventor of hate.

8. Evil and all the other vices of sins are diseases of the soul. But the divine virtues are necessary, like vegetables, so that one can recover the health of salvation.

5 I Timothy 6:10.
These spiritual vegetables refresh the weakness of the soul, until it is enriched back to full health. And this is what the apostle says: “But he who is weak, let him eat vegetables.” It is also for this reason that we read this saying of the Lord: “All this, just as vegetables….” For he incurred a grave disease of sin, which nothing could cure, except eating the precepts of salvation. For this reason, if someone suffers from a disease of this kind, we ought to eat liberally from the principle of chastity, of purity, of patience of love and charity so that we can recover to full health, being both fit and able to eat the solid food of justice and faith. For it is sound and valiant to eat solid food, the most spiritual of athletes. If we warrant to eat the solid food of justice and faith, without doubt we become spiritual athletes, able to conquer and overcome our enemy in this life. Amen.

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6 There is a lacuna in the text here. Nevertheless, the text can be identified as Genesis 9:3, which reads, “Every moving thing that is alive shall be food for you; I give all to you, as I gave the green plant.”
1. After many rebukes which he had made of the impiety of the scribes and Pharisees, our Lord and Savior said to Jerusalem, as your love heard in our present reading: “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kills the prophets and stones those who were sent to you.”\(^1\) That which is rebuked here under the name Jerusalem is not the walls of Jerusalem, but the inhabitants of the city, or rather the synagogue of the Jews, which is very often called Jerusalem. For it was not the walls of the city which killed the prophets, or stoned him who had been sent, but the people of the synagogue. It is they who killed the prophets long ago and they who stoned the just. But perhaps they say the Jews now are not responsible for the blood of the prophets or the death of the just, because they were not there at that time. But when they do not believe the words of the prophets or the just about Christ, then it is like they are now stoning the just and killing the prophets. For what can be a greater injury to the prophets or the just than if one does not believe in Christ? Since the Jews did not believe in him, without a doubt they stone the just, not with stones of the street but with words of blasphemy. And they kill the prophets not with a sword of iron, but with the pen of treachery; for the blasphemies of the Jews against Christ are the stoning of the Jews and the slaying of the prophets. But the good soldier must suffer his death for the King. This is understood of the just and the prophets, those who were good soldiers and suitable servants of the Christ. Surely, the injuries of Christ are the stoning of the prophets, and his death, the death of the prophets. Thus we are right to say, even today we see the Jews persecuting the just and killing the prophets, because they do not believe the words of the just and the prophets about Christ.

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\(^1\) Matthew 23:37.
2. In short, he did not say to the synagogue of the Jews, “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ‘you who killed the prophets,’” but: “You who kill the prophets.” Nor did he say: ‘who stoned those sent to you,’ but: “who stone those who have been sent to you,” so that all the Jews might understand that they are also guilty of the murder of the just and the blood of the prophets. Therefore, he said to the synagogue: “Jerusalem, you who killed the prophets and stoned those who were sent to you; How often would I have gathered your children, just as the hen gathers her chicks under her, and you were unwilling.” When he said, “How often would I have gathered your children,” it is not the first time, but often…
SERMON 14: ON THE HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC AND ON BAPTISM

1. When our Lord and Savior came to Jerusalem, as your love heard in the reading, he came to a pool with five porches, which in Hebrew is called Bethsaida. And so he showed the perfect image of baptism to come with the pool. But so far as there is a difference between the image and reality, they differ between the grace of the pool and the grace of the healing of baptism. That water was moved only once a year; the water of baptism of the Church is always ready to be moved. That was only moved in one place, this is moved throughout the entire world. Then an angel descended, here the Holy Spirit. There, the grace of angels; here, the mystery of the spirit. That water cured only one person a year; here, every day, there are peoples saved. The water of the pool healed only the body. The water here saves body and soul. That healed only from the illness, here, even from the sin. That freed the body only from infirmity; this frees the body and soul from sin. A multitude of ill persons lay down near that water, for only one was healed per year. No one lies at this water except those who want to come and be healed. It is always ready to heal, the moment one comes to be cured. In fact the pagan ones there came and were cured; the Jews there did not want to come: thus they remain in perpetual disease.

2. The importance of the grace of baptism of the Church, the Holy Spirit addressed himself to the church through Solomon to show the evidence: “Your eyes are like of a dove washed in milk, sitting upon the abundance of the waters.”¹ We understand the eyes of the Church as the apostles and martyrs who, in the body of the church, are as invaluable as the eyes, and who were plunged in the baptism of the milk

¹ Song of Solomon 5:12.
of the church, to spiritually become white like milk. Do you want to know how the apostles have been washed in the milk? Listen to what Paul wrote: “I give you milk to drink, not solid food.”\(^2\) It is a good thing that those who have been washed in the milk give the milk. But first of those washed in milk and being the eyes of the church, are the infant who were killed for Christ by Herod in Bethlehem. For they have truly been washed in the milk, those who being still nursed, merited to die for Christ. They have been washed in the milk, those which nursed at their mother and suffered martyrdom for Christ. This martyrdom signifies baptism, as the Lord himself confirmed in the gospel when he said to his disciples: “I have to undergo a baptism.”\(^3\) He was not speaking of the baptism of water which he had already received from John, but of the baptism of his passion. Blessed is he who merits sufficiently to undergo such as it. For the baptism of water is a good thing, but better yet is the baptism of martyrdom. In the former, there is mercy; in the latter is reward. There, remission of sins, here the acquisition of a crown of virtue.

3. Solomon reported correctly about the abundance of water in baptism when he said to the church: “Your eyes are like of a dove washed in milk, sitting upon the abundance of the waters,” for abundant is the grace of baptism of the church, the gift of which waters the entire world. The water of the pool of Bethsaida was only able to heal once a year, while the grace of baptism of the church runs each day, overflowing each day through the kings, races, and innumerable people of the nations who enjoy its gift. Only the Jewish people refused to acknowledge the benefit of such waters. It is why the

\(^2\) I Corinthians 3:2.

\(^3\) Luke 12:50.
infirm man, as he was the type of the Jewish people, said, “While I am coming, another steps down before me.” 4 While the Jewish people were questioning and doubting the coming of Christ, the gentiles came before them and received the first healing; they who were first in healing, became first in the faith.

4. But now we ought to consider what the Lord said, in the present reading, to him who was healed after thirty-eight years: “Behold, now you are healed; Sin no more, lest something worse happens to you.” 5 Whatever sins you had, they are forgiven you; You are healed from all the infirmity of the body, from the illness of the soul, from the diseases of the body, from the sickness of illicit desires. You arise a new man from the washing of regeneration. Be careful not to revert to your former sins, lest you lay yourself open to the danger of death, because the grace of baptism is given once. If anyone should lose it by his own negligence, or rather by infidelity, he becomes guilty of his own death, because he did not wish to protect such great grace. For this reason, before you come to baptism, we asked you whether you renounce the world, its powers and works. And you responded that you renounce it; and thus you came to the grace of baptism eternal. Your words are bound by God; your response is written in heaven. You swore your faith to God; you swore in the presence of angels, because the angels were present when we asked you for faith. Look at what you do. If it is strong to swear to a man, then what of the oath made to God? “From your mouth,” as it is written, either “you will be justified,” or “you will be condemned.” 6 You will be justified if you fulfill your

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4 John 5:7.

5 John 5:14.

6 Matthew 12:37.
promise to Christ. You will be condemned if you are unable to guard the faith of your oath. Hear what Solomon said: “A mighty snare for the man is his own lips.”\(^7\)

Therefore, because the Strong one is dealing with us, we ought to guard the faith promised, to guard the grace which we received, lest we incur excessive confusion on the day of judgment when he begins to say to us: “Friend, how did you come not having a wedding garment?”\(^8\) And we will begin to be seized by the hands and feet, as it is written, and led into the outer darkness. It is why Solomon said to you: “In all times, let you clothes be white and let not oil be lacking on your head.”\(^9\) We always have white clothes if we preserve intact the grace of our baptism. And we always have oil on our head, if we keep the chrism of our salvation which we received, and thus we will not be confounded on the day of judgment, but rather we will merit to rejoice together with all the saints and the elect of God in the heavenly kingdom.

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\(^7\) Proverbs 6:2.

\(^8\) Matthew 22:12.

\(^9\) Ecclesiastes 9:8.
SERMON 15: ON THE WASHING OF FEET

1. Many times, after he had been born from a virgin, our Lord and Savior demonstrated examples of humility. But above all is that which was reported in the present reading, because he deigned to wash the feet of the disciples. As it said: “And rising from supper, he took off his tunic and girded himself, and he began to wash the feet of his disciples.” He next explained why he had done this by saying: “You call me Master and Lord, and you speak rightly: For I am. If I wash your feet, as Master and Lord, you also ought to wash the feet of each other. I gave this example to you so that you will do likewise.”¹ Wondrous and incomparable is the humility of the Lord. The Lord of eternal majesty washed the feet of his servants. Him, whom the angels serve in heaven, served men on earth. He humbled himself on earth so that you do not exalt yourself in anything. He washed the feet of his disciples, so that you do not disdain to wash the feet of your fellow servants. You cannot flatter yourself for your riches, or your birth, or your honors, because he who deigned to do and fulfill this task, is Lord of all honors and powers. Since he showed us the example of humility, we ought to follow and imitate him in this act, which contains a mystery concerning our salvation. But we will speak of it in the proper place.

2. For now, let us speak of the literal sense. Abraham washed the feet of the Lord when He visited him at the oak of Mamre. But he was the servant who washed his master; it was right that the servant washed the feet of his master. And when Abraham washed the feet of the Lord, it was performed not for the Lord but for himself, in order to receive a blessing. In short, for his service, he received a son from his wife, who was

barren in her old age. Abraham saw a pre-figurment of the future mystery when the Lord appeared to him at the oak of Mamre, at noon. For in that oak of Mamre, the cross of the Lord was demonstrated. The hour of noon, the time of the passion, for the Lord was crucified at the sixth hour for the salvation of the world, as we read in the gospel. And it is reported that Abraham was resting under an oak tree, because the faith of the patriarchs rested only under the cross of Christ. It was noon, which is wont to be menaced by excessive heat, because nothing cools us from the ardor of sin except the cross of Christ, by the shadow of his passion. Rightly then, the Lord visited Abraham at noon under the oak tree, for that was the very moment that Christ manifested himself, at noon, that he suffered the blessed passion of the cross for our salvation. Thus, Abraham washed the feet of the Lord for his own benefit. But in this washing of feet, he laid down all the filth of his sins, for in washing the feet of our Lord, his sins were washed away.

Gideon also washed the feet of the Lord, as we read in the book of Judges, not to render a service, but so that he might receive a blessing. And for his service, he received all that he asked and he saw the sacrament of truth to come. He offered a sacrifice on a rock; the Lord touched the rock with a rod; Fire came out of the rock and consumed the precious sacrifice. The rock prefigures the incarnation of Christ, out of which sprang the divine spiritual fire, which is the Holy Spirit, who shall burn the vices of our sins. We are unable to be made worthy of sacrifice to God, unless we are illumined through this divine fire, namely the Holy Spirit, who burns up in us the vices of the flesh, so that we cleansed from all the stain of sin. Then, when Gideon was going to fight his enemies, he was ordered to select only 300 men, with whom he brought back a noble
victory over his enemies. No other number could have made such a victory, since it
signified in itself the mystery of the cross. For the number 300, in the Greek manner of
counting, is represented by the letter ‘Tau,’ which displays the sign of the cross. The
300, however, Gideon divided them into three groups, because the victory of the cross
was the faith in the Trinity.

3. Let us return to the subject at hand. Abraham washed the feet of the Lord, and
Gideon washed them as well, but as servants to their master. As it was referred to in the
present reading, the Lord deigned to wash the feet of his disciples, which is admirable
above all the others. First, let us consider the literal sense. Behold the reward for this
act of piety. According to the flesh, the apostles were descended from Abraham and
Gideon. Therefore, Christ, by washing the feet of his disciples, repaid with piety and
goodness to the sons the act of service which he had received from the fathers. They
washed the feet of the Lord; here, he washes the feet of his disciples and repays the
same act of service, only much more powerfully. They washed the feet of the Lord then,
in order to be sanctified; the Lord now washes the feet of his disciples not to be
sanctified himself, but to sanctify them. They washed the feet of the Lord to erase their
sins; he washes the feet of his disciples in order to purify them from all the stain of sin.
Abraham offered to the Lord three loaves of bread; He, with five loaves, satisfied the
sons of Abraham in the desert. Abraham made the Lord to rest under an oak tree at
noon; the Lord protected his children under the shadow of the cross at noon, for noon
was when the Lord was crucified. Abraham killed a calf for the Lord; for the salvation of
his sons, the Lord offered himself as a sacrifice.
4. But now let us look at the mystery in the present reading, although what we said already was of the mystery. The Lord took off his tunic and girded himself with a towel. He put water in a basin and began to wash the feet of his disciples and to dry them with the towel which he had on. It is not without reason that it is said that took off his tunic and thus washed the feet of the disciples. Clearly the feet of our souls have been washed and the footsteps of our mind have been cleansed only when the Lord took off his tunic. For assuredly, he laid down on the cross the tunic of the body, which he had assumed in his birth but took off in his passion. In order to cover our nakedness, he laid down the tunic of his flesh. And so, with the single tunic of Christ’s body, he covered the entire world. And although the Lord took off his bodily tunic in the passion, he, however, was not nude, because he had the clothing of virtue. This is what is signified by the shedding of the tunic.

5. But when he came to Peter to wash his feet, just as was recounted in the present reading, Peter said to him: “You will never wash my feet. The Lord responded to him, ‘If I do not wash your feet, you will have no part with me.’ And he responded, ‘Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and head.’”² At first, Saint Peter refused the service of the Lord, because he believed himself unworthy to have his feet washed by the Lord. But after the Lord said to him: “If I do not wash your feet, you will have no part with me,” he did not refuse the service of Christ, in order to have fellowship with Christ. And because he recognized that in the washing of the feet was a great mystery, he said: “Not only my feet, but my hands and head.” He offered his feet, so that the steps of our lives, which were polluted in Adam by the staining of sin, might be washed in baptism.

He offered his hands, so that they, which Adam had polluted when he extended his hand illicitly to the tree, might be purified in the sacred baptism of Christ. He offered his head to be washed, so that not even the feeling of his soul, which is in the head, might remain dirtied in the sin of Adam. On account of this, he was offering his entire self for baptism and was desiring that he be washed completely, so that through the washing of his head he might possess a pure heart, in the washing of his hands, he might do the works of justice, and in the washing of his feet, he might walk on the road of truth with undefiled steps.

6. Therefore, the Lord washed the feet of his disciples, lest there remain in us any trace of the sin which had stained Adam. For now, the Lord washes the feet of his servants, which he invites to the grace of saving baptism. And if we see men carrying out the duty of this rite, it is the work, however, of he who is the author of the service, and he who carries that which he instituted. We exhibit the office; He bestows the gift. Our office; His command. But the gift is from Him, even if the service is ours. The grace comes from him, even if the action is ours. We wash the feet of the body; He washes the steps of our souls. We plunge the body in water; He remits sins. We baptize; He sanctifies. We lay hands on the earth; He, from heaven, gives the Holy Spirit. For this reason, catechumens, my sons, we ought to hasten to the grace of baptism, so that, putting off the stains of sins, you may become pure in all things in the eyes of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
SERMON 16: FIRST SERMON FOR THE GREAT NIGHT

1. All the vigils that we celebrate in the honor of the Lord are received by and pleasing to the God, but this vigil is greater than all others. And so this particular night is called by the name ‘Vigil of the Lord.’ For we read the scripture: “This vigil of the Lord must be kept by all the sons of Israel.”¹ Now this night is properly called ‘the Vigil of the Lord’ because he kept watch in life so that we do not remain asleep in death. He suffered the sleep of death for us in the mystery of his passion; but this sleep of God became a vigil for the entire world, because the sleep of God eliminated from us the sleep of eternal death. For this he declared through the prophet when he said: “After I have slept and I have awoken, and my sleep is made sweet to me.”² This sleep of Christ, who reported the bitterness of death and the sweetness of life, became sweet.

Therefore, we call this night ‘the Vigil of God’ because even in his sleep of the passion he kept watch, just as he predicted through Solomon when he said: “I sleep, but my heart was awake;”³ through which he shows himself in the mystery of his divinity and his flesh. For he slept according to the flesh and kept watch according to his divinity, for the divinity cannot sleep. We read what is said about the divinity of Christ: “Behold, he who guards Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers.”⁴ Thus it says also: “I sleep, but my heart was awake,” because in the sleep of his passion he slept according to the body, but his divinity surveyed Hell so that he might rescue men who were held in hell. For our Lord and Savior wanted to visit all places to have mercy on all. He descended from

¹ Exodus 12:42.
² Psalms 3:6.
³ Song of Solomon 5:2.
⁴ Psalms 120:4.
heaven to earth to visit the world. He descended from earth to hell to illuminate those who were held in hell, as the prophet said: “You who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, light has dawned on you.” And so it is suitable that this night is called ‘the Vigil of the Lord,’ because he illuminated not only this world, but he even illuminated those who are in hell.

2. Consequently, the angels in heaven, men on earth, and the souls of the faithful in hell all celebrate this vigil of the Lord. The angels in heaven celebrate this vigil of the Lord because, through his death, Christ destroyed death, trod on hell, saved the world and freed men. And they rightly celebrate because the salvation of the world is the joy of the angels. But if the repentance of one sinner, as it is written in the gospel, is the cause of joy for the angels in heaven, how great then the redemption of the entire world? Men on the earth celebrate because Christ suffered death for the redemption of the human race, conquering death by his death. And the souls of the faithful in hell celebrate because Christ descended to hell to end the reign of death and hell over them.

And is it any wonder that the angels in heaven, men on earth and the souls of the faithful celebrate this vigil of the Lord since he who deigned to die for us is the creator of heaven, earth and hell? We ought to say even more: the Father himself celebrates this vigil of the Lord with the Son and Holy Spirit, because it was according to the will of the father that the Son suffered death, so that he might give life to us by his death. This vigil is not only a festival for men and angels but for the Father and son with the holy Spirit, because the salvation of the world is a cause of joy for the Trinity. For this reason we

5 Isaiah 9:2.
ought to celebrate with all devotion the vigil of so grata a night, because this night, death is destroyed, the world is redeemed, and the people are free.

3. Therefore, this night is rightly called the ‘Vigil of the Lord,’ because it is celebrated in the honor of his name throughout the entire world. There are as many prayers of individuals as there are desires; as many lights as there are prayers of merit. The darkness of night is conquered by the light of our devotion. Angels in heaven rejoice at the solemnity of this vigil. Men on earth rejoice. Even the powers of hell rejoice, because the great solemnity of this night reaches even them. Although the Jews and even the pagans seem strangers to this celebration, they are not without joy, because they are conquered by a secret grace and goodness which comes from the name of Christ who reigns over everything. Many Pagans and Jews celebrate the festival of our vigil as their own both with glad hearts, if not with religious practices.

4. And because this is the night in which, long ago, the firstborn of Egypt was killed and the sons of Israel were freed, Let us pray to the Lord with all our heart, all our faith, so that he may deliver us from all invasions of our enemies and all fear of them. He does not look at our merits but considers his own mercy. He condescended to deliver the children of Israel, not for their merits, but in consideration of his own mercy. Let him protect us according to his mercy and push back the barbarian nations and operate in us what Moses said to the children of Israel: “The Lord fights for you, and you remain silent.”  

He fights, and He conquers. If he has pity and he forgives sins, not according to our merits, but according to his clemency, it is because he is accustomed to mercy even to the unworthy. So that he deigns to do this, we ought to pray as much

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6 Exodus 14:14.
as we can. For he said through the prophet: “Call upon me in the day of tribulation; I will deliver you and you will praise me.”\textsuperscript{7}

\textsuperscript{7} Psalms 50:15.
SERMON 17: SECOND SERMON FOR THE GREAT NIGHT

1. The world witnesses how great the solemnity of the present night is during which this vigil is celebrated all night long. It is not without reason, for tonight death was defeated, life lived, and Christ arose from the dead. Long ago, Moses said to the people, about this very life: "You will see your life hanging on a tree day and night, and you will not believe your life."¹ This life, it is Christ the Lord, has been hung from a tree, when he was raised on the cross for the salvation of the world. Of this life the Jewish people did not want to believe, and for this reason incurred death, since he who flees from death must incur death.

2. But it was not without reason that Moses predicted that this life to hang from a tree day and night. During the day the body of the Lord came down from the cross, as we read in the gospel. But when it was still the middle of the day, the Lord hanging on the cross, there were three hours of darkness throughout the entire world. Thus through day and night Christ hung on the cross, because night came upon the middle of the day. For the sun could not bear an injury to its creator, and for that reason it was covered by darkness, lest it be compelled to take part in the crimes of the Jews. The sun shuddered at the great crime of the Jews. Therefore, it took a veil of darkness like clothes of mourning so that it might show honor as a servant to the death of his Lord. That it was meant by ‘life’ Christ the Lord, he himself shows us in the gospel, when he says: “I am the way, the truth and the life.”² He said way, because he leads to the Father. Truth, because he condemns lies. Life, because he has dominion over death. Hence it is not

¹ Deuteronomy 28:66.
without reason that the prophet attacks death when he says: “Death, where is your sting? Death, where is your victory?”

For death, which used to conquer was conquered by the death of its conqueror. The Life descended into death in order that he himself might make death flee. Just as at the dawn darkness is disappears, so death was slain by the coming eternal life. This life though was not subject to death, suffering, however, death in the body in order to kill, by his hidden virtue, death itself. Like if a lion put on a sheep skin to deceive a wolf, so Christ, who is the life, suffered in the body to deceive death, the devourer or human bodies. So by not wanting to believe in this Life, the Jews incurred death; but we ought to believe in him so we can evade death.

3. This is Easter time, of which Moses spoke long ago to the people: “This month shall be first to you in the months of the year.”

Thus, Moses called the solemnity or this time the first and beginning of the year. We ought to compute the beginning of the year from this time, when we first received salvation. We should begin to call this month the first month for in it we are saved from death. Hence the pagans, who hold that January is the first month, are greatly in error. How can January be the first month of the year when the whole world is hidden dry and without beauty? For in that time, there is no grass on the earth, no flowers on the trees, and no buds on the vines. The first month is not January, when all is dead, but Easter time when all come to life. For now, the grass of the meadows rises as if from the dead, now the flowers are in the trees, now the vines have buds, now the air itself delights in the new time, which allows the pilot to undertake safely a sea voyage. This first month or new time is Easter time, which itself

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3 I Corinthians 15:55.
4 Exodus 13:2.
renews the elements of the world. It is not really surprising that this time renews the world, since even the human race was renewed today. And so innumerable are the peoples throughout the whole universe that are raised today to new life through the water of baptism. For at this time the sheep give birth safely, no longer fearing the cold of winter. Likewise, at this time the Church of God produces spiritual sheep, lambs of Christ, in the flocks of the faithful; they are nourished by the milk of life and the drink of salvation. These spiritual sheep are those spoken about by Solomon: "Arise like sheep from the bath; all are twins and none is barren." Hence this sheep, the sheep of the Church, are shown to be pregnant by the washing because it produces sons of God through the grace of baptism. It brings forth twin sons because out of two peoples, one came to belief.

4. Therefore, many gentiles err who call January the first month or the new time, but it is no wonder if they who err in religion err in time. But we, who believe the Easter season to be the true new time, ought to celebrate with all joy, exultation, and alertness of mind, so that we can suitably say what we chanted in the psalm: “This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.”5 Then we can confidently say, if we obey his commands faithfully, that we will come to eternal life and to perpetual rejoicing in the kingdom of heaven.

5 Psalms 117:24.
When our Lord and Savior came to the time of his passion, in order to show what was before him he prophesied the happiness of his passion, saying: “I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you.”\(^1\) The greatness of this Passover feast we can know by how our Lord and Savior desired to fulfill it. The joy of this feast was desired by the angels, desired by the law, desired by the judges, desired by the prophets, desired by prophets, but the time of his coming was not yet. Indeed, long ago, this feast had been prepared by the law, but only in a figure. Because the law prepared the figure, Christ the Lord completed it in truth. For the passion of Christ is the true Passover, from which we take the name Paschal. The apostle shows the same thing when he says: “For Christ, our Passover, was scarified. Therefore, let us celebrate the feast, not with old yeast or malice or wickedness, but with the sincere unleavened bread of truth.”\(^2\) We must exclude from our hearts all yeast of malice and sin so that, with pure minds and right consciences, we can be made like loaves of unleavened bread, so that we can celebrate the dignity of the Paschal feast of Christ.

If, however, we hold the yeast of sin and malice in our hearts, we do not merit to celebrate the Passover of the Lord. For this reason, the apostle said: “Purge out the yeast from yourselves, so that you may be new dough like unleavened bread.”\(^3\) We are unleavened bread if we remain without the yeast of malice. We are unleavened bread if we are strangers to all the leaven of the Devil. For as the apostle says: “A little yeast

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\(^1\) Luke 22:15.

\(^2\) I Corinthians 5:7-8.

\(^3\) I Corinthians 5:7.
corrupts the whole mass."⁴ For this reason we ought to expunge and throw away all the yeast of sin so that we deserve to enjoy the solemn paschal feast, about which the Lord said to his disciples: “I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you.” Therefore, we eat this Passover with Christ because he feeds those he saves. For he is the author of the Passover feast, the author of the mystery. He fulfills this Passover feast, so that he may refresh us by the bread of his passion and recreate us by the drink of salvation. Since the Lord wants to make us participants in a great feast, let us pray that we might be worthy of his sacrament, and we might consequently merit the right blessing of the Lord. Amen.

⁴ I Corinthians 5:6.
1. When our Lord and Savior had declared the power of his divinity by numerous signs and miracles, “Nicodemus came to Him,” the evangelist says, “a chief of the Jews, at night time, and said to Him: we know that you have come from God as a teacher. For no one can do these miracles, which you do, unless God is with him.”\(^1\) Nicodemus, a chief of the Jews, desired indeed to come to the Lord, but he was afraid to offend the Jews, and for that reason he came to the Lord not in the daytime, but at night, because he was bound by the ignorance of darkness, the unbelief of the Jews. Christ, the light of justice, had not yet illuminated his heart, because he had not yet acknowledged the light of the truth. Hence these words of the Lord in the gospel: “He who walks in the daylight will not stumble. But he who walks at night stumbles for the light of the world is not in him.”\(^2\) He who follows Christ, the eternal light, walks always in the day. The coming of night does not impede him, who always has the light of truth in his heart. But he who ignores the true light of Christ, even if he walks in the daylight, is always in night.

Thus, because Nicodemus was bound in the ignorance of the Jews, it is right to say that he came to the Lord at night. And that Nicodemus was then in the night of ignorance, he himself affirms. For he said to the Lord: “We know that you have come from God as a teacher. For no one can do these miracles, which you do, unless God is with him.” He took him for one of the teachers among many when He was the author of the heavenly teachings. He wondered at the signs and miracles, when he ought to have recognized from the majesty of the Lord in the signs, God alone could do such great

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1 John 3:1-2.

2 John 11:9-10.
miracles. Therefore, even though Nicodemus came to the Lord at night, yet because he had come to God, who is the light of truth, he did not depart without the grace of light.

2. And so the Lord said to him: “You must be born again,” in order to pour into his heart the light of new birth. But because Nicodemus could not yet clearly understand the grace of the great new birth, he responded: “How can this be done? Can a man, when he is old, enter his mother’s womb and be born again?” Then he (Jesus) clearly said: “Unless one is born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. For that which is born of flesh is flesh; but that born of the Spirit is spirit.” In this, the Lord showed clearly to Nicodemus that there are two births: one earthly, the other heavenly; one of the flesh, the other spiritual. But he reveals that the spiritual is much more powerful than the fleshly by saying: “that which is born of flesh is flesh; but that born of the Spirit is spirit.”

3. Therefore, of the flesh is the birth that comes from man; spiritual is the birth that comes from God. One comes from men, the other from God. Men of this world produce that one; God generates this one. One pours forth from the earth; the other travels to heaven. One has a temporary life, the other eternal. Finally, this one makes sons of men; that one makes sons of God. The whole spiritual birth is done invisibly, as much as the physical is visible. For we see one who is baptized dip in the font, we see him come up from the water; but we do not see that which is done in the washing. Only the assembly of the faithful, in spirit, understands that the sinner descends into the font be he comes up clean from all sin. Blessed and true is this birth of heaven which makes

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3 John 3:3.
4 John 3:5-6.
sons of God from sons of men. About this mystery, Nicodemus, because he had not yet believed, said to the Lord: “Can a man, when he is old, enter his mother's womb and be born again?” Nicodemus was still flesh only, therefore he spoke of the flesh. But the Lord, in order to bring his carnal senses to spiritual understanding, said to him: “Unless one is born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.” He showed Nicodemus that birth of which each man must be reborn. This spiritual birth makes children of old men. Whoever is regenerated through baptism is reborn in innocence, laying aside the errors of antiquity and the malice of sin. It is the spiritual womb of the Church which conceives and gives birth to the sons of God.

4. Therefore, because you, candidates for baptism, my sons, you have to be born again in innocence through the grace of God, laying aside all the old things of sin, you ought to guard, whole and unblemished, the grace of your birth, so that you can be called true sons of God and be worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven.
SERMON 18A: OF BAPTISM AND THE HOLY SPIRIT (FRAGMENT)

For this birth makes us worthy of the Kingdom of heaven, according to the words of the Lord as your loves heard: “Unless one is born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.” And he added: “For that which is born of flesh is flesh,” because it is born from the body. “But that born of the Spirit is spirit.”¹ And how can heretics dare to deny that the Holy Spirit is God, when they see clearly the son of God declaring the Holy Spirit God? Our spiritual birth is not without the Holy Spirit, and not without reason: for just as our first creation was the work of the Trinity, so our second creation is the work of the Trinity. For no work of the father is without the son, nor without the Holy Spirit, because the work of the Father is the work of the Son. The work of the son is the work of the Holy Spirit. The grace of the Trinity is one and the same. We are saved now by the Trinity, because we were made by the Trinity alone in the beginning. There is only one work of the trinity in the creation of man; there has been only one loss for the Trinity, long ago in the loss of man…

¹ John 3:5-6.

1. There are many things insinuated to us is the reading; but what ought we to say more than the gospel where our salvation is founded? The reading of the prophets is a good thing, indeed, but, the gospel is better, because the reading of the prophetic is predictive, in the Gospel, however, truth is revealed. The sayings of the prophets are covered in the clouds of mystery; the words of the gospel, however, enlighten with the clarity of the sun.

The present reading of the gospel displays the injuries which our Lord and Savior suffered at the hands of the Jews and the Gentiles for the salvation of humanity. For when our Lord and Savior had been received by the soldiers in order to be conducted to the cross, it says: “They put on him a purple tunic and draped him with a scarlet robe. And they placed a crown of thorns on his head, and a reed in his right hand. And they worshipped him, bowing and saying: Hail, king of the Jews.”¹ By this, the Jews and Gentiles made mockery of him. But now, through the heavenly mystery, we know what these things mean. In them sinfulness was at work; in the nations (gentiles) the mystery of faith and the reason of truth. As a king he assumed the purple tunic, and as the prince of martyrs the scarlet cloak, because his sacred blood shines as if it were precious scarlet. As a victor he received the crown, because the crown is properly offered to the victor. As God, he was adored on bended knee. Therefore, he assumed the purple as king, the scarlet as prince of martyrs, was crowned as a victor, was hailed as Lord, and was worshipped as God.

¹ Matthew 27:28-30.
2. We are able to recognize the significance of the purple tunic as the Church which, abiding in Christ the king, shines with the glory of royalty. Hence it is called “a royal people” by John in his apocalypse. This purple is like that which we read in the words of Solomon: “His entire bed is purple.” In this bed Christ rests, where he could find the purple, which is a royal faith and a precious mind. Purple is shown truly to be a precious and royal thing, because although it is a natural product, it changes, however, the nature when dyed, and it changes the appearance. It is one thing in its nature, and another in its appearance. It is base in its nature, but changed it is precious. Thus, our flesh by nature is base, but changed by grace it is made precious, plunged three times into the mystery of the Trinity, like spiritual scarlet, like purple. Hence if we want to be counted as precious purple, we ought to guard the grace made in us, as that we can be worthy to have so great a king.

We can turn to the scarlet cloak which also signifies the glory of the martyrs, for it was dyed with his own blood and adorned with the blood of the martyrs, as though they shine like precious scarlet in Christ. This scarlet is that which had to be offered long ago to beautify the temple of God; the martyrs adorn the Church of God. But it was necessary to offer that scarlet twice to adorn the tabernacle. The martyrs of Christ receive a double grace because they surrendered to the passion in both body and soul. For on the outside, they bleed the blood of martyrdom from their flesh, but within, they decorated their souls with the confession of faith. And through this, the martyrs offered double scarlet to adorn the tabernacle, because they are made precious in their body and soul to the Lord.

2 Song of Solomon 3:10.
3. But the crown of thorns which the Lord received upon his head signifies our company out of the nations we came to belief. Although we were once thorns, that is sinners, we, however, believed in Christ and we were made into a crown of justice, because no longer do we injure or prick the Savior, but we encircle his head with our confession of faith, confessing that the Father is in the Son, because the head of Christ is God as the apostle displayed. This crown is that which David once proclaimed in the psalm, saying: “You set upon his head a crown of precious stones.”

We were long ago thorns, but after we began to be counted in the crown of Christ, we were made precious stones. For he who made precious stones from thorns, was he who raised up the sons of Abraham from rocks.

4. It is not without reason that the present reading tells us about the reed placed in the right hand of the Lord. Listen to what David testified about Christ in the Psalms: “My tongue is the pen of a scribe who writes swiftly.” In his passion he received a reed in his right hand so that he might give pardon to our crimes by the noting of heaven and inscribe, by divine writing, his law upon our hearts, just as he proclaimed through the prophet: “I write my laws in their hearts, and it their spirits I write them.”

We are able to understand another significance of the reed, for the spiritual meanings are multiple. The reed, which is empty and without marrow of the bones, designates the people of the nations, who, for a long time, were without the marrow of divine law, empty of faith and void of grace. The reed, which is the people of the nations, is placed in the right hand of the Lord because he has in his left hand now the people of the Jews who persecuted

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3 Psalms 21:3.
4 Psalms 45:1.
5 Jeremiah 31:33.
Christ. Isaiah shows that the reed signifies the people of the nations when he speaks about the Lord: “He will not break the bruised reed,”6 which is the people of the nations who, although seemingly bruised by the devil, are not cast down by Christ but made solid. In kneeling in worship, they show the faith and salvation of the believing peoples who each day, by bowing the knee, worship the eternal king, Christ.

5. The present reading reports that when Christ was led to his passion, “They found a certain Simon of Cyrene and they forced him to take up his cross.”7 In the cross of Christ is the triumph of his power and the trophy of his victory. Blessed is Simon, who so merited to be the first to bear the sign of such a great triumph. This cross, the Lord carried first, and then Simon was forced to bear it so that, in the cross, his Lord might clearly show the grace of the heavenly mystery, because he was God and man, Word and flesh, Son of God and Son of man. As a man he was crucified, but as God he triumphed in the mystery of the cross. He suffered the passion in the flesh, but the divine triumphed in victory. It was in the cross that Christ triumphed over death and the devil. In the cross, it is as if Christ mounted a chariot of triumph. It is for this reason that he chose four evangelists, like a celestial chariot of four horses chosen to announce to the entire world the triumph of his great victory. Simon of Cyrene carried on his shoulders the triumph of this victory. He was made a partner in the passion, so that he might participate in the resurrection, as the apostle says: “If we die with him, we will also live with him. If we endure with him, we will also reign with him.”8 And for this reason,

6 Isaiah 42:3.
7 Matthew 27:32.
8 II Timothy 2:11.
the Lord says in the gospel: “Whoever does not take up his cross and follow me, cannot be my disciple.”

6. The cross of Christ is our victory, because the cross of Christ obtained the triumph of victory for us. Who among us is so blessed as to be worthy to carry the cross of Christ himself? He bears the cross of Christ who dies to the world and affixes himself to Christ. Listen to that which the Apostle said: “I am crucified with Christ; I live, but I am no longer myself, Christ lives in me.” Therefore, whoever is a stranger to the life of the flesh, as the apostle said, a stranger to the desires of the world, is crucified with Christ. But whoever lives in the vices of the flesh and in the lust of the world, is unable to say: “I am crucified with Christ,” because he does not live according to the manner of Christ but according to the worldly life, the will of the devil.

The cross of Christ therefore is the salvation of the world and the triumph of the heavenly victory. For long ago, when great kings gained victory over a noble people, they would make a trophy of victory in the shape of the cross and would hang it as a sign of eternal remembrance at the place where the spoils of the enemy had been captured. The cross of Christ is a very different king of victory. The victory of other kings was made in the destruction of nations, the overthrowing of cities, the plundering of provinces. But here, the victory of the cross is the redemption of peoples, the salvation of cities, the freeing of provinces, the safety of the entire world. In this conquest, only the Devil is ruined and captures the demons. The cross of Christ redeems the world and makes the demons captives. The spoils of the demonic captives hang from the

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10 Galatians 2:19.
triumphant cross of Christ. Even today, the demons hang as a sign because the cross of Christ has become their torture and suffering; they are held captive by the faith in the cross and the sign of the passion.

7. When they had come to Golgotha, it says: “They gave him vinegar mixed with gall. And when he had tasted it, he refused to drink.”\textsuperscript{11} This he had predicted to happen through David, when he said: “And they gave me gall to eat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar.”\textsuperscript{12} Behold this mystery. Long ago, Adam tasted a sweet fruit and gained the bitterness of death for the human race. On the other hand, the Lord received the bitterness of gall in order to recover for our lives sweetness from the bitterness of death. Therefore, he received the bitterness of gall so that he might extinguish the bitterness of sin in us. He accepted the sour taste of vinegar, he shed for us the precious wine of his blood. Thus he endured evils and rendered them as goods. He received death, but he gave life. It is not without reason that he was crucified in this place where it was said that the body of Adam had been buried. Christ was crucified there, where Adam was buried, so that life might work there where the first death had happened, in order that he might raise up life from death. Death through Adam, life through Christ who deigned to be crucified and die for us so that, by the tree of the cross, he might blot out the sins of the tree and abolish the punishment of death by the mystery of his death.

\textsuperscript{11} Matthew 27:34.  
\textsuperscript{12} Psalms 69:21.
SERMON 20: ON THE PASSION (FRAGMENT)

…therefore, because our Lord and Savior deigned to suffer also the passion of the cross for our salvation, we ought to have this great redemption always before our eyes, and faithful obey all of his precepts. For we fell in Adam, but we are resurrected in Christ. We were broken by the sin of Adam, but we are renewed through the grace of Christ…

…this kind of potter’s field, as the evangelist said, which the Church of Christ is, is the burial place of foreigners. When we believe Christ, we are made foreigners to the world, but we are in the household of God. Foreigners to the earth, citizens of heaven; strangers in the world, neighbors of Christ. Listen to what the Apostle Peter demonstrated when he said: “As strangers and foreigners, keep your hands from fleshly desires.”¹ And Paul says more of the same: “You are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, your life, appears, then you will appear like him in glory.”² If we are strangers to the vices of this world, to carnal desires, then we are buried in the potter’s field, which is the Church of Christ, but buried happily because we are dead to this world but we live in Christ. Buried to iniquity, we rise again in justice; buried to vice, we rise again in virtue. The apostle Paul clearly demonstrates this fact: “You have been buried with him through baptism in death, so that just as Christ was resurrected into life, you also might walk in new life”³…

¹ I Peter 2:11.
² Colossians 3:3-4.
³ Romans 6:4.
SERMON 21: FIRST SERMON ON SAINT JOHN, EVANGELIST AND APOSTLE

1. Today we celebrate the heavenly birth of Saint John the apostle and evangelist. He possessed a great and unique grace because Christ held a special love for him. He, after the passion of the Lord, as we read in the Apocalypse, was banished to the isle of Patmos for the sake of the name of Christ and was bound by chains. But the chains were not a punishment for the apostle but an honor. It is an honor, and even the greatest honor, to suffer injustice for the sake of Christ, because all injustice and all punishment by men for the sake of Christ raise one to heaven. Thus, John, while he was bound on that island with chains, was raised in the spirit, and, as he testified, the door to heaven was opened to him. Therefore these chains were not for John an onerous burden, but the wings of virtue, by which he was raised to heaven.

He recorded in the Apocalypse the great things he saw through the door open to him into heaven. He saw the throne of God in heaven; he saw the son of God seated at the right hand of the Father; he saw choirs of angels; he saw the 24 elders and the four living creatures and many other secret mysteries, which he was told to remain silent about, as he reports.

2. When he was on the island, a book was given to him for him to eat, just as he says: “A book was given to me, and it was said to me that I should eat it. And I ate it and in my mouth it was sweet as honey but in my stomach it was bitter. Now it was said to me: ‘You must prophesy to the nations.’”\(^2\) That is what happened. The book which he received to eat, the book was the gospel, which he wrote afterwards. For after Emperor


\(^2\) Revelation 10:9-10.
Domitian, who had banished John, was murdered, John was set free from the island and then he wrote the gospel book which bears his name. This is why he said that it was sweet in his mouth but bitter in the stomach: sweet for the sake of preaching, bitter for the sake of persecution; For when he preached the sweetness of the faith, he incurred the bitterness of persecution. The bitterness of persecution, however, carries with it a great sweetness, because persecution earns the sweet glory of martyrdom. While the roots of trees are bitter, they are wont to produce sweet fruit. Thus even though persecution appears bitter, it produces the sweet fruit of salvation, since they are made to be confessors or martyrs, those who are persecuted.

3. But it can be understood in another way that the book of the gospel was that which John received to eat, which he said was sweet in his mouth but bitter in his stomach. Those who understand in the spirit of faith the words of John attribute to his mouth, which is his preaching, sweetness because they understand the words in the piety of faith. But those who receive the words of John in a wicked sense rouse the bitterness of heresy for they turn the sweetness of faith into the bitterness of treachery. That is why these are shown to be in the mouth and those in the intestines. In the mouth are the catholics, whom God blesses; in the stomach are heretics from which they are expelled. John, in his gospel, displays the sweetness of catholics against the bitterness of heretics. Photius, who denied that Christ is God, was full of bitterness according to John, since he revealed this God when he said: "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."3 Arius filled himself with bitterness by not believing that the Son proceeded from the Father. One cannot believe that the Word of

3 John 1:1.
God is the Son unless he admits that he must proceed, properly speaking, from the heart of the Father. All heretics, who attack or destroy the faith of his preaching, are filled with bitterness according to John. Saint John intends the sweetness of his preaching for catholics but the bitterness for heretics. He intends the sweetness for the faith of the church, bitterness for the treachery of the synagogue, which did not want to receive the preaching of John.

4. After he was freed from the island of Patmos, Saint John wrote the gospel which has been preached throughout the entire world. After many persecutions which he endured for the name of Christ even though he was a weak old man, he departed from this world to the Lord. The Lord said of him, as we read in the gospel: “Thus I want him to remain, up to the time when I come.”

But the reason that the Lord said this was not because he would not die, but that he would die free from pain. He continues: “Jesus did not say that he would not die but: ‘Thus I want him to remain, up to the time when I come.’” For the Lord comes for a single saint when he leaves his body. John, when he was burdened by excessive age, said this to his disciples, just as scripture, which refers itself to falling asleep, shows, so that they might make him a grave. It had been said to him by the Lord what day he would die. And so his disciples made him a place, wherein his body could be laid. And so the Blessed John laid himself down, and without pain, without motion and without strain, and he departed from his body, so that he could be seen to go out rather than be knocked out of his body. It was for this reason that the Lord said of him: “Thus I want him to remain, up to the time when I come,”

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4 John 21:22.
5 John 21:23.
because he received the sleep of the blessed without pain. In that place, great forces and great wonders happen so that even the incredulous might believe. It is not strange then if his grace works there, where his body has been assumed, when it works even in those places where just a little of their ashes remain. Therefore, because even our church merited having his remains, we ought to celebrate with all the faith and devotion his having fallen asleep so that we may be able to receive a portion with him and with all the saints of God.
1. Many great and illustrious things are reported in the gospel about Saint John, whose spiritual birth we celebrate today. But since we cannot recount all of them, let us say a few words on the vast subject. To speak some about the merits of the saints is to merit holiness. He was the junior among all the disciples; by age the younger, but in the gospel he was placed among the first of the faith. Indeed, whenever the Lord wanted to chose some among his disciples, John was among those that he selected to be with Him.

2. When he entered the house of the chief of the synagogue in order to raise his daughter from the dead he selected Peter, James and John. He wanted those three to be witnesses when he raised the girl from death. The Lord did this for two reasons: first because the divine law said “all things stand on the words of two or three witness.”\(^2\) Second, no one could be raised from the death of sin without the faith and grace of the Trinity. Therefore the Lord employed the three disciples when he raised the girl from the dead so that he might show the mystery of the Trinity. This death of sin is put to flight when the faith of the Trinity is present.

When he wanted to reveal his glory to the disciples on the mountain, he took with Peter and James also saint John. Here He led the three disciples “up the mountain separately, and he was transfigured before them. And Moses and Elijah appeared with him.”\(^3\) And the voice of the father was heard from heaven saying: “Here is my beloved...”}

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2 Deuteronomy 19:15.

3 Matthew 17:1-3.
son in whom I am well pleased. Listen to him." Behold this mystery: how the Son of God manifested himself as the God of heaven and earth and the places below. From heaven the Father bore witness to the Son; on earth the three disciples were elected to be witnesses; from below Moses was called as a witness because Moses tasted death. And lest there be any place empty of the testimony of Christ, even Elijah, who never tasted death, was brought from heaven. So the God of heaven, earth, paradise, and places below had witness on all sides and from all places. And thus, here saint John was chosen among the first of the apostles.

3. Even at the time of the Passion, when the Son of God was hung on the cross for the salvation of the world, the Lord commended his earthly mother Mary to no one other than John, saying to him: “Behold your mother.” And to Mary, “Behold your son.” Leaving his mother and John to one another; not so that he, who guards all in his divine honor, might abandon saint Mary – he who is defender and protector of all – but so that he might demonstrate the proper affection of a son for Mary. The Lord ought to display a pious respect for his holy Mother Mary, because he is the author of piety. Therefore here John is preferred among the holy apostles, because he merited a unique grace to be beloved by Christ.

4. After his passion, when the Lord rose from the dead, Peter and John, hearing about the resurrection of Christ, ran to the tomb and beheld it. John arrived at the tomb first, although he did not enter it first because it was reserved for Peter to enter in first. Thus John arrived at the tomb before Saint Peter because of the love which he had

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4 Matthew 17:5.
towards Christ; but he ceded that place to Peter out of humility. There where he ran ahead to the tomb he led the way along the trail of the love of Christ. When he ceded the place to Peter, it was to give priority to honor. In all of this he proved his humility and faith, humility towards fellow servants, faith in Christ.

5. Saint John also wrote a gospel as no one is unaware of how excellent and glorious a thing it is. The gospel according to John is most necessary against all heresies, because within it clearly declares the divinity of Christ, and it displays Him to be evidently God. Therefore because today is the heaven birthday of such a great apostle, we celebrate his memory with due honor, so that with the aid of his prayers, we might be admitted to the eternal glory which is prepared for all the saints of God.
1. In the present reading, divine scripture recounts the story of Cain and Abel as your love heard. Abel was a shepherd and Cain was a farmer. It said: “And it came to pass that both of them offered their gifts before the Lord. Abel offered the first part of his lamb and its fatness. And the Lord looked well upon the offering of Abel; but he did not look well upon the offering of Cain. And Cain was very angry, and his face was crestfallen.” And what do we say? Is God a respecter of persons, so that He accepted the offering of Abel, but he rejected the offering of Cain? It cannot be believed! Nothing can be hidden from God who probes the heart and mind of each and is the judge of consciences. Therefore, God regarded with favor the offering of Abel because he offered to the Lord with simplicity of heart and a pure mind. For the Lord said to him who thought of killing his brother: “If you offer rightly, but do not share in it properly, you have sinned; keep quiet.” The Lord argued with Cain so that he might not complete the thoughts of his heart. But his mind was so blinded by hatred of his brother that he did not consider fraternal piety or the pressing judgment of God. Neither the piety of his brother, nor the charity of brotherhood, nor the divine rebuke were able to recall him from his deed. Consequently, it is not without merit that the Lord says in the gospel: “If you bring your offering to the altar and remember that something against your brother, take back your offering form the altar and go reconcile with your brother and then offer your gift.” If you want your gift to be acceptable to the God, you must be reconciled with your brothers; lest torn by hatred <…> in order not to become like Cain.

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1 Genesis 4:3-5.
2 Genesis 4:7.
2. Regarding the offerings made by Cain and Abel, God fixed his gaze upon the gifts, but he considered the inner thoughts of the mind so that he whose heart was pleasing to God would be pleasing in offering, but he whose heart was displeasing would find his offering disfavored. The offering of Abel pleased God because he offered the gift of a pure heart to God; the offering of Cain was displeasing to God because he, who thought about the death of his brother, offered his gift to God not with a pure heart but with a wicked mind. Moreover, the offerings themselves, in a typological sense, displayed the vast difference between the two worshippers. Cain offered a gift from the fruits of the earth because his thought was earthly. Abel, however, offered a gift of a lamb from his sheep in order to show and signify his innocence. And not only did Abel offer a gift from the fruits of his flocks, but also the fat of his sheep, for the fat stands for the works of mercy. For this reason, God accepts this offering of our innocence, when we add, like the fat of sheep, our works of mercy.

But it was not merely for show that Abel was a shepherd; he prefigured in his example what was said in the gospel: “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep.”4 In Abel, the image of the shepherd led the way, so that in Christ it might be truly manifested. One is the shepherd here below, the other is the shepherd of heaven. Abel is the shepherd of animals, Christ of martyrs. Abel is the shepherd of irrational beasts, Christ of sheep with reason.

3. But let us attend to the greater mystery. While it is correct to call our Savior a shepherd, he is also, however, named sheep or lamb. It was an allusion to the passion of the Lord, in the present reading, when Abel offered a lamb from his flock to the Lord

4 John 10:11.
God. The saintly patriarchs and prophets, in consideration of their innocence, are called sheep and rams. It is of them that we read in the scripture: “The rams of the flock are their clothing and their valleys abound in fruit.” And again: “But we are your people and the sheep of your flock.” It is from this flock of saints that a sheep came forth pure and without blemish, which is Saint Mary, who, contrary to nature, brought forth for us a lamb in purple, which is Christ the king. Justly Christ the Lord is understood as the lamb of purple, for he was not made king but was born as such. Every other king did not become king upon birth; only after being born is he made king, either taking over the royal purple, or receiving the royal dignity. But our Lord and Savior came out of the womb of a virgin with royal authority because he was king already before he was born from a virgin. He was born from God the father as king and son of God. Listen to what the Lord himself declared in the gospel. When Pilate asked him: “Are you a king?” He responded: “I was born for that purpose, and I came into this world for that purpose.” The Magi from the east had recognized this royal dignity already at the moment of his fleshly birth. This is why they said to the Jews: “Where is him who is born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east, and we came to worship him.”

Like the greatness of the faith of Abel who offered a gift of the lamb from his flock to God, So is the religious devotion of the Christian people, which we are, who offer to the Lord offering of innocence and simplicity, if, however, we merit <…> by the Lord. Therefore, we offer to God gifts from our flock of sheep if we live simply and innocently

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5 Psalms 65:13.
6 Psalms 95:7.
7 John 18:37.
8 Matthew 2:2.
in the sight of God. We offer also a gift of the fatness of ours flocks to God if we exhibit, like fat, work of piety and mercy before God.
1. Divine Scripture tells us several things about the sacred patriarch Joseph. For that reason let us try to say some things like showing crumbs from a great loaf of bread. Hence we read in the gospel: “For even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the table of their masters.” If the crumbs from such a great banquet do not fill us, at least they nourish. When we first came to believe we were nourished by crumbs like the precepts of the apostle. But when we advanced in the faith then we were admitted to the abundance of the bread of heaven so that we might be satiated by the bread of heaven who said in the gospel: “I am the bread of life which came down from heaven.”

Therefore, let us not reject the crumbs of doctrine which are crumbs of the bread. For that reason we ought not to suppress the crumbs so that we might merit to be filled by the bread of heaven. But let us look now at Saint Joseph in order that we might be nourished, like the bread of heaven, by his example of chastity and modesty.

2. Saint Joseph, as you, Dearly Beloved, heard in the present reading, was handsome in appearance, but more brilliant in mind because he was modest in body and had a chaste mind. He shone in bodily appearance, but the excellence of his soul shone even brighter. And thought the appearance of the body is usually a hindrance to salvation, it was not able to harm the holy man, for the brilliance of his soul was master over his bodily appearance. The soul ought to rule over the flesh, not the flesh over the soul; for the soul is the master of the flesh and the flesh the servant of the soul.

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1 Matthew 15:27.
2 John 6:51.
Unhappy is that soul which is ruled over by the flesh, and instead of being master is made a servant because it loses the faith of the Lord and undertakes the slavery of sin.

But the soul of the Patriarch Joseph held its dominance faithfully and the flesh could not rule in anything. When his mistress, an impudent woman, asked him to lie with her, he refused, because he had not lost the mastery of his soul even in his condition of servitude. Falsely accused of rape, he was sent to prison. But the saint considered the prison as a palace, or rather he himself was a palace in prison for where faith, modesty and chastity are, that is a palace of Christ, a temple of God, a dwelling of the Holy Spirit. If any man flatter himself because he is handsome in body or any woman boasts about her fleshly beauty, he should follow the example of Joseph and she the example of Susanna: They are chaste in body and modest in soul, and so are not only beautiful to men, but are so even to God. There are three examples of chastity in the Church which everyone ought to imitate: Joseph, Susanna and Mary. Joseph for the men to imitate, Susanna for women, Mary for virgins.

3. Secondly, in the mystical or allegorical sense, Joseph prefigured the Lord. If we consider the deeds of Joseph, we recognize clearly the presentation in advance of the figure of the Lord. Joseph had a coat of many colors; our Lord and Savior is known to have a coat of many colors, for he received the church which was gathered out of many nations just like a coat. This coat of many colors is the church which Christ took on. The church is diverse and varied in grace: it has martyrs and confessors. It has priests and ministers. It has virgins and widows. It has those who perform works of justice. The variety of the Church is not a variety of colors but a variety of grace. And our Lord and Savior showcases this variety of the church just as a coat of many colors.
Joseph, dragged by his brothers, was sold to the Ishmaelites; also, our Lord and Savior was dragged by the Jews and sold to the gentiles. The Ishmaelites who bought Joseph, were carrying various spices with him in order to represent that the nations coming to faith would spread the diverse works of justice throughout the entire world.

4. Let us turn now to the greatest mystery: Just as Joseph was sold for 20 pieces of gold, the Lord was sold for thirty of silver. The servant was sold for a dearer price than the master. Of course, humanity was deceived in estimating the value of the Lord because He who was sold is inestimable. But let us turn to the fullness of this mystery. The Jews offered thirty pieces of silver for the Lord, the Ishmaelites twenty of gold for Joseph. The Ishmaelites paid more for the servant than the Jews for the Lord. The Ishmaelites respected in Joseph the image of Christ, the Jews had contempt for the truth which was in Christ. Therefore, the Jews offered a meaner price for Christ, for they placed a meaner price on the passion of the Lord. But how could the passion of the Lord be held so cheaply when it was the price of redeeming the entire world? For the passion of Christ redeemed by death the entire world and all the human race. Listen to that wish the apostle said: “You were purchased at a great price.” Listen to the similar testimony of the Apostle Peter: “You have been redeemed from your vain way of life not by gold of this world or perishable gold, but by the precious blood of the undefiled Son of God.” If we had been bought from death by gold of silver, our redemption was of little price because a man is worth more than silver or gold. Now, however, we have been

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3 1 Corinthians 6:20.

4 1 Peter 1:18-19.
redeemed at an inestimable price because he who redeemed us by his passion is of inestimable worth.

5. If we consider as well the other deeds of the life of Joseph, we recognize in all of them a prefiguring of the image of Christ. Joseph suffered the false accusation of an impudent woman; the Lord was often the object of slander by the synagogue. Joseph suffered punishment in prison; Christ suffered the passion of death. One was sent to prison, the other descended to hell. Frequently divine scripture is accustomed to call hell a prison, as these words of prophecy: “Bring forth my soul out of prison.”\(^5\) The saintly prophet desired to be free from hell. But here, behold the mystery. After Joseph came out of prison, he was made lord of Egypt. So also, after our Lord and Savior came out of his prison, he took the lordship of the entire world through the knowledge of his faith. Everywhere the name of Christ reigns, His domination extends everywhere. The world believes in Him, He is manifested throughout the world. The nations honor Him, and kings adore Him. To him be glory and empire forever and ever. Amen.

\(^5\) Psalms 142:7.
1. We were introduced in the reading to Saint Elijah. It is fitting to read about saint Elijah during this time of fasting, for Elijah fasted for forty day and forty night without seeking earthly bread, for he had within himself the bread of life, which is the word of God that comforted him and acted as food for him during those forty days, so that he might appear stronger than he had been at any other time. We read of many miracles by this Elijah, which you, dearly beloved, heard in part in the reading. Since it would take too long to explain a single event, for an hour of time or even days would be insufficient, let us say a few things on the vast subject so that we might understand many things by studying some.

2. When Elijah suffered extreme persecution at the hands of king Ahab and his wife Jezebel, the Lord said to Elijah: “Go to the brook, and I will command the ravens to fee you there, and you will drink water from the brook. And every day,” says the Scripture, “they brought to him bread in the morning and meat in the evening.”¹ From this we see the great are that the Lord has for his saints that he deigns to nourish them by the ministry of the ravens. Already before, David had rightly and truly said in the Psalm: “The Lord will not suffer the soul of the righteous to hunger.”² Righteous, it was said, was the soul Saint Elijah the Prophet. The lord did not wish him to suffer hunger than so he fed him by the ministry of birds. Without doubt the food of the soul is entirely inner; it is the word of God was is always refreshing, yet thanks to the mercy of God he was not deprived of bread as well. For saint Elijah, it was provided to him in the desert

¹ I Kings 17:3-4, 6.
² Proverbs 10:3.
by the ministry of ravens; For Daniel, when he was held in the lions’ den, God commanded that his meal be born to him by the ministry of an angel. Daniel suffered persecution at the hands of the leaders of Babylon for the sake of righteousness. But the iniquity of the persecutors could not harm the soul of the just. The ravens fed Elijah, the wild animals did not touch Daniel; yet men prepare ambushes and persist in persecuting.

3. But let us return to the subject at hand. God fed his servant Elijah in the desert by the ministry of ravens, who brought bread in the morning and meat in the evening to him. What does this say about the Jews who think that in this world they must abstain from foods which the law has declared in mystery to be impure? Certainly the raven, according to the law, is an unclean animal; and whoever touches an unclean animal, according to their interpretation, necessarily becomes unclean. How could Saint Elijah have used the meat which was brought to him by the ravens, if whatever a raven touches is unclean? But, for Elijah, the food which was carried to him by ravens could not be unclean, for he whose conscience was pure. Clearly, it is not food but the conscience which corrupts a man. This is why the Apostle rightly said: “All things are clean to the clean; but for the unclean and defiled nothing is clean.”

Even if the food they receive is clean, they pollute their clean food through their impure conscience. Thus, the Jews believe it is good to abstain from impure food, but they, who are filled with the impurity of sins, are never clean. If only they could abstain from the impurity of sins like they do from unclean food, then they would be made truly clean. For, to eat clean food and to carry an unclean conscience profits nothing for salvation. For this

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3 Titus 1:15. This quote varies from the SC. It springs from the discovery of a new manuscript recorded in: J. Lemarie, "Nouveau Temoins," 1988.
reason, we ought to always bear a clean conscience, so that we can hold all the food which we receive as clean. It is not the food which renders a man unclean, but a bad conscience.

4. We have said these things of the Jews, who think that only in abstaining from certain foods can they be clean, so that it might teach us by when saint Elijah, who was always pure, received food which the impure ravens carried to him. And as far as he was not polluted by the meat, not only was he not offended, he was transported to paradise. If, however, we consider the deeds of Elijah in a spiritual sense and through the eyes of faith, we discover a great and mystical mystery. For Elijah, who suffered persecution at the hands of that most evil woman, Jezebel, stood for a type of the Lord, who suffered persecution by the synagogue, a sacrilegious woman. The ravens, which carried food to Elijah, represent the figure of our calling; we came to belief out of the unclean nations, carrying our devotion and faith to Christ the Lord. The devotion and the faith of believers are food to Christ. But let us look more fully at the mystery of the ravens. “The ravens brought,” to Elijah, “bread in the morning and meat in the evening.” In the morning, they carried to the Lord bread which is those who believe in Christ with all their heart; they have true nourishment in their mouths: faith. In the evening, they brought the flesh of the martyrs, who, at the evening of their life, handed over their body and flesh for the name of Christ. And this meat, they carried in their mouth, because they suffered martyrdom for Christ by the confession of their mouth.

5. Let us now consider why Elijah was sent to the house of a certain widow which was in Zarephath in Sidon so that he might be fed and not die from hunger. This

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woman, as the reading reported, had only a little flour and a little oil. Elijah came to her and told her to make bread for him so that he might eat. She responded to him saying that she had only a little flour and oil to make a loaf of bread for her son and then to die hungry. Elijah said to her: “Make one for me first, that I may eat; for thus says the Lord: Neither shall the jar of flour nor the vessel of oil be empty before the Lord sends rain upon the Earth.” Great was the grace of the prophet who promised such a thing to this woman. But the faith of the woman helped the grace of the prophet. She believed with total faith and performed the requests of Elijah. How full the woman was of faith that she believed this thing Elijah told her. With the little flour which was all that remained, she made bread and offered it to the prophet before giving something to her own sons. She valued more the merit of the prophet than her love for her sons. Justly then, she is a figure of the church in all things, for she venerated in Elijah even then the image of Christ, whose love and grace, she preferred before her own sons or even her own life. And the woman had not heard the Lord saying in the gospel: “Whoever does not hate his parents or his sons for my sake is not worthy of me,” yet she fulfilled this precept of the gospel before she heard it. In Elijah she saw the mystery of Christ at work. This woman was a widow; she had not yet believed in Christ the man, of whom John the Baptist said: “After me will come a man who has surpassed me because he was prior to me.” This man came after John because, according to the flesh, he deigned to be born of a virgin after John. But he was before John because he was begotten by God the Father before all things.

5 1 Kings 17:13-14.
7 John 1:30.
6. But let us consider the image of the church which is presented perfectly in the woman. Before Elijah came to her, she suffered from hunger with his sons; she suffered completely and from a grave sense of hunger, because not yet had Christ, the bread of life, descended from heaven; not yet had the Word of God become incarnate from a virgin. Hear the word of the Prophet: “I will send a famine upon the earth; not a famine of bread or of water, but a famine of hearing the word of God.”

For whoever suffers a famine of the word of God runs the risk of true hunger. For truly different is a famine of bread upon the earth than a famine of the word of God. A famine of bread on the earth can kill only the body not the soul. But a famine of the word of God murders the body and puts the soul to death. A famine of bread in this world ends the present life of men; A famine of the word of God rejects the man from eternal and perpetual life. Before it received Christ, the Church suffered this kind of peril; but after receiving him, it has escaped the danger of eternal death. Before the coming of Christ, this woman had a little flour and a little oil, which were the preaching of the law and the prophets. Yet these were insufficient for her life so the grace of Christ fulfilled the law and prophets. Hence these words of the Lord in the gospel: “I came not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill them.”

The salvation of the human life could not be in the law or the prophets, but only in the passion of Christ. For this reason, after the Church received Christ, they abounded in flour, oil and wood. The flour prefigures the nourishment of the word; the oil the gift of divine mercy; the wood, the mystery of the hallowed cross, through which is give to us the rain of heaven. For thus Elijah said to

8 Amos 8:11.
9 Matthew 5:17.
the woman: “For the flour and oil shall not run out for you until the Lord sends rain upon the earth.”\textsuperscript{10} Our Lord and Savior brought to us the rain of heaven, which is the preaching of the gospel, through which the parched hearts of the human race, like the thirsty earth, receive the water of life.

Therefore, because we are filled with such spiritual food, we ought not to complain about the burden of fasting. Rather we should say to the Lord what the prophet said in the psalm: “How sweet are your words to me, O Lord, sweeter than honey or honeycomb to my mouth!”\textsuperscript{11} So when the Lord sees the devotion of our faith surrounding him, he might reward us with the grace of heaven and all the spiritual goods.

\textsuperscript{10} I Kings 17:14.

\textsuperscript{11} Psalms 119:103.
SERMON 26: FOR THE DEDICATION OF THE CHURCH OF CONCORDIA

1. We need to make inexpressible thanks to our God, who has finished decorating his church. The basilica in honor of the saints is completed and has been completed quickly. Following the example of other churches, you are roused to a similar kind of devotion. But we welcome your faith because it preceded this example. Although you began late, you finished first, because you deserved to have the relics of the saints first. We received from you the relics of these saints you received from us the pursuit of devotion and the emulation of the faith. It is a good struggle, and religious battle, where we contend not over secular desires but for the gift of grace. We took that which had brought to you a religious greed; but this very thing aroused your zeal, so that you begged for just a portion. It could not be denied to you, for just was your demand. A portion was given to you, so that you have the whole in this portion, and we lost nothing from that which had been given, according to what the scripture says: “Whoever has much has no abundance, and whoever has a little has no lack.” Therefore, this church of Concordia is decorated with the relics of saints and the construction of the basilica and the office of the bishop. This saintly man, my co-bishop and brother, merited the honor of the high priesthood, and who, through this kind of relics of the saints, honored the church of Christ, the eternal priest.

2. Numerous are the merits of the apostolic saint whose relics we have here. But of the many, let us speak a little. It is fitting that we preach some of their merits, whose faith and grace shine in the entire world and whose virtues and grace operate everywhere. “In all the world,” just as the prophet says in the psalms, “their voice

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1 II Corinthians 8:15.
resounds, and unto the ends of the earth their words ring.”\textsuperscript{2} The voices of the apostles came out clearly through the whole country, not only at that time when they physically preached Christ to the world, but even today and every day they spread, when the power of the faith and the grace of the spirit operate against the different maladies of sins. But we should not expect a lesser grace of the apostles because we do not seem to have all their relics. Where two or three are, all are, because the faith is common and the grace is alike. Listen to that which the Lord declared: “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the middle of them.”\textsuperscript{3} If, therefore, Christ is with two or three, all the apostles are with Christ. It is necessary that where Christ is all the chorus of the apostles stand by. Consequently, we ought to believe and hold that all are present even if only a few are. Because we are not able to explain the merits of each individual apostle, we ought to say something briefly of these whose relics we have, so that we might obtain some increase in faith.

3. The evangelists manifest how great John the Baptist was in the eyes of the Lord and also how great John the evangelist was, whose relics we have here. There John the Baptist, here the evangelist. That one recognized his Lord while still in his mother’s womb; this one, sitting on the shore, found Christ. That one baptized the Lord; this one reclined on the breast of the Lord. That one is spoken of first among those born of women; this one was loved with a special affection. This one was named by an angel; the other is named son of thunder. This one made known to the people Christ when he

\textsuperscript{2} Psalms 19:4.

\textsuperscript{3} Matthew 18:20.
said: “Behold the lamb of God, Behold he who takes the sin of the world.” The other, by the preaching of his gospel, displayed the Son of God to the by saying: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him and without him nothing has been made.” Both excellent, both the greatest. That one saw the Holy Spirit descend in the form of a dove onto the Lord; this one, carried off by the spirit, understood the secrets of heaven. Finally, that one was sent to prison by king Herod for the sake of chastity; the other was banished to an island by the Emperor Domitian for the name of Christ.

4. What to say about the apostles Andrew and Thomas, about the evangelist Luke? For we have relics of them here as well. Andrew was the brother of Saint Peter. He, just like his bother Peter, suffered crucifixion for the sake of Christ. They were equal in the passion because they were equal in the faith. Both of them were equal in the service of Christ; they suffered the of the same cross. And it was clearly right that those who were brothers in blood also shared in their glorious passion.

Thomas was also one of the apostles. When Thomas he doubted after the resurrection of the Lord, the Lord most clearly confirmed Thomas’s faith by saying to him: “Put your hand in my side, and cease to be unbelieving, but be faithful.” When he had touched the Lord, Thomas said to him, “My Lord and My God.” And the Lord said to him, “Because you have seen me, you believe. Blessed are those who have not seen

4 John 1:29.
5 John 1:1-3.
6 John 20:27.
7 John 20:28.
and have believed."\(^8\) Saint Thomas doubted after the resurrection of the Lord, but his doubts confirmed the faith of the Church. Thomas touched the hand of the Lord, so that he might feel the imprint of the nails; he touched the side of the Lord, in order to feel the signs of the bodily wound, lest in the present it is asserted by enemies of the faith that the Lord did not suffer death in his body. Yet, while Thomas proved by the sight of his eyes and the touch of his hands that Christ had been resurrected in the body, neither Marcion nor the Manicheans, however, wanted to believe the Lord was raised in his body. But what did Thomas say after he felt the hand of the Lord? "My Lord and My God." He acknowledged Christ as his Lord only in the light of the resurrection, because he conquered death and raised up his body from death by his own power, it is only by the power of God and eternal majesty. And thus he said, "My Lord and My God." And so this man went abroad to the Indians, according to the saying of the Lord, so that he might preach Christ the Lord in India. After many wonders and miracles which confirmed the faith to believers, he suffered in reward a glorious death. Since, therefore, his body was to be buried in India, one merchant, a Christian and very religious, went to India for the cause of business, to bring back precious stones or goods He would bring the desire for earthly gain to the Romans. But the man of trade in the things of the world was found to be trader in the things of God. For when he came to India, it was shown to him through revelation where the body of Thomas lay, and he was admonished to bring the body with him to Edessa. But he as a merchant of God, despising earthly gain, began to think only of heavenly gain. He found a better reward than that of the precious stones he had sought for…

\(^8\) John 20:29.
SERMON 27: ON THE RESURRECTION OF LAZARUS

1. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ showed the power of his divinity by many signs and wonders, but the greatest was the death of Lazarus, which you, dearly beloved, heard in today’s reading, showing himself to be the one about whom it was written: “The Lord of power is with us, the God of Jacob is our protector.”¹ Our Lord and Savior performed these wonders with two meanings: bodily and spiritually, that is, visible and invisible, so that he might show by the visible work his invisible power. Previously, he gave sight of the eyes to a man blind from birth as a visible work, so that he might illuminate, by his invisible power, the blindness of the Jews to the light of his knowledge. Truly, in the present reading, he gave life to a dead Lazarus so that, in life, he might arouse the unbelieving hearts of the Jews from the death of sin. Finally, many Jews believed in Christ the Lord because of Lazarus. They recognized in the resurrection of Lazarus the manifestation of the power of the Son of God, because the power to properly command death is not the state of humanity, but of the divine nature.

We read, certainly, that the apostles raised the dead, but they prayed to the Lord in order to raise; they also did not raise by their own power or their own force, but by invoking the name of Christ who commands both death and life. The Son of God himself raised Lazarus by his own proper power. When the Lord said, “Lazarus, come out,”² he immediately came out of the tomb. Death was not able to hold him for whom Life called. The smell of the burial was still in his nostrils when Lazarus stood alive. Death did not wait to hear the voice of the Savior repeat itself, for it was not able to endure the power

¹ Psalms 46:7.
² John 11:43.
of life. But at the love voice of the Savior, death left the body of Lazarus in the tomb and his soul in hell. All of Lazarus, who had not been wholly there, proceeded out of the tomb alive. One rouses someone sleeping more slowly than Lazarus from the dead. The smell of death was in the nostril of the Jews and Lazarus stood alive. But now let us look at the beginning of the reading.

2. The Lord said to his disciples, as you, dearly beloved, heard in the present reading: “Our friend Lazarus is sleeping; but I hurry in order to rouse him from his sleep.”³ The Lord said rightly, “Our friend Lazarus is sleeping,” because he was truly going to raise him from death just as from sleep. But the disciples, ignorant as to why he said this, said to him: “Lord, if he sleeps, he will get better.”⁴ Then he responded, “He said clearly to them: ‘Lazarus is dead. But I am joyful for your sakes that I was not there so that you may believe.’”⁵ If the Lord said there that he was joyful about the death of Lazarus for the sake of the disciples, why is it reported that later he wept for the death of Lazarus? But we observe the nature of joy and tears. The Lord was joyful for the sake of the apostles; he wept for the sake of the Jews. For the sake of the disciples he was joyful, because through the resurrection of Lazarus, he was able to confirm their faith in Christ. For the sake of the Jews, he wept at unbelief, for even despite the resurrection of Lazarus, they would not believe in Christ the Lord. Or perhaps the lord wept to blot out the sins of the world by his tears. If Peter could wash away their own sins by the shedding of their tears, why should we not believe that the tears of the Lord blotted away the sins of the world? After the weeping of the Lord, many from the Jewish

³ John 11:11.
⁴ John 11:12.
⁵ John 11:14-15a.
people believed. The display of piety of the Lord conquered the unbelief of part of the Jews, and the piety of his shedding of tears softened their rebellious minds. And this is perhaps why the Lord is referred to in the present reading as both joyful and weeping, because, “Whoever sows in tears,” as the scripture says, “reaps in joy.” Therefore, the tears of the Lord were the joy of the world: he shed tears so that we might merit joy. But let us return to the subject.

He said to his disciples: “Your friend Lazarus is dead. But I am joyful for your sakes that I was not there so that you may know.” Let us examine this mystery: How did the Lord say that he was not there for the death of Lazarus? For when he said clearly, “Lazarus is dead,” he showed, by his evidence, that he had been present. The Lord could not have said this, without any message to himself, unless he was present. How was it that the Lord, who surrounds all the places of the whole world in his divine majesty, was not present in the place where Lazarus was dead? But here, again, our Lord and Savior showed the mystery of his divinity and his humanity. He was not there according to the flesh; he was according to his divinity, because God is everywhere.

3. Therefore, when the Lord came to Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, seeing the crowd of Jews, he said, “Where have you laid him?” Did the Lord not know where Lazarus had been laid, he who had announced, even while absent, that Lazarus was dead and was everywhere in the majesty of his divinity? But here the Lord acted according to the ancient custom. For he said in a like manner to Adam, “Where are you,

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6 Psalms 126:5.
7 John 11:14-15a. NB: Chromatius tweaks the verse here, inserting ‘amicus noster’ in the first clause and switching credatis for sciatis.
8 John 11:34.
Adam?” 9 Not because he was ignorant where Adam was, but he asked so that Adam might confess his sin from his mouth first, and he could merit pardon for his sin. And He asked Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” And he said: ‘I do not know.” 10 It was not because he was ignorant where Abel was that the Lord asked Cain, but so that when he denied it, the lord might accuse him of the crime which he had committed against his brother. In fact Adam was forgiven because he confessed the sin he had committed about which the Lord asked. Cain was condemned to an eternal penalty because he denied. Thus, when the Lord asked here, “Where have you laid him?” he was not asking because he did not know where Lazarus had been laid, but so that crowd of Jews might follow him to the tomb of Lazarus and then, shown the divine power of Christ in the resurrection of Lazarus, they would become witnesses against themselves, if they did not believe in such a great miracle. For the Lord had said previously to them: “If you do not believe me, believe at least in these works, and know that the Father is in me, and I in Him.” 11

Then when he came to the tomb, he said to the Jews who were standing around, “Take away the stone.” 12 What do we say? Was the Lord, who by his own power removed the bars of hell, not able to remove a stone from the tomb by just a word? But he commanded men to do that which could be done by man; but in that which was of divine nature, he showed his power. For it was within the power of humanity to recall the stone from the tomb; but to recall the soul from hell is divine power. Truly with ease, if

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9 Genesis 3:9.
10 Genesis 4:9.
11 John 10:38.
12 John 11:39.
he had wanted to, he, who created the world by a word, could have removed the stone from the tomb with an order of a single word.

4. When they had removed the stone from the tomb, he said in a loud voice: “Lazarus, come forth!” Thus, showing himself to be of whom it was written: “The Voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty.” And again: “Behold, he will give a strong voice to his power.” This voice, which called Lazarus from death to life in an instant, is clearly powerful and majestic. The soul had been returned to the body before he uttered a sound of his voice. Although the body and soul were in different places, the voice of the Lord himself restored the soul to the body, and brought back the body to the soul. Death was frightened away by hearing a voice of such great power. And it is no wonder if Lazarus was able to rise at a single word of the Lord, when it says in the gospel that all who are in the grave will rise again by one word only: “The hour comes when all who lay in the grave will hear the voice of the Son of God and will rise.” Hence without doubt then, death, hearing the voice of the Lord, could have released all the dead from its own grasp, if it had not known that only Lazarus was called for. Thus the Lord said: “‘Lazarus, come forth!’ At once, he came out with his hands and feet bound and his face covered by a cloth.” And what should we say here? Was the Lord, who laid waste to the bonds of death, not able to break the bonds of the grave? But here, our Lord and Savior, by raising Lazarus, showed his power twice, so

13 John 11:43.
14 Psalms 29:4.
15 Psalms 68:33.
16 John 5:25.
17 John 11:44.
that he might administer the faith of belief even to the doubt of the Jews. For it is no less wonder that Lazarus could walk with bound feet than to raise the dead…
SERMON 28: ON THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE: “DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THOSE WHO RUN IN A RACE…”

1. The Blessed Apostle Paul exhorts us to win the crown of heavenly glory not only through the teaching of the law, but also by examples from this world. Thus he said, among other things, as you, dearly beloved, heard: “Do you not know that among those who run in a race, all run, but only one receives the crown?” And he adds: “Thus, run so as to seize it.”¹ According to the earthly example, there are many who run, as the Apostle says, but only one receives the crown, that is he who runs best. So it is in the present race of life, there are many who run, but only one receives the crown. The Jews run according to the law, Philosophers run according to empty wisdom, the heretics run according to the proclamation of false things, the catholics run according to the preaching of the true faith. But of all these, only one receives a crown: it is the catholic people who by the right course of faith, aiming at Christ, so that they might reach the prize and the crown of immortality.

2. This is why the Jews, philosophers, and heretics, who do not walk on the correct path of faith, run in vain. What profit is it to the Jews to run in profit of the law while they are ignorant of Christ the master of the law? And the Philosophers run according to empty wisdom of this world, but that course is useless and fleeting, which does not know the true wisdom of Christ. For Christ is the true wisdom of God, which is not adorned with language or shining speeches, but made known through faith of the heart. And the Heretics run according to their poisoned statement of faith, they run according to fasting, they run according to almsgiving, but they will not achieve a crown, because they do not believe in Christ faithfully. For their false faith does not merit to

¹ I Corinthians 9:24.
receive the grace reserved for the true faith. The apostle shows this in another place when he says: “And if I give all that I have to the poor, and if I deliver my body to the fire to be burned, but I do not have love, it profits nothing to me.”² Whoever does not believe in Christ faithfully, he does not have love of Christ. And for that reason the Apostle adds this saying rightly: “Thus, run so as to seize it.” Therefore, we ought to run faithfully the course of the faith of Christ, in the commands of God, in the works of justice, so that we might attain the crown of eternal life.

3. Finally, the apostle shows us how we ought to run, when he says: “Everyone who strives for mastery is self controlled in all things; now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, [but we are an incorruptible one].”³ See by this example of the apostle, he invites us to the promised crown of immortality. In contests of this world, whoever wants victory abstains themselves from certain foods, from too much drink, from all impurity, lives under a chastity so great they will not even touch their proper wives; they have no other hope of conquering their selves, except they keep their bodies in pure chastity. And after such a great labor what do they receive other than a small, corruptible, vile crown? If, therefore, such a great labor is suffered by some for a corruptible crown, how much more ought we to bear, who are promised the reward of heaven and the crown of eternal glory? Therefore, the contest is not an insubstantial contest. We struggle against spiritual wickedness, against the devil and his angels. We struggle against injustice, against the enticement of sins. And if we conquer in this struggle, we receive as many crowns as vices we overcame.

² 1 Corinthians 13:3.

³ 1 Corinthians 9:25. The Latin does not contain the final clause either through oversight of writer or transcription. I have given it here for reference to the reader.
4. And so it is a great contest in which we display the spectacle for the Lord. When we fight, the Lord watches us, his angels watch us. We conquer on the earth, but we receive the reward of courage in the heavens. In fact, the saintly martyrs battle for mastery, and they overcame not only the vices of sins but death itself and received the reward of immortality. In this combat, our Lord and Savior first fought and conquered, so that he might display his example of struggle and victory.

Thus by explaining this to you, we plant the seed of good battle in your hearts like the ploughman with a plow of righteousness. Cultivate the word which we have planted in you, so that it can grow and be sufficient. Then God, when he visits, will pour out on you the dew of his piety. It will give growth to our seeds, so that at the harvest we will have bunches of merits producing results in the hundreds.
SERMON 29: ABOUT HOW SAINT PETER WAS RELEASED FROM PRISON

1. You, dearly beloved, heard in order how Saint Peter was cast into prison bound with two chains, given over to four groups of soldiers, and was hence freed by an angel of the Lord. Saint Peter had been cast into prison because of the name of the Lord, but he did not dread the punishment of prison because he was himself, even in prison, the temple of God. He was bound with two chains, but when he was in prison, he tore away the chains of the crimes of the believers. He was guarded by four squads of soldiers, that is sixteen men – for just as a centurion has a hundred soldiers under him, so a quaternion has four – but under custody, he introduced the four gospels to those coming to the faith. He, who was kept under divine guard, could not fear human guards.

2. Therefore, when Peter, bound by two chains, was carefully guarded in prison by four squads of soldiers, an angel of the Lord came to him, as you, dearly beloved, heard, opened the door of his cell and said to him: “Get up, gather your clothes and put them on, tie on your shoes, and come, follow me.” At that, he rose, following. When he came to the iron gate with the angel, at once it opened itself before them. It is no wonder if a iron gate opened itself of its own accord for Saint Peter, who already received the power over the gates of hell when the Lord said it him: “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church. And the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And whatever you bind on earth will be bound even in heaven, and whatever you loose in

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earth will be loosed in heaven.” 3 Thus, there, he who opened the gates of hell opened the gate of iron for Saint Peter. There he who overcame death itself rescued Peter from death.

3. But we know that whatever was done for Saint Peter in the literal sense happens for us in the mystical sense, if we follow the faith of Peter. For we are held in this world like in a prison. Therefore, if we merit to be visited by God and an angel of the Lord sent to us, he will say to each of us: “Gird yourself, tie on your shoes, put on your clothes and follow me.” 4 For we gird ourselves if we surround the loins of our body with a girdle of chastity, as the apostle says: “Let your loins be girded in chastity.” 5 And we shod our feet if we defend the steps of our life with the commandments of the gospel of faith, so that we might securely tread on the thorns of sins and the thistles of iniquity. We put on our clothes, if we wholly preserve in ourselves our wedding garment, which is the grace of baptism. If you faithfully fulfill this, then at once shall fall the chains on our hands, which was the chains of sins, by which we were held fast and bound according to the soul.

4. But there can be no other way to escape from our prison, which is the error of this world, unless we are visited by the Lord through an angel. The gate of iron, which is the gate of death and punishment and was broken into pieces by the Son of God through the power of his passion, is open to us. Thus, we come to the house of Mary, which is the church of Christ, where Mary, the mother of the Lord, dwells. There, a girl whose name is Rhoda comes to meet us. The name of Rhoda is a fitting one according

3 Matthew 16:18-19.
to the mystery of our salvation. For Rhoda means ‘rose’ according to the Greek language. Therefore, we cannot come to the house of Mary unless we are met by Rhoda, which is the congregation of saints which shines with the blood of the glorious martyrs like a precious rose...
SERMON 30: ON THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH

1. After our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ conquered death, arose and ascended into heaven, his church, as you, dearly beloved, heard in the present reading, had in number one hundred persons. The church was meeting in the upper room with Mary, who was the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. It could not be called the Church except Mary, the mother of the Lord was present with his brothers. For there is the Church of Christ where the incarnation of Christ from the virgin is preached. And wherever the apostles, the brother of the Lord, preach, the gospel is heard. The synagogue of the Jews cannot be called the church, because it refuses to believe in the incarnation of Christ from a virgin and to hear spiritual preaching.

2. At first, after the ascension of the Lord to heaven, the Church numbered only a hundred and twenty persons. Afterwards, it spread to such an extent that it filled up the entire world through countless peoples. That future, the Lord himself revealed to his apostles: “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth, it remains alone. But when it dies, it brings forth much fruit.”¹ Clearly, the resurrection of the Lord after his passion brought forth much fruit of salvation of people. For in the grain of wheat, our Lord and Savior signified his body. And when he was buried in the earth, he brought forth innumerable fruits, because through the resurrection of the Lord the whole world became the fruits of virtue and a harvest of believing people. One death has become the life of all. Rightly it is compared to the kingdom of heaven in the gospel, as it says: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed planted in garden. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown, it will become greater than all the other plants, so that the birds of the sky dwell

¹ John 12:24.
in its branches.”² The Lord likened himself to the mustard seed and although he was the Lord of glory and eternal majesty, he became the least of these because he was born from a virgin with the body of a small child. Thus, he was sown in the earth when his body was laid in the tomb. But after he arose from death through the glory of this resurrection, he grew on earth in order to become a tree having branches in which the birds of heaven dwell. This tree represents the church, which the death of Christ resurrected into glory. Its branches are understood to be none other than the apostles, because as branches adorn a tree, so the apostles adorn the church of Christ with the beauty of their grace. In these the birds of heaven are known to dwell. The birds of heaven signify us allegorically, who rest on the teaching of the apostles, as on some branches, when we come to the church of Christ.

3. But let us return to the matter at hand. At first, after the ascension of the Lord, the church was few in number. But afterwards, it developed until it filled the entire world, not just the cities but the many nations. It is believed among the Persians, it is believed in India, it is believed in the entire world. It is neither the fear of sword, nor the fear of the emperor which has brought all these nations to adore Christ; rather faith in Christ has rendered them peaceful. When people fought one against another to establish their power on the earth, they asserted their proper rule over other’s lands. When they came to the faith and confessed the name of Christ, no longer do they fight, for all acknowledge the one king of all, Jesus Christ. Under this king, there is no enmity between peoples; all of a common accord honor, adore and venerate him. It is for him that they lay down their wild passions and glory in his grace. Granted that the diversity

² Matthew 13:31-32.
of the kingdom makes them quarrel with respect to the kingdoms of this world, however
with respect to the kingdom of God, they appear as united in harmony under the faith in
one emperor, all are soldiers of Christ because of faith. From Him they receive the pay
of salvation each day, and they obtain the gifts of spiritual graces. If necessity should
also demand, they are prepared to lay down their lives for their king more easily than to
lose the faith; and this is indeed just because this king for whom we are soldiers grants
a reward even after death. A king of this world can perform nothing for a soldier after he
is slain, for even the king is subject to death. But Christ the king grants to his soldiers
who are slain a reward of eternal immortality. The soldier of this world, if he is slain for
the sake of his king, is conquered; but the soldier of Christ more than conquers, if he
dies for Christ.
SERMON 31: ON THE APOSTLES HEALING THE SICK

1. How great and manifold was the grace the Apostles were filled with in the presence of the Lord, as you, dearly beloved, heard in turn. First, they spoke in diverse languages so that they might preach to the entire world the Lord and creator of all languages, the only begotten Son of God. No language would have been understood in the preaching of the apostle’s language unless all languages had been understood. The apostles had no need of interpreters; they had for their interpreter God and the Holy Spirit. They had no need to be taught by men because they had learned all that they preached from Christ, the master of life. Therefore, first the apostles received grace so that they might speak in all languages, then they began to perform these divine wonders: restoring sight to the blind, the deaf to hearing, walking to the lame, health to the sick, and life to the dead. These acts were not done by human ability, but by divine power. These works and miracles were not performed according to human qualities but according to divine power. Just as iron, which by its nature subdues or destroys everything by its force, when it is placed in the fire and heated, the smith changes and controls it not by its own nature but by the power of the fire. Just so, the apostles, inflamed by divine fire, which is the Holy Spirit, began to perform divine miracles not by their mortal nature but by the power of God. For it is not in the mortal nature to command death but in divine power.

2. The apostles wrought a double grace in the infirm, bodily and spiritually. They freed the body from its maladies, but they freed the soul from the illness of sin. The sickness of the soul is more serious than that of the body. David clearly displayed this in the psalms when he said: “Bless the Lord o my soul, for he forgives all your iniquities,
and he heals all your diseases.”¹ The diseases of the soul are much more grave than the diseases of the body. The diseases of the body bring temporary death to men; but the diseases of the soul acquire eternal death. In fact, long ago, when Adam transgressed the divine command, he incurred not a bodily illness but weakness in the soul, which made him perish an eternal death, if the grace of Christ had not redeemed him from death. Listen, in fact, to what the prophet demonstrated when he said: “By his stripes we have all been healed.”² The wounds of the Lord’s passion have become medicine by which humanity is saved. The diseases of the soul are treated not by human medicine but only by the grace of Christ. The diseases of the soul, which are the fevers of sins of and the wounds of offenses, advance not from outside onto the body but from within the soul. Wounds of this kind, on the soul, are treated not by men but by God. It is not a sharp needle of the earth but the sharp word of God which penetrates the interior of the soul. Hear what the prophet said: “A mollifying plaster did not cure them, but your word, O Lord, which healed all things.”³ Hence David also said of this: “He sent his word, and he healed them.”⁴ It was a good thing that when the prophet prayed to the Lord for the iniquity of the Jewish people, he said: “Is there no balm in Gilead or no doctor there? Why does the health of the people not rise in you?”⁵ Here the prophet is not speaking of a balm but of heavenly medicine, not of a human physician but of the Great Physician.

¹ Psalms 103:2a, 3.
² Isaiah 53:5.
³ Wisdom of Solomon 16:12.
⁴ Psalms 107:20b.
⁵ Jeremiah 8:22.
3. But we ought to consider also this: when there are numerous sicknesses in the human race, in particular diverse illnesses of sins, how can the prophet promise a single medicinal balm to heal all maladies? According to the example of the earth, different sicknesses require different medicines. But in the mystery of heaven, a balm is the single medicine which has cured and treats every day all the sicknesses of sin. We know that the origin of this remedy is not from any source other than the tree. Hence, when the prophet promised a cure by a balm, he meant, without doubt, the medicine of the cross of the Lord, which gave to the human race eternal health. Thus, here is a medicine which healed the diverse maladies of the world and treats them every day, because the preaching of the cross of Christ is the remedy of sins, as you, dearly beloved, heard. It heals not only the illnesses of the body, but even the illnesses of the soul. For when they believe in Christ, they are freed from all the maladies of sin.

The sick on their beds were brought before the apostles, as was retold in the reading, but also those who were spiritually sick, and all were cured. And whoever was touched by even the shadow of Peter at once received health. The grace in the apostles was so great that even the shadow could cure the maladies. But perhaps some doubters or less faithful find these things incredible, that the shadow of the apostles could serve to heal the infirmities of men. Doubtful minds do not believe that the apostles could do these things, if they do not see similar miracles being done now. For the shadow of the apostle operates among the sick or afflicted and among those beset by unclean spirits, and they display the healing of heaven in reward of their faith. It cannot be doubted that the shadow of the apostles once had such an ability, when we know that now their relics have such a power. And if they performed these things in the
place where they suffered for the sake of Christ, it was a miracle. That now, they even
act where they did not suffer, so that the greatness of their merits might be rendered
greater still by the greatness of their miracles. WE have said this because it was read in
the present reading that the shadow of Peter and the rest of the apostles freed the sick
from the maladies by which they were bound.

4. You, dearly beloved, also heard how great was the charity and unanimity of
those who believed at the time of the apostles. “And all the souls were of one heart, no
one said of the things he possessed that they were his own, but they held all things in
common.”6 For this reason, they were pleasing to God because they were living such a
good life. For why do they divide the goods here when they have without division
heavenly goods? Or why do they, who possessed the Lord of all commonly, not have all
in common? That which was to one was had by all, and that which was to all was had
by each. In that sharing they were imitating the community of future glory where the
reign of the saints will be common to all, where no one struggles over boundaries,
possessions, or houses. There, joy and delight are common to all because that which is
to one is for all, and that which all have, each have.

But I am afraid that the well-known agreement and charity among the faithful
which existed in the time of the apostles may be our condemnation since we preserve
neither agreement nor peace nor charity because of our zeal for greed. They used to
view property as common; we want to make the things of others our own. We fight
about boundaries and possessions as if we are never going to die. We expect
everything of earth, nothing of heaven, everything of the present life, nothing of future

6 Acts 4:32.
glory and eternal life. We forget the words of our Lord and Savior: “What does a man profit if he gains the whole world and loses his soul?”⁷ And also: “Behold and beware. A man’s life is not found in the abundance of things that he owns.”⁸ For this reason, we ought to be strangers to covetousness and desire, strangers to envy, to discord, to dissension. We ought to study peace, concord and agreement so that we might have eternal life in common with such men of whom it is said: “And all the believers were of one heart and soul, and they held all things in common.”⁹ And for this reason we ought to come to the aid of the needs of our brothers and the poor who suffer as if we shared in their afflictions, because we have in common one God and Father, and one Lord, the only begotten son of God, and one Holy Spirit, and one faith, and the grace of one baptism through which we are born again by God into eternal life.

⁷ Matthew 16:26 (Mark 8:36).
⁹ Acts 4:32a, c.
SERMON 32: ON THE BIRTH OF THE LORD

1. “…And it came to pass in those days, it was sent out an edict of Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. This taxing was first made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, each to his own city.”¹ If we consider these things in the spiritual sense, we see no small mystery. The first census of the entire world was put in motion at that time when the Lord was born according to the flesh. It was impossible to begin the first counting of the entire world at any moment except when he was born for whom the human race should be counted. Not under another emperor, but under he who first received the name Augustus, because the true and eternal Augustus was he who is born from a virgin. One was emperor of the earth, the other the emperor of heaven. One was the king of men, the other the king of angels.

Even the name of this governor, Quirinius, under whom the census was begun, agrees with the heavenly mystery. Quirinius is translated from Greek into Latin as ‘ruler,’ a name which fits none more so than Christ the Lord who ruled over the bodies and souls of mankind. As we read in the scripture of him, he himself is “Lord of Lords” who rules not only on the earth but also in heaven. Indeed, there are many powers in earth and even heaven, but the Lord is the only one who rules over all. Therefore, it is fitting that a census of the entire world was begun at the time of the birth of the Lord because it was him by whom the entire world was numbered in salvation. Those who are counted by the terrestrial emperor are numbered so that they might judge the tribute due and pay the necessary head tax. We have been assessed for this by Christ, the eternal king,

that we may weigh the tribute of our head tax and pay the necessary tax of faith, which
the martyrs did in the highest degree, who offered themselves for the name of Christ.

At that time when a census of the entire world was begun, the Lord was born
according to the flesh. He was born in Bethlehem, and it was not fitting that he be born
anyplace other than in Bethlehem. Bethlehem translates as the “house of bread.” This
place received the name long ago from the prophet, because the “bread of heaven”\(^2\)
was he who was born in Bethlehem from a virgin. If one praises the great cities which
brought forth great kings, what place is higher than that place where the Lord, the king
of heaven and of earth and of the entire world deigned to be born?

2. Therefore, when Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem to register, as the
present reading reported: “Mary gave birth to her first born son and wrapped him in
swaddling clothes and placed him in a manger, because there was no place in the inn.”\(^3\)
He is here shown to be the first born who was born of a virgin and not only the first born,
but the only begotten. First born of the Father, first born from the virgin. First born of the
Father because he was born of the father before all things. Only begotten of the father
because he was the only son of the Father. In a like manner, he is declared first born
and only begotten of the virgin: first born because he was first from a virgin, only
begotten because he is the only one born of a virgin. Behold how far the Son of God
debased himself in humility for us: He, who with the Father reigned in heaven was laid
in a manager; He who grants the robe of immortality was wrapped in swaddling clothes;
He who is excellent and mighty appeared in the body of a small child.

\(^2\) John 6:41.
\(^3\) Luke 2:7.
3. But these things of the life of the Lord contain sacred mysteries. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes because he took on our sins on himself like the rags, just as it was written: “He bears our sins and suffers for us.”4 Thus, he was wrapped in rags so that we might cast off the rags of our sins. He was wrapped in swaddling so that he might weave together the precious robe of the church by means of the Holy Spirit; for that reason certainly he was wrapped in swaddling so that he might summon the different nations who believe in him. We came to belief out of different nations, and we surround Christ just like rags, for we had been rags long ago, but now we are made into a precious robe for Christ. And when our Lord and Savior was laid in a manager, it showed that he would be the food of believers. The manager is where animals gather to receive food. Therefore, since we are rational animals, we have the heavenly manger at which we gather. Our manger is the altar of Christ at which every day we gather to take the bread of salvation and the body of Christ. But the Lord was placed in the manger, “because there was no place in the inn.” In the inn, the synagogue is signified for, prejudiced by the error of unbelief, it was not worthy to receive Christ into itself. But we rightly understand the inn to be the synagogue because just as the diverse races meet in the inn, so the synagogue has become the inn of all unbelief and all errors, and so Christ could never find a place there. So he was found lying in a manger, which is the Church of the nations which, full of devotion and with total faith, received into themselves our Lord and Savior because he is the true food of all who believe and the spiritual nourishment of the soul.

4. An angel announced the physical birth of the Lord first to shepherds who were watching over their flocks. No one except the shepherds ought to have known first the birth of the prince of shepherds. Spiritually, the shepherds of the flocks are the bishops of the churches who watch over the flocks committed to them by Christ so that they do not suffer the traps of wolves. Thus it is said: “But there were in that region shepherds who were keeping watch by night and guarding their flocks.”⁵ If therefore we always keep watch in the faith of Christ and in the commands of the Lord, we protect the flocks rightly entrusted to us by Christ and are rightly called the shepherds of the Church. But if we are guilty of the sleep of negligence and infidelity, not only are we unable to keep flocks entrusted to us but we cannot keep our own selves, just like the teachers of the Jews long ago became evil and useless shepherds, who lost both themselves and the sheep of the Lord. May the Lord turn away peril of this kind from us so that we are never overwhelmed by the sleep of infidelity. May he give his mercy and his grace so that we may be able always to keep watch in the faith of Him. Our faith is able to be watchful in Christ. Therefore, in faith always let your devotion also keep watch, that as the teaching of the priest arouses his people to works of justice, so the devotion of the people enlivens the priests, and thus it happens that the flock rejoices in its shepherd and the shepherd his flock.

5. So the angel said to the shepherds, as you, dearly beloved, heard in the present reading: “I bring you great joy for born to you today in the city of David is a savior, Christ the Lord.”⁶ It is a great joy, clearly, for the shepherds. He was born the

prince of shepherds to guard his sheep and flee the wolves that are demons. The birth of Christ according to the flesh became the joy of shepherds, the safety of the flocks and the flight of the wolves. Thus, the angel said to the shepherds: “I bring you great joy for born to you today in the city of David is a savior, Christ the Lord.” What could have been a greater joy than what the angel announced to the shepherds: the king of glory, the Christ and Lord of eternal majesty, desired to be born from a virgin for the sake of human salvation? But the present reading declares to us that the birth of the Lord was not only a joy for the shepherds, but also a joy for the angels. For it says: “And there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host singing: Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth to men of good will.” It was appropriate that for the birth of such a great king not only men, but angels should rejoice, because he was the creator of men, the creator of angels and the god of all powers. Therefore, because our Lord and Savior deigned to be born according to the flesh on this day, we rejoice. We, along with the heavenly exultations of the angels, are spiritually jubilant with faith, with devotion and with holiness in our hearts.

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SERMON 33 – ON ALLELUIA

1. The word alleluia invites us to the praise of our Lord and all to confession of faith. Alleluia, when translated from Hebrew to Latin, has a double meaning: “Sing to the One who is,” and also, “Lord, bless us all together.” Both things are necessary for our faith and our salvation.

For this reason, we ought to sing ‘The One who is,’ because we used to sing long ago to those who were not, that is the gods of the nations and the images of idols. But then we sang in vain, because they were empty things that we worshiped. We sang in vain when we spoke to the base things, when we praised the gods of the nations, when we constructed unlawful and profane loves of the gods of the nations, of which the prophet said: “The gods that have not made the heaven and earth, they shall perish from the earth and from this heaven.”2 Listen to what David said in the psalm: “All the gods of the nations are daemons. But the Lord made the heavens.”3 And so for a long time we sang in vain, but after we came to belief and to divine understanding, we began to sin ‘The One who is,’ who is God omnipotent, creator of heaven, maker of earth, fashioner of the world, himself the creator of men, who said to Moses: “Say this to the sons of Israel: He who is sent me to you.”4 He is who always was and who will endure for eternity. We sing Alleluia rightly and with merit to him who is the reason we are and live. It is not by our virtue or our power but according to his dignity and piety. Therefore

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1 The Latin text of this sermon comes from CCSL, not SC. The editors changed the text to reflect new manuscript discoveries. The SC sermon 33 is sermon 36 in CCSL and this translation reflects that.

2 Jeremiah 10:11.

3 Psalms 96:5.

we ought to sing for such a great God as this who is worthy, to whom belong praise and majesty, who is eternal, omnipotent, unfathomable, who is creator and savior of the world, who has such a great love for men that he would hand over even his own son for the salvation of the world, as the Lord says in the gospel: “God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

2. Therefore we translate Alleluia as ‘Sing to the One who is.’ We also translate Alleluia as ‘Lord, bless us all together.’ If we reflect then we discover that this interpretation is very appropriate for our faith and salvation. For when we say Alleluia, we pray ‘Lord, bless us all together.’ If we should be made together by faith, by peace, by harmony, by concord, we are worthy to merit the blessing of God all together. For this also is written: “Behold how good and pleasant it is for brothers to live together.”

And again: “God makes the solitary to live in families.” And so we are blessed by God if we are found all together, that is remaining in the unity of faith, in the harmony of peace, in the affections of love, following what the apostle also exhorts and reminds us: “But I beg of you that you be likeminded in all things, and there be no divisions among you. But may you be perfectly joined in mind and in knowledge.” Hence if discord, if division, if dissension are among us, we do not merit the blessing of God. How are we able to respond Alleluia, which means in our father’s language, “Lord, bless us all together,”

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5 John 3:16.
6 Psalms 133:1.
8 I Corinthians 1:10.
when we are not found together? Let us be always all together, so that we merit the blessing together.

The response of Alleluia does not belong to heretics, nor schismatics, nor all the opponents of the unity of the church. They are not together with the church as one, who are not gathered with us together. The Lord clearly proves this in the gospel by saying: “Whoever is not with me is against me. Whoever does not gather with me dissipates.” It is the property of Christ to gather into unity; the devil scatters to diverse places. Therefore, whoever loves the unity of the Church, he follows Christ. Whoever delights in division follows the devil because the author of division is the devil. And for this reason we read what Solomon said: “A time to scatter stones, and a time to gather.” The time was long ago when the devil divided us by difference. But the time came again when Christ gathered us together. For that reason we ought to shun and avoid discord, of which we know the devil is the author. Instead we should follow the peace and unity of the church so that we are able to respond rightly and with merit ‘Alleluia,’ which means ‘Lord, bless us all together.’

3. See how rich the grace is in this interpretation of Alleluia! We each respond and we seek a shared blessing so that we are each blessed together. We are one body in the church. For this reason, that one prays and he obtains for all. They all pray, and it is given to each people, out of which the church is gathered. For this purpose we ought to accept what was said of the people of the nations and of the Jewish people. In short, there was made a distinction between them which is: “He raised the helpless from the

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9 Matthew 12:30.

10 Ecclesiastes 3:5.
dirt and lifted the poor from the dung heap.” ¹¹ The man who is called ‘helpless’ has nothing; but the poor man is who seems to have something. And so in the ‘helpless man’ we recognize that the people of the nations are signified who altogether had nothing, because they received neither the prophets not the law. But the ‘poor man’ is the people of the Jews who seem to have had something in the law and the prophets, the merits of the patriarchs, the grace of the judges, but lay in the dung heap because he laid with fleshly vices in the filth of sins and in the error of the nations. But the people of the nations, who we recognize were signified by the helpless man, laid in the dust because they used to worship idols of the earth the whole of the earth had no hope of heaven. Both, thus, were raised for both were saved; both were lifted because both were liberated; here from the vices of the earth, there from the dung heap of sins; here from the cult of idols, there from guilt of justice. And they were raised to this so that they might be placed with princes, that is with the apostles and prophets who are the princes of the church of God.

4. But this is not an idle thing, that while two groups were discussed, only one is shown stationed with the princes, because the two peoples became one people of the church, were placed in honor as the prince of the peoples and associated with the apostles and prophets. Therefore, out of the two that were called, one people was made for both began to be one, as the apostle said: “And he called those who were far away and those who were close by; he is our peace, who has made both one.” ¹² Finally, in order to show that one church came from two callings, he adds at the end of the psalm:

¹¹ Psalms 113:7.

¹² Ephesians 2:17b, 14a.
“He makes the barren woman a house and the rejoicing mother of sons.”  

13 Before the coming of Christ, the church was a barren woman because it had not received the seed of justice, it has not given birth to faith. It was barren in regards to faith, barren of the child of justice. But after the coming of Christ and after it received the seed of the divine word, it was made fruitful and fertile. It bears and gives birth each day to countless sons of God throughout the entire world, in all nations. Each day it conceives, and each day it bears sons, because all who come to faith in the spiritual belief are produced by its womb. And so she cries out to the prophet saying: “Be glad, o barren woman that did not bear, break forth and sing you that did not bring forth, because more numerous are the children of the desolate than here that has a husband.”  

14 For a long time the synagogue had a husband, which was the law that ruled over it. But it was unable to bring forth the fruits of justice and thus the sons produced were useless. It produced them not of God, but of the world; not from the salvation of God, but from authority. But the church, which was barren and sterile for a long time, has now become fruitful. Each day it conceives a fetus of justice, gives birth to salvation, produces countless sons of God, because each day God produces sons from the Church. They are conceived when they come to belief; reborn through the washing of water; born by the baptism of God.  

5. Therefore since believers are saved every day, it is as if every day sons were produced from the church by the Lord. It is shown that of these numerous sons the mother is the church, for where it says, “He makes the barren woman a house and the

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13 Psalms 113:9.

14 Isaiah 54:1.
rejoicing mother of sons,”¹⁵ these sons are of her whom it had been spoken in Genesis as a type of the church, “This is the mother of all living.”¹⁶ Not of the dead but of the living because the church produces only living sons, those it gives birth to live through faith in God, and are strangers to the works of death. But of the dead, that is unbelievers and sinners, the church does not condescend to be the mother of, for all the unbelieving and unfaithful are counted as dead by God, even if they live in the body. Thus we read what the Lord said in the gospel: “Let the dead bury their dead.”¹⁷ But the just and faithful, even if they depart from the body, are counted as living by God. Thus we read what the Lord said in the gospel: “I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” He adds: “He is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”¹⁸ Certainly, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob live with him. According to the flesh, they are now dead, yet they are called alive, because with the merits of the faith and righteousness before God they were still living.

And so whoever lives justly and faithfully in this world, is shown to live even after death, and to live a better life for in this life there is opportunity for sins, but in that life there is sanctuary in the kingdom. In this life, there is death, there immortality is the rule. Here, adversity, there happiness.

Therefore, if we live justly and faithfully in the sight of God, we are rightly called sons of the church, for the church is only the mother of the living. But if we are unfaithful in this life and take part in iniquity, we do not merit to be called sons of the church. And

¹⁵ Psalms 113:9.
¹⁶ Genesis 3:20.
¹⁷ Matthew 8:22.
¹⁸ Matthew 22:32.
for this reason we ought to live and act in this world so that we can be said to be sons of the church, in order that we might rightly merit to reign with the church in future glory.
1. This day, as he heard when the divine passage was read, our Lord and Savior was baptized by John in the Jordan, and for this reason it is no small feast but a great one. For when our Lord deigned to be baptized, the Holy Spirit came upon him in the form of a dove, and the voice of the Father was heard saying: “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.”¹

2. Oh how great the mystery in this heavenly baptism! The father from heaven was heard, the son was seen on earth, the holy spirit is shown in the form of a dove. For there is not true baptism, no remission of sins where the truth of the trinity is not present nor can the remission of sins be given if one does not believe in the perfection of the trinity. But the baptism of the church is one and true, which is given once, in which you are dipped once and you are made new and clean. Clean because it displaces the filth of sins; New because you arise in new life, the old sins laid aside. The bath makes these baptismal candidates like snow, not in the skin of the body, but in the brightness of the mind and the purity of the soul.

Thus, the heavens are opened by the Lord in baptism. The bath of regeneration opens the kingdom of heaven to believers as shown by this sentence of the Lord: “Unless he is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven.”² He enters then who is reborn, and who does not neglect to guard his baptism. And likewise, he who does not enter was not born again.

¹ Matthew 3:17.
² John 3:5.
3. Therefore, because our Lord came to give a new baptism for the salvation of the human race and the remission of all sins, he himself deigned to be the first one baptized, not so as to lay aside sin since he had done no sin, but to sanctify the water of baptism for the blotting out of all sin for believers through the rebirth of baptism. Thus, for this reason, he was baptized in the waters so that we might be washed from all sins through baptism…³

He was plunged into the water so that we might be purged from all sins. He received the bath of regeneration so that we can be reborn of water and the Holy Spirit.

The baptism of Christ then, washes us of our sins and renews us for the life of salvation. Listen to what the Apostle said of this: “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”⁴ And he adds: “Therefore, you are buried with him through baptism in death. Yet just like Christ arose from the dead, you also walk in new life.”⁵ And so through baptism we die to sin, but we share life with Christ. We bury our former life, but we arise to new life. We put off the old errors of man and put on the new clothing. Even in his baptism, the Lord fulfilled all righteousness because he wanted to be baptized in order that we might be baptized. For that purpose, he received the bath of regeneration so that we might be reborn into life.

³ This is the end of the confirmed sermon in all the manuscripts. However, Chromatius’s commentary on Matthew contains a tractatus on this same passage, Matthew 3:13-15 (Tractatus XII). There, the end of this fragment matches almost word for word with the middle of the commentary. It seems reasonable to believe that the commentary preserves some of Chromatius’s original sermon even if not verbatim. I follow the lead of the SC in giving the rest of the commentary here, which, interestingly, makes the sermon’s length on par with Chromatius’s other sermons. For the complete Tractatus see: CCL 9, p.243-246.

⁴ Galatians 3:27.

⁵ Romans 6:4.
And this John baptized our Lord and Savior, but rather he was baptized by Christ. For Jesus sanctified the water, John was sanctified by it. Jesus gave grace, John received it. John deposited his sins, Jesus forgave them. All of this because John was a man, Jesus, God. For it is the power of God to forgive sins, as the scripture says: “Who can forgive sins, if not the Lord alone?”⁶ And for this reason John said to Christ: “I ought to be baptized by you, and yet you come to me?”⁷ John needed baptism since he was unable to be without sin. Truly Christ had no need of baptism since he had done no sin. Hence in this baptism which our Lord and Savior received, John was first to be purged of sins, then after him the whole world. For this reason he said: “Suffer this; for thus it is necessary to fulfill all righteousness.”⁸

The grace of the baptism of John was prefigured mystically long ago when the people were led through the river Jordan into the promised land. Just as the people then, going through the river Jordan into the promised land, were preceded by the Lord, so now, through the same water of the river Jordan, a heavenly road is open for the first time, by which we are brought to that blessed land of the promise, which is the promised kingdom of heaven. Then Joshua,⁹ the son of Nun, was the leader of the people into the Jordan; for us it is Jesus, the Lord Christ, who, by his baptism, is the leader to eternal salvation, the only begotten son of God, who is blessed, world without end. Amen.

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⁷ Matthew 3:14.
⁸ Matthew 3:15.
⁹ NB: In the Latin text, Joshua is rendered as Iesus.
1. In the reading that you just heard, we were told about the most noble woman of Suzanna, who gave us a model of purity and an example of chastity. She had a beautiful appearance, but even more beautiful virtues. She was more beautiful in her soul than her body. The beauty of the body is transitory, but the beauty of the soul is eternal. She did not adorn her body with jewels, nor did she have on earrings or rings or pearls, but within she was completely full of the ornaments of virtue. She had in the place of earrings the divine word, for a ring the proper faith, and in the place of pearls the precious works by which she ornamented the beauty of this soul and mind.

2. The blessed apostle Paul rejoiced at this example of Susanna and exhorted women by saying: “Finally, let holy women attire themselves not with pleated hair, or rings, or pearls, or fine clothing but by observing chastity through good works.”¹ Hence, those elegant women who think that they only if they put on ornaments of this kind, despite the teaching of the apostle, are wrong. Truly this kind of presumption is worthy of the anger of their creator. Why do you paint your face white or red as if to improve in yourself the image of God, who made your face as he desired? Or that work in you which is natural is the work of the creator God. Whatever you add to yourself is the evidence of the devil who wishes to defile the work of God in you. Why do you desire to adorn yourself with rings or beautiful clothes when you ought to be adorned with faith and holy morals? Therefore, if you desire to please God, follow the example of Susanna: be chaste, be pure, be of honest morals, do works of justice, and you will be sufficiently beautiful not only in the sight of God but also beautiful in the sight of men.

¹ 1 Timothy 2:9-10.
This beauty will please even a husband, if he finds his wife beautiful in acts and fair in mind.

3. Therefore, Susanna, for the sake of her purity, despised even death. She was denounced by two desperate elders, accused as guilty, and condemned as an adulterer. But this saint and admirable woman preferred to suffer death so as to save her purity rather than live with complicity in evil.

When she was led to death, however, God aroused the Holy Spirit in the young Daniel, whom it was said “desired God,” in order to make known the innocence of Susanna and to display the false claims of the accusers. Thus, it came to pass, by the right justice of God, that Susanna, being innocent, was freed, and the priests, being false accusers and adulterers, were given the death they deserved. The king of Babylon roasted them in a fire for the evil they had done in Israel and because they had committed adultery with the wives of his citizens.

4. Therefore, Susanna prefigures the church by the example of her purity and chastity. By his faith and conduct, she remained in the paradise of Christ, just as all the faithful remain in the church by their chaste morals, by the holiness of good works, by correct faith, by firm hope, and perfect love. They vie to please their chief, the God Christ. Finally, chastity and purity are supported when we fast. For we fast from those things, not only to deprive ourselves of nourishment, but to separate ourselves from all carnal vices which are passions of the flesh, lust of the mind, depraved thoughts, hatred and envy, gossiping and complaining, fury and anger and from all the like vices and sins. Truly, to abstain only from food, is not fasting. For this reason, when we fast, we
ought to abstain by all means from vices, so that the Lord might not say of us: “It is not
the fast I have chosen, says the Lord.”²

² Isaiah 58:5.
…And for this reason, they all must praise God with one voice, one mind, which is harmony, one faith, one hope, and one love. And so God consents to be praised by the justified, not by sinners; praised by Catholics, not by heretics; praised by the faithful, not by the unfaithful. For this reason, we ought to act and behave in such a manner that we have the ability to praise God and that the words of the prophet might be said of us: “Praise, you servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.” We do this rightly if we obey his desire and commands faithfully.

1 This fragment is added as an ending to several of Chromatius’s sermons (8, 33) in the manuscript tradition. With the restoration of the correct end of 33, the paragraph has been separated and moved here. The text comes from CCSL 9, p. 162.

2 Psalms 113:1.
SERMON 37 – ON THE CALMING OF THE STORM

1. [Our Lord Jesus Christ went up in a boat with his disciples, just as the gospel truly relates, in order to sail across the water. And a great storm came up on the water, so that the boat was covered by waves.]¹ This boat, upon which Christ went, can be understood in two ways. We can see the cross on which Christ went up for our redemption in this boat. Our Lord and Savior, who pilots the whole world, was carried by a small wood boat. He who created the world saved it by the wood of his cross. He, who humbled himself to death on a cross for our sake and who keeps eternal watch over his people, slept in the boat. He who agreed to free us from the danger of eternal death faced the danger of the sea. He, who awakens us each day in his holy church from our sleep in ignorance and unbelief by the preaching of the saints, was awoken by the disciples.

In another way, we can understand this boat as the holy Church. For, although there were few in the number of the faithful at the first, afterwards it grew into a great number of believers and now it fills the entire world. Therefore it is now no longer called a boat but a great ship. And the sea is a symbol of the world.

2. “And behold, there came a great storm on the sea, so that the ship was covered by waves.”² A great persecution arose against the church no long after the passion of the Lord. The cruelty of wicked men, instigated by demons, fought against the faithful of the church. The persecutions of the wicked people almost overwhelmed the faithful of the assembly. While the disciples were sailing, Christ was asleep, by

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¹ This first part seems to be a commentary inserted by the manuscript compiler to replace the beginning of the sermon, which is now lost to us. The commentary comes from the commentary of St. Epiphianus of Cyprus. See: Sancti Epiphanii epics. Interpretatio Evangel, Ed. A. Erikson (Lund 1939), 110.

² Matthew 8:24.
which we understand he permits the pressures and persecutions of this world from time to time to try the church, in order to prove its faith.

"And the disciples came and awoke him saying: 'Lord, save us, lest we die! Then, getting up, he commanded the winds and the sea and a great calm came about."\textsuperscript{3} When the prayer of faith has no hesitation, whenever the prayers of the faithful, in their necessity, address the Lord, then he arises quickly to mercy. But we, whenever we are pressed down by tribulation or dire straits, just like a storm on the sea, we ought to arouse our Lord and Savior to mercy by insistent prayers and merit of faith so that he comes to the help and aid of those who hope in his mercy. Thus he says through the prophet: "Call upon me in the day of your trouble, I will deliver you and you will praise me."\textsuperscript{4}

Therefore, let us call on God with our whole heart and in all faith so that he might free us from all tribulations: famine, war, death, captivity, and from all danger. Then we can praise his name in all things and laden with the worthy fruits of our good works, we might merit to reach the gate of his heavenly kingdom.

\textsuperscript{3} Matthew 8:25-26.
\textsuperscript{4} Psalms 50:15.
1. We heard in the divine reading how great the grace of God towards men was even after the breaking of his command. It says, “And God made Adam and his wife coats of skins and clothed them.” After their sin, they were both naked for they had lost their covering of modesty, as they listened to the words of the devil speaking through the serpent rather than the command of the Lord. For this reason they were naked, robbed of their robes of the grace of God and the clothing of his love. Whoever does not have on the clothing of the grace of God, even if he has many coats, is naked of all good things. But it is not without reason that God made coats of skins for Adam and his wife and clothed them. In this, he demonstrated the grace of the passion of Christ. Otherwise, the human race, stripped and bare, would be unable to be clothed in the grace of God, unless by passion of Christ the Lord. He redeemed the entire world and freed it from eternal damnation and death.

2. The scripture adds this also: “God sent Adam from paradise, lest he stretch forth his hand to the tree of life and eat from it and live forever.” It is not without a mystical meaning that God forbid man, to whom he had given the commands of eternal salvation, from living forever. But God prohibited him from touching the tree of life for this reason: lest he live in eternal punishment. For, if man was not redeemed from sin, and tasted the tree of life, he would live forever indeed, but in eternal punishment not in glory. Hence it was necessary that men were first condemned to death for the transgression of the command in order that they might be saved by grace. In fact what

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1 Genesis 3:21.
2 Genesis 3:23 and 22. Chromatius must be quoting from memory here as he combines two verses in the wrong order.
the tree of life could not then procure for men, the passion of Christ procured for them.
By the tree of the cross, man recovered the grace which he had lost and could not then
recover from the tree of life…
SERMON 39 – ON THE BEATITUDES (FRAGMENT)

1. When our Lord and Savior was visiting many cities and regions preaching and healing all the diseases and infirmities of the people, “seeing the multitudes around him,” just as the present reading reported, “he went up on a mountain.”¹ It is fitting that the most high God goes to a high place to preach the uplifting message to those men who desire to climb to the highest virtues. It is good that the new was preached on a mountain, since the law of Moses was given on a mountain. That one was given in ten commandments for instruction and discipline of the present life. This one is in eight beatitudes since following it leads to eternal life and the heavenly county…

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”² The meek must be peaceful in mind, sincere in heart, of which, the Lord illustrates clearly that it is no small merit when he says: “they shall inherit the earth.” This earth is that of which it was written: “I believe that I saw the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.”³ The inheritance of that earth then is the immortality of the body and the eternal glory of the resurrection. <…> Meekness is a stranger to pride, to boasting, to ambition. Hence it is not unfitting that the Lord exhorted his disciples elsewhere by saying: “Learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.”⁴

“Blessed are those that mourn, for they will be comforted.”⁵ Not those who mourn for the loss of dear ones, but those who weep correctly for sin, who wash their offenses

¹ Matthew 5:1.
² Matthew 5:4.
³ Psalms 27:13.
⁴ Matthew 11:29.
⁵ Matthew 5:5.
with tears. Or, at least, those who mourn the iniquity of this world or bewail the sins of others.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, because they will be called sons of God.”

Behold the great merits of the peacemakers, who are no longer called servants but sons of God. This is not wrong, for whoever loves peace, loves Christ, the author of peace, whom the apostle Paul named peace when he said: “He himself is our peace.” But whoever does not love peace pursues dissension, because he loves the devil who is the author of dissension. In fact he first made the conflict between God and man when he made man break the command of God. But for this reason, the son of God descended from heaven, to condemn the devil, the author of discord, and to make peace between God and man. He reconciled man to God and recalled God to man in grace. For this reason we ought to be peacemakers so they might merit to be called sons of God.

Without peace we lose not only the title of sons, but even the name of servants, as the apostle said: “Let us love peace, without which none of us is able to please God.”

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6 Matthew 5:9.
7 Ephesians 2:14.
8 This citation is a combination of Hebrews 12:14 and 11:6. In *Tractatus XVII*, on this same passage, Chromatius cites the verse correctly.
1. Among other saving precepts, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ gave to his disciples when they asked how they ought to pray this form of prayer which you just heard in the present reading. You, dearly beloved, heard in what manner he taught his disciples to pray to God, the Father omnipotent: "When you pray, enter into your chamber, close the door and pray to your Father."¹ In speaking of the chamber he does not mean a hidden place in the house, rather he calls to mind the secrets of our hearts made known to the father alone. And we ought to pray to God with a closed door, that is we must lock our hearts from all evil thought and, with closed lips, speak to God with an uncorrupted mind. God hears our faith and not our voice. Therefore let us lock our hearts with key of faith from the snares of the enemy and open it only to God, whose temple we know it to be, so that when he dwells in our hearts, he himself may be an advocate in our prayers. Therefore, Christ our Lord, the word of God and the Wisdom of God, we pray it also.

2. “Our Father who is in heaven.”² Here is the voice of freedom and complete confidence. Therefore, you must live a life of moral so that you can be a son of God and brother of Christ. Who has the temerity to presume to call God his father if he deviates from His will? Hence, beloved, show yourselves worthy of divine adoption, for it is written: “For as many as believe in him, he gives the power to become sons of God.”³

¹ Matthew 6:6.
² Matthew 6:9-13 for the Lord’s Prayer and all citation not otherwise noted.
³ John 1:12.
“Hallowed be your name.” This is not that God be hallowed by our prayers, since he is always holy, but rather we ask that his name be hallowed in us, so that, sanctified in his baptism, we might persevere in that which we have begun.

“Your kingdom come.” Is there a moment when our God, whose reign is immortal, does not rule? But when we say, “Your kingdom come,” we ask for the coming of our reign, which God has promised to us and which Christ obtained for us by his blood and passion.

“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” This means that whatever you want in heaven, we reproduce faultlessly in the earth.

“Give us today our daily bread.” Here, we ought to understand this as spiritual bread. Christ himself is our bread, who said: “I am the bread of life, who came down from heaven.” We call the bread daily because we ought to ask always for the forgiveness of our sins so that we might be worthy of the heavenly food.

“And forgive us our debts just as we forgive our debtors.” This precept signifies that we are unable to win pardon of our sins lest we first remit other who offend us, just as the Lord said in the gospel: “Unless you forgive men of their sins, our Father will not forgive you your sins.”

“And lead us not into temptation.” That is: do not allow us to be led by him who tempts, the author of depravity. For the scripture says: “God does not tempt us with

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4 John 6:51.

5 Matthew 6:15.
evil.”⁶ But, the devil is the tempter as the Lord said during his conquest: “Keep watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”⁷

“But deliver us from evil.” He said this because the apostle said: “You do not know what you ought to pray for.”⁸ Hence we must pray to God Omnipotent so that whatever human weakness we have do not prevail over us. Then we can be given the power of Jesus Christ our Lord, who, being God, lives and reigns in the unity of the Holy Spirit through all the ages. Amen.

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⁶ James 1:13.
⁷ Matthew 26:41.
⁸ Romans 8:26.
1. The assembly of people and the crowds for market day gives us, dear brothers, the opportunity to relate the speech of the gospel. The things of the world are wont to be figures of the spiritual and earthly images give away the heavenly ones. Even our Lord and Savior often relates to us the things of heaven through earthly images, when he says: “The kingdom of heaven is like a net which is cast into the sea.”¹ And again: “The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who seeks a precious pearl.”² Therefore, if the market contains within itself reason, so that each, according to his need, sells what is superfluous to him or buys things that are wanting, not inappropriately will I also set out the merchandise that the lord has committed to me, the preaching that is assuredly from heaven, since indeed he has chosen me, even if unworthy and the least of those servants to whom the Lord has distributed talents, to conduct business and make a profit. Merchants are not lacking at all where, through the grace of God, there are such hearers and so many of them. Indeed, where earthly advantage is not neglected, one must strive even more after a heavenly profit. I desire, dear brother, to set out before you the precious pearls of the beatitudes from the holy gospel. Open the treasuries of your heart, buy, receive eagerly and possess with joy.

When the numerous crowds have come together from different regions, our Lord and Savior, the only begotten of the most high Father, who deigned to be made man when he was god, taking his disciples, that is his apostles, “went up on a mountain, and opening his mouth, he taught them, saying: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the

¹ Matthew 13:47.
² Matthew 13:45.
kingdom of heaven is theirs. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”3 Our Lord and Savior established very firm degrees of precious stones so that the holy souls of the faithful might be able to discover and climb to the highest good, which is the kingdom of heaven. Shortly therefore, dearest brothers, I want to show what these degrees are. Let your whole mind and soul be intent on this, for the things of God are no small matter.

2. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.”4 What a wonderful beginning, brothers for the doctrine of heaven! He did not begin with a matter of dread but of happiness, making us not scared, but rather desirous. In the manner of an organizer of games or an official, he offers a great reward to the contestants in this spiritual stadium, so that they will neither fear the labors nor tremble at the dangers. Therefore, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.” He does not say simply or confusedly ‘blessed are the poor,’ but rather he adds: ‘poor in spirit.’ For not all the poor are happy, because it happens often out of necessity, sometimes as a result of poor behavior, and even out of the anger of God. Therefore, blessed are the poor of spirit, those men, who make themselves poor in spirit and will for the sake of God, renouncing worldly goods, voluntarily giving out their own funds. These deserve to be called blessed, because they are “poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.” They, by their voluntary poverty, attain the riches of the kingdom of heaven.


4 Matthew 5:3.
Then he says: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

Wonderfully, after the first step, he shows a second: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” But just as it is impossible, according to the order of things, to stand on the second step unless one climbs the first, so man is unable to be meek unless he is first made poor in spirit. How therefore will the spirit placed among riches, among cares and worldly anxieties, from which difficulties, lawsuits, appeals, provocations, and exasperations without end are born, how will the spirit, among these I say, be able to be meek and calm among these disturbances unless it first cuts itself off and renounces all causes of anger and opportunities of quarrels? The sea is not made calm unless the winds cease; fire is not extinguished unless the matter of incendiary material, branches and thistles, are removed; thus neither is the soul meek and quiet unless those things which raise it up and inflame it have been laid aside. Therefore, it is a good thing that the second step is joined to the first, since those who are poor in spirit are already on the road of meekness.

3. He proceeds to the third: “Blessed are those that mourn, for they will be comforted.” What should we understand in these healing tears? Certainly not those tears which arise from damage to our things, nor those form the loss of dear ones, nor the loss of secular offices; none of these things make the poor in spirit to have pain. The healing tears are those which are poured out for sins, for the recollection of divine trial. When the soul is situated among countless difficulties and preoccupations, it is not able to think about itself. Now, with the effects of security and meekness, it begins to look

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5 Matthew 5:4.
6 Matthew 5:5.
closer at itself, to examine its actions of the day and the night, and thus the wounds of past crimes begin to appear, and then the tears of healing follow, and so health, for as soon as that, the tears meet the heavenly consolation. He said truly: “Blessed are those that mourn, for they will be comforted.”

4. Let us come now, brothers, to the fourth: “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” 7 Truly, after repentance, after mourning and tears for our sins, what other hunger and thirst could arise than for righteousness? For, just as those who wander in the darkness of the night are eager to reach the light, and those who pass yellow bile desire food and drink, so the mind of Christian men, after passing through mourning and tears for his sins, now he is hungry and thirsty for the righteousness of God alone. And rightly, he rejoices when he is satisfied with what he desires.

5. Let us come to the fifth step: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy.” 8 No one can give to another that which he does not give to himself. Therefore, after he has obtained mercy for himself and the satiety of righteousness, now he begins to feel sorry for the wretched, begins now to pray for the sins of others. Becoming merciful even towards his enemies, he prepares for himself an accumulation of mercy by this kind of act for the coming of the Lord. For this reason it is said: “Blessed are the merciful, for they will obtain mercy.”

7 Matthew 5:6.
8 Matthew 5:7.
6. And here is the sixth step: “Blessed are the pure in heart, because they will see God.”\(^9\) Clearly now, they are poor in heart, able to see God, who are poor in spirit, meek, lament their sins, are refreshed by righteousness, are merciful, who, in adversity, guard the eye of their heart in lucidity and clarity so that without any malice of the eyes or obstacle of any kind, they might be able to see the inaccessible clarity of God. For purity of the heart and purity of conscience will suffer no cloud in regard to seeing the Lord.

7. Following, brothers: “Blessed are the peacemakers, because they will be called sons of God.”\(^{10}\) Great is the merit of those who are devoted to peace since they considered as having the name of sons of God. It is good then to establish peace between brothers who quarrel over earthly goods or for the sake of vain glory or grudges. But this merits only a small reward as the Lord said in our example: “Who made me a judge or a divider over you?”\(^{11}\) For as he had already said: “Ask not again for what has been taken from you.”\(^{12}\) And in another place: “How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another?”\(^{13}\) We ought to understand that there is a peacemaking which is higher and better. I am speaking of those who led those men of the gentiles, who were enemies of God, to peace by the presence of the doctrine. Also peacemakers are those who corrected the sinners and reconciled them to God through repentance, of those who corrected the rebellious ways of the heretics, and of those

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\(^9\) Matthew 5:8.  
\(^{10}\) Matthew 5:9.  
\(^{13}\) John 5:44.
who made unity and peace out of the discord within the Church. Truly, Such men as these are peacemakers, not only are they blessed, but they earn the reward of being called sons of God. Imitating Christ, the son of God, who the apostle called “our peace” and our reconciliation, they receive the fellowship in his name.

8. “Blessed are those who suffer persecution for the sake of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.”

14 It cannot be doubted, brothers, that good deeds are always accompanied by envy. Setting aside the cruelty of the persecutors, when you begin to hold to a strict righteousness, striking against arrogance, and calling the unbelievers to the peace of God, beginning, in fact, to differ from worldly men who live in error, at once persecution arises. It is necessary to let their hatred arise and their jealousies tear at you. Thus, Christ finally adds for his listeners this highest step, to the very top, where they not only suffer patiently, but also embrace dying for his sake.

9. “Blessed are you when men persecute you and taunt you and say all matter of evil against you falsely for the sake of righteousness. Rejoice and exult for there is a great reward for you in heaven. For, they also persecuted the prophets who came before you.”

15 The perfect virtue, brothers, comes after many works of righteousness, suffering insults from men for the sake of truth, afflicted with torments, ending in death, the example of the prophets should give us no cause for alarm, since the prophets, though wounded in different manners for the sake of righteousness, merited to be participate in the suffering and the reward of Christ. This step is higher, of which Paul, his vision fixed on Christ, said: “This one thing I do: Forgetting those things which are

14 Matthew 5:10.
15 Matthew 5:11-12.
behind and extending my hand for things which are in front of me, I chase the prize of God which is the highest calling of Christ Jesus.”  

16 And even more clearly he said to Timothy: “I have fought the good fight, I have completed my race.”  

17 As someone who had ascended all the steps, he added: “I have guarded the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.”  

18 In truth, completing the whole course that was left to him, Paul, suffering tribulations and persecutions, joyfully reached the highest step, that of martyrdom. Thus, the Lord justly urges us in his sermon: “Rejoice and exult for there is a great reward for you in heaven.” And he shows that this reward is a result of the increasing persecution.

10. The eight steps of the gospel shown to you, my brothers, are built from precious stones, as I said. You see this ladder of Jacob, whose top reached from the Earth to heaven. Whoever climbs to the top, he finds the gates of heaven, and entering through them, stands joyously without end in the sight of God, praising the Lord with his holy angels throughout eternity.

This is our merchandise, this our spiritual market day. Let us give, blessed ones, that we might have. Let us offer ourselves as poor in spirit so that we might receive the riches of the kingdom of heaven according to his promise. Let us offer meekness so that we might possess the earth and paradise. Let us mourn the sins both of ourselves and or others in order that the goodness of God might be our comforter. Let us hunger and thirst for righteousness, so that we might be fully satisfied. Let us give mercy that we might obtain true mercy. Let us live peacefully, in order that we might be called sons of

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17 II Timothy 4:7.
18 II Timothy 4:8.
God. Let us offer a pure heart and a chaste body so that we might be able to see God
Let us not fear persecution for the sake of righteousness so that we might be made
heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Let us embrace happily and joyfully insults, torments,
even death, if they happen for the sake of the truth of God, that we might be given a
great reward in heaven with the prophets and apostles.

But now so that the words of the end might agree with those of the beginning, if it
is a joy for merchants to gain the present and perishable, we ought to be glad and
greatly rejoice all together, since we find such pearls of the Lord today, to which no
worldly goods can compare. In order to merit to acquire and possess them, we ask the
help and grace of the Lord himself, who is in glory, world without end. Amen.
Hence the Lord said in the present reading as you heard: "'Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me?' And Peter responded: 'Lord, you know that I love you.' Again the Lord said to him: 'Simon, son of Jonas, do you love me?' He responded: 'Lord, you know that I love you.'"¹ What should we say about this? Did not the Lord, who knew the secrets of the heart, know that Peter loved him? Or was a single response of Peter not sufficient for the Lord who knows all even before we speak? But three times the Lord asked Peter, so that the three confessions might condemn the thrice denials.

Finally, the Lord said to the Peter: "'When you were young, you girded yourself and went wherever you desired to go. But when you are old, others will gird you and lead you where you do not want to go.' But he said this is signify what kind of death he would glorify God."² In the old age of his life, Saint Peter suffered on the cross for Christ. For the Lord had said in another place in the gospel: "Whoever does not take up his cross and follow me, cannot be my disciple."³ The disciple of truth fulfilled this command of the master. He suffered the cross for the Lord so that he might glorify the cross of the Lord.

But when he was led to the cross, he proposed to be crucified with his feet inverted. Not shrinking from the passion, but he kept his humility, being judged not the equal of the Lord, but a servant. The punishment was like that of Christ, but the grace was not, for Peter was crucified for himself, but Christ for the salvation of the world. Peter was crucified so that he might acquire the glory of his own passion; Christ was

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¹ John 21:15-16.
crucified so that the fame of his passion might crown the whole world. Peter was fixed with his feet upwards so that he might hasten with quick steps to heaven; Christ was raised on the cross with his hands fixed so that the extent of his arms might cover the entire world...
When the kings of this world conquer their enemies and obtain victories, they make trophies in the likeness of the cross of the Lord, which weigh upon the captives of war as a sign of eternal memory. And although now in all battles the image of the cross signifies victory, it is far removed from the victory of the cross. In the same manner that we see their victory over a king, the destruction of the enemy is the capture of the wretched, so the true victory of the cross of the Lord is the salvation of all people, redemption of sinners, hope of the resurrection, and the means of eternal life.\(^4\)

\(^4\) The sermon continues, though it is not likely from Chromatius. It is a composite text and draws from a variety of sources. The first paragraph matches up with Sermon 19 well and is thus provided here.
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