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## The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome

The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome was composed in approximately 215 in Rome. It apparently preserved older second century practices which were in danger of falling to disuse or innovation. Hippolytus, a presbyter of the Roman Church at the time, was so distraught over the innovating practices of his former friends, the Pope Zephyrinus and his successor Callistus, that he set himself up as history's first antipope! He continued in this role through the rules of Callistus successors, Urban and Pontius, and in the time of Pope Pontianus, both he and Pontianus were exiled to Sardinia, from all accounts an extraordinarily unhealthy place, where they were forced to work the mines. Shortly afterward, in 235, both died there. Sometime before his death, Hippolytus was reconciled to the Roman Bishop. The two were martyrs, and their bodies were both brought back to Rome, where they were honorably buried.

Sadly most of Hippolytus' works are lost to us. *The Apostolic Tradition* itself is partly preserved in a Latin palimpsest, and in several oriental versions. The Greek original is wholly lost, but for fragments in the heavily edited excerpts in *The Apostolic Constitutions*.

My translation here is based on the work of Bernard Botte (*La Tradition Apostolique. Sources Chretiennes*, 11 bis. Paris, Editions du Cerf, 1984) and of Gregory Dix (*The Treatise on the Apostolic Tradition of St. Hippolytus of Rome, Bishop and Martyr*. London: Alban Press, 1992). My version (which it certainly is) is intended as a simplified one for ease of reading, directed primarily towards the non-expert. It's a simple kindness, and I hope that you, dear reader, will enjoy it.

## The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus

**1** We have set forth as was necessary that part of the discourse which relates to the spiritual gifts, all that God, right from the beginning, granted to people according to his will, bringing back to himself this image which had gone astray.

**2**Now, driven by love towards all the saints, we have arrived at the essence of the tradition which is proper for the Churches. **3**This is so that those who are well informed may keep the tradition which has lasted until now, according to the explanation we give of it, and so that others by taking note of it may be strengthened **4**(against the fall or error which has recently occurred because of ignorance and ignorant people), **5**with the Holy Spirit conferring perfect grace on those who have a correct faith, and so that they will know that those who are at the head of the Church must teach and guard all these things.

**2** He who is ordained as a bishop, being chosen by all the people, must be irreproachable.

**2**When his name is announced and approved, the people will gather on the Lord's day with the council of elders and the bishops who are present. **3**With the assent of all, the bishops will place their hands upon him, with the council of elders standing by, quietly. **4**Everyone will keep silent, praying in their hearts for the descent of the Spirit. **5**After this, one of the bishops present, at the request of all, shall lay his hand upon him who is being ordained bishop, and pray, saying,

**3** God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 Father of mercies and God of all consolation,  
 you who live in the highest, but regard the lowest,<sup>a</sup>  
 you who know all things before they are,  
**2**you who gave the rules of the Church through the word of your grace,  
 who predestined from the beginning the race of the righteous through Abraham,  
 who instituted princes and priests,  
 and did not leave your sanctuary without a minister;  
 who from the beginning of the world has been pleased  
 to be glorified by those whom you have chosen,  
**3**pour out upon him the power which is from you, the princely Spirit,  
 which you gave to your beloved Son<sup>b</sup> Jesus Christ,  
 which he gave to your holy apostles,  
 who founded the Church in every place as your sanctuary,  
 for the glory and endless praise of your name.  
**4**Grant, Father who knows the heart,  
 to your servant whom you chose for the episcopate, that he will feed your holy flock,  
 that he will wear your high priesthood without reproach,  
 serving night and day, incessantly making your face favorable,  
 and offering the gifts of your holy church;  
**5**in the spirit of high priesthood having the power to forgive sins according to your command;  
 to assign lots according to your command;  
 to loose any bond according to the authority which you gave to the apostles;  
 to please you in mildness and a pure heart, offering to you a sweet scent,  
**6**through your son Jesus Christ,  
 through whom to you be glory, power, and honor,  
 Father and Son,  
 with the Holy Spirit,  
 in the Holy Church,  
 now and throughout the ages of the ages.  
 Amen.

<sup>a</sup> Lit., *the humble*.

<sup>b</sup> Or *servant*. The Gk and Lat words mean both. In this phrase throughout the work as here.

**4**When he has been made bishop, everyone shall give him the kiss of peace, and salute him  
 respectfully, for he has been made worthy of this. **2**Then the deacons shall present the oblation  
 to him, and he shall lay his hand upon it, and give thanks, with the entire council of elders, saying:  
**3**The Lord be with you.  
 And all reply:  
 And with your spirit.  
 The bishop says:  
 Lift up your hearts.  
 The people respond:  
 We have them with the Lord.  
 The bishop says:  
 Let us give thanks to the Lord.

The people respond:

It is proper and just.

The bishop then continues:

**4**We give thanks to you God,  
through your beloved son Jesus Christ,  
whom you sent to us in former times<sup>a</sup>  
as Savior, Redeemer, and Messenger of your Will,  
**5**who is your inseparable Word,  
through whom you made all,  
and in whom you were well-pleased,  
**6**whom you sent from heaven into the womb of a virgin,  
who, being conceived within her, was made flesh,  
and appeared as your Son,  
born of the Holy Spirit and the virgin.

**7**It is he who, fulfilling your will  
and acquiring for you a holy people,  
extended his hands in suffering,  
in order to liberate from sufferings  
those who believe in you.

**8**Who, when he was delivered<sup>b</sup> to voluntary suffering,  
in order to dissolve death,  
and break the chains of the devil,  
and tread down hell,  
and bring the just to the light,  
and set the limit,  
and manifest the resurrection,

**9**taking the bread, and giving thanks to you, said,  
"Take, eat, for this is my body which is broken for you."  
Likewise the chalice, saying,  
This is my blood which is shed for you.

**10**Whenever you do this, do this (in) memory of me.

**11**Therefore, remembering his death and resurrection,  
we offer to you the bread and the chalice,  
giving thanks to you, who has made us worthy  
to stand before you and to serve as your priests.

**12**And we pray that you would send your Holy Spirit  
to the oblation of your Holy Church.

In their gathering together,  
give to all those who partake of your holy mysteries the fullness of the Holy Spirit,  
toward the strengthening of the faith in truth,

**13**that we may praise you and glorify you,  
through your son Jesus Christ,  
through whom to you be glory and honor,  
Father and Son,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in your Holy Church,  
now and throughout the ages of the ages.  
Amen.

<sup>a</sup> Or *the last times*.

<sup>b</sup> Or *betrayed*.

**5** If someone makes an offering of oil, the bishop shall give thanks in the same manner as for the oblation of the bread and wine. He does not give thanks with the same words, but quite similar, saying, <sup>2</sup>"Sanctify this oil, God, as you give holiness to all who are anointed and receive it, as you anointed kings, priests, and prophets, so that it may give strength to all who taste it, and health to all who use it."

**6** Likewise, if someone makes an offering of cheese and olives, the bishop shall say, <sup>2</sup>"Sanctify this brought-together milk, just as you also bring us together in your love. <sup>3</sup>Let this fruit not leave your sweetness, this olive which is a symbol of your abundance, which you made to flow from the tree, for life to those who hope in you."

<sup>4</sup>In every blessing should be said:

To you be glory,  
 Father and Son  
 with the Holy Spirit,  
 in your Holy Church,  
 now and forever,  
 and throughout all the ages of the ages.  
 Amen.

**7** When an elder is ordained, the bishop places his hand upon his head, along with the other elders, and says according to that which was said above for the bishop, praying and saying:

<sup>2</sup>God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 look upon your servant here,  
 and impart the spirit of grace and the wisdom of elders<sup>a</sup>,  
 that he may help and guide your people with a pure heart,  
<sup>3</sup>just as you looked upon your chosen people,  
 and commanded Moses to choose elders,  
 whom you filled with your spirit  
 which you gave to your attendant.

<sup>4</sup>Now, Lord, unceasingly preserving in us the spirit of your grace,  
 make us worthy, so that being filled  
 we may minister to you in singleness<sup>b</sup> of heart,  
 praising you,

<sup>5</sup>through your son Christ Jesus,  
 through whom to you be glory and might,  
 Father and Son  
 with the Holy Spirit,  
 in your Holy Church,  
 now and throughout the ages of the ages.  
 Amen.

<sup>a</sup> Lit., *advice of elders*.

<sup>b</sup> Or *simplicity*.

**8** When one ordains a deacon, he is chosen according to what has been said above, with only the bishop laying on his hand in the same manner. In the ordination of a deacon, only the bishop lays on his hand, <sup>2</sup>because the deacon is not ordained to the priesthood, but to the service of the bishop, to do that which he commands. <sup>3</sup>For he is not part of the council of the clergy, but acts as a manager, and reports to the bishop what is necessary. <sup>4</sup>He does not receive the spirit common to the elders, which the elders share, but that which is entrusted to him under the bishop's authority. <sup>5</sup>This is why only the bishop makes a deacon. <sup>6</sup>Upon the elders, the other elders place their hands because of a common spirit and similar duty. <sup>7</sup>Indeed, the elder has only the authority to receive this, but he has no authority to give it. <sup>8</sup>Therefore he does not ordain to the clergy. Upon the ordination of the elder he seals; the bishop ordains.

<sup>9</sup>The bishop says this over the deacon:

<sup>10</sup>O God, you who have created all  
and put it in order by your Word,  
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
whom you sent to serve by your will,  
and to manifest to us your desire,

<sup>11</sup>give the Holy Spirit of grace and earnestness and diligence to this your servant,  
whom you have chosen to serve your church  
and to offer up in holiness in your sanctuary  
that which is offered from the inheritance of your high priests,  
so that serving without reproach and in purity, he may obtain a higher degree,  
and that he may praise you and glorify you,

<sup>12</sup>through your son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
through whom to you be glory, and power, and praise,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
now and always, and throughout the ages of the ages.

Amen.

**9** If a confessor has been placed in chains for the Name of the Lord, hands are not laid upon him for the office of deacon or elder. He has the honor of the office of an elder through his confession. If he is instituted as a bishop, then hands will be laid upon him.

<sup>2</sup>If there is a confessor who was neither led before an authority, nor punished with bonds, nor placed in prison, nor condemned to any other penalty, but was only incidentally derided because of the Name of our Lord, and punished with domestic confinement even though he confessed, for whatever office he is worthy of hands shall be placed on him.

<sup>3</sup>The bishop shall give thanks according to all that was said above. <sup>4</sup>It is not at all necessary that he prays with the very same words given above, as though by an effort of memory giving thanks to God. Each shall pray whatever is according to his ability. <sup>5</sup>If someone has the ability to pray a lengthy and solemn prayer, that is well. If someone else, in praying, offers a short prayer, this is not to be prevented. That prayer must only be correct in orthodoxy.

**10** When a widow is appointed, she is not ordained, but is chosen by name. <sup>2</sup>If her

husband has been dead a long time, she is appointed. <sup>3</sup>If it has not been a long time since her husband died, she may not be trusted. If, however, she is old, let her be tested for a time. For often the passions grow old with those who give them a place in themselves. <sup>4</sup>The widow is appointed by word alone, and then may join the rest of the widows. Do not lay hands upon her, for she does not offer the oblation, nor does she have a liturgical duty. <sup>5</sup>Ordination is for the clergy because of liturgical duty. The widow is appointed because of prayer, which is a duty for all.

**11** The reader is appointed when the bishop gives the book to him. He does not have hands laid upon him.

**12** Hands are not laid on a virgin, for a decision alone makes her a virgin.

**13** Hands are not laid on the sub-deacon. He is chosen by name to assist the deacon.

**14** If someone among the laity is seen to have received a gift of healing by revelation, hands are not laid upon such a one, for the matter is obvious.

**15** Those who are newly brought forward to hear the Word shall first be brought before the teachers at the house, before all the people enter. <sup>2</sup>Then they will be questioned concerning the reason that they have come forward to the faith. Those who bring them will bear witness concerning them as to whether they are able to hear. <sup>3</sup>They shall be questioned concerning their life and occupation, marriage status, and whether they are slave or free. <sup>4</sup>If they are the slaves of any of the faithful, and if their masters permit them, they may hear the Word. If their masters do not bear witness that they are good, let them be rejected. <sup>5</sup>If their masters are pagans, teach them to please their masters, so that there will be no blasphemy.

<sup>6</sup>If a man has a wife, or a woman has a husband, let them be taught to be content, the husband with his wife, and the wife with her husband. <sup>7</sup>If there is a man who does not live with a woman, let him be taught not to fornicate, but to either take a wife according to the law, or to remain as is.

<sup>8</sup>If there is someone who has a demon, such a one shall not hear the Word of the teacher until purified.

**16** They will inquire concerning the works and occupations of those who are brought forward for instruction. <sup>2</sup>If someone is a pimp who supports prostitutes, he shall cease or shall be rejected. <sup>3</sup>If someone is a sculptor or a painter, let them be taught not to make idols. Either let them cease or let them be rejected. <sup>4</sup>If someone is an actor or does shows in the theater, either he shall cease or he shall be rejected. <sup>5</sup>If someone teaches children (worldly knowledge), it is good that he cease. But if he has no (other) trade, let him be permitted. <sup>6</sup>A charioteer, likewise, or one who takes part in the games, or one who

goes to the games, he shall cease or he shall be rejected. <sup>7</sup>If someone is a gladiator, or one who teaches those among the gladiators how to fight, or a hunter who is in the wild beast shows in the arena, or a public official who is concerned with gladiator shows, either he shall cease, or he shall be rejected. <sup>8</sup>If someone is a priest of idols, or an attendant of idols, he shall cease or he shall be rejected. <sup>9</sup>A military man in authority must not execute men. If he is ordered, he must not carry it out. Nor must he take military oath. If he refuses, he shall be rejected. <sup>10</sup>If someone is a military governor,<sup>a</sup> or the ruler of a city who wears the purple, he shall cease or he shall be rejected. <sup>11</sup>The catechumen or faithful who wants to become a soldier is to be rejected, for he has despised God. <sup>12</sup>The prostitute, the wanton man, the one who castrates himself, or one who does that which may not be mentioned, are to be rejected, for they are impure. <sup>13</sup>A magus shall not even be brought forward for consideration. <sup>14</sup>An enchanter, or astrologer, or diviner, or interpreter of dreams<sup>b</sup>, or a charlatan<sup>c</sup>, or one who makes amulets, either they shall cease or they shall be rejected. <sup>15</sup>If someone's concubine is a slave, as long as she has raised her children and has clung only to him, let her hear. Otherwise, she shall be rejected. <sup>16</sup>The man who has a concubine must cease and take a wife according to the law. If he will not, he shall be rejected.

<sup>a</sup> Lit. *has the authority of swords*

<sup>b</sup> Other ancient authorities add *or one who clips the fringes of garments*,

<sup>c</sup> Lit., *one who stirs up the people*

**17** Catechumens will hear the word for three years. <sup>2</sup>Yet if someone is earnest<sup>a</sup> and perseveres well in the matter, it is not the time that is judged, but the conduct.

<sup>a</sup> Or *eager*

**18** When the teacher finishes his instruction, the catechumens will pray by themselves, separate from the faithful. <sup>2</sup>The women will also pray in another place in the church, by themselves, whether faithful women or catechumen women. <sup>3</sup>After the catechumens have finished praying, they do not give the kiss of peace, for their kiss is not yet pure. <sup>4</sup>But the faithful shall greet one another with a kiss, men with men, and women with women. Men must not greet women with a kiss.

<sup>5</sup>All the women should cover their heads with a pallium, and not simply with a piece of linen, which is not a proper veil.

**19** After the prayer, the teacher shall lay hands upon the catechumens, pray, and dismiss them. Whether such is one of the laypeople or of the clergy, let him do so.

<sup>2</sup>If any catechumens are apprehended because of the Name of the Lord, let them not be double-hearted because of martyrdom. If they may suffer violence and be executed with their sins not removed, they will be justified, for they have received baptism in their own blood.

**20** When they are chosen who are to receive baptism, let their lives be examined, whether they have lived honorably while catechumens, whether they honored the widows,

whether they visited the sick, and whether they have done every good work.. <sup>2</sup>If those who bring them forward bear witness for them that they have done so, then let them hear the Gospel.

<sup>3</sup>From the time at which they are set apart, place hands upon them daily so that they are exorcised. When the day approaches on which they are to be baptized, let the bishop exorcise each one of them, so that he will be certain whether each has been purified.

<sup>4</sup>If there are any who are not purified, they shall be set apart. They have not heard the Word in faith, for the foreign spirit remained with each of them.

<sup>5</sup>Let those who are to be baptized be instructed that they bathe and wash on the fifth day of the week. <sup>6</sup>If a woman is in the manner of women, let her be set apart<sup>a</sup> and receive baptism another day.

<sup>7</sup>Those who are to receive baptism shall fast on the Preparation of the Sabbath<sup>b</sup>. On the Sabbath<sup>c</sup>, those who are to receive baptism shall all gather together in one place chosen according to the will of the bishop. They shall be commanded to pray and kneel<sup>d</sup>. <sup>8</sup>Then, laying his hand on them, he will exorcise every foreign spirit, so that they flee from them and never return to them. When he has finished exorcising them, he shall breathe on their faces and seal<sup>e</sup> their foreheads, ears and noses. Then he shall raise them up.

<sup>9</sup>They shall all keep vigil all night, reading and instructing them.

<sup>10</sup>Those who are to be baptized are not to bring any vessel, only that which each brings for the eucharist. It is indeed proper that each bring the oblation in the same hour.

<sup>a</sup> Lit., *isolated*.

<sup>b</sup> Friday

<sup>c</sup> Saturday

<sup>d</sup> Lit., *bend the knee*.

<sup>e</sup> With the sign of the cross.

**21** At the hour in which the cock crows, they shall first pray over the water. <sup>2</sup>When they come to the water, the water shall be pure and flowing, that is, the water of a spring or a flowing body of water. <sup>3</sup>Then they shall take off all their clothes. <sup>4</sup>The children shall be baptized first. All of the children who can answer for themselves, let them answer. If there are any children who cannot answer for themselves, let their parents answer for them, or someone else from their family. <sup>5</sup>After this, the men will be baptized. Finally, the women, after they have unbound their hair, and removed their jewelry. No one shall take any foreign object with themselves down into the water.

<sup>6</sup>At the time determined for baptism, the bishop shall give thanks over some oil, which he puts in a vessel. It is called the Oil of Thanksgiving. <sup>7</sup>He shall take some more oil and exorcise it. It is called the Oil of Exorcism. <sup>8</sup>A deacon shall hold the Oil of Exorcism and stand on the left. Another deacon shall hold the Oil of Thanksgiving and stand on the right.

<sup>9</sup>When the elder takes hold of each of them who are to receive baptism, he shall tell each of them to renounce, saying, "I renounce you Satan, all your service<sup>a</sup>, and all your works."

<sup>10</sup>After he has said this, he shall anoint each with the Oil of Exorcism, saying, "Let every

evil spirit depart from you." **11**Then, after these things, the bishop passes each of them on nude to the elder who stands at the water. They shall stand in the water naked. A deacon, likewise, will go down with them into the water. **12**When each of them to be baptized has gone down into the water, the one baptizing shall lay hands on each of them, asking, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" **13**And the one being baptized shall answer, "I believe." **14**He shall then baptize each of them once, laying his hand upon each of their heads. **15**Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose on the third day living from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, the one coming to judge the living and the dead?" **16**When each has answered, "I believe," he shall baptize a second time. **17**Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh?" **18**Then each being baptized shall answer, "I believe." And thus let him baptize the third time.

**19**Afterward, when they have come up out of the water, they shall be anointed by the elder with the Oil of Thanksgiving, saying, "I anoint you with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ." **20**Then, drying themselves, they shall dress and afterwards gather in the church.

**21**The bishop will then lay his hand upon them, invoking, saying,  
"Lord God, you who have made these worthy  
of the removal of sins through the bath of regeneration,  
make them worthy to be filled with your Holy Spirit,  
grant to them your grace,  
that they might serve you according to your will,  
for to you is the glory,  
Father and Son  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the Holy Church,  
now and throughout the ages of the ages.  
Amen.

**22**After this he pours the oil into his hand, and laying his hand on each of their heads, says,  
"I anoint you with holy oil  
in God the Father Almighty,  
and Christ Jesus,  
and the Holy Spirit."

**23**Then, after sealing<sup>b</sup> each of them on the forehead, he shall give them the kiss of peace and say,  
"The Lord be with you."  
And the one who has been baptized shall say,  
"And with your spirit."  
**24**So shall he do to each one.

**25**From then on they will pray together with all the people. Prior to this they may not pray with the faithful until they have completed all. **26**After they pray, let them give the kiss of peace.

<sup>27</sup>Then the deacons shall immediately bring the oblation. The bishop shall bless the bread, which is the symbol of the Body of Christ; and the bowl of mixed wine<sup>c</sup>, which is the symbol of the Blood which has been shed for all who believe in him; <sup>28</sup>and the milk and honey mixed together, in fulfillment of the promise made to the fathers, in which he said, "a land flowing with milk and honey," which Christ indeed gave, his Flesh, through which those who believe are nourished like little children, by the sweetness of his Word, softening the bitter heart; <sup>29</sup>and water also for an oblation, as a sign of the baptism, so that the inner person, which is psychic, may also receive the same as the body. <sup>30</sup>The bishop shall give an explanation of all these things to those who are receiving.

<sup>31</sup>Breaking the bread, distributing a piece to each, he shall say,  
"The Bread of Heaven in Jesus Christ."

<sup>32</sup>And the one who receives shall answer,  
"Amen."

<sup>33</sup>The elders, and the deacons if there are not enough, shall hold the cups and stand together in good order and with reverence: first the one who holds the water, second the one who holds the milk, and third the one who holds the wine. <sup>34</sup>They who partake shall taste of each three times. And he who gives shall say,

"In God the Father Almighty."

The one who receives shall respond,  
"Amen."

<sup>35</sup>The one giving shall say,  
"And in the Lord Jesus Christ."

The one who receives shall respond,  
"Amen."

<sup>36</sup>The one giving shall say,  
"And in the Holy Spirit, and in the Holy Church."

And the one who receives shall respond,  
"Amen."

<sup>37</sup>It shall be done so for each.

<sup>38</sup>When these things are done, they shall be zealous to do good works, and to please God, living honorably, devoting themselves to the church, doing the things which they were taught, and advancing in piety.

<sup>39</sup>We have delivered these things to you only briefly concerning baptism and the oblation because you have already been instructed concerning the resurrection of the flesh and the rest according to what is written. <sup>40</sup>If there is anything else which needs to be told, the bishop shall tell it privately<sup>d</sup> to those who receive baptism. None but the faithful may know, and even them only after receiving baptism. This is the white stone about which John said, "A new name is written on it, which no one knows except the one who received the stone."

<sup>a</sup> Other ancient authorities read *servants*.

<sup>b</sup> That is, making the sign of the cross.

<sup>c</sup> That is, wine mixed with water.

<sup>d</sup> Lit., *in quiet*

**22** On the first day of the week the bishop, if possible, shall deliver the oblation to all the people with his own hand, while the deacons break the bread. <sup>2</sup>When the deacon brings it to the elder, the deacon shall present his platter, and the elder shall take it himself and distribute it to the people by his own hand. <sup>3</sup>Other days they will receive the oblation according to the command of the bishop.

**23** Widows and virgins will fast often and pray for the Church. The elders will fast when they want to, as is the same for the laypeople. <sup>2</sup>The bishop may not fast except when all the people fast. <sup>3</sup>For often someone will bring an offering, and it cannot be rejected. For whenever the bishop breaks the bread, he must partake of it, and eat it with all who are there.

**24** The deacon shall be diligent in giving the oblation to the sick, if there is no elder. <sup>2</sup>When he has been given as much as is necessary, receiving according to how much needs to be given out, he shall give thanks, and they shall eat there.

**25** When the evening has arrived, with the bishop present the deacon shall bring in a lamp. <sup>2</sup>The bishop, standing in the midst of all the faithful present, shall give thanks. But he shall first greet all by saying,  
"The Lord be with you."  
<sup>3</sup>And all the people shall respond,  
"And with your spirit."  
<sup>4</sup>Then the bishop shall say,  
"Let us give thanks to the Lord."  
<sup>5</sup>And the people shall respond,  
"It is proper and just.  
Greatness and exaltation and glory are due to him."

<sup>6</sup>But he shall not say,  
"Lift up your hearts,"  
because that is said for the oblation.

<sup>7</sup>And he shall pray thus, saying,  
"We give thanks to you, O God,  
through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
because you have enlightened us by revealing the incorruptible light.  
<sup>8</sup>Therefore, having finished the length of a day,  
and arriving at the beginning of the night,  
and having been satisfied with the light of the day  
which you created for our satisfaction,  
and since we now do not lack a light for the evening through your grace,  
we sanctify you and glorify you,  
<sup>9</sup>through your only Son our Lord Jesus Christ,  
through whom to you with him be glory and might and honor  
with the Holy Spirit,

now and always, and throughout the ages of the ages.

Amen.

**10** Then all shall say,  
"Amen."

**11** After the meal they shall get up and pray, and the children shall sing songs, along with the virgins.

**12** Afterwards, the deacon holding the mixed cup of the oblation shall say a psalm from among those in which is written *Alleluia*. **13** Then, if the elder orders it, more from the same psalms. After this, the bishop shall offer the cup, saying one of those psalms appropriate to the cup, all of which should include *Alleluia*. **14** When the psalms are recited, all shall say, "Alleluia," which means, "We praise he who is God. Glory and praise to him who created all the world by word alone!" **15** When the psalm is completed, he shall bless the cup and give of the pieces of bread to all the faithful ones.

**26** When they dine, the faithful present shall take from the hand of the bishop a small piece of bread before taking their own bread, because it is blessed. Yet it is not the eucharist, like the body of the Lord. **2** Before they all drink, they shall take their cups and give thanks for them. Thus they will eat and drink in purity. **3** However, give the catechumens exorcised bread and cups.

**27** The catechumen may not take part in<sup>a</sup> the Lord's Supper. **2** At every meal, those who eat shall remember him who invited them, because he requested that they might come under his roof.

<sup>a</sup> Lit. *recline at*

**28** Eat and drink in moderation. Do not drink to drunkenness, so that no one will mock you and so that he who invited you will not be grieved by your disorderly conduct. It is better that he continue to pray to be made worthy so that the saints may come to him. For indeed, as he said, "You are the salt of the earth." **2** If you are all assembled and are offered a dinner gift<sup>a</sup>, accept it.

**3** When you eat, eat sufficiently and not to excess, so that the host may have some left that he can then send to someone as leftovers of the saints, so that the one to whom it is sent may rejoice.

**4** Let the guests eat in silence, without arguing, saying only what the bishop allows. If someone asks a question, it shall be answered. When the bishop answers, all shall remain silent, praising him modestly, until someone else asks a question.

**5** And if, in the absence of the bishop, the faithful attend the meal in the presence of an elder or a deacon, they shall eat in the same way, honorably. Everyone shall be careful to receive the blessed bread and from the hand of the elder or deacon. Similarly, the catechumen will still receive exorcised.

<sup>6</sup>If laypeople only are gathered, they shall behave modestly, for a layperson cannot make the blessed bread.

<sup>a</sup> *Gk apophorêton*

**29** Each shall eat in the Name of the Lord. For this is pleasing to God that we should show ourselves as zealots even among the pagans, all of us being unified and sober.

**30** Whenever someone wishes to invite older widows to a meal, he shall send them away before sunset. <sup>2</sup>If he cannot receive them in his own home due to his ecclesiastical office, he shall give them food and wine and send them away. Then they may eat it at home as they please.

**31** All shall be diligent to offer to the bishop the firstfruits of the fruits of the first harvest.

<sup>2</sup>He shall bless them, saying,

<sup>3</sup>"We give thanks to you, God,  
and offer to you the firstfruits of the fruits  
which you have given to us as food,  
having nourished them by your word,  
commanding the earth to bring forth all kinds of fruit  
for the pleasure and nourishment of men and all animals.

<sup>4</sup>For all this we praise you, God,  
in which you have been our benefactor,  
adorning all creation for us with various fruits,

<sup>5</sup>through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,  
through whom to you be glory  
throughout the ages of the ages.  
Amen."

**32** These are the fruits which he shall bless: the grape, fig, pomegranate, olive, pear, apple, blackberry, peach, cherry, almond, and plum. But not the pumpkin, melon, cucumber, onion, garlic, or any other vegetable.

<sup>2</sup>Sometimes flowers also are offered. The rose and lily may be offered, but no other flowers.

<sup>3</sup>With all foods, give thanks to the Holy God, eating them to his glory.

**33** No one must eat anything on Pascha<sup>a</sup> before the oblation has been made, for with one who acts thus, it will not be counted as a fast. <sup>2</sup>If a woman is pregnant, or if someone is sick and cannot fast for two days, let them fast on Saturday, taking bread and water if necessary. <sup>3</sup>If are at sea or for any other necessity did not know the day, when they have learned it they shall fast after Pentecost. <sup>4</sup>For the Passover which we celebrate is not a type, for the type has indeed passed. For this reason it no longer happens in the second month, and one should fast when one has learned the truth.

<sup>a</sup> Or *Easter*

**34** Each of the deacons and sub-deacons shall serve the bishop. The bishop shall be told who are the sick, so that if it seems good to him, he may visit them. For the sick are greatly comforted that the high priest remembers them.

**35** The faithful, as soon as they wake up and are risen, before beginning work, shall pray to God, and then go to their work. <sup>2</sup>But if there is any instruction in the Word, they shall give this preference and go there to hear the Word of God for the strengthening of their souls. They shall be zealous to go to the church, where the Spirit flourishes.

**36** The faithful shall be careful to partake of the eucharist before eating anything else. For if they eat with faith, even though some deadly poison is given to them, after this it will not be able to harm them.

**37** All shall be careful so that no unbeliever tastes of the eucharist, nor a mouse or other animal, nor that any of it falls and is lost. For it is the Body of Christ, to be eaten by those who believe, and not to be scorned.

**38** Having blessed the cup in the Name of God, you received it as the antitype of the Blood of Christ. <sup>2</sup>Therefore do not spill from it, for some foreign spirit to lick it up because you despised it. You will become as one who scorns the Blood, the price with which you have been bought.

**39** The deacons and elders shall meet daily at the place which the bishop appoints for them. The deacons especially should not fail to meet every day, except when illness prevents them. <sup>2</sup>When all have assembled, they shall teach all those who are in the assembly<sup>a</sup>. Then, after having prayed, each one shall go to the work assigned to him.

<sup>a</sup> Or *church*

**40** Do not put a high price on burying people in the cemeteries, for they are for all the poor. However, they shall pay the wages of a workman to whoever digs the hole, and the price of the bricks. <sup>2</sup>The bishop will provide for the caretaker there from what they offer at the assemblies<sup>a</sup>, so that there is no charge for those who come to the place.

<sup>a</sup> Or *churches*

**41** Let every faithful man and every faithful woman, when they rise from sleep at dawn, before they undertake any work, wash their hands and pray to God. Then they may go to work. <sup>2</sup>But if there is some instruction in the Word, they shall go there, considering that it is God whom they hear in the one instructing. For having prayed in the assembly,<sup>t</sup> they will be able to avoid all the evils of the day. The pious should consider it a great wrong if they do

not go to the place in which they give instruction, especially if they know how to read.

<sup>3</sup>If there is a teacher there, let no one be late in arriving at the assembly<sup>a</sup> where they give instruction. Then it shall be given to whoever speaks to utter things which are useful to each one, and you will hear things you did not know, and you will benefit from the things which the Holy Spirit will give to you through the one who instructs. In this way, your faith will be strengthened by what you will have heard. He will also tell you there what you ought to do at home. Therefore, let each one be certain to go to the assembly<sup>a</sup>, to the place where the Holy Spirit flourishes.

<sup>4</sup>If there is a day when there is no instruction, let each one at home take a holy book and read enough of it to gain an advantage from it.

<sup>5</sup>If you are at home, pray at the third hour and praise God. If you are elsewhere at that time, pray in your heart to God. <sup>6</sup>For in this hour Christ was seen nailed to the wood. And thus in the Old Testament the Law instructed that the shewbread be offered at the third hour as a symbol of the Body and Blood of Christ. And the sacrifice of the irrational<sup>b</sup> lamb was a symbol of the perfect Lamb. For Christ is the Shepherd, and he is also the bread which descended from heaven.

<sup>7</sup>Pray also at the sixth hour. Because when Christ was attached to the wood of the cross, the daylight ceased and became darkness. Thus you should pray a powerful prayer at this hour, imitating the cry of him who prayed and all creation was made dark for the unbelieving Jews.

<sup>8</sup>Pray also at the ninth hour a great prayer with great praise, imitating the souls of the righteous who do not lie, who glorify God who remembered his saints and sent his Word to them to enlighten them. <sup>9</sup>For in that hour Christ was pierced in his side, pouring out water and blood, and the rest of the time of the day, he gave light until evening. This way he made the dawn of another day at the beginning of his sleep, fulfilling the type of his resurrection.

<sup>10</sup>Pray also before your body rests on your bed.

<sup>11</sup>Around midnight rise and wash your hands with water and pray. If you are married, pray together. <sup>12</sup>But if your spouse<sup>c</sup> is not yet baptized, go into another room to pray, and then return to bed. Do not hesitate to pray, for one who has been joined in marital relations is not impure. Those who have bathed have no need to wash again, for they are pure. <sup>13</sup>By catching your breath in your hand and signing<sup>d</sup> yourself with the moisture of your breath, your body is purified, even to the feet. For the gift of the Spirit and the outpouring of the baptism, proceeding from the heart of the believer as though from a fountain, purifies the one who has believed. <sup>15</sup>Thus it is necessary to pray at this hour.

For those elders who handed down the tradition to us taught us that in this hour every creature hushes for a brief moment to praise the Lord. Stars and trees and waters stand still for an instant. All the host of angels serving him, together with the souls of the righteous, praise God. <sup>16</sup>This is why it is important that all those who believe make certain to pray at that hour. Testifying to this, the Lord says thus, "Behold, a cry was made at midnight, saying, 'Behold the bridegroom is coming! Arise to meet him!'" And he adds,

saying, "Watch, therefore, for you do not know when the hour is coming."

<sup>17</sup>Likewise, at the hour of the cock-crow, rise and pray. Because at this hour, with the cock-crow, the children of Israel refused Christ, who we know through faith, hoping daily in the hope of eternal light in the resurrection of the dead.

<sup>18</sup>With these things, all you faithful, if you do and remember them, instructing one another, and encouraging the catechumens, you will not be able to be tempted or to perish, having Christ always in your thoughts.

<sup>a</sup> Or *church*

<sup>b</sup> Gk *alogos*

<sup>c</sup> Lat and Gk *wife*

<sup>d</sup> That is, making the sign of the cross.

**42** If you are tempted, seal<sup>a</sup> your foreheads reverently. For this is the Sign of the Passion, displayed and made manifest against the devil, provided that you do it with faith, not to be seen by men, but by presenting it with skill like a shield.

<sup>2</sup>Because the Adversary, when he sees the strength of the heart and when he sees the inner man which is animated by the Word show, formed on the exterior, the interior image of the Word, he is made to flee by the Spirit which is in you. <sup>3</sup>This is symbolized by the Paschal lamb which was sacrificed, the blood of which Moses sprinkled on the threshold, and smeared on the doorposts. He told us of the faith which is now in us, which was given to us through the perfect Lamb.

<sup>4</sup>By sealing<sup>a</sup> the forehead and eyes with the hand, we turn aside the one who is seeking to destroy us.

<sup>a</sup> That is, making the sign of the cross.

**43** Thus, if these things are heard with grace and correct faith, they bestow edification on the Church and eternal life on the believers. <sup>2</sup>I counsel that these things be observed by all with good understanding. For if all who hear the apostolic tradition follow and keep it, no heretic will be able to introduce error, nor will any other person at all. <sup>3</sup>It is in this manner that the many heresies have grown, for those who were leaders did not wish to inform themselves of the opinion of the apostles, but did what they wanted according to their own pleasure, and not what was appropriate.

<sup>4</sup>If we have omitted anything, beloved ones, God will reveal it to those who are worthy, steering Holy Church to her mooring in the quiet haven.