

WRITINGS OF COUNCIL OF NICAEA OF 325

by Council of Nicaea of 325

Writings of Council of Nicaea of 325 (c. AD 325). Council of Nicaea of 325 was an early church father whose writings have been preserved for the edification of the church.

9 Chapters

Table of Contents

0. Writings of Council of Nicaea of 325
1. Addenda
2. On the Keeping of Easter
3. The Canons
4. The Captions of the Arabic Canons Attributed to the Council of Nice
5. The Creed
6. The Nicene Creed
7. The Ratification
8. The Synodal Letter

Writings of Council of Nicaea of 325

Addenda

Addenda, As Authorized at Constantinople, a.d. 381.

Addenda, As Authorized at Constantinople, a.d. 381.

(a) Of heaven and earth.

(b) Begotten of the Father before all worlds.

(c) By the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary.

(d) Was crucified also for us, under Pontius Pilate, (e) And was buried.

(f) Sitteth on the right hand of the Father, (g) Whose kingdom shall have no end.

(h) The Lord, the Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father;¹ Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets: In one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen. This Nicaeno-Constantinopolitan Creed was solemnly ratified by the Council of Ephesus (a.d. 431) with the decree² that "No one³ shall be permitted to introduce, write, or compose any other faith,⁴ besides that which was defined by the holy Fathers assembled in the city of Nice, with the presence of the Holy Ghost."

1: The addition of the Filioque , in the West, is theologically true, but of no authority here. See Pearson, On the Creed .

2: Canon vii.

3: No one . This re-affirms the action of Nicaea itself, and forbids the imposition of anything novel as a creed by any authority whatever. Nothing, therefore, which has not been set forth by Nicene authority (or by the supplementing and co-equal councils of the whole Church, from the same primitive sources) can be a creed, strictly speaking. It may be an orthodox confession, like the Quicumque Vult , but cannot be imposed in terms of communion, any more than the Te Deum .

4: Any other faith . The composition and setting north of another faith , as terms of communion, by Pius IV., bishop of Rome, A.D. 1564, and its acceptance, with additional dogmas, at the opening of the Vatican Council (so-called), A.D. 1869, brought the whole Papal communion under this anathema of Ephesus. [FOOT NOTES] Pages 530-536.

On the Keeping of Easter

On the Keeping of Easter. On the Keeping of Easter. From the Letter of the Emperor to all those not present at the Council.

(Found in Eusebius, Vita Const., Lib. iii., 18-20.) When the question relative to the sacred festival of Easter arose, it was universally thought that it would be convenient that all should keep the feast on one day; for what could be more beautiful and more desirable, than to see this festival, through which we receive the hope of immortality, celebrated by all with one accord, and in the same manner? It was declared to be particularly unworthy for this, the holiest of all festivals, to follow the custom [the calculation] of the Jews, who had soiled their hands with the most fearful of crimes, and whose minds were blinded. In rejecting their custom,¹ we may transmit to our descendants the legitimate mode of celebrating Easter, which we have observed from the time of the Saviour's Passion to the present day [according to the day of the week]. We ought not, therefore, to have anything in common with the Jews, for the Saviour has shown us another way; our worship follows a more legitimate and more convenient course (the order of the days of the week); and consequently, in unanimously adopting this mode, we desire, dearest brethren, to separate ourselves from the detestable company of the Jews, for it is truly shameful for us to hear them boast that without their direction we could not keep this feast. How can they be in the right, they who, after the death of the Saviour, have no longer been led by reason but by wild violence, as their delusion may urge them? They do not possess the truth in this Easter question; for, in their blindness and repugnance to all improvements, they frequently celebrate two passovers in the same year. We could not imitate those who are openly in error. How, then, could we follow these Jews, who are most certainly blinded by error? for to celebrate the passover twice in one year is totally inadmissible. But even if this were not so, it would still be your duty not to tarnish your soul by communications with such wicked people [the Jews]. Besides, consider well, that in such an important matter, and on a subject of such great solemnity, there ought not to be any division. Our Saviour has left us only one festal day of our redemption, that is to say, of his holy passion, and he desired [to establish] only one Catholic Church. Think, then, how unseemly it is, that on the same day some should be fasting whilst others are seated at a banquet; and that after Easter, some should be rejoicing at feasts, whilst others are still observing a strict fast. For this reason, a Divine Providence wills that this custom should be rectified and regulated in a uniform way; and everyone, I hope, will agree upon this point. As, on the one hand, it is our duty not to have anything in common with the murderers of our Lord; and as, on the other, the custom now followed by the Churches of the West, of the South, and of the North, and by some of those of the East, is the most acceptable, it has appeared good to all; and I have been guarantee for your consent, that you would accept it with joy, as it is followed at Rome, in Africa, in all Italy, Egypt, Spain, Gaul, Britain, Libya, in all Achaia, and in the dioceses of Asia, of Pontus, and Cilicia. You should consider not only that the number of churches in these provinces make a majority, but also that it is right to demand what our reason approves, and that we should have nothing in common with the Jews. To sum up in few words: By the unanimous judgment of all, it has been decided that the

most holy festival of Easter should be everywhere celebrated on one and the same day, and it is not seemly that in so holy a thing there should be any division. As this is the state of the case, accept joyfully the divine favour, and this truly divine command; for all which takes place in assemblies of the bishops ought to be regarded as proceeding from the will of God. Make known to your brethren what has been decreed, keep this most holy day according to the prescribed mode; we can thus celebrate this holy Easter day at the same time, if it is granted me, as I desire, to unite myself with you; we can rejoice together, seeing that the divine power has made use of our instrumentality for destroying the evil designs of the devil, and thus causing faith, peace, and unity to flourish amongst us. May God graciously protect you, my beloved brethren.

1: We must read e#thouj , not e#thnouj , as the Mayence impression of the edition of Valerius has it.

The Canons

The Canons of the 318 Holy Fathers Assembled in the City of Nice, in Bithynia.

Canon I.

Notes. The Canons of the 318 Holy Fathers Assembled in the City of Nice, in Bithynia.

Canon I.

If any one in sickness has been subjected by physicians to a surgical operation, or if he has been castrated by barbarians, let him remain among the clergy; but, if any one in sound health has castrated himself, it behoves that such an one, if [already] enrolled among the clergy, should cease [from his ministry], and that from henceforth no such person should be promoted. But, as it is evident that this is said of those who wilfully do the thing and presume to castrate themselves, so if any have been made eunuchs by barbarians, or by their masters, and should otherwise be found worthy, such men the Canon admits to the clergy.

Notes.

Ancient Epitome¹ Of Canon I.

Eunuchs may be received into the number of the clergy, but those who castrate themselves shall not be received.

Balsamon. The divine Apostolic Canons xxi., xxii., xxiii., and xxiv., have taught us sufficiently what ought to be done with those who castrate themselves, this canon provides as to what is to be done to these as well as to those who deliver themselves over to others to be emasculated by them, viz., that they are not to be admitted among the clergy nor advanced to the priesthood.

Daniel Butler.

(Smith & Cheetham, Dict. Christ. Ant.) The feeling that one devoted to the sacred ministry should be un mutilated was strong in the Ancient Church This canon of Nice, and those in the Apostolic Canons and a later one in the Second Council of Arles (canon vii.) were aimed against that perverted notion of piety, originating in the misinterpretation of our Lord's saying (Matt. xix. 12) by which Origen, among others, was misled, and their observance was so carefully enforced in later times that not more than one or two instances of the practice which they condemn are noticed by the historian. The case was different if a man was born an eunuch or had suffered mutilation at the hands of persecutors; an instance of the former, Dorotheus, presbyter of Antioch, is mentioned by Eusebius (H. E. vii., c. 32); of the latter, Tigris, presbyter of Constantinople, is referred to both by Socrates (H. E. vi. 16) and Sozomen (H. E. vi. 24) as the victim of a barbarian master.

Hefele.

We know, by the first apology of St. Justin (Apol. c. 29) that a century before Origen, a young man had desired to be mutilated by physicians, for the purpose of completely refuting the charge of vice which the heathen brought against the worship of Christians. St. Justin neither praises nor blames this young man: he only relates that he could not obtain the permission of the civil authorities for his project, that he renounced his intention, but nevertheless remained virgo all his life. It is very probable that the Council of Nice was induced by some fresh similar cases to renew the old injunctions; it was perhaps the Arian bishop, Leontius, who was the principal cause of it.²

Lambert.

Constantine forbade by a law the practice condemned in this canon. "If anyone shall anywhere in the Roman Empire after this decree make eunuchs, he shall be punished with death. If the owner of the place where the deed was perpetrated was aware of it and hid the fact, his goods shall be confiscated." (Const. M. Opera. Migne Patrol. vol. viii., 396.)

Beveridge. The Nicene fathers in this canon make no new enactment but only confirm by the authority of an Ecumenical synod the Apostolic Canons, and this is evident from the wording of this canon. For there can be no doubt that they had in mind some earlier canon when they said, "such men the canon admits to the clergy." Not, ou[toj o9 kanw\l{n, but o9 kanw\l{n, as if they had said "the formerly set forth and well-known canon" admits such to the clergy. But no other canon then existed in which this provision occurred except apostolical canon xxi. which therefore we are of opinion is here cited. [In this conclusion Hefele also agrees.] This law was frequently enacted by subsequent synods and is inserted in the Corpus Juris Canonici, Decretum Gratiani. Pars. I. Distinctio LV., C vij.

1: For the authority of this opitome vide Introduction.

2: Leontius while still a presbyter lived with a subintroducta at Antioch, whose name was Eustolion, so we learn from St. Athanasius, Theodoret (H. E. ii. 24) and Socrates (H. E . ii. 26); as he could not part from her and wished to prevent her leaving him, he mutilated himself. His bishop deposed him for this act, but the Emperor Constantius (not Constantine, as by a mistake in the English Hefele, I. p. 377) practically forced him into the episcopal throne of Antioch.

The Captions of the Arabic Canons Attributed to the Council of Nice

The Captions of the Arabic Canons Attributed to the Council of Nice.

Canon I.1

Canon II.

Canon III.

Canon IV.

Canon V.

Canon VI.

Canon VII.

Canon VIII.

Canon IX.

Canon X.

Canon XI.

Canon XII.

Canon XIII.

Canon XIV.

Canon XV.

Canon XVI.

Canon XVII.

Canon XVIII.

Canon XIX.

Canon XX.

Canon XXI.

Canon XXII.

Canon XXIII.

Canon XXIV.

Canon XXV.

Canon XXVI.
Canon XXVII.
Canon XXVIII.
Canon XXIX.
Canon XXX.
Canon XXXI.
Canon XXXII.
Canon XXXIII.
Canon XXXIV.
Canon XXXV.
Canon XXXVI.
Canon XXXVII.
Canon XXXVIII.
Canon XXXIX.
Canon XL.
Canon XLI.
Canon XLII.
Canon XLIII.
Canon XLIV.
Canon XLV.
Canon XLVI.
Canon XLVII.
Canon XLVIII.
Canon XLIX.
Canon L.
Canon LI.
Canon LII.
Canon LIII.
Canon LIV.

Canon LV.

Canon LVI.

Canon LVII.

Canon LVIII.

Canon LIX.

Canon LX.

Canon LXI.

Canon LXII.

Canon LXIII.

Canon LXIV.

Canon LXV.

Canon LXVI.

Canon LXVII.

Canon LXVIII.

Canon LXIX.

Canon LXX.

Canon LXXI.

Canon LXXII.

Canon LXXIII.

Canon LXXIV.

Canon LXXV.

Canon LXXVI.

Canon LXXVII.

Canon LXXVIII.

Canon LXXIX.

Canon LXXX. The Captions of the Arabic Canons Attributed to the Council of Nice.

Canon I.1 Insane persons and energumens should not be ordained.

Canon II.

Bond servants are not to be ordained.

Canon III.

Neophytes in the faith are not to be ordained to Holy Orders before they have a knowledge of Holy Scripture. And such, if convicted after their ordination of grave sin, are to be deposed with those who ordained them.

Canon IV. The cohabitation of women with bishops, presbyters, and deacons prohibited on account of their celibacy.

We decree that bishops shall not live with women; nor shall a presbyter who is a widower; neither shall they escort them; nor be familiar with them, nor gaze upon them persistently. And the same decree is made with regard to every celibate priest, and the same concerning such deacons as have no wives. And this is to be the case whether the woman be beautiful or ugly, whether a young girl or beyond the age of puberty, whether great in birth, or an orphan taken out of charity under pretext of bringing her up. For the devil with such arms slays religious, bishops, presbyters, and deacons, and incites them to the fires of desire. But if she be an old woman, and of advanced age, or a sister, or mother, or aunt, or grandmother, it is permitted to live with these because such persons are free from all suspicion of scandal.²

Canon V. Of the election of a bishop and of the confirmation of the election.

Canon VI. That those excommunicated by one bishop are not to be received by another; and that those whose excommunication has been shown to have been unjust should be absolved by the archbishop or patriarch.

Canon VII. That provincial Councils should be held twice a year, for the consideration of all things affecting the churches of the bishops of the province.

Canon VIII. Of the patriarchs of Alexandria and Antioch, and of their jurisdiction.

Canon IX. Of one who solicits the episcopate when the people do not wish him; or if they do desire him, but without the consent of the archbishop.

Canon X.

How the bishop of Jerusalem is to be honoured, the honour, however, of the metropolitan church of Caesarea being preserved intact, to which he is subject.

Canon XI. Of those who force themselves into the order of presbyters without election or examination.

Canon XII. Of the bishop who ordains one whom he understands has denied the faith; also of one ordained who after that he had denied it, crept into orders.

Canon XIII. Of one who of his own will goes to another church, having been chosen by it, and does not wish afterwards to stay there. Of taking pains that he be transferred from his own church to another.

Canon XIV. No one shall become a monk without the bishop's license, and why a license is required.

Canon XV. That clerics or religious who lend on usury should be cast from their grade.

Canon XVI. Of the honour to be paid to the bishop and to a presbyter by the deacons.

Canon XVII. Of the system and of the manner of receiving those who are converted from the heresy of Paul of Samosata.

Canon XVIII. Of the system and manner of receiving those who are converted from the heresy the Novatians.

Canon XIX. Of the system and manner of receiving those who return after a lapse from the faith, and of receiving the relapsed, and of those brought into peril of death by sickness before their penance is finished, and concerning such as are convalescent.

Canon XX. Of avoiding the conversation of evil workers and wizards, also of the penance of them that have not avoided such.

Canon XXI. Of incestuous marriages contrary to the law of Spiritual relationship, and of the penance of such as are in such marriages.

[The time of penance fixed is twenty years, only godfather and godmother are mentioned, and nothing is said of separation.]

Canon XXII. Of sponsors in baptism.

Men shall not hold females at the font, neither women males; but women females, and men males.

Canon XXIII. Of the prohibited marriages of spiritual brothers and sisters from receiving them in baptism.

Canon XXIV. Of him who has married two wives at the same time, or who through lust has added another woman to his wife; and of his punishment.

Part of the canon. If he be a priest he is forbidden to sacrifice and is cut off from the communion of the faithful until he turn out of the house the second woman, and he ought to retain the first.

Canon XXV. That no one should be forbidden Holy Communion unless such as are doing penance.

Canon XXVI.

Clerics are forbidden from suretyship or witness-giving in criminal causes.

Canon XXVII. Of avoiding the excommunicate, and of not receiving the oblation from them; and of the excommunication of him who does not avoid the excommunicated.

Canon XXVIII.

How anger, indignation, and hatred should be avoided by the priest, especially because he has the power of excommunicating others.

Canon XXIX. Of not kneeling in prayer.

Canon XXX. Of giving [only] names of Christians in baptism, and of heretics who retain the faith in the Trinity and the perfect form of baptism; and of others not retaining it, worthy of a worse name, and of how such are to be received when they come to the faith.

Canon XXXI. Of the system and manner of receiving converts to the Orthodox faith from the heresy of Arius and of other like.

Canon XXXII. Of the system of receiving those who have kept the dogmas of the faith and the Church's laws, and yet have separated from us and afterwards come back.

Canon XXXIII. Of the place of residence of the Patriarch, and of the honour which should be given to the bishop of Jerusalem and to the bishop of Seleucia.

Canon XXXIV. Of the honour to be given to the Archbishop of Seleucia in the Synod of Greece.

Canon XXXV. Of not holding a provincial synod in the province of Persia without the authority of the patriarch of Antioch, and how the bishops of Persia are subject to the metropolitans of Antioch.

Canon XXXVI. Of the creation of a patriarch for Ethiopia, and of his power, and of the honour to be paid him in the Synod of Greece.

Canon XXXVII. Of the election of the Archbishop of Cyprus, who is subject to the patriarch of Antioch.

Canon XXXVIII. That the ordination of ministers of the Church by bishops in the dioceses of strangers is forbidden.

Canon XXXIX. Of the care and power which a Patriarch has over the bishops and archbishops of his patriarchate; and of the primacy of the Bishop of Rome over all.

Let the patriarch consider what things are done by the archbishops and bishops in their provinces; and if he shall find anything done by them otherwise than it should be, let him change it, and order it, as seemeth him fit: for he is the father of all, and they are his sons. And although the archbishop be among the bishops as an elder brother, who hath the care of his brethren, and to whom they owe obedience because he is over them; yet the patriarch is to all those who are under his power, just as he who holds the seat of Rome, is the head and prince of all patriarchs; inasmuch as he is first, as was Peter, to whom power is given over all Christian princes, and over all their peoples, as he who is the Vicar of Christ our Lord over all peoples and over the whole Christian Church, and whoever shall contradict this, is excommunicated by the Synod.³

[I add Canon XXXVII. of Echellensis's Nova Versio LXXXIV. Arabic. Canonum Conc. Nicoeni, that the reader may compare it with the foregoing.]

Let there be only four patriarchs in the whole world as there are four writers of the Gospel, and four rivers, etc. And let there be a prince and chief over them, the lord of the see of the Divine Peter at Rome, according as the Apostles commanded. And after him the lord of the great Alexandria, which is the see of Mark. And the third is the lord of Ephesus, which is the see of John the Divine who speaks divine things. And the fourth and last is my lord of Antioch, which is another see of Peter. And let all the bishops be divided under the hands of these four patriarchs; and the bishops of the little towns which are under the dominion of the great cities let them be under the authority of

these metropolitans. But let every metropolitan of these great cities appoint the bishops of his province, but let none of the bishops appoint him, for he is greater than they. Therefore let every man know his own rank, and let him not usurp the rank of another. And whosoever shall contradict this law which we have established the Fathers of the Synod subject him to anathema.⁴

Canon XL. Of the provincial synod which should be held twice every year, and of its utility; together with the excommunication of such as oppose the decree.

Canon XLI. Of the synod of Archbishops, which meets once a year with the Patriarch, and of its utility; also of the collection to be made for the support of the patriarch throughout the provinces and places subject to the patriarch.

Canon XLII. Of a cleric or monk who when fallen into sin, and summoned once, twice, and thrice, does not present himself for trial.

Canon XLIII.

What the patriarch should do in the case of a defendant set at liberty unpunished by the decision of the bishop, presbyter, or even of a deacon, as the case may be.

Canon XLIV.

How an archbishop ought to give trial to one of his suffragan bishops.

Canon XLV. Of the receiving of complaints and condemnation of an archbishop against his patriarch.

Canon XLVI.

How a patriarch should admit a complaint; or judgment of an Archbishop against an Archbishop.

Canon XLVII. Of those excommunicated by a certain one, when they can be and when they cannot be absolved by another.

Canon XLVIII. No bishop shall choose his own successor.

Canon XLIX. No simoniacal ordinations shall be made.

Canon L.

There shall be but one bishop of one city, and one parochus of one town; also the incumbent, whether bishop or parish priest, shall not be removed in favour of a successor desired by some of the people unless he has been convicted of manifest crime.

Canon LI.

Bishops shall not allow the separation of a wife from her husband on account of discord-[in American, "incompatibility of temper"].

Canon LII.

Usury and the base seeking of worldly gain is forbidden to the clergy, also conversation and fellowship with Jews.

Canon LIII.

Marriages with infidels to be avoided.

Canon LIV. Of the election of a chorepiscopus, and of his duties in towns, and villages, and monasteries.

Canon LV.

How a chorepiscopus should visit the churches and monasteries which are under his jurisdiction.

Canon LVI. Of how the presbyters of the towns and villages should go twice a year with their chorepiscopus to salute the bishop, and how religious should do so once a year from their monasteries, and how the new abbot of a monastery should go thrice.

Canon LVII. Of the rank in sitting during the celebration of service in church by the bishop, the archdeacon and the chorepiscopus; and of the office of archdeacon, and of the honour due the archpresbyter.

Canon LVIII. Of the honour due the archdeacon and the chorepiscopus when they sit in church during the absence of the bishop, and when they go about with the bishop.

Canon LIX.

How all the grades of the clergy and their duties should be publicly described and set forth.

Canon LX. Of how men are to be chosen from the diocese for holy orders, and of how they should be examined.

Canon LXI. Of the honour due to the deacons, and how the clerics must not put themselves in their way.

Canon LXII. The number of presbyters and deacons is to be adapted to the work of the church and to its means.

Canon LXIII. Of the Ecclesiastical Economist and of the others who with him care for the church's possessions.

Canon LXIV. Of the offices said in the church, the night and day offices, and of the collect for all those who rule that church.

Canon LXV. Of the order to be observed at the funeral of a bishop, of a chorepiscopus and of an archdeacon, and of the office of exequies.

Canon LXVI. Of taking a second wife, after the former one has been disowned for any cause, or even not put away, and of him who falsely accuses his wife of adultery. If any priest or deacon shall put away his wife on account of her fornication, or for other cause, as aforesaid, or cast her out of doors for external good, or that he may change her for another more beautiful, or better, or richer, or does so out of his lust which is displeasing to God; and after she has been put away for any of these causes he shall contract matrimony with another, or without having put her away shall take another, whether free or bond; and shall have both equally, they living separately and he sleeping every night with one or other of them, or else keeping both in the same house and bed, let him be

deposed. If he were a layman let him be deprived of communion. But if anyone falsely defames his wife charging her with adultery, so that he turns her out of doors, the matter must be diligently examined; and if the accusation was false, he shall be deposed if a cleric, but if a layman shall be prohibited from entering the church and from the communion of the faithful; and shall be compelled to live with her whom he has defamed, even though she be deformed, and poor, and insane; and whoever shall not obey is excommunicated by the Synod.

[Note.-The reader will notice that by this canon a husband is deposed or excommunicated, as the case may be, if he marry another woman, after putting away his wife on account of her adultery. It is curious that in the parallel canon in the collection of Echellensis, which is numbered LXXI., the reading is quite different, although it is very awkward and inconsequent as given. Moreover, it should be remembered that in some codices and editions this canon is lacking altogether, one on the right of the Pope to receive appeals taking its place. As this canon is of considerable length, I only quote the interesting parts.]

Whatever presbyter or deacon shall put away his wife without the offence of fornication, or for any other cause of which we have spoken above, and shall east her out of doors . . . such a person shall be east out of the clergy, if he were a clergyman; if a layman he shall be forbidden the communion of the faithful. . . But if that woman [untruly charged by her husband with adultery], that is to say his wife, spurns his society on account of the injury he has done her and the charge he has brought against her, of which she is innocent, let her freely be put away and let a bill of repudiation be written for her, noting the false accusation which had been brought against her. And then if she should wish to marry some other faithful man, it is right for her; to do so, nor does the Church forbid it; and the same permission extends as well to men as to women, since there is equal reason for it for each. But if he shall return to better fruit which is of the same kind, and shall conciliate to himself the love and benevolence of his consort, and shall be willing to return to his pristine friendship, his fault shall be condoned to him after he has done suitable and sufficient penance. And whoever shall speak against this decree the fathers of the synod excommunicate him.

Canon LXVII. Of having two wives at the same time, and of a woman who is one of the faithful marrying an infidel; and of the form of receiving her to penance. [Her reception back is conditioned upon her leaving the infidel man.]

Canon LXVIII. Of giving in marriage to an infidel a daughter or sister without her knowledge and contrary to her wish.

Canon LXIX. Of one of the faithful who departs from the faith through lust and love of an infidel; and of the form of receiving him back, or admitting him to penance.

Canon LXX. Of the hospital to be established in every city, and of the choice of a superintendent and concerning his duties. [It is interesting to note that one of the duties of the superintendent is-"That if the goods of the hospital are not sufficient for its expenses, he ought to collect all the time and from all Christians provision according to the ability of each."]

Canon LXXI. Of the placing a bishop or archbishop in his chair after ordination, which is enthronization.

Canon LXXII. No one is allowed to transfer himself to another church [i.e., diocese] than that in which he was ordained; and what is to be done in the case of one cast out forcibly without any blame attaching to him.

Canon LXXIII. The laity shall not choose for themselves priests in the towns and villages without the authority of the chorepiscopus; nor an abbot for a monastery; and that no one should give commands as to who should be elected his successor after his death, and when this is lawful for a superior.

Canon LXXIV.

How sisters, widows, and deaconesses should be made to keep their residence in their monasteries; and of the system of instructing them; and of the election of deaconesses, and of their duties and utility.

Canon LXXV.

How one seeking election should not be chosen, even if of conspicuous virtue; and how the election of a layman to the aforesaid grades is not prohibited, and that those chosen should not afterward be deprived before their deaths, except on account of crime.

Canon LXXVI. Of the distinctive garb and distinctive names and conversation of monks and nuns.

Canon LXXVII. That a bishop convicted of adultery or of other similar crime should be deposed without hope of restoration to the same grade; but shall not be excommunicated.

Canon LXXVIII. Of presbyters and deacons who have fallen only once into adultery, if they have never been married; and of the same when fallen as widowers, and those who have fallen, all the while having their own wives. Also of those who return to the same sin as well widowers as those having living wives; and which of these ought not to be received to penance, and which once only, and which twice.

Canon LXXIX.

Each one of the faithful while his sin is yet not public should be mended by private exhortation and admonition; if he will not profit by this, he must be excommunicated.

Canon LXXX. Of the election of a procurator of the poor, and of his duties.

1: Turrianus calls them "Chapters".

2: I have translated this canon in full because the caption did not seem to give fairly its meaning. In Labbe will be found a long and most curious note.

3: I have translated the whole canon literally; the reader will judge of its antiquity.

4: Canon XXXIX. of this series has nothing to do with the Patriarchs or with the see of Rome and its prerogatives.

The Creed

The Creed As Set Forth at Nicoea, 1 a.d. 325. The Creed As Set Forth at Nicoea, 1 a.d. 325.

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things, visible and invisible: And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father, only begotten, that is, of the substance of the Father;

God of God; Light of light; very God of very God; begotten, not made; being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made, both things in heaven and things in earth: Who for us men and for our salvation came down, and was incarnate, and was made man:

He suffered, and rose again the third day: And ascended into heaven: And shall come again to judge the quick and the dead. And in the Holy Ghost, etc.²

1: It was the old Creed of Jerusalem slightly amended, and made the liturgic symbol of Christendom, and the exponent of Catholic orthodoxy. Compare the Creed of Caesarea, Burbidge, p. 334. But see this whole subject admirably illustrated for popular study by Burbidge, *Liturgies and Offices of the Church*, p. 330, etc., London, Bells, 1885.

2: Here the k.t.l| . is to be understood, as in the liturgies where a known form is begun and left imperfect. The clauses (see Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechet.* , lect. xviii.) are found in the Creed of Jerusalem, thus: "In one baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and in one Holy Catholic Church; and in the resurrection of the flesh; and in eternal life."

The Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed

Notes The Nicene Creed

(Found in the Acts of the Ecumenical Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, in the Epistle of Eusebius of Caesarea to his own Church, in the Epistle of St. Athanasius Ad Jovianum Imp., in the Ecclesiastical Histories of Theodoret and Socrates, and elsewhere, The variations in the text are absolutely without importance.) The Synod at Nice set forth this Creed.¹ The Ecthesis of the Synod at Nice.²

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the only-begotten of his Father, of the substance of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten (γεννηθε/ντα), not made, being of one substance (ομοου/σιον, consubstantialem) with the Father. By whom all things were made, both which be in heaven and in earth. Who for us men and for our salvation came down [from heaven] and was incarnate and was made man. He suffered and the third day he rose again, and ascended into heaven. And he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. And [we believe] in the Holy Ghost. And whosoever shall say that there was a time when the Son of God was not (ην pote ουκ ην), or that before he was begotten he was not, or that he was made of things that were not, or that he is of a different substance or essence [from the Father] or that he is a creature, or subject to change or conversion³ -all that so say, the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes them.

Notes The Creed of Eusebius of Caesarea, which he presented to the council, and which some suppose to have suggested the creed finally adopted.

(Found in his Epistle to his diocese; vide: St. Athanasius and Theodoret.)

We believe in one only God, Father Almighty, Creator of things visible and invisible; and in the Lord Jesus Christ, for he is the Word of God, God of God, Light of Light, life of life, his only Son, the first-born of all creatures, begotten of the Father before all time, by whom also everything was created, who became flesh for our redemption, who lived and suffered amongst men, rose again the third day, returned to the Father, and will come again one day in his glory to judge the quick and the dead. We believe also in the Holy Ghost We believe that each of these three is and subsists; the Father truly as Father, the Son truly as Son, the Holy Ghost truly as Holy Ghost; as our Lord also said, when he sent his disciples to preach: Go and teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

1: This is the heading in the Acts of the IIIrd Council. Labbe, Conc ., tom. iii., 671.

2: This is the heading in the Acts of the IVth Council. Labbe, Conc ., tom. iv., 339.

3: This word, in the Greek τρεπτο\n

The Ratification

The Ratification. The Ratification. And those who say There was a time when He was not, or that Before He was begotten He was not, or that He was made out of nothing; or who say that The Son of God is of any other substance, or that He is changeable or unstable,-these the Catholic and Apostolic Church anathematizes.

The Synodal Letter

The Synodal Letter. The Synodal Letter.

(Found in Gelasius, *Historia Concilii Nicaeni*, Lib. II, cap. xxxiii. ; Socr., *H. E.*, Lib. I., cap. 6; Theodor., *H. E.*, Lib. I., cap. 9.) To the Church of Alexandria, by the grace of God, holy and great; and to our well-beloved brethren, the orthodox clergy and laity throughout Egypt, and Pentapolis, and Lybia, and every nation under heaven, the holy and great synod, the bishops assembled at Nicea, wish health in the Lord.

Forasmuch as the great and holy Synod, which was assembled at Nicea through the grace of Christ and our most religious Sovereign Constantine, who brought us together from our several provinces and cities, has considered matters which concern the faith of the Church, it seemed to us to be necessary that certain things should be communicated from us to you in writing, so that you might have the means of knowing what has been mooted and investigated, and also what has been decreed and confirmed.

First of all, then, in the presence of our most religious Sovereign Constantine, investigation was made of matters concerning the impiety and transgression of Arias and his adherents; and it was unanimously decreed that he and his impious opinion should be anathematized, together with the blasphemous words and speculations in which he indulged, blaspheming the Son of God, and saying that he is from things that are not, and that before he was begotten he was not, and that there was a time when he was not, and that the Son of God is by his free will capable of vice and virtue; saying also that he is a creature. All these things the holy Synod has anathematized, not even enduring to hear his impious doctrine and madness and blasphemous words. And of the charges against him and of the results they had, ye have either already heard or will hear the particulars, lest we should seem to be oppressing a man who has in fact received a fitting recompense for his own sin. So far indeed has his impiety prevailed, that he has even destroyed Theonas of Marmorica and Secundes of Ptolemais; for they also have received the same sentence as the rest. But when the grace of God had delivered Egypt from that heresy and blasphemy, and from the persons who have dared to make disturbance and division among a people heretofore at peace, there remained the matter of the insolence of Meletius and those who have been ordained by him; and concerning this part of our work we now, beloved brethren, proceed to inform you of the decrees of the Synod. The Synod, then, being disposed to deal gently with Meletius (for in strict justice he deserved no leniency), decreed that he should remain in his own city, but have no authority either to ordain, or to administer affairs, or to make appointments; and that he should not appear in the country or in any other city for this purpose, but should enjoy the bare title of his rank; but that those who have been placed by him, after they have been confirmed by a more sacred laying on of hands, shall on these conditions be admitted to communion: that they shall both have their rank and the right to officiate, but that they shall be altogether the inferiors of all those who are enrolled in any church or parish, and have been appointed by our most honourable colleague Alexander. So that these men are to have no

authority to make appointments of persons who may be pleasing to them, nor to suggest names, nor to do anything whatever, without the consent of the bishops of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, who are serving under our most holy colleague Alexander; while those who, by the grace of God and through your prayers, have been found in no schism, but on the contrary are without spot in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, are to have authority to make appointments and nominations of worthy persons among the clergy, and in short to do all things according to the law and ordinance of the Church. But, if it happen that any of the clergy who are now in the Church should die, then those who have been lately received are to succeed to the office of the deceased; always provided that they shall appear to be worthy, and that the people elect them, and that the bishop of Alexandria shall concur in the election and ratify it. This concession has been made to all the rest; but, on account of his disorderly conduct from the first, and the rashness and precipitation of his character, the same decree was not made concerning Meletius himself, but that, inasmuch as he is a man capable of committing again the same disorders, no authority nor privilege should be conceded to him.

These are the particulars, which are of special interest to Egypt and to the most holy Church of Alexandria; but if in the presence of our most honoured lord, our colleague and brother Alexander, anything else has been enacted by canon or other decree, he will himself convey it to you in greater detail, he having been both a guide and fellow-worker in what has been done.

We further proclaim to you the good news of the agreement concerning the holy Easter, that this particular also has through your prayers been rightly settled; so that all our brethren in the East who formerly followed the custom of the Jews are henceforth to celebrate the said most sacred feast of Easter at the same time with the Romans and yourselves and all those who have observed Easter from the beginning.

Wherefore, rejoicing in these wholesome results, and in our common peace and harmony, and in the cutting off of every heresy, receive ye with the greater honour and with increased love, our colleague your Bishop Alexander, who has gladdened us by his presence, and who at so great an age has undergone so great fatigue that peace might be established among you and all of us. Pray ye also for us all, that the things which have been deemed advisable may stand fast; for they have been done, as we believe, to the well-pleasing of Almighty God and of his only Begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Ghost, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
 - 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net