Shorter writings

Council of Ephesus (AD 431) (AD 431)

SermonIndex.net / Church Fathers

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Decree of the Council Against Nestorius

As, in addition to other things, the impious Nestorius has not obeyed our citation, and did not receive the holy bishops who were sent by us to him, we were compelled to examine his ungodly doctrines. We discovered that he had held and published impious doctrines in his letters and treatises, as well as in discourses which he delivered in this city, and which have been testified to. Compelled thereto by the canons and by the letter (a0nagkai/wj kate-peixqe/ntej a0po/ te tw=n kano/nw, kai\ e0k th=j e0pistolh=j, k.t.l.) of our most holy father and fellow-servant Coelestine, the Roman bishop, we have come, with many tears, to this sorrowful sentence against him, namely, that our Lord Jesus Christ, whom he has blas-phemed, decrees by the holy Synod that Nestorius be excluded from the episcopal dignity, and from all priestly communion.

Notes.

The words for which I have given the original Greek, are not mentioned by Canon Bright in his Article on St. Cyril in Smith and Wace's Dictionary of Christian Biography; nor by Ffoulkes in his article on the Council of Ephesus in Smith and Cheetham's Dictionary of Christian Antiquities. They do not appear in Canon Robertsons History of the Church. And strangest of all, Dean Milman cites the Sentence in English in the text and in Greek in a note but in each case omits all mention of the letter of the Pope, marking however in the Greek that there is an omission. (Lat. Chr., Bk. II., Chap. III.) I also note that the translation in the English edition of Hefele's History of the Councils (Vol. III., p. 51) is misleading and inaccurate, "Urged by the canons, and in accordance with the letter etc." The participle by itself might mean nothing more than "urged" (vide Liddell and Scott on this verb and also e0pei/gw) but the adverb which precedes it, a0nagkai/wj, certainly is sufficient to necessitate the coacti of the old Latin version which I have followed, translating "compelled thereto." It will also be noticed that while the prepositions used with regard to the "canons" and the "letter" are different, yet that their grammatical relation to the verb is identical is shewn by the te-kai;, which proves the translation cited above to be utterly incorrect.

Hefele for the ”canons” refers to canon number lxxiv. of the Apostolic Canons; which orders an absent bishop to be summoned thrice before sentence be given against him.

Decree of the Synod in the Matter of Euprepius and Cyril

(Found in Latin only. Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 810.) The petition of the most pious bishops Euprepius and Cyril, which is set forth in the papers they offered, is honest. Therefore from the holy canons and the external laws, which have from ancient custom the force of law, let no innovation be made in the cities of Europa, but according to the ancient custom they shall be governed by the bishops by whom they have been formerly governed. For since there never was a metropolitan who had power otherwise, so neither hereafter shall there be any departure from the ancient custom.

Note.
(Hist. of the Councils, Vol. III., p. 77.) Two Thracian bishops, Euprepius of Biza (Bizya) and Cyril of Coele, gave occasion for a decree, praying for protection against their Metropolitan, Fritilas of Heraclea, who had gone over to the party of John of Antioch, and at the same time for the confirmation of the previous practice of holding two bishoprics at the same time. The Synod granted both.

Extracts from the Acts. Session 1 Part 1

[Before the arrival of the Papal Legates.] (Labbe and Cossart, Concilia Tom. III., col. 459 et seqq.) The Nicene Synod set forth this faith: We believe in one God, etc. When this creed had been recited, Peter the Presbyter of Alexandria, and primicerius of the notaries said: We have in our hands the letter of the most holy and most reverend archbishop Cyril, which he wrote to the most reverend Nestorius, filled with counsel and advice, on account of his aberration from the right faith. I will read this if your holiness [i.e., the holy Synod] so orders. The letter began as follows:Katafluarou=si me\n, w9j a0k0ou/w, k.t.l.Intelligo quosdam meae, etc.

Extracts from the Acts. Session 1 Part 2

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 462.) And after the letter was read, Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, said: This holy and great Synod has heard what I wrote to the most religious Nestorius, defending the right faith. I think that I have in no respect departed from the true statement of the faith, that is from the creed set forth by the holy and great synod formerly assembled at Nice. Wherefore I desire your holiness [i.e. the Council] to say whether rightly and blamelessly and in accordance with that holy synod I have written these things or no. [A number of bishops then gave their opinion, all favourable to Cyril; after these individual opinions the Acts continue (col. 491):] And all the rest of the bishops in the order of their rank deposed to the same things, and so believed, according as the Fathers had set forth, and as the Epistle of the most holy Archbishop Cyril to Nestorius the bishop declared.

Palladius, the bishop of Amused, said, The next thing to be done is to read the letter of the most reverend Nestorius, of which the most religious presbyter Peter made mention; so that we may understand whether or no it agrees with the exposition of the Nicene fathers. ... And after this letter was read, Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria, said, What seems good to this holy and great synod with regard to the letter just read? Does it also seem to be consonant to the faith set forth by the holy Synod assembled in the city of Nice? [The bishops, then as before, individually express their opinion, and at last the Acts continue (col. 502):] All the bishops cried out together: Whoever does not anathematize Nestorius let him be anathema. Such an one the right faith anathematizes; such an one the holy Synod anathematizes. Whoever communicates with Nestorius let him be anathema! We anathematize all the apostles of Nestorius: we all anathematize Nestorius as a heretic: let all such as communicate with Nestorius be anathema, etc., etc.

Juvenal, the bishop of Jerusalem said: Let the letter of the most holy and reverend Coelestine, archbishop of the Church of Rome, be read, which he wrote concerning the faith. [The letter of Coelestine was read and no opinion expressed.] Peter the presbyter of Alexandria, and primicerius of the notaries said: Altogether in agreement with the things just read are those which his holiness Cyril our most pious bishop wrote, which I now have at hand,

and will read if your piety so shall order. [The letter was read which begins thus:] Tou= Swth=roj h9mw=n le/gontoj e0nargw=j, k.t.l.Cum Salvator noster, etc.

Extracts from the Acts. Session 1 Part 3

(L. and C., Cone., Tom. III., Col. 503.) [No action is recorded in the Acts as having been taken. A verbal report was made by certain who had seen Nestorius during the past three days, that they were hopeless of any repentance on his part. On the motion of Flavian, bishop of Philippi, a number of passages from the Fathers were read; and after that some selections from the writings of Nestorius. A letter from Capreolus, Archbishop of Carthage, was next read, excusing his absence; after the reading of the letter, which makes no direct reference to Nestorius whatever, but prays the Synod to see to it that no novelties be tolerated, the Acts proceed. (Col. 534).] Cyril, the bishop of the Church of Alexandria, said: As this letter of the most reverend and pious Capreolus, bishop of Carthage, which has been read, contains a most lucid expression of opinion, let it beinserted in the Acts. For it wishes thatthe ancient dogmas of the faith should be confirmed, and that novelties, absurdly conceived and impiously brought forth, shouldbe reprobated and proscribed.

All the bishops at the same time cried out: These are the sentiments (fwnai/) of all of us, these are the things we all say-the accomplishment of this is the desire of us all. [Immediately follows the sentence of deposition and the subscriptions. It seems almost certain that something has dropped out here, most probably the whole discussion of Cyril's XII. Anathematisms.]

Extracts from the Acts. Session 2 Part 1

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 609.) The most pious and God-beloved bishops, Arcadius and Projectus, as also the most beloved-of-God Philip, a presbyter and legate of the Apostolic See, then entered and took their seats. Philip the presbyter and legate of the Apostolic See said: We bless the holy and adorable Trinity that our lowliness has been deemed worthy to attend your holy Synod. For a long time ago (pa/lai) our most holy and blessed pope Coelestine, bishop of the Apostolic See, through his letters to that holy and most pious man Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, gave judgment concerning the present cause and affair (w\#risen) which letters have been shown to your holy assembly. And now again for the corroboration of the Catholic (kaqolikh=j) faith, he has sent through us letters to all your holinesses, which you will bid (kelou/sate) to be read with becoming reverence (prepo/ntwj) and to be entered on the ecclesiastical minutes.

Arcadius, a bishop and legate of the Roman Church said: May it please your blessedness to give order that the letters l of the holy and ever-to-be-mentioned-with-veneration Pope Coelestine, bishop of the Apostolic See, which have been brought byus, be read, from which your reverence will be able to see what care he has for all the Churches. Projectus, a bishop and legate of the Roman Church said, May it please, etc. [The same as Arcadius had said verbatim> And afterwards the most holy and beloved-of-God Cyril, bishop of the Church of Alexandria, spoke as is next in order contained; Siricius, notary of the holy Catholic (kaqolikh/j) Church of Rome read it. Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria said: Let the letter received from the most holy and altogether most blessed Coelestine, bishop of the Apostolic See of Rome be read to the holy Synod with fitting honour. Siricius, notary of the holy Catholic (kaqolikh=j) Church of the city of Rome read it.

And after it was read in Latin, Juvenal, the bishop of Jerusalem said: Let the writings of the most holy and blessed bishop of great Rome which have just been Toad, be entered on the minutes. And all the most reverend bishops prayedthat the letter might be translated and read. Philip, the presbyter of the Apostolic See and Legate said: The custom has been sufficiently complied with, that the writingsof the Apostolic See should first be read inLatin. But now since your holiness has demanded that they be read in Greek also, it is necessary

that your holiness's desire should be satisfied; We have taken care that this be done, and that the Latin be turned into Greek. Give order therefore that it be received and read in your holy hearing. Arcadius and Projectus, bishops and legates said, As your blessedness ordered that the writings which we brought should be brought to the knowledge of all, for of our holy brethren bishops there are not a few who do not understand Latin, therefore the letter has been translated into Greek and if you so command let it be read.

Flavian, the bishop of Philippi said: Let the translation of the letter of the most holy and beloved of God, bishop of the Roman Church be received and read. Peter, the presbyter of Alexandria and primicerius of the notaries read as follows:

Extracts from the Acts. Session 2 Part 2

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 617.) And all the most reverend bishops at the same time cried out. This is a just judgment. To Coelestine, a new Paul To Cyril a new Paul! To Coelestine the guardian of the faith! To Coelestine of one mind with the synod! To Coelestine the whole Synod offers its thanks! One Coelestine! One Cyril! One faith of the Synod! One faith of the world! Projectus, the most reverend bishop and legate, said: Let your holiness consider the form (tu/pon) of the writings of the holy and venerable pope Coelestine, the bishop, who has exhorted your holiness (not as if teaching the ignorant, but as reminding them that know) that those things which he had long ago defined, and now thoughtit right to remind you of, ye might give command to be carried out to the uttermost, according to the canon of the common faith, and according to the use of the Catholic Church.

Firmus, the bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia said: The Apostolic and holy see of the most holy bishop Coelestine, hath previously given a decision and type (tu/pon) in this matter, through the writings which were sent to the most God beloved bishops, to wit to Cyril of Alexandria, and to Juvenal of Jerusalem, and to Rufus of Thessalonica, and to the holy churches, both of Constantinople and of Antioch. This we have also followed and (since the limit set for Nestorius's emendation was long gone by, and much time has passed since our arrival at the city of Ephesus in accordance with the decree of the most pious emperor, and thereupon having delayed no little time sothat the day fixed by the emperor was past; and since Nestorius although cited had not appeared) we carried into effect the type (tu/pon) having pronounced against him acanonical and apostolical judgment.Arcadius the most reverend bishop and legate, said: Although our sailing was slow, and contrary winds hindered us especially, so that we did not know whether we should arrive at the destined place, as we had hoped, nevertheless by God's good providence ... Wherefore we desire to ask your blessedness, that you command that we be taught what has been already decreed by your holiness.

Philip, presbyter and legate of the Apostolic See said: We offer our thanks to the holy and venerable Synod, that when the writings of our holy and blessed pope had been read to you, the holy members by our [or your] holy voices, ye joined yourselves to the holy head also

by your holy acclamations. For your blessedness is not ignorant that the head of the whole faith, the head of the Apostles, is blessed Peter the Apostle. And since now our mediocrity, after having been tempest-tossed and much vexed, has arrived, we ask that ye give order that there be laid before us what things were done in this holy Synod before our arrival; in order that according to the opinion of our blessed pope and of this present holy assembly, we likewise may ratify their determination. Theodotus, the bishop of Ancyra said: The God of the whole world has made manifest the justice of the judgment pronounced by the holy Synod by the writings of the most religious bishop Coelestine, and by the coming of your holiness. For ye have made manifest the zeal of the most holy and reverend bishop Coelestine, and his care for the pious faith. And since very reasonably your reverence is desirous of learning what has been done from the minutes of the acts concerning the deposition of Nestorius your reverence will be fully convinced of the justice of the sentence, and of the zeal of the holy Synod, and the symphony of the faith which the most pious and holy bishop Coelestine has proclaimed with a great voice, of course after your full conviction, the rest shall be added to the present action.[In the Acts follow two short letters from Coelestine, one to the Emperor and the other to Cyril, but nothing is said about them, or how they got there, and thus abruptly ends the account of this session.]

Extracts from the Acts. Session 3

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 621.) Juvenal the bishop of Jerusalem said to Arcadius and Projectus the most reverend bishops, and to Philip the most reverend presbyter; Yesterday while this holy and great synod was in session, when your holiness was present, you demanded after the reading of the letter of the most holy and blessed bishop of Great Rome, Coelestine, that the minutes made in the Acts with regard to the deposition of Nestorius the heretic should be read. And thereupon the Synod ordered this to be done. Your holiness will be good enough to inform us whether you have read them and understand their power. Philip the presbyter and legate of the Apostolic See said: From reading the Acts we have found what things have been done in your holy synod with regard to Nestorius. We have found from the minutes that all things have been decided in accordance with the canons and with ecclesiastical discipline. And now also we seek from your honour, although it may be useless, that what things have been read in your synod, the same should now again be read to us also; so that we may follow the formula (tu/pw|) of the most holy pope Coelestine (who committed this same care to us), and of your holiness also, and may be able to confirm (bwbaiw=sai) the judgment.

[Arcadius having seconded Philip's motion, Memnon directed the acts to be read which was done by the primicerius of the notaries.] Philip the presbyter and legate of the Apostolic See said: There is no doubt, and in fact it has been known in all ages, that the holy and most blessed Peter, prince (e!carkoj) and head of the Apostles, pillar of the faith, and foundation (qeme/lioj) of the Catholic Church, received the keys of the kingdom from our Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, and that to him was given the power of loosing and binding sins: who down even to to-day and forever both lives and judges in his successors. The holy and most blessed pope Coelestine, according to due order, is his successor and holds his place, and us he sent to supply his place in this holy synod, which the most humane and Christian Emperors have commanded to assemble, bearing in mind and continually watching over the Catholic faith. For they both have kept and are now keeping intact the apostolic doctrine handed down to them from their most pious and humane grandfathers and fathers of holy memory down to the present time, etc.

[There is no further reference in the speech to the papal prerogatives.] Arcadius the most reverend bishop and legate of the Apostolic See said: Nestorius hath brought us great sor-

row.. . . And since of his own accord he hath made himself an alien and an exile from us, we following the sanctions handed down from the beginning by the holy Apostles, and by the Catholic Church (for they taught what they had received from our Lord Jesus Christ), also following the types (tu/poij) of Coelestine, most holy pope of the Apostolic See, who has condescended to send us as his executors of this business, and also following the decrees of the holy Synod [we give this as our conclusion]: Let Nestorius know that he is deprived of all episcopal dignity, and is an alien from the whole Church and from the communion of all its priests. Projectus, bishop and legate of the Roman Church said: Most clearly from the reading, etc, . . . Moreover I also, by my authority as legate of the holy Apostolic See, define, being with my brethren an executor (e0kbibasth\j) of the aforesaid sentence, that the beforenamed Nestorius is an enemy of the truth, a corrupter of the faith, and as guilty of the things of which he was accused, has been removed from the grade of Episcopal honour, and moreover from the communion of all orthodox priests.

Cyril, the bishop of Alexandria said: The professions which have been made by Arcadius and Projectus, the most holy and pious bishops, as also by Philip, the most religious presbyter of the Roman Church, stand manifest to the holy Synod. For they have made their profession in the place of the Apostolic See, and of the whole of the holy synod of the God-beloved and most holy bishops of the West. Wherefore let those things which were defined by the most holy Coelestine, the God-beloved bishop, be carried into effect, and the vote east against Nestorius the heretic, by the holy Synod, which met in the metropolis of Ephesus be agreed to universally; for this purpose let there be added to the already prepared acts the proceedings of yesterday and today, and let them be shewn to their holiness, so that by their subscription according to custom, their canonical agreement with all of us may be manifest.

Arcadius the most reverend bishop and legate of the Roman Church, said: According to the acts of this holy Synod, we necessarily confirm with our subscriptions their doctrines. The Holy Synod said: Since Arcadius and Projectus the most reverend and most religious bishops and legates and Philip, the presbyter and legate of the Apostolic See, have said that they are of the same mind with us, it only remains, that they redeem their promises and confirm the acts with their signatures, and then let the minutes of the acts be shewn to them.[The three then signed.]

The 12 Anathematisms of St. Cyril Against Nestorius

(Found in St. Cyril's Opera. Migne, Pat. Graec, Tom. LXXVII., Col. 119; and the Concilia.)

I.
IF anyone will not confess that the Emmanuel is very God, and that therefore the Holy Virgin is the Mother of God (Qeo/tokoj), inasmuch as in the flesh she bore the Word of God made flesh [as it is written, "The Word was made flesh": let him be anathema.

Notes.
The Anathematisms of the Heretic Nestorius Against Cyril. (Found best in Migne's edition of Marius Mercator.) I. If anyone says that the Emmanuel is true God, and not rather God with us, that is, that he has united himself to a like nature with ours, which he assumed from the Virgin Mary, and dwelt in it; and if anyone calls Mary the mother of God the Word, and not rather mother of him who is Emmanuel; and if he maintains that God the Word has changed himself into the flesh, which he only assumed in order to make his Godhead visible, and to be found in form as a man, let him be anathema. Petavius. (De Incarnatione, Lib. vj. cap. xvij.) In this anathematism certain words are found in the Greek copy of Dionysius which are lacking in the ordinary copies, viz. "according as it is written, 'And the Word was made flesh';" unless forsooth Dionysius supplied them of his own authority. For in the Lateran Synod in the time of Martin I.this anathematism was quoted without theappended words.

This anathematism breaks to pieces the chief strength of the Nestorian impiety Forit sets forth two facts. The one that the Emmanuel, that is he who was born of a woman and dwelt with us, is God: the other, that Mary who bare such an one is Mother of God. That Christ is God is clearly proved from the Nicene Creed, and he shews that the same that was in the beginning the Son of God, afterwards took flesh and was born of Mary, without any change or confusion of natures. St. Cyril explains that by sarkikw=j, carnaliter, he meant nothing else than kata\ sa/rka, secundum carnem, "according to the flesh." And it was necessary to use this expression to overthrow the perfidy of Nestorius; so that we may understand that the most holy Virgin was the parent not of a simple and bare man, but of God the Word, not in that he was God, but in that he had taken flesh. For God the Father

was the parent of the same Son qei>\kw=j (divinely) as his mother was sarkikw=j (after the flesh). And the word (sarkikw=j) in no degree lessens the dignity of his begetting and bringing forth; for it shews that his flesh was not simulated or shadowed forth; but true and like to ours. Amphilochius distinctly uses the word, saying "Except he had been born carnally (sarkikw=j), never wouldest thou have been born spiritually (pneumatikw=j)." Cf. St. Gregory Nazianzen (Orat. 51).

Theodoret misunderstood St. Cyril to teach in this first anathematism that the Word was changed into the flesh he assumed. But Cyril rightly treated this whole accusation as a foolish calumny.

The Canons

(Critical Annotations on the text will be found in Dr. Routh's Scriptorum Eccl. Opusc.Tom. II. [Ed. III.] p. 85.) The holy and ecumenical Synod, gathered together in Ephesus by the decree of our most religious Emperors, to the bishops, presbyters, deacons, and all the people in every province and city: When we had assembled, according to the religious decree [of the Emperors], in the Metropolis of Ephesus, certain persons, a little more than thirty in number, withdrew from amongst us, having for the leader of their schism John, Bishop of Antioch. Their names are as follows: first, the said John of Antioch in Syria, John of Damascus, Alexander of Apamea, Alexander of Hierapolis, Himerius of Nicomedia, Fritilas of Heraclea, Helladius of Tarsus, Maximin of Anazarbus, Theodore of Marcianopolis, Peter of Trajanopolis, Paul of Emissa, Polychronius of Heracleopolis, Euthyrius of Tyana, Meletius of NeoCaesarea, Theodoret of Cyrus, Apringius of Chalcedon, Macarius of Laodicea Magna, Zosys of Esbus, Sallust of Corycus in Cilicia, Hesychius of Castabala in Cilicia, Valentine of Mutloblaca, Eustathius of Parnassus, Philip of Theodosia, and Daniel, and Dexianus, and Julian, and Cyril, and Olympius, and Diegenes, Polius, Theophanes of Philadelphia, Trajan of Augusta, Aurelius of Irenepolis, Mysaeus of Aradus, Helladius of Ptolemais. These men, having no privilege of ecclesiastical communion on the ground of a priestly authority, by which they could injure or benefit any persons; since some of them had already been deposed; and since from their refusing to join in our decree against Nestorius, it was manifestly evident to all men that they were all promoting the opinions of Nestorius and Celestius; the Holy Synod, by one common decree, deposed them from all ecclesiastical communion, and deprived them of all their priestly power by which they might injure or profit any persons.

Canon I.

Whereas it is needful that they who were detained from the holy Synod and remained in their own district or city, for any reason, ecclesiastical or personal, should not be ignorant of the matters which were thereby decreed; we, therefore, notify your holiness and charity that if any Metropolitan of a Province, forsaking the holy and Ecumenical Synod, has joined the assembly of the apostates, or shall join the same hereafter; or, if he has adopted, or shall hereafter adopt, the doctrines of Celestius, he has no power in any way to do anything in opposition to the bishops of the province, since he is already cast forth from all ecclesiastical communion and made incapable of exercising his ministry; but he shall himself be

subject in all things to those very bishops of the province and to the neighbouring orthodox metropolitans, and shah be degraded from his episcopal rank.

Notes.

Ancient Epitome of Canon I. If a metropolitan, having deserted his synod, adheres or shall adhere to Celestine, let him be cast out. Nicholas Hydruntinus. Scholion concerning Celestine and Celestius. Whose finds at the end of the fourth canon of the Holy Synod of Ephesus [and thesame is true of this first canon. Ed.] ”Clerics who shall have consented to Celestine or Nestorius, should be deposed,” let him not read ”Celestine” with an ”n,” but ”Celestius” without the ”n.” For Celestine was the holy and orthodox Pope of Rome, Celestius was the heretic.It is perfectly certain that this was no ac cident on the part of Aristenus, for in his commentary on Canon V., he expressly says that ”Celestine was Bishop of Rome” and goes on to affirm that, ”The Holy Synod decreed that they who embraced the opinions of Nestorius and Celestine,” etc. What perhaps is equally astonishing is that Nicholas Hydruntinus, while correcting the name, still is of opinion that Celestius was a pope of Rome and begins his scholion with the title. peri Kelesti/nou kai\ kelesti/ou Papw=n Rw/mhj. Beveridge well points out that this confusion is all the more remarkable as in the Kalendar of the Saints observed at that very time by the Greeks, on the eighth day of April was kept the memory of ”Celestine, Pope of Rome, as a Saint and Champion against the Nestorian heretics.” (Bev., Annot, in C. v.).

Simeon the Logothete adds to this epitome the words, kai\ to\ e0ch=j a0dioi/khtoj which are necessary to make the sense complete.

The Definition Against the Messalians

Who are Also Called Euchetae and Enthusiasts.
(Found in Latin only. Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 809.) When the most pious and religious bishops, Valerian and Amphilochius had come to us, they proposed that we should consider in common the case of the Messalians, that is the Euchetes or Enthusiasts, who were flourishing in Pamphylia, or by what other name this most contaminating heresy is called. And when we were considering the question, the most pious and religious bishop Valerian, presented to us a synodical schedule which had been drawn up concerning them in the great city of Constantinople, under Sisinnius of blessed memory: What we read therein was ap-proved by all, as well composed and as a due presentation of the case. And it seemed good to us all, and to the most pious bishops Valerian and Amphilochius and to all the most pious bishops of the provinces of Pamphylia and Lycaonia, that all things contained in that Synodical chart should be confirmed and in no way rescinded; also that the action taken at Alexandria might also be made firm, so that all, those who throughout the whole province are of the Messalian or Enthusiastic heresy, or suspected of being tainted with that heresy, whether clerics or laymen, may come together; and if they shall anathematize in writing, according to the decrees pronounced in the aforesaid synod [their errors], if they are clergymen they may remain such; and if laymen they may be admitted to communion. But if they refuse to anathematize, if they were presbyters or deacons or in any other ecclesiastical grade, let them be cast out of the clergy and from their grade, and also from communion; if they be lay-men let them be anathematized.

Furthermore those convicted of this heresy are no more to be permitted to have the rule of our monasteries, lest tares be sown and increase. And we give command that the most pious bishops Valerian and Amphilochius, and the rest of the most reverend bishops of the whole province shall pay attention that this decree be carried into effect. In addition to this it seemed good that the filthy book of this heresy, which is called the ”Asceticon,” should be anathematized, as composed by heretics, a copy of which the most religious and pious Valerian brought with him. Likewise anything savouring of their impiety which may be found among the people, let it be anathema. Moreover when they come together, let there be commended by them in writing such things as are useful and necessary for concord,

and communion, and arrangement (dispositionem vel dispensationem). But should any question arise in connexion with the present business, and if it should prove to be difficult and ambiguous, what is not approved by the most pious bishops Valerian and Amphilochius, and the other bishops throughout the province, they ought to discuss all things by reference to what is written. And if the most pious bishops of the Lycians or of the Lycaonians shall have been passed over; nevertheless let not a Metropolitan be left out of whatever province he may be. And let these things be inserted in the Acts so that if any have need of them they would find how also to expound these things morediligently to others.

Note on the Messalians or Massalians.

(Tillemont, Memoires, Tom. VIII., Seconde Partie. Condensed.) St. Epiphanius distinguishes two sorts of persons who were called by the name of Messalians, the one and the more ancient were heathen, the other were Christian in name. The Messalians who bore the Christian name had no beginning, nor end, nor chief, nor fixed faith. Their first writers were Dadoes, Sabas, Adelphus, Hermes, Simeon and some others. Adelphus was neither monk nor clerk, but a layman. Sabas had taken the habit of an anchorite and was surnamed "the Eunuch," because he had mutilated himself. Adelphus was of Mesopotamia and was considered their leader, so that they are sometimes called "Adelphians." They are also called "Eustathians." "Euchites" is the Greek equivalent of "Messalians" in Hebrew. They were also called "Enthusiasts" or "Corentes" because of the agitation the devils caused them, which they attributed to the Holy Spirit. St. Epiphanius thought that these heretics sprang up in the time of Constance, although Theodoret does not put them down until the days of Valentinian. They came from Mesopotamia, but spread as far as Antioch by the year 376.

They pretended to renounce the world, and to give up their possessions, and under the habit of monks they taught Manichaean impieties, and others still more detestable. Their principal tenet was that everyone inherited from his ancestors a demon, who had possession of his soul from the moment of his birth, and always led it to evil. That baptism cut away the outside branches of sin, but could not free the soul of this demon, and that therefore its reception was useless. That only constant prayer could drive out this demon. That when it was expelled, the Holy Spirit descended and gave visible and sensible marks of his presence, and delivered the body from all the uprisings of passion, and the soul from the inclination to evil, so that afterwards there was no need of fasting, nor of controlling lust by the precepts of the Gospel. Besides this chief dogma, gross errors, contrary to the first principles of religion, were attributed to them. That the divinity changed itself in different manners to unite itself to their souls. They held that the body of Christ was infinite like his divine nature; they did not hesitate to say that his body was at first full of devils which were driven out when the Word took it upon him. They claimed that they possessed clear knowledge of the state of souls after death, read the hearts and desires of man, the secrets of the future and saw the Holy Trinity with their bodily eyes. They affirmed that man could not only attain perfection but equal the deity in virtue and knowledge.

They never fasted, slept men and women together, in warm weather in the open streets. But certain say that before attaining to this liberty of license three years of mortification were required, The most well-known point of their discipline is that they forbade all manual labour as evil, and unworthy of the spiritual. Harmenopulus in his Basilicoe (Tom. I. Lib. ix.) says that they held the Cross in horror, that they refused to honour the Holy Virgin, or St. John the Baptist, or any of the Saints unless they were Martyrs; that they mutilated themselves at will, that they dissolved marriages, that they foreswore and perjured themselves without scruple, that women were appointed as mistresses of the sect to instruct and govern men, even priests. Although so opposed to the faith of the Church, yet for all this the Messalians did not separate themselves from her communion. They did not believe in the Communion as a mystery which sanctifies us, which must be approached with fear and faith, but only came to the holy Table to hide themselves and to pass for Catholics, for this was one of their artifices. When asked, they had no hesitation in denying all that they believed, and were willing to anathematize those who thought with them. And all this they did without fear, because they were taught they had attained perfection, that is impassibility.Vide Theodoret, H. E., Lib. iv., cap. xi.Photius tells us that John of Antioch wrote against these heretics.

St. Maximus the Abbot speaks of this heresy as still existing in the VII Century, and as practising the most abominable infamies. Photius bears witness of its resuscitation in his days in Cappadocia with its wonted corruptions. Harmenopulus remarks that a certain Eleutherius of Paphlagonia had added to it new crimes, and that in part it became the source of the sect of the Bogomiles, so well known in the decadence of the Greek empire.

The Epistle of Cyril to Nestorius

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 315; Migne, Patr. Groec., Tom. LXXVII. [Cyril., Opera, Tom. X.]; Epist. iv., co]. 43.) To the most religious and beloved of God, fellow minister Nestorius, Cyril sends greeting in the Lord. I hear that some are rashly talking of the estimation in which I hold your holiness, and that this is frequently the case especially at the times that meetings are held of those in authority. And perchance they think in so doing to say something agreeable to you, but they speak senselessly, for they have suffered no injustice at my hands, but have been exposed by me only to their profit; this man as an oppressor of the blind and needy, and that as one who wounded his mother with a sword. Another because he stole, in collusion with his waiting maid, another's money, and had always laboured under the imputation of such like crimes as no one would wish even one of his bitterest enemies to be laden with. I take little reckoning of the words of such people, for the disciple is not above his Master, nor would I stretch the measure of my narrow brain above the Fathers, for no matter what path of life one pursues it is hardly possible to escape the smirching of the wicked, whose months are full of cursing and bitterness, and who at the last must give an account to the Judge of all.

But I return to the point which especially I had in mind. And now I urge you, as a brother in the Lord, to propose the word of teaching and the doctrine of the faith with all accuracy to the people, and to consider that the giving of scandal to one even of the least of those who believe in Christ, exposes a body to the unbearable indignation of God. And of how great diligence and skill there is need when the multitude of those grieved is so great, so that we may administer the healing word of truth to them that seek it. But this we shall accomplish most excellently if we shall turn over the words of the holy Fathers, and are zealous to obey their commands, proving ourselves, whether we be in the faith according to that which is written, and conform our thoughts to their upright and it-reprehensible teaching.

The holy and great Synod therefore says, that the only begotten Son, born according to nature of God the Father, very God of very God, Light of Light, by whom the Father made all things, came down, and was incarnate, and was made man, suffered, and rose again the third day, and ascended into heaven. These words and these decrees we ought to follow, considering what is me. ant by the Word of God being incarnate and made man. For we do not say that the nature of the Word was changed and became flesh, or that it was converted

into a whole man consisting of soul and body; but rather that the Word having personally united to himself flesh animated by a rational soul, did in an ineffable and inconceivable manner become man, and was called the Son of Man, not merely as willing or being pleased to be so called, neither on account of taking to himself a person, but because the two natures being brought together in a true union, there is of both one Christ and one Son; for the difference of the natures is not taken away by the union, but rather the divinity and the humanity make perfect for us the one Lord Jesus Christ by their ineffable and inexpressible union.

So then he who had an existence before all ages and was born of the Father, is said to have been born according to the flesh of a woman, not as though his divine nature received its beginning of existence in the holy Virgin, for it needed not any second generation after that of the Father (for it would be absurd and foolish to say that he who existed before all ages, coeternal with the Father, needed any second beginning of existence), but since, for us and for our salvation, he personally united to himself an human body, and came forth of a woman, he is in this way said to be born after the flesh; for the was not first born a common man of the holy Virgin, and then the Word came down and entered into him, but the union being made in the womb itself, he is said to endure a birth after the flesh, ascribing to himself the birth of his own flesh. On this account we say that he suffered and rose again; not as if God the Word suffered in his own nature stripes, or the piercing of the nails, or any other wounds, for the Divine nature is incapable of suffering, inasmuch as it is incorporeal, but since that which had become his own body suffered in this way, lie is also said to suffer for us; for he who is in himself incapable of suffering was in a suffering body. In the same manner also we conceive respecting his dying;

for the Word of God is by nature immortal and incorruptible, and life and life-giving; since, however, his own body did, as Paul says, by the grace of God taste death for every man, he himself is said to have suffered death for us, not as if he had any experience of death in his own nature (for it would be madness to say or think this), but because, as I have just said, his flesh tasted death. In like manner his flesh being raised again, it is spoken of as his resurrection, not as if tie had fallen into corruption (God forbid), but because his own body was raised again. We, therefore, confess one Christ and Lord, not as worshipping. a man with the Word (lest this expression ”with the Word” should suggest to the mind the idea of division), but worshipping him as one and the same, forasmuch as the body of the Word, with which he sits with the Father, is not separated from the Word himself, not as if two sons were sitting with him, but one by the union with the flesh. If, however, we reject the personal union as impossible or unbecoming, we fall into the error of speaking of two sons, for it will be necessary to distinguish, and to say, that he who was properly man was honoured with the appellation of Son, and that he who is properly the Word of God, has by nature both the name and the reality of Sonship.

We must not, therefore, divide the one Lord Jesus Christ into two Sons. Neither will it at all avail to a sound faith to hold, as some do, an union of persons; for the Scripture has not

said that the Word united to himself the person of man, butthat he was made flesh. This expression, however, "the Word was made flesh," can mean nothing else but that he partook of flesh and blood like to us; he made our body his own, and came forth man from a woman, not casting off his existence as God, or his generation of God the Father, but even in taking to himself flesh remaining what he was. This the declaration of the correct faith proclaims everywhere. This was the sentiment of the holy Fathers; therefore they ventured to call the holy Virgin, the Mother of God, not as if the nature of the Word or his divinity had its beginning from the holy Virgin, but because of her was born that holy body with a rational soul, to which the Word being personally united is said to be born according to the flesh. These things, therefore, I now write unto you for the love of Christ, beseeching you as a brother, and testifying to you before Christ and the elect angels, that you would both think and teach these things with us, that the peace of the Churches may be preserved and the bond of concord and love continue unbroken amongst the Priests of God.

The Letter of Pope Coelestine to the Synod of Ephesus

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tom. III., col. 613. Also Migne, Pat. Lat., Tom. L, col. 505.) Coelestine the bishop to the holy Synod assembled at Ephesus, brethren beloved and most longed for, greeting in the Lord.

A Synod of priests gives witness to the presence of the Holy Spirit. For true is that which we read, since the Truth cannot lie, to wit, the promise of the Gospel; "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. And since tiffs is so, if the Holy Spirit is not absent from so small a number how much more may we believe he is present when so great a multitude of holy ones are assembled together! Every council is holy on account of a peculiar veneration which is its due; for in every such council the reverence which should be paid to that most famous council of the Apostles of which we read is to be had regard to. Never was the Master, whom they had received to preach, lacking to this, but ever was present as Lord and Master; and never were those who taught deserted by their teacher. For he that had sent them was their teacher; he who had commanded what was to be taught, was their teacher; he who affirms that he himself is heard in his Apostles, was their teacher. This duty of preaching has been entrusted to all the Lord's priests in common, for by right of inheritance we are bound to undertake this solicitude, whoever of us preach the name of the Lord in divers lands in their stead for he said tothem, "Go, teach all nations. You, dearbrethren, should observe that we have received a general command:

for he wills that all of us should perform that office, which he titus entrusted in common to all the Apostles. We must needs follow our predecessors. Let us all, then, undertake their labours, since we are the successors in their honour. And we shew forth our diligence in preaching the same doctrines that they taught, beside which, according to the admonition of the Apostle, we are forbidden to add aught. For the office of keeping what is committed to our trust is no less dignified than that of handing it down.

They sowed the seed of the faith. This shall be our care that the coming of our great father of the family, to whom alone assuredly this fulness of the Apostles is assigned, may find fruit uncorrupt and many fold. For the vase of election tells us that it is not sufficient to plant and to water unless God gives the increase. We must strive therefore in common to

keep the faith which has come down to us to-day, through the Apostolic Succession. For we are expected to walk according to the Apostle. For now not our appearance (species) but our faith is called in question. Spiritual weapons are those we must take, because the war is one of minds, and the weapons are words; so shall we be strong in the faith of our King. Now the Blessed Apostle Paul admonishes that all should remain in that place in which he bid Timothy remain. The same place therefore, the same cause, lays upon us the same duty. Let us now also do and study that which he then commanded him to do. And let no one think otherwise, and let no one pay heed to over strange fables, as he himself ordered. Let us be unanimous thinking the same thing, for this is expedient: let us do nothing out of contention, nothing out of vain glory: let us be in all things of one mind, of one heart, when the faith which is one, is attacked. Let the whole body grieve and mourn in common with us.

He who is to judge the world is called into judgment; he who is to criticise all, is himself made the object of criticism, he who redeemed us is made to suffer calumny. Dear Brethren, gird ye with the armour of God. Ye know what helmet must protect our head, what breast-plate our breast. For this is not the first time the ecclesiastical camps have received you as their rulers. Let no one doubt that by the favour of the Lord who maketh twain to be one, there will be peace, and that arms will be laid aside since the very cause defends itself.

Let us look once again at these words of our Doctor, which he uses with express reference to bishops, saying, "Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, over which the Holy Ghost has placed you as bishop, that ye rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his blood." We read that they who heard this at Ephesus, the same place at which your holiness is come together, were called thence. To them therefore to whom this preaching of the faith was known, to them also let your defence of the same faith also be known. Let us shew them the constancy of our mind with that reverence which is due to matters of great importance; which things peace has guarded for a long time with pious understanding.

Let there be announced by you what things have been preserved intact from the Apostles; for the words of tyrannical opposition are never admitted against the King of Kings, nor can the business of truth be oppressed by falsehood.I exhort you, most blessed brethren, that love alone be regarded in which we ought to remain, according to the voice of John the Apostle whose reliques we venerate in this city. Let common prayer be offered to the Lord. For we can form some idea of what will be the power of the divine presence at the united intercession of such a multitude of priests, by considering how the very place was moved where, as we read, the Twelve made together their supplication. And what was the purport of that prayer of the Apostles? It was that they might receive grace to speak the word of God with confidence, and to act through its power, both of which they received bythe favour of Christ our God. And now what else is to be asked for by your holycouncil, except that ye may speak the Word of the Lord with confidence? What else than that he would give you grace to preserve that which he has given you to preach? that being filled with the Holy

Ghost, as it is written, ye may set forth that one truth which the Spirit himself has taught you, although with divers voices.

Animated, in brief, by all these considerations (for, as the Apostle says: ”I speak to them that know the law, and I speak wisdom among them that are perfect”), stand fast by the Catholic faith, and defend the peace of the Churches, for so it is said, both to those past, present, and future, asking and preserving ”those things which belong to the peace of Jerusalem.” Out of our solicitude, we have sent our holy brethren and fellow priests, who are at one with us and are most approved men, Arcedius, and Projectus, the bishops, and our presbyter, Philip, that they may be present at what is done and may carry out what things have been already decreed be us (quoe a nobis anted statuta sunt, exequa tur). To the performing of which we have no doubt that your holiness will assent when it is seen that what has been decreed is for the security of the whole church. Given the viij of the Ides of May, in the consulate of Bassus and Antiochus.

The Letter of the Synod of Ephesus to the Synod in Pamphylia

(Labbe and Cossart, Concilia, Tome III., col. 806.)

Forasmuch as the divinely inspired Scripture says, "Do all things with vice," it is especially their duty who have had the priestly ministry allotted to them to examine with all diligence whatever matters are to be transacted. For to those who will so spend their lives, it comes to pass both that they are established in [the enjoyment of] an honest hope concerning what belongs to them, and that they are borne along, as by a favouring breeze, in things that they desire: so that, in truth, the saying [of the Scripture] has much reason [to commend it]. But there are times when bitter and intolerable grief swoops down upon the mind, and has the effect of cruelly beclouding it, so as to carry it away from the pursuit of what is needful, and persuade it to consider that to be of service which is in its [very] nature mischievous. Something of this kind we have seen endured by that most excellent and most religious Bishop Eustathius. For it is in evidence that he has been ordained canonically; but having been much disturbed, as he declares, by certain parties, and having entered upon circumstances he had not foreseen, therefore, though fully able to repel the slanders of his persecutors, he nevertheless, through an extraordinary inexperience of affairs, declined to battle with the difficulties which beset him, and in some way that we know not set forth an act of resignation.

Yet it behooved him, when he had been once en-trusted with the priestly care, to cling to it with spiritual energy, and, as it were, to strip himself to strive against the troubles and gladly to endure the sweat for which he had bargained. But inasmuch as he proved himself to be deficient in practical capacity, having met with this misfortune rather from inexperience than from cowardice and sloth, your holiness has of necessity ordained our most excellent and most religious brother and fellow-bishop, Theodore, as the overseer of the Church; for it was not reasonable that it should remain in widowhood, and that the Saviour's sheep should pass their time without a shepherd. But when he came to us weeping, not contending with the aforenamed most religious Bishop Theodore for his See or Church, but in the meantime seeking only for his rank and title as a bishop, we all suffered with the old man in his grief, and considering his weeping as our own, we hastened to discover whether

the aforenamed [Eustathius] had been subjected to a legal deposition, or whether, forsooth, he had been convicted on any of the absurd charges alleged by certain parties who had poured forth idle gossip against his reputation. And indeed we learned that nothing of such a kind had taken place, but rather that his resignation had been counted against the said Eustathins instead of a [regular] indictment. Wherefore, we did by no means blame your holiness for being compelled to ordain into his place the aforenamed most excellent Bishop Theodore.

But forasmuch as it was not seemly to contend much against the unpractical character of the man, while it was rather necessary to have pity on the eider who, at so advanced an age, was now so far away from the city which had given him birth, and from the dwelling-places of his fathers, we have judicially pronounced and decreed without any opposition, that he shall have both the name, and the rank, and the communion of the episcopate. On this condition, however, only, that he shall not ordain, and that he shall not take and minister to a Church of his own individual authority; but that [he shall do so only] if taken as an assistant, or when appointed, if it should so chance, by a brother and fellow-bishop, in accordance with the ordinance and the love which is in Christ. If, however, ye shall determine anything more favourable towards him, either now or hereafter, this also will be pleasing to the Holy Synod.

Source. English translation: an older public-domain translation as collected in the Writings-Database (HistoricalChristianFaith), mostly from the Ante-Nicene, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers and similar nineteenth-century editions. SermonIndex has only divided it into chapters and short sections; the wording is the translator's own. Square brackets, Greek or Latin words and footnote-free text are as the source file prints them, and a transcription error may remain. No Greek or Latin text is shown beside it yet, and no modern English version has been made.