

## **The Priesthood and Worship in the Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria (II)**

PhD Std. Ionuț Vasile Crișan<sup>1</sup>

### **Abstract:**

The second part of the study deals with the Cyrillic exegesis on a series of references from the sacrificial system of the Old Testament a fact accomplished by the offering/sacrifice of Christ on the cross. This is revealed by a special worship/ministry perceived as the restoration of the true worship/ministry manifested by the living *kenosis* of the Son of God. The peculiarity of this devotion, its specific features, as well as the nature of this identity of the Son, who becomes a priest and offering, forms here the framework of our preoccupation. All these elements are considered as a constituent part of the new relationship that the Christian has now through Christ, respectively in the Church, as a new humanity.

### **Keywords:**

St. Cyril, Christ, sacrifice, ministry/worship/devotion, High Priest, *kenosis*, slave/servant, economy, mind (nous).

### **Judaic sacrifices –typos and the reality of the sacrificial High Priest of Christ**

In his exegetical writings, Saint Cyril offers a whole variety of meanings and nuances of the sacrificial aspect developed from Scriptural texts from the perspective of the great Sacrifice (Christ). In this sense, all the elements that appear in prescriptions and sacrificial rules are direct references to the death and saving suffering of the Son of God<sup>2</sup>. Thus, we can say that the exegesis of Cyril

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<sup>1</sup> Ioan Crișan, PhD Std. at Orthodox Faculty of Theology St. „Andrei Țaguna” from the University „Lucian Blaga” in Sibiu.

<sup>2</sup> For God’s passibility at Cyril of Alexandria, see, Henry Chadwick, „Eucharist and Christology in the Nestorian Controversy”, *Journal of Theology Studies* 2 (1951), p. 158, etc;

iscentred on the Christic sacrifice. The multitude and variety of references that appear almost every chapter and verse in the exegetical work of the bishop makes up a highly semantic theological discourse that is extremely difficult to display. The texts put forward in this study are part of a very dense and difficult to grasp fabric that we want to capture here, only broadly.

Thus, in the exegesis of Isaiah 6, St. Cyril writes that in the vision of the prophet Isaiah both angel and coal are "a symbol of Christ, who for our sake and on our behalf presented himself to the God and Father as a spiritual sacrifice, clean and blameless, even as pleasing aroma".<sup>3</sup> As Jonathan Douglas Hicks said, „what was only partially actualised (or accomplished, our note) in the priests' identification with the sacrifices in the Old Testament became wholly realised (accomplished, our note) in the Son's becoming the sacrificial victim".<sup>4</sup> In other words, the high priest Jesus Christ is both the sacrificing priest (*hierourgos*) and the sacrifice/victim himself (*tima*)<sup>5</sup>.

In this sense, one can find a direct exegesis with these implications in the episode of Leviticus 16. While the High Priest of the Old Testament used to enter only once in the Holy of the Holies confirming the horns of the altar with the blood of the goat, Christ sprinkles with His blood the cross that becomes an altar for salvation and for the life of all, and in the heavenly sanctuary appears before the Father on our behalf<sup>6</sup>. The explanation for almost every type of sacrificial ritual presented in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, etc., is seen in direct connection with the passions, the cross, the death of Christ, and the new life lived by Christians under Christ's sacrificial auspices. For example, at Exegesis at Exodus 29 where the young bull is Christ, as the One who is beyond the yoke and not under the yoke. This is to understand the unusualness of the Godhead of the Word with His bondage and descent in the flesh subjected to the yoke, after

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John J. O'Keefe, „Kenosis or Impassibility: Cyril of Alexandria and Theodoret of Cyrus on the Problem of Divine Pathos”, *Studia Patristica* 32 (1997), p. 358-365; Ioan G. Coman, „Și Cuvântul trup s-a făcut”. *Hristologie și mariologie patristică*, Ed. Mitropoliei Banatului, Timișoara, 1993, p. 113, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Comm. Is.* 5, 18 PG 70, 181B în J. Douglas Hicks, „St. Cyril on the Priesthood of Christ and the Old Testament”, *Phronema* XXX (2015), nr. 1, p. 98. See also *Commentary on Haggai*, 1. 5-6, apud St Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on Twelve prophets*, vol. 3, *Fathers of the Church*, vol. 124, translated with an introduction by Robert C. Hill, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C., 2012, p. 67.

<sup>4</sup> J. Douglas Hicks, art. cit., p. 99. See *Comm. Hos.* 4: 7, 8-9, (FC 115, vol. 1) p. 110-112.

<sup>5</sup> *On Adoration* (abbreviated *De ador.*) 3 (PG 68, 292CD and 293AB) apud Jonathan Douglas Hicks, art. cit., p. 99.

<sup>6</sup> *De ador.* 9 (PG 68, 625 A), 10 (PG 68, 685D-688A) (allusion to *Hebrews* 9 and *Leviticus* 4).

humanity. The entrails are burning as a sweet aroma, being also a type of virtues inside and out of the mind, which have a good spiritual fragrance in them. And the rest of the body burns out of the camp. For Christ suffered outside the gate (cf. Hebrews 13, 12). The fact that the body is consumed, indicates in a thin way that passion and death are not His dishonor, but will end in a brilliant and well-known honor. For in the image of fire is meant the Godhead<sup>7</sup>.

An important exegesis is on Leviticus 9, where St. Cyril makes the transition from the Jewish sacrifices to the spiritual sacrifices of Christians, showing the relevance and the way of assimilation of the cult sacrifices<sup>8</sup> (!). The fundamental role of Mosaic sacrifices was the dedication or training of the capitulation of life (the most precious gift) concretized by a vegetal or animal offering. Christians by spiritualizing these sacrifices become co-sacrificial with Christ. Interestingly, in this case, we do not have a rejection or a critical delimitation of the Jewish cultic system to which a correction is brought, but with a revaluation, and the assumption, as such, of the entire ritual structure, understood as part of the divine economy within which Christ Himself was present in those sacrifices. Thus, Christ is in a sacrificial differentiated presence in the Old Covenant, that culminates in the Incarnation and Death on Golgotha.

Another dimension of the Son's offering is mentioned in the context where the bishop speaks of the food/nourishment of His sacrifice<sup>9</sup>. Christ inaugurates the new creation in Himself, restoring us through Him and in Him when we receive His holy blood and body (cf. Worship 12). Taking into account the Eucharist, St. Cyril compares the ministry of Christ (prefigured by Melchizedek) to that of Aaron, where Christ conveys a superior dimension to ministry in that He "feeds us with hidden sacrifices for an unfading life (*amaranthon Zoin tais mistikais*

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<sup>7</sup> *De ador.* 11, PG 68,756 B-D

<sup>8</sup> *De ador.* 11, PG 68,769 ABC.

From the chirillian concept of sweet aroma raised from the sacrifice on the altar, in the reception of Father Staniloae, receives a more obvious ontological meaning, "is erected to a new way of existence, different from the natural one, in a deified way" (D. Stăniloae, „Legătura interioară dintre moartea și învierea Domnului”, (The Inner Bond between the Death and the Resurrection of the Lord), *Studii Teologice*, VIII (1956), no. 5-6, p. 284). The same good fragrance of the Christ sacrifice also fills us, that is, the Church (holy tent) offered as a total offering to God. From the sacrificial state springs the sweet fragrance of Christ pleasing to the Father, even in death and above it (Ibidem, p.285).

<sup>9</sup>Here he states that the sacrificial system leads to the mystery of Christ in the heavens (the life-giving sacrifice), which now abolishes the old cultic system, *Comm. Mal.* 1, 11; FC 124: 298-299).

*hierourghiais/immarcescibilem vit mysticis sacrificiis*)”<sup>10</sup>. It is of interest that in this episode we have a qualitative comparison between the two ministries/covenants.

In bringing us to the sacrifice of Christ, as a sacrifice for His sacrifice, Saint Cyril develops the theme of the spiritual, eschatological Sabbath, the priesthood of Christians. In this respect, with regard to the text of Leviticus 1, 2-9, the bishop theologian sees a clear image (type) of the life of saints and perfect union with God in spirit and holiness which like domestic animals, that is, bull and sheep, by dying to the world by mortification of the flesh, in order to live in God by evangelical living. Through this we ascend to the offering state, which is truly spiritual and very-well-scented to the Father through the Son<sup>11</sup>. Because through Him we have entrance/access, and He has initiated to us the transition towards existence, entering as our forerunner in the Holy of Holies and showing us the true way<sup>12</sup> and this from an eschatological perspective<sup>13</sup>.

Thus, in Christ, the life of Christians becomes a pleasing sacrifice, a sweet aroma to the Father. This fragrance is born of sacrificial state or continuous self-denial (offering) and involves a sacrificial circuit in that believers give their lives through the offerings of the altars (the Divine Liturgy) by the power of the sacrifice of Christ and in His sacrifice, Christ brings us to the Father, having in this way, our contribution<sup>14</sup>. The Father receives this sacrifice because we are sacrificed in Christ in the seal of His Son, which makes us to be seen as His own sons/children<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> *Glaph. Gen. 2* (PG 69, 109C). „The Eucharist is a sharing in the death of Christ in a two-fold sense: it is a participation in the benefits of Christ's death and an offering up of one's own life to share in this death” J. Douglas Hicks, art. cit. p. 100. See *De ador.* 11, P.G. 68, 756 B-D etc., about sacrificial rituals as a type of Christ's passion and sacrifice.

<sup>11</sup> *De ador.* 16 (PG 68, 1016 B)

<sup>12</sup> *De ador.* 16, 1016 B.

<sup>13</sup> *De ador.* 16, 1012 D.

<sup>14</sup> The sacrifice of Christ must be answered with our sacrifice, of believers, so that His offering for believers can be effective. It must cause our sacrifice to make sacrifices to Him. Christ's sensibility of sacrifice is inexhaustible and "is the last source of all the sensibility of sacrifice" being God Himself "and having in His nature the fragrance of the Father's knowledge", according to St. Cyril” Dumitru Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină” (The Bond between Eucharist and Christian Love), *Studii Teologice* XVII(1965), no. 1-2, p.18; the Father refers to *De ador.* 10, PG 68, 712 A. The answer of our sacrifice to the sacrifice of Christ sees Cyril in the Epistle to the Hebrews where Christ becomes forerunner in the Holy of Holies by His sacrifice, imitating the quality with which he entered, being in fact the entrance ticket "as sacrifice and priest".

<sup>15</sup> The sacrifice of Christ penetrates to the "last instance of transcendence and holiness", that is, to the Father. But this dynamism or sacrificial tension spreads to all who unite with

## *The Priesthood and Worship in the Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria*

In this regard, Father Dumitru Stăniloae states that "the whole explanation of the meaning and purpose of the sacrifice of Christ made on the Golgotha and continued in heaven, and of our sacrifice with Him from the power of His sacrifice in Mysteries (Sacraments), gave it to St. Cyril of Alexandria, in the works of „On Adoration and Worship in Spirit and Truth” and *Glaphyra*<sup>16</sup>. At the same time, this is also the first mention made by the Romanian theologian<sup>17</sup> about Christ’s sacrificial exegesis, (<complete>) exposed by St. Cyril of Alexandria<sup>18</sup>. In his exposition, Stăniloae develops the necessity of continuing the sacrifice of Christ from heaven as a prerequisite and indispensable condition for transmitting to the believers His sacrificial state<sup>19</sup>, especially through the Holy Mysteries

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Christ. Father Stăniloae describes it as an incendiary outbreak through which it is transmitted to those who do not oppose the gift and initiation of sacrifice to the Father, but from this sacrificial initiative unites the convocation/congregation of the faithful by making a common sacrifice with the sacrifice of Christ. The sacrifice of Christ is animated by an infinite love for the Father and for the people. In other words, "Christ's sacrifice, inseparable from His universal Priesthood, has the power to sustain all on their way to the Father (D. Stăniloae, „*Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină*” *The Bond between Eucharist and Christian Love*, p. 15).

<sup>16</sup>Dumitru Stăniloae, „*Fiiința Tainelor în cele trei confesiuni*”, (*The Being of the Mysteries in the Three Confessions*), *Ortodoxia* VIII (1956), no. 1, p. 19. Idem, „*Legătura interioară dintre moartea și învierea Domnului*” (*The Inner Bond between the Death and the Resurrection of the Lord*), p. 284: (Father Cyril, our note) "has extensively developed the idea of the death of Christ as a sacrifice to the Father, to the smell of good fragrance, that by receiving it in us, we are also able to make such sacrifices”.

<sup>17</sup>Notwithstanding the fact that it does not mention here the place or places where it extracts these nuances of the mystical sacrifice, except for a single reference to *Glaph. Lev. PG. 69, 540* (D. Stăniloae, *Fiiința Tainelor...*, p. 19, footnote 56).

<sup>18</sup>For the analysis of the concept of the perpetual state of sacrifice to Father Stăniloae from the reception of St. Cyril, see Ciprian Ioan Streza, „*Ὁ Χριστός, μυστικῶς ἱεουργούμενος ἐν ταῖς ἀγίας σκηναῖς*” – Fr. Dumitru Staniloae and the Rediscovering and Reinterpreting St. Cyril of Alexandria’s Teaching About the State of Perpetual Sacrifice of Jesus Christ”, *Review of Ecumenical Studies* VIII (2016), nr. 1, pp. 100-122; Nicolae Răzvan Stan, „*Teologia jertfei hristologice a scoiliilor scrise de părintele Stăniloae la opera Sf. Chiril al Alexandriei*”, în coord., Nicolae Răzvan Stan, Lucian Dindirică, *Părintele profesor Dumitru Stăniloae sau Consonanța dintre dogmă, spiritualitate și liturghie*, Ed. Cetatea de Scaun, Târgoviște/Ed. Mitropolia Olteniei, Craiova, 2015, p. 379-405.

<sup>19</sup>Of this state of sacrifice Father Stăniloae says that it is a mystical death of man in God, a burial in Him, but this descent/immersion in God, which is actually the source of life, takes place simultaneously, a resurrection, respectively receiving of new life (Dumitru Stăniloae „*Teologia Euharistiei*”, (*Theology of the Eucharist*), *Ortodoxia* XXI (1969), no. 3, p. 352). Death in another from love as the paradoxical opposite of the dead, which sees it as a loneliness, makes the frame of mentioning St. Cyril of Alexandria. Mystical death or continual sacrifice is the fruit of the sacrificial sacrifice, and "the most complete explanation in this sense

(Sacraments), a state that makes us also to be sacrificed and committed to God through the often articulated theme: "Entering into the sacrifice state to the Father"<sup>20</sup> or the theology of the entrance of the Son of God as a man to the Father<sup>21</sup>.

The sacrificial condition of Christ constitutes a milestone for all the metamorphosis of Christian life. This state communicates the maximum efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. It makes the resurrection of Christ (the continuation of death as a sacrifice) to perpetuate<sup>22</sup> and transform the life of Christians into the resurrection. The resurrection is the perpetual experience of the sacrificial state as an ontological condition. In other words, the necessity of death as a sacrifice has

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of the actuality of the Eucharistic sacrifice (...), as one that does not only represent us, but encompasses us, has been given by, St. Cyril of Alexandria" (*Ibidem*, p. 352).

<sup>20</sup>Christ in this state of sacrifice of pleasant fragrance/aroma is always for unity through Mysteries (sacraments) with us and our transformation into sacrifices, "it is better to spread from us the fragrance of Christ's sacrifice, according to II Cor. 2, 14-15" (Idem, „Ființa Tainelor...”, p. 19).

<sup>21</sup>St. Cyril in Father Stăniloae's statement states that this entrance is made from the time of life here, but incomplete. Christ's entry into the Father is in fact an inauguration of a new relationship based on full access. Received by the Father by sharing the fragrance of the Christ's myrrh, that is, the co-sacrificial condition that gives the possibility of "proximity and dare", for communion with the Father through the sacrifice of Christ (through him we have the *prosaoghin*, *De ador.* 11, Col. 756 B in D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină...”, p. 19). Further on, Father Stăniloae brings a clarification about our entry into the Father, so the entrance of Christ with us is special and different in contrast to His entry as the Forerunner that was made in order to be able to enter (as a principle), but without us (our presence as individuals). Entry is through and in Christ, these prepositions show somehow the dynamics of the entrance, but also the difference between the two entries mediated by Christ. Entry into Christ is made with every Christian in part, but made possible "through Christ", that is, by the entrance as an inauguration in his capacity as the Forerunner (D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină...”, p. 19). Entry "in Christ" implies the freedom of those who want to enter the Father, therefore, Stăniloae speaks about the communion of Christ as a sacrificial state until kingdom come; Christ in this endeavor facilitates the ascension of Christians at the "door" of the Holy of Holies (*De ador.* 16, col. 1056 D, în D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină...”, p. 20).

<sup>22</sup>If the resurrection of Christ would not be the result of death as a sacrifice, it would not imprint on it the character of a continuing sacrifice, and it could not be our source for acts and sacrificial states, life in love. But so we have in the resurrection of Christ, which is the continuation of His death, a source of successive mystical deaths, ever higher, to selfishness" (D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină”, p. 12), after which St. Cyril is invoked, where the saints are those who "die sacral (hieros) to God in different degrees of spiritual power (...)" (*De ador.* 17, P.G. 68, col. 1117 B apud D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină”, p. 12).

the direct consequence the resurrection, but resurrection as a continuous sacrifice and separation from selfishness.

According to Father Stăniloae's analysis, "the combination of the idea of death and of sanctification means that what is sacrificed, dying for a inferior way of life, resurrects for a superior way of life. Death and sanctification were, on the one hand, in a succession relationship, on the other, in a coexistence. The new life not only began with the death of the old life, but it itself was a state of continuous death from the old way of living"<sup>23</sup>.

The paradox in offering this sacrifice, after Stăniloae is that by offering the sacrificed victim it takes place his sanctification, or "it is filled with the cleansing power of God" by the fact that now the (living) offering belongs to Him exclusively. Hence the meaning of the mystical and perpetual sacrifice in people's relationships with God, embodied in virtues, "by living life in the service of God"<sup>24</sup>.

Thus, the sacrificial view of St. Cyril in connection with our access to God is conditioned by the sacrifice of the Son, but paradoxically, and by our sacrifice for the possibility of communion with the Father and sharing of the sacrifice of the Son. For example, the episode of the ascension of Mount Horeb, in reading of Cyril, shows us that those who ascend to this glory, having previously surrendered themselves as sacrifices to truly ascend to the higher to come near to God, must first be cleansed by the blood of Christ, Who and He gave his soul as an exchange (antallagma / redhostimento) for the life of all<sup>25</sup>. We can see the Cyrillic insistence of specifying the identity of the Son of God in the act of His consecration of

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<sup>23</sup>Dumitru Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină”, p. 4.

<sup>24</sup>Dumitru Stăniloae, „Ființa Tainelor...”, p. 19. D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină”: „The sacrifice of Christ for us was brought to attract us into the true sacrifice, to rise from our life of selfishness. That's why sacrifice of Christ has to get his effect all the way, it needs to see his accomplished follow-up. This sacrifice must continue to work. (...), the ministry of Christ as High Priest-Savior will only be brought to an end when He adds to His sacrifice our personal sacrifices, as was symbolically made in the Old Testament. (...), If our sacrifice does not take place, then the sacrifice of Christ does not manifest its fruit for which it has been brought. We bring to naught the sacrifice of Christ for us. There is another reason why Christ's sacrificial life must last forever, like his Priesthood: to give birth to the lives of each one of us, to elicit our sacrifice, moving and consolidating us into a lifetime of love. The sacrifice (...) (of Christ, our note) must be assimilated (...) (by the believers, our note), in order to translate into the state of giving, by love, in the same state of sacrifice, to make their life to serve all, to share with the generous elan of Christ. Our life must be articulated in the life of Christ, making it like his own"(pp. 16-17; see also note 4 to the last paragraph of the Cyrillic text).

<sup>25</sup> *Glaph.* (Elegant Sayings abbreviated *Glaph.*) PG 69, Ex. 3, 517 BC.

priesthood, namely in the anointing<sup>26</sup>, but above all in the total vicarial act of Christ's sacrifice for all humanity.

According to the Lawrence Welch, the exegesis of Cyril to John 19:30 expresses the sacrifice of Christ, the second Adam as the apogee of the economic kenosis and hence the highest point (or the lowest) of the Incarnation. After Welch, at St. Cyril, adamic typology and kenosis are inseparable, and the passage from John becomes one of the most important texts in the whole commentary<sup>27</sup>. This is because the divine mystery is fully revealed through the death of Christ<sup>28</sup>. The sacrifice of Christ becomes the standard by which all the symbols and types of the law (seen as "the introduction and the antechamber of the evangelical one"<sup>29</sup>) have their meaning<sup>30</sup>. As we saw in the first part, it becomes the most exegetical principle in Chirillian theology, and in agreement with In. 4, 24 we notice that the death of Christ is the new form of service that establishes worship in spirit and truth (understood by St. Cyril through the concept of "politeia"<sup>31</sup>).

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<sup>26</sup> J. Douglas, art. cit., p. 102.

<sup>27</sup> Lawrence Welch, *Christology and Eucharist in the Early Thought of Cyril of Alexandria*, International Scholars Publications, San Francisco, 1994, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> Yet in this text from John, St. Cyril seems more concerned with the text of Matthew 27, 51 (!). The rip (split) of the veil of temple indicates the access revealed by Christ to the Holy of Holies, namely the knowledge of the divine mystery, the opening of the path to the inner tent of those who believe in Christ (cf. P.G. 74, 672 CD). That is why Scripture is interpreted from the perspective of Christ's sacrifice.

<sup>29</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, P.G. 74, 672B.

<sup>30</sup> L. Welch, *op. cit.*, p. 95. Associated with the burning of all, the total sacrifice or the burning of all parts of the animal (Lev 1), unlike the sacrifice of salvation, where only one side burned, indicating a partial sanctification. In this sense, the two bulls (Book XI, Col. 788 C), the two turtles, sacrificed one as a burnt offering, another as a sin offering; read typologically, the number two shows the whole/totality, but also Christ, which, on the one hand, dies for us, on the other hand, is burning for us as a sweet aroma to the Father (cf. *De ador.* 15, Col. 972 C). Here, St. Cyril makes a clear distinction between these two categories, pointing out that only Christ is fit to bring burnt offerings, because he is truly a whole saint, whole blessed and sanctified (cf. *De ador.* 10, Col. 709 B, in D. Stăniloae, *Legătura dintre Euharistie și iubirea creștină*, p. 10). Whole burnt offering is an index for total dedication and the effect becomes one with maximum effectiveness.

<sup>31</sup> A term generally used by Fathers to refer as a way or the contrast with to Judaism. But St. Cyril uses in conjunction with the text of John 4:24 (hence the title he gives to his Exegetical work *De Adoratione*...) to illustrate that the Jewish way of life was replaced by the Gospel, and the Hebrew sacred texts have found their true fulfillment (fulfillment), in the new way of life in Christ (Robert Wilken, *Judaism and the Early Christian Mind: A Study of Cyril of Alexandria's Exegesis and Theology*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1971, p. 75). Thus, *politeia* signifies the difference between the life under the yoke of the Law and the fresh life of



## **The nature and composition of the priesthood of Jesus Christ in the reading of Cyrill**

In shaping the Chirilic sacerdotal sacrificial conception, it is necessary to understand the contextual perspective of the alexandrian bishop. In this respect, St. Cyril tries to develop a language in which the union (henosis) between the divine and the human in Jesus Christ can be expressed. With the background of this elaboration, where the divine unites itself with the human, in the person of Jesus Christ, Saint Cyril "builds" the theology of the High Priest, Jesus Christ, on the evangelical (John) and Pauline (especially Hebrews<sup>32</sup>) texts. The Son of God is the one who serves (leitourgos)<sup>33</sup> and brings sacrifice as High Priest<sup>34</sup>. To explain this paradoxically, the shepherd of Alexandria repeatedly resorts to the text in Philippians 2 (morphe doulou/form of slave and morphe Theou/the form of God<sup>35</sup>).

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the Gospel. This process takes place with the Incarnation of Jesus, "the time of His coming" where the images turn to the truth and the shadow of the Law in Spiritual Ministry/Worship(In Ioannis Evangelium P.G. 73, 313 B).

<sup>32</sup>See, Rowan A. Greer, *The Captain of our Salvation*, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), Tübingen, 1973, p. 321-355.

<sup>33</sup>The Alexandrian father "makes continual use of the fact that in Greek the sacrificial victim is called *sacred or holy work*" (hierieion, hierourgoumenon)" (D. Stăniloae, „Legătura interioară dintre moartea și învierea...”, p. 284). From this sacrificial aspect, Father Stăniloae makes the following remarks, namely that the sacrifice involves purity, which becomes both "a result of the sacrifice" and presupposes "something prior to sacrifice". The premise of purity for offering's God is in fact the condition for the quality of the sweet aroma or pleasant fragrance from the sacrifice (*Ibidem*, p.284).

In another study, Father Stăniloae quotes St. Cyril (*De ador.* 11) for the terms by which he renders the "object offered", sometimes "victim" (tima) at other times, "sacred object" (hierieion), then act of *prothesis* to bring the offering for sacrifice (*tiein*) or sanctification (hierourgein). This alternation the father also applies to the sacrificial logic of the Divine Liturgy, "(...) the priest sacrifices Christ, or sanctifies the gifts, or to a believer that he died for sins and consecrated to a pure life" (Idem, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină...”, p. 4).

<sup>34</sup>The sacramental and sacerdotal (priestly) aspects are complementary and constitutive for the Church and "have their source of supply and uninterrupted support in the sacrificial state and in the quality of the High Priest Jesus Christ" (D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină...”, p. 3). Further, Father Staniloae said that "they show the close relationship between the sacrifice of Christ for us and our participation in it" (*Ibidem*).

<sup>35</sup>For the exegesis of this particularly important passage, see especially in the Romanian theological literature, Nicolae Moșoiu, *Taina prezenței lui Dumnezeu în viața umană. Viziunea creatoare a Părintelui Profesor Dumitru Stăniloae*, teză de doctorat, Editura Paralela 45, 2002, 323 p.

Thus, we see that the High Priest's ministry (becomes sacrificial to Christ because He brings Himself /sacrificed) is part of the divine economy<sup>36</sup>, and is based on this exchange (antallagma / redhostimento) between God and humanity. Christ as a man stands (vertically, standing) to offer priestly sacrifice, and as God is seated (horizontally, on the throne) to receive it. Thus, from this dual position we have to understand the nature of the Christian priesthood, where on the throne as God the Son is seated, and by the divine economy he becomes slave by sharing the human nature from where he receives the name of priest (hiereus) and servant (leitourgos)<sup>37</sup> in a state of prayer-vertically).

This duality generates an economic (antallagma / redhostimento) exchange from which the universal character of the sacrifice of Christ originates, "the only true sacrifice for all." In this sense, Father Stăniloae gives more reasons for the sacrificial universality of Christ. First of all, the human nature of Christ is of a divine hypostasis or subject, so that the human nature is "open to all, because its divine hypostasis is open to it all"<sup>38</sup> or "the center by which it radiates (...) communicate the divine energies to all"<sup>39</sup>. Human nature becomes the environment through which Christ works in men, being in fact the point or center from where the work of salvation expands. The next reason is the compensation of the state of sin through the vicarial work, as well as the union of the sacrifice<sup>40</sup>. In this sense, the sacrifice becomes a place of intersection between the sacrificer, the offering and the One to whom it is sacrificed, it is "the meeting point of the one who sacrifices to God and to the others"<sup>41</sup>.

Specific to St. Cyril's theology is the emphasis and valorisation of the life of obedience of the Son of God made man in the fulfillment of renewal and justification in our name. A role performed by total obedience to the Father in His life on earth through this union (henosis) in the likeness of sinful flesh (an expression of Pauline origin Rm 8, 3 taken over by St. Cyril, en homoiomati sarkos hamartias)<sup>42</sup>.

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<sup>36</sup>Gerald O'Collins, S.J., and Michael Keenan Jones, *Jesus our priest. A Christian Approach to the Priesthood of Christ*, Oxford, University Press, p. 99.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. Cyril of Alexandria, *De Recta Fide ad Reginas*, 111 (on the Hebrew 8, 1-2) apud Gerald O'Collins, S.J., and Michael Keenan Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 99. See also the iconography about divine celestial liturgy.

<sup>38</sup>D. Stăniloae, „Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină”, p. 12.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibidem*, p. 13.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibidem*.

<sup>42</sup>Thomas F. Torrance, *Theology in Reconciliation. Essays towards Evangelical and Catholic Unity in East and West*, Geoffrey Chapman, 1975, p. 169.

*The Priesthood and Worship in the Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria*

This righteousness (justification) and renewal is accomplished not only by the victory of sin in the flesh (*en ti sarki*) but also by the fact that it makes the human nature partaking in its righteousness (*dikaiosyne*) (allusion to the righteousness/justification through union with Christ, the theme of Romans 4-5, our note)<sup>43</sup>. We can see that in the theme of righteousness there is the theology of the economy of the willingness to obey (*eis apan hipakoi*) of the Son who takes the form of slave (*morphe doulu*) to restore the sonship/ condition of a son (*hios*) according to the original image, in our place and our behalf<sup>44</sup>. According to Torrance, in St. Cyril's thinking, this is the heart of Christ's vicarious work of humanity, where the priesthood and condition of Christ as the obedient son (and slave, our note) through the Incarnation form a single indissoluble reality<sup>45</sup>.

In reading of Th. Torrance, the priestly ministry of Christ at St. Cyril appears with his incarnational or economic identification with us and is inseparable from it in the entire human experience he shares until its maximum depth<sup>46</sup>. Therefore, the researcher notes that it can not be said simply about the humanity of Jesus, „but to the mediatorial ministry of the Son of God within and from the side of our humanity towards God the Father”<sup>47</sup>. We could say anin-carnate service from the heart of mankind from where His priestly work springs.

Two texts in the Commentary on the Epistle to Hebrews 2, 14-18 and 5, 7-9 are seen by St. Cyril in this connection with the priestly ministry of Christ. Thus, the Son of God "clothed" with the human nature (flesh) and all its weaknesses in a chenotic way. In this sense, He becomes a guarantor for us because he was without sin, he uses the measures of humanity assumed, to offer up praises, shed tears, and learn obedience although he is the Son of God (or God Himself, our note)<sup>48</sup>. This shows that Christ is consubstantial with us (and at the same time consubstantial with the Father), and accepting the weaknesses and affections of the condition of the enslaved human nature become a first form of His priesthood<sup>49</sup>. The Priesthood of the Christ is first and foremost a full identification of vulnerabilities and

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 170 (see also here the bibliographic references to the Cyril's works)

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 170 (see also here the bibliographic references to the Cyril's works).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*. So that the obedience of the Son to the Father in our human nature becomes a whole life of filial obedience, one that forms the foundation for His sacerdotal-vicariouly ministry. See Cyril of Alexandria, *Epist. Ad Hebraeos*, PG 74: 964B-977B; 984D-988D apud Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

<sup>46</sup> Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 173-174. (see also here the bibliographic references to the Cyril's works).

<sup>48</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, *Quod unus sit Christus*, PG 75: 132A; cf. 1321B-1325B; see also *Epist. Ad Hebraeos*, PG 74, 964C-972A; 976C-977B; 984C-988D, apud Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

<sup>49</sup> Cf., Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 174.

suffering with those for whom worship is brought on the basis of His divinity united to humanity.

Father Stăniloae notes in Cyrillic exegetical theology that the act of the Son to overcome death is the quality of the High Priest of Christ. This is because Christ makes from His death a willing sacrifice and a complete surrender to the Father<sup>50</sup>.

Consubstantial with the Father, the Son unites us with Himself with the Father, perfecting His mediation for us, representing not only God who knows us, but also the humanity who now knows the Father. The son becomes our counsel/defender (*advocatus/parakliton*), praying and interceding for us to the Father. That is why the vicarious priesthood of Christ, the mediator between God and man, is fulfilled in and through Himself<sup>51</sup>.

In other words, the Son of God became priest in the sense that He becomes a vulnerable man in obedience and prayer of surrender to the Father without ceasing to be God. God and man in a united union and in the most intimate/high dwelling of divinity/holiness. We could say that man (the human) through Christ has found his place in the heart of God, where Christ leads/carries up the believers' minds<sup>52</sup>. This reference by Saint Cyril explains in some way the description of the nature of the Christian ministry of the new worship as rational/noetic (cf. In 4: 24), and

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<sup>50</sup> Dumitru Stăniloae, footnote 377 in *Închinare* 10, p. 340: „It is noteworthy that St. Cyril considers that Christ's own quality as High Priest of the fact that he has received death to overcome it, sacrificed himself to be resurrected (the sign of Jonah). He receives death not only to show that even dead is stronger than death, but also to make of his death the sacrifice for all humanity before the Father. (...) Such a high priest who is made man to be a man of God for man, could not become the Son of God except by the Father's determination”.

<sup>51</sup> Father Stăniloae affirms that the sublimity of Christ's Priesthood of life lies in the fact that He brings Himself as sacrifice. In this way, the sacrifice has nothing passive in it (D. Stăniloae, "Legătura dintre Euharistie și iubirea creștină...", p. 14). In other words, in the sacrifice of Christ, who is Christ Himself, everything is active, self-giving, because He is Himself as a person, leaving nothing to come from the outside, even more He is the promoter and supporter of His burning (offering). Hence the force of sacrifice attraction as self-bringing. In the case of Christ, the Father Stăniloae says that the subjectivity of His sacrifice equates to its fullest value to others. We could say it is an objective subjectivity. In this regard, the Romanian theologian asserts that the High Priest: Jesus Christ can not be changed with another because he can not be separated from the one sacrifice brought by him. The intrinsic connection between the priest and the sacrifice in the case of Christ becomes one, one total and perfect reality. From the separation between this two, Stăniloae indicates the probability of occurrence of the term: *victim* ("tima" term used by St. Cyril himself!). However, this term for the sacrifice of Christ is no longer applicable, because here the sacrifice and the priest are one and the same reality. But even for the sacrifice of believers this term can not be given, because even the believers become sacrifices and priests (Ibidem, p. 14).

<sup>52</sup> Cf. *Adv. Nestorium*, PG 76, 161 A.

above all, the reason for the appellation given to Christ as the High Priest of our souls (arhierous ton himeteron psychon)<sup>53</sup> or as the High Priest of our confession<sup>54</sup>.

### **The new worship offered by Christ**

The new worship offered by Christ to God originates from the priestly sacrificial service itself, namely the Father's willing obedience to his slave's death on the cross. From the extremely numerous and varied sacrificial examples of St. Cyril contained in his exegetical theology, we chose two in this case to illustrate the density of the new doxological-liturgical report of the new man before God. Thus, in *Glaphyra*, the First Book in Genesis, Chap. 4 to the episode of the sacrifice of Adam's first sons. Here the righteous Abel is Christ, who brings us to God as the gift of the first-born. The first-born are those who are tender to the heart and infants in wickedness and chosen in virtue and the bearers of his glory in their firstborn. This is the church, which is called by Paul (Ephesians 2:18) the multitude of the first-born, enrolled in heaven, of those called to sanctification by faith. For this holy crowd and flock of the first-born became the priest Christ (hierourgos) and Cyril concludes, that we have made good and well-received sacrifices above the young bull, which grow horns and hooves (Ps 68, 35), because the bloody offering is very low and earthly, and is not reckoned by the God as fragrant incense. „*But worship in the Spirit and through Christ is very pleasing to the Father*” (*H de ge en en pnevmati kai dia Hristou latreia poli di lian estin andanousa to Patri / cultus vero in spiritu et per Christum longe acceptior est Patri*, my emphasis)<sup>55</sup>. In this sacrificial theology, as noted by Jonathan Douglas Hicks, St. Cyril reaches one of the heights of his reflection (the deepest mystery) about the priesthood of Christ, namely as a high priest, Christ is *the true worshipper of the Father* (my emphasis)<sup>56</sup>.

The second example is the exegesis of the ascension of Moses and Aaron, as well as of the other elders on Mount Horeb. Cyril said that we have been called to Christ and the upper city, and we have been worthy of God's and Father's eyes. This was possible through Christ because in Him we have been taught to worship the true God and Father of all creation<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>53</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG 74, 480 C.

<sup>54</sup> *Adv. Nestorium*, iii 116 A, 120 C, etc., apud Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>55</sup> *Glaph. Gen. 1*, PG 69, 40D-41AB.

<sup>56</sup> J. Douglas Hicks, *art. cit.*, p. 100-101.

<sup>57</sup> *Glaph. Ex. 3*, P.G. 69,512 D, see *Glaph. Ex. 3*, 516B; *Glaph. Ex. 3*, 517A.

Thus, a fundamental aspect of the priestly ministry of the Son of God is the restoration of the true worship, which Christ does in a vicarious way to God the Father<sup>58</sup> (worship as an valorization of genuine communion with God).

Through the work of the High Priest in which Christ is fully and completely devoted to God, Christ draws us to communion with the Father in the Holy Spirit, "we learn" to pray to God. What is so impressive here, is St. Cyril's emphasis on the humanity of Christ, who becomes the environment of God and His ministry/worship as a man who joins us in prayers and offerings to God; moreover, He centralizes them in His person and in His sacrifice (self-oblation), repetitions underlined with the prepositions "by" "with" and "in". As Anglican theologian Thomas F. Torrance says: "It is highly distinctive of Cyril's thought, however, that we worship and pray to the Father not only in and through Christ, but *with him*, for in accordance with the law of the economy his self-identification with us meant that he ranged himself along *with us* as himself a worshipper of God the Father. *He worships for he has assumed the nature that pays worship*"<sup>59</sup>.

Further on in analyzing the concept of worship / ministry in the theology of the Patriarch of Alexandria, I follow in general the excellent essay of Thomas F. Torrance<sup>60</sup>. Thus, the professor points out that this concept can be summed up in St. Cyril in four specific traits. In this sense, the first feature is related to the kenosis, namely the obedience and humiliation (lowliness) of the Son of God (eis hekousion hipakoin, kai tapeinosin), more exactly his slave position from which he brings worship to God, as essential part of the incarnate economy<sup>61</sup>.

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<sup>58</sup>This is because the Adam and Eve have departed from the true God, they have not served the Lord any more, and therefore, they have apostate. Thereby we understand even more the importance of restoration of the true bond with God in the ministry/worship of High Priest: Jesus Christ. Cf. Frances M. Young, „A Reconsideration of Alexandrian Christology”, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* XXII (1971), nr. 2, p. 104. Young states that this is part of the Christological Alexandrian tradition asserted by St. Athanasius the Great in his polemic with the Arians. So, both anti-arian and anti-nestorian arguments are based on the same elaboration, namely the soteriological position exhibited in *De Incarnatione*. This ministry/worship was fulfilled by the Logos living in man.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 176. Cyril of Alexandria, *Thesaurus*, PG 75, 117CD; 361B-D; etc. see footnote 6 and also the text. (Cyril of Alexandria, *Adv. Nestorium*, PG 76/3: 116AB) etc.

<sup>60</sup> Thomas Torrance, "The Mind of Christ in Worship: The Problem of Apollinarianism in the Liturgy", *apud Th. Torrance, op. cit.*, p. 163-185.

<sup>61</sup> Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

This is also suggested by Father. Stăniloae in one of his footnotes on the translation of the Commentary to John of St. Cyril, namely: "If Christ had been" worshipper "before the incarnation, he would not have said "We" (reference to v. 22: "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews" In 4:22, our note), as One who

## *The Priesthood and Worship in the Theology of St. Cyril of Alexandria*

The worship that Christ brings in His descent (lowliness) to men is directly addressed to the Father. The Son's willingness to lay Himself in humiliation, humble slave, completes the ministry (leitourghian) throughout His economy, without ceasing to be God and Lord, and to be worshiped according to these (his priesthood is par excellence<sup>62</sup>). St. Cyril claims that Christ in His ministry to the earth brought to the Father becomes a "superior worshipper," though this does not mean that he would achievesome superior kind of worship<sup>63</sup>. The priestly ministry of Christ is defined in the payment/acquisition of the worshipwhich he offers<sup>64</sup>, namely St. Cyril takes account of the quality of this worship to God<sup>65</sup>. Even more, since worship comes from the creatures (slaves/servants) offered to God as

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becomes a worshiper when He becomes a man like other men. He would have somehow shown that, before being made man, he was singularly a worshipper. By His classification as a worshipper among men, He emphasizes His humbleness, or His full descent to the human condition that He did not have before. But Jesus falls as a man among those Jews who have maintained the knowledge of God, as He who sends His Son as a man, and they were waiting for Him, that is, the Mother of God, the Apostles, who knew the true God. By this, as a man, He becomes a worshipper of God, but He also knew that He is the Son of God, Who is not a worshipper, but worshipped, and Who will cause men to worship anywhere to the Father in the Holy Spirit and in itself, which is the truth. They will therefore worship God, clearly known as the Trinity. (footnote 389, on Sf. Chiril of Alexandriei. *Scrieri partea IV, Comentariu la Evanghelia Sfantului Ioan 4* (St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Writings Part IV, Commentary on the Gospel of St. John*), translation, introduction and notes by Dumitru Stăniloae, (PSB 41), Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române PH, Bucharest, 2000, p. 222).

<sup>62</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG 73, 304D-305AB.

<sup>63</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG 73, 304 D- 305BC etc.

<sup>64</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG 73, 308 A; *De ador.* 10, P.G. 68, 708B (!), etc.

Father Stăniloae understands this payment at St. Cyril as identical to the sacrifice of Christ: "After St. Cyril, the sacrifice of Christ for us can be called the payment given to us by God the Father, but only because it was necessary to have passion and his death to give our face a pleasant face in the eyes of God and to realize in the flesh assumed by him the sacrificial condition from which to irradiate the power that would counterbalance our return from God and create in each persona similar sacrificial state. (...), the power made by death as a sacrifice in the assumed nature of Christ overwhelms the contrary power from us. This power was set in the assumed naturewith the payment of the sacrifice, that is, of the death on the cross "(D. Stăniloae, *Legătura între Euharistie și iubirea creștină*, p. 14). And elsewhere he sees this sacrifice as a gift but also as a ransom with the quality of gift, which sends to love as a Subject (footnote 415, *Închinare* 10, p. 361). And further, in a different context, the Romanian theologian perceives the sacrifice as holy redemption, not in the legal sense but as "an opening full of love to God the Father," a love that fills the sacrificed humanity of the Son in order to turn it into an outbreak of the sanctifying presence of God, irradiating all who are clinging to the Christ sacrifice (footnote 570, *Închinare* 15, p. 516).

<sup>65</sup> *De ador.* 10, col. 707 BC.

Emperor (Creator) and Lord<sup>66</sup>. Worship that no longer includes "gifts from the outside", but constituted from service in the preparatory form of the Law, according to Deut. 6, 13, from which it appears that "for worship is, as it were, the gate and the way to service in acts, having as its principle servitude towards God (piliar hospes tis esti, kai hodos tis en ergois latreias hi proskinesis, arhen ehousa douleian tin hos pros Teon)"<sup>67</sup>. Just as in the case of the Cyrillic reading sacrifices, we have the interpenetration of the two Covenants as parts of the whole, including in ministry (relationship with God). Worship is also here as a means and way of serving God in acts<sup>68</sup>.

Particularly important is the inclusion of the terms, like *leitourghia*, *latreia*, *proskynesis* and *douleia* to describe the kind of worship or adoration which Christ offered to the Father with us and on our behalf, without doing any systematic separation between these notions.

Moreover, St. Cyril sees worship as "an essential part of the Lord's saving mission in the flesh"<sup>69</sup>. Thus, we have a redeeming worship offered by Christ in the measures or limits of his *kenosis*, where St. Cyril speaks of the so-called the worship of the economy (*hi proskinesis oikonomias*<sup>70</sup>). Christ Himself is the first and true worshipper of the Father who in his vicarious mediation (*mesiteia*) becomes Himself the ransom/redemption (*hilasmos*)<sup>71</sup> and our worship (*proskinesis*, *latreia*), the altar itself (*tysiastirion*) and our pattern (*hipodigm*) in prayer, worship and adoration<sup>72</sup>.

The second feature related to the cult brought by Jesus in his kenotic-filial form is the appropriation of this type of worship, as spiritual/rational /noetic *par excellence* in opposition to the old (Moses) as carnal-legalist. St. Cyril understands this worship as a direct reference to the nature of God that is the Spirit, a worship in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:24). Torrance rightly observes that this does not imply rejection of physical acts in worship or liturgical gestures as such, or the necessity of materializing devotion in acts and works (as we have seen above or in the first part), but rather the rejection of institutional substitutes for the worship of God in spirit and in truth<sup>73</sup>. Now after the glorification of Christ and the coming of

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<sup>66</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG.73, 308 A.

<sup>67</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG 73, 312 BC apud Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

<sup>68</sup> *In Ioannis Evangelium*, PG.73, 304 D, 305 BC, 312 BC, etc.

<sup>69</sup> Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

<sup>70</sup> *De recta fide ad reginas*, PG 76/2, 1349C apud Thoams Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

<sup>71</sup> See, Ed. G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford University Press, 1961, p.

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<sup>72</sup> Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 179. (see also here the bibliographic references to the Cyril's terms).

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 180.



the Spirit, these liturgical acts have a typical and indicative function that leads us directly to the *leitourgia* and *latreia* that Christ has fulfilled in our name, and in which all prayers, devotions are gathered up and vicariously mediated through the Son by consecration and bringing His own life (human being) before the Father<sup>74</sup>.

The third characteristic is to identify the mind of the one who prays with the very mind of Christ (cf. Philip 2: *Stouto froneite en himin ho kai en Hristo Iisou*), a union of minds in the thought of prayer. This feature directly refers to the kenosis of the Son of God in which He assumed the human soul (*psihi*) and the mind (*nous*) to become Priest and Mediator in our name and to represent us in the Father's eyes, so that we could share with Him his mind (*fronema*), so that our human mind (*nous*) can be sanctified and healed/restored to Him. As Torrance observes, St. Cyril invokes this mental union with Christ (which is highly significant) when he explains the importance of the Christian worship because it is offered in and through *the Mind of Christ*<sup>75</sup>. The mind of Christ is not primarily the mind of the Logos or of the Son as God, „but the rational soul of Jesus, which he is inexpressibly united to his divine Mind, and never replaced by it”<sup>76</sup>.

Only on the basis of the mental union between us and Christ can it be said that the mind of the faithful (*ton pisteionton ton noun*) must ascend to God<sup>77</sup>. The

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 180; See Commentary on John 16; 17 and also the bibliographic references to this Cyril's work in Th. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 180. Participating in the mind of Christ does not diminish the activity of the believer in performing the worship, even more in this way, it reaches their full reality in the vicarious worship/ministry of Christ, because now the worship of the believer is a Christomorphic one.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>77</sup> Cyril of Alexandria, *Adv. Nestorium*, PG 76, 161 A, apud Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

These explanations are based on the eunomist and apollinist polemic. This is because only if Christ fully shares our mental/psychic experiences, they can be saved or healed by Him, otherwise we can not assimilate His sacrifice to the Father. Thus, on the basis of Torrance's observations, we can see the fact that in the act of (priestly) worship of the Son of God, an essential role plays the human mind as a part of his human soul. The hierarchical mediation of Christ in St. Cyril's theology, according to the L. Welch, forms a tacit Cyrillic argument in affirming the existence of the soul in Jesus Christ. This is a Christological problem for which the Alexandrian school was accused (and also Saint Cyril) that it deliberately omitted the affirmation of the soul in Christ, which would betray Apollinarian's theology. To this is added the emphasis of Scriptural text John 1, 14 (*Rm 8*) which would indicate the carnal/corporeal part of humanity assumed by Logos. In fact, "sarx" means, according to Welch, in Cyrillic Theology an concept for the fulness of fallen humanity (or, more precisely, under the conditions of falling of the functional human "in the garments of skin" (cf. *Gen 3,21* ), where the Son prays as man with a rational soul and human mind (L. Welch, *op. cit.*, p. 113). This is because the prayer

restoration that takes place here is primarily at the rational, noetic level. The true man, Christ knows whom to worship. Perversion of human mind (adamic) means the perverting of worship, therefore the act of worship/ministry is carried out primarily by mind and then to engage the whole being. In short, reason dictates the object (subject) of the worship.

The last feature of the new worship refers to the Holy Spirit, the One who makes it possible to have access to the Father through the Son<sup>78</sup>. The Spirit is the (*sindesmos*) connection or the ring through which we are united with God and among us together. All things are imprinted by the Father through the Son in the Spirit and are sent from the Father through the Son in the Spirit<sup>79</sup>. In accordance with this athanasian teaching also assumed by St. Cyril, all actions from man to God are mediated through the Son in the unity of the Spirit<sup>80</sup>. In this sense, the Spirit makes us partakers with Himself in assimilating our prayers with or in His prayer, which has already been exalted to the Father and continues to be brought/offered and accepted by the Father for us<sup>81</sup>.

As Torrance observes, St. Cyril understands in spiritual/pneumatological terms the intimate union between Christ and us<sup>82</sup> (hence the indissoluble union of all four of these features, especially the third and fourth). The presence of the "mind of Christ" in us and in His giving our mind to the Father sends to the fact that the Spirit is the One who reminds us that it is the mind of Christ and in the same Spirit our mind is sanctified and exalted by Christ in God<sup>83</sup>. None of these takes place without in "en" and through "dia" the Spirit and by its distinctive

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is an activity of the human mind, and the prayer of the Son understood without full humanity would indicate the absurdity that God prays to Himself, or that prayer is proper to His divinity (?!). Hence the reference to Christ as the "High Priest of our souls" in the interpretation of John 17. The climax of the Priesthood's Christ as a absolutely devoted worshipper to the Father is also found in Commentary on John 17, which, in the opinion of Thomas F. Torrance, forms "one of the great patristic works on the theology of worship"(Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 177).

<sup>78</sup>cf. *Ephesians* 2, 18: „For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father”.

<sup>79</sup>The athanasian formula used by St. Cyril in his writings. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>80</sup>*De recta fide ad reginas*, PG 76/2, 1372A-1412C.

<sup>81</sup> See footnote 3 Th. Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 182 for the bibliographic references to Commentary on John.

<sup>82</sup>Thomas Torrance *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>83</sup> See the bibliographic references to Commentary on John, apud Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

activity in our union with the Son and through Him, with the Father<sup>84</sup> (Holy Trinity). In other words, we do not have access to Christ and thus to the Father. Hence the importance of the invocation/epiclesis of the Holy Spirit in all liturgical acts done by the believer through the prayer and thanksgiving offering in the unity of the Spirit<sup>85</sup> without any confluence of the natures involved.

Thus, as masterly Torrance remarks, „by preserving intact the indivisible unity of the divine and human natures in one Person of the incarnate Son through whom and in whom God has reconciled us to himself (but also through the ministry/worship brought by the "High Priest of Our Souls", our note !), Cyril rejects the idea of an *independent* centre of priestly activity in Jesus Christ, and therefore wards off the idea, to which the Antiochene theology seemed so prone, that God saves us *for the sake* of his Son (dia ton hion sou), or *for the sake* of Christ (dia Christ), and what he has done on our behalf, as though he constituted thereby the motive for God's redeeming love and not from first to last the manifestation and operation of that love and indeed its embodiment as sheer philanthropy (filantropia) in our flesh and blood”<sup>86</sup>.

### **Conclusions:**

1. Prefigurations and sacerdotal acts of the Old Covenant form the framework of the priesthood of Christ in the New Covenant. All this is grounded and explained in His consecration as High Priest of all humanity. That is why, in the Cyrillic exegetic theology, we have a total and totalized Christian exegesis. Furthermore, the priesthood of the Son of God receives a special emphasis on Cyrillic reading expressed by economic and compassionate identification with fallen humanity (*Phil 2; II Co 8, 9*), respectively in the full assumption of the vulnerabilities and the human limits incurred until the expansion their liminal. In this sense, the assumption of the priestly ministry is the very basis of the act of in-hominisation or in-carnation. Thus, the Incarnation is a milestone in all the High Priest's acts of Christ.

2. The holiness gained by Immanuel's entire hierarchical economy (the favorite appellation for Christ) receives the meaning of total self-denial, self-abandonment (absolute devotion to God) or mystical death. All of this is technically included in the formulation of *the eternal sacrificial state* as the only

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<sup>84</sup> *Thesaurus*, PG 75, 593A-596D; *Dialogus de Trinitate*, PG 75/VI, 1005C-1020A, etc., apud Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 182.

<sup>85</sup> *De ador.*, PG 68, 833C-836A in Thomas Torrance, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 185. Here Torrance quotes J. A. Jungmann, *The Place of Christ in Liturgical Prayer*, p. 37.

eligible mean of acquiring the intimacy of God. This theme is the most invoked by Father Stăniloae and forms the reference of the Cyrillic reception in his theology.

3. The particularity of the worship that Christ brings as an High Priest of humanity consists of certain attributes (humility, obedience, as spiritual/noetic, union of the mind with that of Christ, mediated by the union of the Spirit), which configures the new settlement relational of men as priestly liturgical beings in front of God's eyes. In the vicarious sacrifice brought by Christ through the Spirit, we acquire the closeness/proximity of God as the Father, and thereby express the fact that the new worship is addressed to the whole Trinity. This is realized from the position of the believers (the status) as sons, otherwise formed by evangelical living (*politeia*) or the kenotic-doxological way of life of Christ. The worship of the faithful is taken over by Him and assimilated to the worship brought by Him, inseparable from His sacrifice to the Father. More specifically, the consummation of the service of the Son as High Priest in his economic-vicarious ministry becomes the center of worship of the new humanity (the Church) offered to God. That is why worship or the manner in which one interacts with God is absolutely fundamental for the new creation (the Christian).