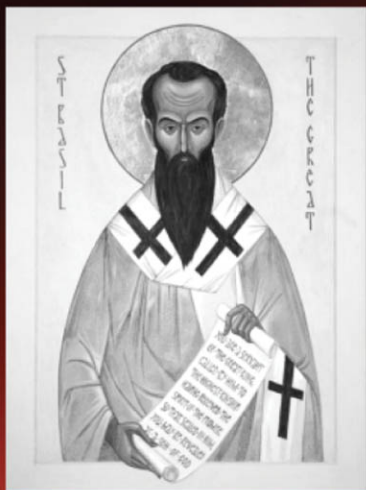


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THE ASKETIKON OF ST BASIL THE GREAT



Anna M. Silvas

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ANNA M. SILVAS

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This book is dedicated
with gratitude to the fathers in my life
to my own dear father, Theodor Silvas
his father, Vasile Silvas
our spiritual father, Cardinal Alexandru Todea
and to the brave bishops of the Greek-Catholic Church of Romania,
for the true renewal of Christianity in the third millennium

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PREFACE

MANY were the Jewish, Christian, and para-Christian ascetic movements of the late ancient world, in which enthusiasm for celibacy and for spiritual endeavour assumed a wide variety of forms. Such were the ascetic and even monastic tendencies within late Hellenistic Judaism, the lifestyle of St John the Baptist, the ascetic and otherworldly teachings of the Gospels and the New Testament, the polity of the apostolic community in Jerusalem in the first Christian century, the eschatological sensibility encouraged by the experience of persecution and martyrdom, the various enthusiast movements of the first three or four Christian centuries. Apart from Christianity and Judaism, this ascetic *Zeitgeist* was abetted by economic and cultural distresses, the well-known *taedium vitae* and especially the heightened religious sensibilities of the late ancient world that can even be observed in third-century Neoplatonism, the last of the schools of pagan philosophy.

During the fourth century AD Christian monasticism emerged almost spontaneously in many different parts of the Christian world. In the second half of the century, central Anatolia gave rise to its own 'home-grown' monasticism. The most important document of this nascent native monasticism is the *Great Asketikon* of St Basil the Great, of Caesarea (AD 329–79), the subject of this book.

'Christian monasticism' here refers to the Christian ascetic movements as they acquired definitive forms and a canonically recognized 'place' in the orthodox Catholic Church. 'Orthodox' and 'Catholic' may be taken to refer at this stage to acceptance of the doctrinal parameters established by the Council of Nicaea in 325 and elaborated and confirmed in the Council of Constantinople in 381. More loosely, the terms can be used of those theological gropings in the interim that tended positively to this settlement.

The present volume is dedicated to a new translation of the Great Asketikon of St Basil the Great, collated against the Small Asketikon (the 'first edition' of the Asketikon), as it can best be recovered from the Latin translation by Rufinus of Aquileia (c. AD 349–411). The graphic presentation endeavours to show as precisely as possible how the earlier version is embedded in the later version. The introductory studies build on this exhaustive textual comparison.

They commence by outlining the complex issues of textual transmission; they go on to assess and compare the ascetic community as it is found in the earlier and in the later versions of the *Asketikon*; they continue with a chapter on the historical-geographical background and they culminate in an extended study of the emergence of monasticism in central Anatolia in the mid to late fourth century AD. Technical studies of Rufinus' translation techniques and Basil's editorial techniques are postponed to the last two chapters. An original map, chronological tables, an index of scriptural citations, and seven appendices provide additional helps to this field of study.

Other important contemporary documents deserve mention here. First there is the prefatory letter and the Canons of the Council of Gangra which was convened to deal with hyper-ascetic exaggerations. Secondly there is the *Life of Saint Makrina (VSM)* by Gregory of Nyssa, our primary source of information about St Basil's and St Gregory's eldest sister.

Questions guiding the present studies are: what were the continuities and changes of Basil's ascetic teaching between the two versions of the *Asketikon*? What are the forms of ascetic community documented in the earlier and in the later versions and how do they compare? Do the concerns of Gangra find an echo only in the Great *Asketikon*, or are they to be detected also in the Small *Asketikon*? How is Basil's ascetic doctrine related to the Anatolian ascetic movement inspired by Eustathius of Sebasteia, and to the transformations in the family household of Basil Senior of Neocaesarea and Emmelia of Cappadocia under the ascetic leadership of their first-born, Makrina the Younger? That brings in the phenomenon of the 'domestic ascetic movement' of the fourth century. Finally, can the results of these probings help elucidate the changes in Basil's ecclesiological and theological thinking during the all-important first decade of his life as a Christian ascetic, 356–65?

These studies began with an MA thesis for the University of Melbourne in 1993 on the text and transmission of Rufinus' Latin translation, the *Regula Basili*. This was followed up by a doctoral thesis for the University of New England in 2000: *The Two Versions of St Basil's Asketikon and the Emergence of Monasticism in 4th Century Anatolia*. The present volume is a revised and recast version of the latter thesis.

Special thanks are due to the Vice-Chancellor of my university, Professor Ingrid Moses, from whom I received a special grant to prepare this work for publication. Warm thanks to my colleagues and mentors at UNE, Mr Alan Treloar, and Professor G. H. R. Horsley. Much appreciated encouragement also came from

Professors Stephen Mitchell and Philip Rousseau. Finally, thanks are due to Lucy Qureshi of OUP, and to Andrew Louth, OUP's painstaking reader.

Perhaps something should be said of the dispositions in which these labours were undertaken. While it is true that some of the later historical inquiry takes into account various critiques of recent decades (Elm, in her introduction at 4–11 provides a useful survey of the historiography in this field of early Christianity, from A. Von Harnack to M. Foucault), the work is not based in such perspectives. It is aligned, in the main, with traditional patristic scholarship and with what one might call a sympathetic humanist approach, as shown, for example, by Philip Rousseau in *Basil of Caesarea*, 1994; a work of high intellectual demand, of wide reading and deep reflection, implicitly Christian and theological and invested with the quality of a long-matured 'friendship' between the author and his subject, Basil. It is close to the ideal I would wish to follow. Use is made of such collateral disciplines as textual studies, epigraphy, and historical geography which can afford to be relatively free of passing ideological fads. Though the scope of these studies is not strictly theological, nevertheless, they are always implicitly disposed in that direction.

The present author writes and thinks from 'within the tradition' of a confessional Christian faith, indeed of the Church. The idea that to dissociate oneself from a conscientious religious faith and allegiance to the Church, to diminish or even exclude a theological and spiritual teleology, to keep the Church Fathers at a distance by adopting a brashly critical or superior stance, or to adopt a confessionally secularist, post-Christian and reductionist analysis could possibly help elucidate the profoundly religious, believing, and ecclesially minded work of these early Christian Fathers finds no quarter here. Basil himself was vitally concerned with hermeneutical principles and would certainly think such a project inherently self-contradictory and preposterous. His first major work, the *Contra Eunomium*, in which he engaged the famous Arian theologian, might well be subtitled 'An enquiry on how to do theology rightly in the Church'. This issue remained a vital concern to Basil for the rest of his short life. Thus the present work bids to be carried out in an implicit fellowship of faith, moral endeavour, spiritual life, and Church with St Basil himself. This means that the author looks to Basil affectionately and respectfully as a father or an elder brother within the household of the Church but she does so as an adult child towards a parent, not obliged to believe or obey everything that a parent says, or hold that parent above all scrutiny, but certainly to maintain family respect and love always, in the spirit of the

commandment *You shall honour your father and your mother* (Exod. 20: 12). It might be remarked that such an adult filial piety was entirely characteristic of St Basil himself with regard to the Church of his time. It is certainly a great privilege to help refresh in the English-speaking world the blessing of this great Father of the Church, for which I humbly thank God.

The crisis of Christianity in the present age involves not the least crises in the liturgy and in the religious—and more specifically—monastic life. They are intimately related. The eschatological dynamic of the Divine Liturgy: our being drawn even on earth into the life that is to come, through the grace of the Holy Trinity imparted in the Divine Word incarnate died and risen, is the soul of the life of monks and nuns who pursue this without compromise in the liturgy of the heart. Thus they become a beacon to other Christians of *the mystery which is Christ in you, your hope of glory* (cf. Col. 1: 27).

A Christianity that has lost all eschatological sensibility, that has forgotten how to do liturgy, and that has frittered away its monasticism, is a truly frightening prospect. It is as if it had forfeited its glowing heart and its hope, and reconfigured itself to the agenda of this world. Where is *the burning lamp, placed on a lampstand, giving light to all in the house?* (Matt. 5: 15)

To those then who see the vital need of recovering, one might almost say reinventing Christian monasticism for the health of the Church, *The Asketikon of St Basil the Great* is especially offered. St Basil the Great has exceptional gifts to contribute to such an enterprise: the awesome austerity of his own focus on God attested in his whole life, his breathtaking intelligence, the deep theological and anthropological underpinnings of his monastic doctrine, his utter saturation in the Scriptures, his acute diagnoses of spiritual pathologies, the extensive body of his own writings that gives us a fuller access to his person, the complementing of his work by the other Cappadocian fathers, especially St Gregory of Nyssa, who continued his fatherhood of monks and virgins after he died. There is also a common situation and purpose, since Basil himself was partly trying to remedy the mess of the Church in his part of the world through the fostering of well-grounded monastic communities. It may also be time to revisit some of his ideas about community life that have long since been abandoned, and to look again at the domestic piety that was the matrix through the great St Makrina of the monasticism that has come down under his name.

A.M.S.

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ABBREVIATIONS

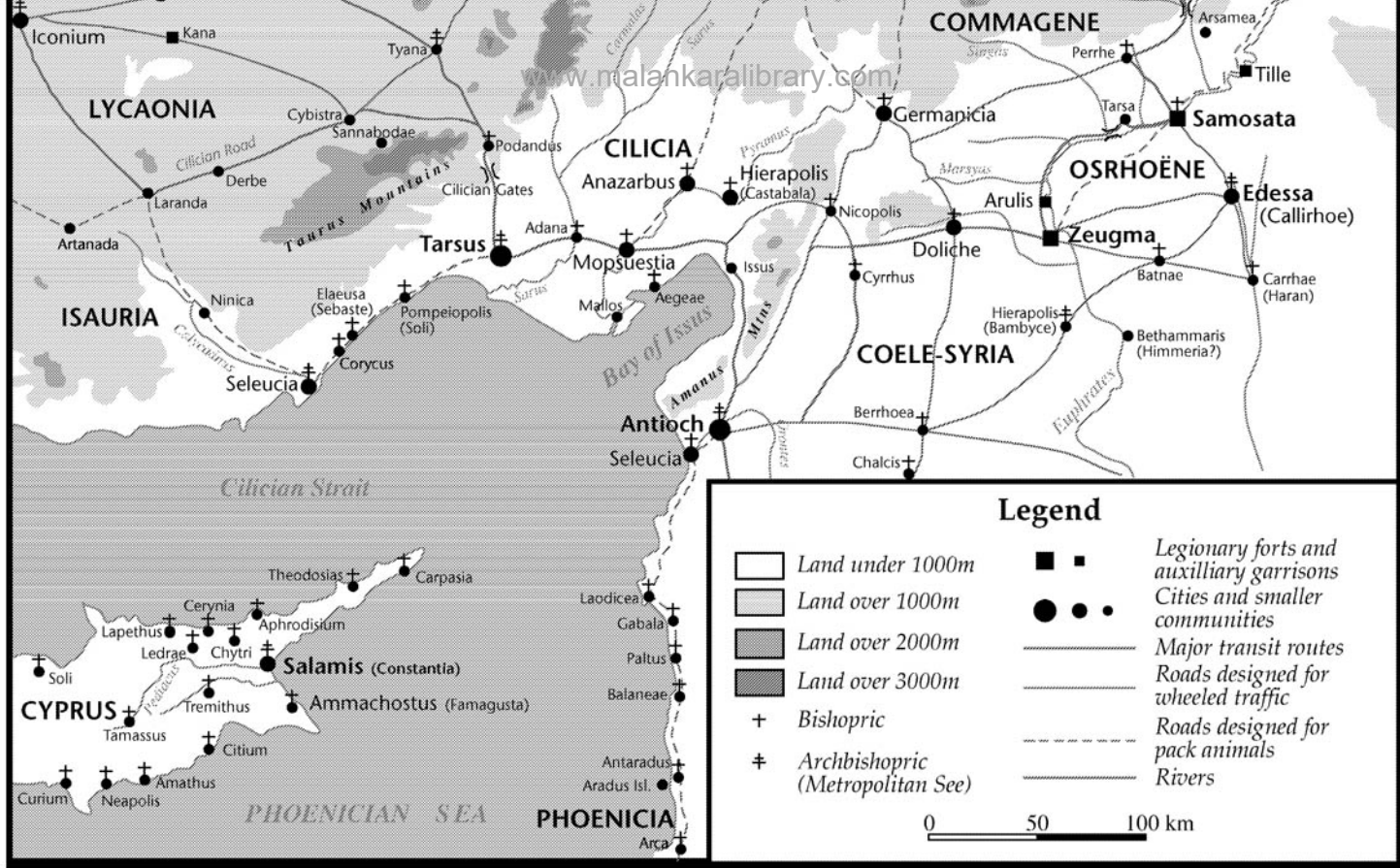
IMPORTANT works are cited by author's name only; other works by the same author will be identified by a word from the title of the relevant work. For example, 'Fedwick' refers to P. J. Fedwick (ed.), *Basil of Caesarea, Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*, while 'Fedwick, Charisma' refers to P. J. Fedwick, *The Church and the Charisma of Leadership in Basil of Caesarea* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1979).

- BBV* III P. J. Fedwick, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis*, III: *The Ascetica*, Corpus Christianorum Series Graeca (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997).
- Callahan V. W. Callahan (tr. and ed.), *Saint Gregory of Nyssa: Ascetical Works*, Fathers of the Church 58 (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1967), *The Life of Macrina*, 161–91.
- Clarke W. K. L. Clarke (tr.), *The Ascetic Works of Saint Basil* (London: SPCK, 1925).
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- Fedwick P. J. Fedwick, *Basil of Caesarea, Christian, Humanist, Ascetic: A Sixteen-Hundredth Anniversary Symposium*, 2 vols. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1981).
- French D. French, *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor*, fascicle 2, 'An interim catalogue of milestones', parts 1 and 2 (Oxford: British School of Archaeology at Ankara, Monograph 9, 1998).
- Gangra Proceedings of the Council of Gangra, in J. D. Mansi (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, 31 vols. (Florence and Venice, 1757–98), II. 1097–1106.
- GNO* W. Jaeger (gen. ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958–). Where volume number is not cited, reference is to *VSM (GNO VIII/1)*.

- Grib. Jean Gribomont, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de Saint Basile* (Louvain: Muséon, 1953).
- Jerphanion G. de Jerphanion, 'Ibora—Gazioura? Étude de géographie pontique', in *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale, Université Saint-Joseph, Beyrouth* 5 (1911), 333–54.
- LR *The Longer Responses = Regulae Fusius Tractatae*, in J. Garnier and P. Maran (eds.), *Opera Omnia Sancti Patris Basili* (Paris, 1721–30; 1839 imprint republished by Migne, Paris, 1857, as PG 29–32; 31. 890–1052).
- Mitchell S. Mitchell, *Anatolia: Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor*, 2 vols. (Oxford: OUP, 1993; repr. as paperback, 1995), vol. i: *The Celts and the Impact of Roman Rule*; vol. ii: *The Rise of the Church*.
- NPNF 2nd ser. *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, general editors Philip Schaff and Henry Wace (orig. edn., Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1895; repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995); cited by volume number.
- PG J.-P. Migne (gen. ed.), *Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Graeco-Latina*, 161 vols. (Paris, 1857–66).
- PL J.-P. Migne (gen. ed.), *Patrologia Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, 221 vols. (Paris, 1844–55).
- RB *Benedicti Regula*, tr. T. Fry et al. (eds.), RB 1980: *The Rule of St Benedict in Latin and English with Notes* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1980).
- RBas. K. Zelzer (ed.), *Basili Regula: A Rufino Latine Versa*, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum 86 (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986).
- Rousseau P. Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
- SR *The Shorter Responses = Regulae Brevius Tractatae*, in J. Garnier and P. Maran (eds.), *Opera Omnia Sancti Patris Basili* (Paris, 1721–30; 1839 imprint republished by Migne, Paris, 1857 as PG 29–32; 31. 1079–1309).
- Stramara D. F. Stramara, 'Double Monasticism in the Greek East, Fourth through Eighth Centuries', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 6 (1998), 269–312.
- VSM *Vita Sanctae Macrinae or the Life of St Macrina*

- by Gregory of Nyssa, ed. V. W. Callahan in W. Jaeger (gen. ed.), *Gregorii Nysseni Opera* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958–), viii/1 (1963), 347–414.
- Wagner M. M. Wagner (tr.), *Saint Basil: Ascetical Works*, Fathers of the Church 9 (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1950).
- Way A. C. Way (tr.), *Saint Basil: Exegetical Works*, Fathers of the Church 46 (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1963).

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I

An Introduction to the Textual Issues

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ASKETIKON: A PRELIMINARY SKETCH

Basil was born in *c.* AD 329 to an aristocratic Christian family of Neocaesarea, the capital of Pontos Polemoniakos. His father was Basil Senior, an eminent advocate and teacher of rhetoric, his mother Emmelia, of the Cappadocian aristocracy. Eustathius of Sebasteia, a renowned, and indeed controversial ascetic leader, used often to pass through the city on his many journeys to and from the imperial capital, for there, in coming up from Armenia Minor, he joined the Via Pontica. He became a friend to the family and they to him. Basil Senior died in the mid-340s, whereupon the mother, Emmelia, transferred the family seat to Annisa, a country estate on the river Iris, just west of its junction with the Lycus. Basil finished his 'middle' studies in Caesarea of Cappadocia, and spent 349–56 in advanced studies, mostly in Athens. He returned home to find the family household in an early stage of transformation into an ascetic community due to the influence of his eldest sister, Makrina. Recalled by her from pursuing a secular career in his father's footsteps, he embraced baptism and the ascetic life—regarded in those circles as almost coterminous.

From late 357–62 Basil retired with some male companions to a spot in the wooded hills on the river Iris, not too far from the Annisa villa. During these formative years Basil was deeply troubled at the confusion in the Church. He worked out his ascetic and theological bearings by prayer and an intense application to the Scriptures, by watching developments in the family household under Makrina's guidance, by correspondence and enquiry, and by some initiation into ecclesiastical affairs by Eustathius, by then metropolitan of Sebasteia and a frequent visitor to Annisa.

In July 362 Basil was ordained for the presbyterate of Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea of Cappadocia. It proved an unhappy venture and within a few months he was back in Pontos where he spent the

years 363–5 preaching and promoting the life of Christian ascetic communities in the region. During his visits to local communities he would be questioned by ascetics and devout Christians on the right way to live according to the Scriptures. His replies were sometimes taken down by tachygraphers, who handed their drafts to him to correct and edit for a fair copy.

Eventually Basil's friend Gregory Nazianzen brokered a reconciliation between him and Bishop Eusebius. He returned to Caesarea late in the year 365. This was the moment for the first edition of the *Asketikon*, a collection of his teachings and replies intended as a legacy for the ascetics of Pontos. He probably completed it in view of his departure down south, or else finished it in Caesarea and sent it back to Pontos. So the Small *Asketikon* may be fairly dated to 365–6.

In September of 370 Basil became metropolitan of Caesarea, and died less than nine years later. The *Asketikon* he left behind him then was more than twice its original proportions. It is important to understand that this enlarged edition was not achieved simply in two discreet stages, as if in a purely literary exercise: a first and a second edition. Rather, the work was augmented and rearranged gradually over the years, usually by way of response to living situations and particular occasions.

One of these occasions was the great year of famine 368–9, during which Gregory of Nyssa tells us that Makrina and the youngest brother, Peter used to succour children abandoned by the wayside. In *LR* 15 we find inserted among the earlier passages a whole new section dealing with rearing and educating orphan children in the community. So it is very likely that Basil visited the north at this period where he continued his role of teaching the ascetic communities, supplying another body of answers addressing new situations.

Basil therefore was already adding to the *Asketikon* while he was still only a presbyter. Once he became bishop he was prompted by the request of ascetics to complete his revisions and send them a copy. Thus a first edition of an *expanded* *Asketikon*, the nearest to whose arrangements is Fedwick's *Ask. 2* (the so-called 'Basiliad' recension), may be dated to Basil's early episcopate, the early 370s. At this stage there may have been a common revised and expanded edition in both Caesarea and Pontos. But by the time of his death there was certainly a multiple transmission, the ongoing Pontic and Caesarean collections not always being kept in tandem.

Another moment of impetus came during Basil's extended stay at Annisa in 375/6, which by now had become a fully-fledged monastic

community presided over by his sister Makrina and his brother Peter, whom he had advanced to the presbyterate soon after he himself had become bishop. Basil had several important agenda to accomplish during this visit. One, of especial urgency, was to secure the allegiance of the Pontic ascetics—yes even his own sister and brother—from the influence of Eustathius of Sebasteia, once a great friend to the family but now ‘outed’ as the leader of the Pneumatomachians (‘Spirit-fighters’), a politically expedient late variant of the Homoiousian theological party.

During this stay at Annisa Basil himself carried out another revision of the *Asketikon*, very probably assisted by his brother Peter. Another possibility is that Peter was the chief editor under Basil’s eye. If such is the case, the mysterious editor of the Pontic manuscript prized by the Scholiast—on whom more shortly—was none other than Basil himself, or at least Peter under Basil’s supervision. There is nothing intrinsically unlikely about Basil’s reorganizing the Shorter Responses into thematic blocks himself. He had been trained by years of proof-reading and re-editing. Indeed, he had long ago organized thematically both the *Philocalia*¹ and the *Moralia*.²

It cannot have been any earlier than this period of strife with Pneumatomachians that some very specific coda were added to the *Asketikon* on the divine nature of the Holy Spirit. An instructive example concerns the formulaic phrase, *the glory of God and his Christ*, which occurs as such in *LR 37*. In the refashioning of the preface to the Longer Responses a phrase is added to this same formulaic phrase: *and of the worshipful and Holy Spirit*. This means there was a stage of composition *after* the Small *Asketikon*, that is, *LR 37*, which in turn was followed by a still later editorial insertion, in the re-edited *LR Prologue*, no earlier than the year 376.

After his sojourn in Annisa, Basil returned to Caesarea, never to visit Pontos again—he had little more than two years of life left to him. Meanwhile, he continued to work with the ascetics of Cappadocia—indeed, a resident community formed a central part of the so-called *Basiliad*, a kind of comprehensive Christian ‘new city’ set up by him in Caesarea. This final period occasioned a few more Questions/Responses, at that stage not known in Pontos. Meanwhile an opportunity to bring the Pontic reorganization of the Shorter Responses to bear on the transmission in Caesarea never materialized. So at the end of Basil’s life, there were, in addition to the Small

¹ Excerpts from Origen, in collaboration with Gregory Nazianzen.

² See below under ‘The thematic structure of the Pontic recension’.

Asketikon at least *three* concurrent recensions of the Great Asketikon: the Pontic, the Caesarean, and the Ask. 2 of which both the later versions had been a development.

To begin to add substance to the above brief sketch, it is necessary to consider the Scholiast.

THE SCHOLIAST³

How desirable it would be if we had a learned, careful text critic at a very early stage in the transmission of Basil's works, capable of giving a considered report on the contemporary textual record. In fact we have such, the learned Scholiast, the *endredaktor* of Ask. 4,⁴ what Jean Gribomont called the 'Vulgate' recension. He dates it from no later than the sixth century—perhaps as early as the late fifth century. Gribomont, *Histoire du Texte*, p. 159, describes him briefly:

Le scholiast est un érudit byzantin, qui semble bien avoir pris la peine, non seulement de rechercher quelques vieux manuscrits, mais d'aller en pèlerinage scientifique à Césarée et dans le Pont, aux endroits où s'est exercée l'activité de Basile. Il a vu la Basiliade, il a ramené de précieux exemplaires. Il en sait la valeur, et, dans les marges de la recension qu'il établit, il donne les éléments d'une introduction critique . . . Ces conjectures sont généralement intelligentes.

From the Scholiast's editorial notes (*scholia*, sing. *scholion*) we have independent confirmation of the existence of the earliest form of the Asketikon, which he calls the 'Small Asketikon':

Scholion 2

When, at an earlier period, before his episcopacy, he was questioned by the ascetics of his circle, he had his answers put into written form and gave them the Small Asketikon (τὸ μικρὸν ἀσκητικόν). He then reworked and expanded it, and sent it on to most devout monks who were earnestly

³ In this section the Scholia are translated from the Greek text as edited in Grib. 152–6. The Scholia are found in the following MSS: Scholia 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7 in Vatican grec 413 (Grib. 14); Scholia 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9 (a summary of Scholion 7) in Mt Athos MS Lavra 442 (Grib. 14); Scholion 8, which is another summary of Scholion 7, in Venice, Bibliotheca Marciana Fondo Antico 63 (Grib. 21). Fedwick adds Scholion 10, another summarization of Scholion 7, found in the Halki MS (= Fedwick's Ask. 2 recension) at the end of 'ErAp' 330. 'In my opinion, this Scholion is out of place: it was copied by the scribe from a MS of Ask. 4 in which it precedes ErAp 287–313.' *BBV* III. 61 n. 96.

⁴ See below, 'The recensions of the Asketikon'.

imploring him, once he himself had already been invested with the high priesthood. Accordingly, he considered it necessary to preface it with the discourse *On the Faith* and append to it a collection of testimonies from the God-inspired Scriptures (i.e. the *Moralia*).

The temporal sequence of this statement suggests that Basil was already reworking and expanding the Small Asketikon *before* he became bishop. But once he was made bishop, certain devout monks urged him to complete his revisions and send them a copy. This became the earliest instance of the expanded Asketikon. It is unlikely that his petitioners were Cappadocian locals. They were more likely from Pontos—perhaps even from Annisa itself, and from his own brother Peter.

In planning his own recension of the Great Asketikon (Ask. 4), the Scholiast undertook some labour to research and collate manuscripts. He found one in the *Basiliad* in Caesarea, which was still operational in his day; there was also a ‘very ancient’ manuscript that came from Pontos, and several ‘from the east’. The Scholiast, however, esteemed the Pontic manuscript as his oldest and most authoritative source, and decided to use it as the template of his own edition.

Scholion 3

The most ancient manuscript, brought from Pontos, from which this volume was transcribed (*μετεγράφη*), had only one title, prefixed to the beginning thus: ‘An Outline⁵ of Ascetic Life’ (*ὑποτύπωσις ἀσκήσεως*). I found this⁶ and the titles that follow in their sections, in the book from Caesarea and in the other manuscripts.⁷ Yet even in these the titles do not everywhere use the same terms or in the same way. So it appears that they were devised by certain learned men later, in order to ensure a clearly divided and unconfused reading.

He carefully noted the text variants between the various manuscripts and proposed very reasonably that they came about because Basil himself made amendments to his text in different circumstances of time and place, leading to a varied transmission in Basil’s own lifetime:

⁵ Or perhaps ‘Sketch’. Gribomont translates ‘Essai sur l’ascèse’.

⁶ i.e. Basil’s *On the Faith*.

⁷ i.e. the compiler had three sources of MSS available to him: from Pontos, from Caesarea, and from ‘the east’ (see Scholion 6 below).

Scholion 5

There are occasions when the very text itself in the volume from Caesarea differs (*καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν φράσιν παρηλλαγμένην*)⁸ from that of the manuscript brought from Pontos, as is the case here.⁹ The reason for this is, I think, that the great teacher was questioned at one time by some monks [e.g. in Cappadocia], at another time by others [e.g. in Pontos], but they were living in different places; so he took up his own copy (*τὸ ἰδιόγραφον*)¹⁰ and amended it as he thought fit, and so handed it over to be transcribed (*οὕτως εἰς μεταγραφὴν ἐκάστῳ δοῦναι*), to each [body] of those who were questioning him (*τοῖς αἰτήσασιν*).

Scholia 4, 6, and 7 provide important information on the differing arrangements and enumerations of Questions/Responses found by the Scholiast in the several manuscripts, and on his own editorial choices:

*Scholion 4*¹¹

Of these 55 chapter headings (*κεφαλαίων*), the most ancient volume (*ἀρχαιοτάτη βίβλος*) had only eighteen, for these are indeed the questions of the ascetics themselves, while the others were added piecemeal by readers (*ὑπὸ τῶν ἀναγινωσκόντων προσετέθησαν κατ' ὀλίγον*). Now in the oldest volume (*παλαιότατη βίβλος*), someone wrote on the side (*παρέγραψέν*) an extra nine chapter headings, while the volume from Caesarea has 32,¹² and in those that were in the east (*τοῖς δὲ κατὰ τὴν Ἀνατολήν*) 20,¹³ even so, some from each region have more, some less. For our part then, we have inscribed the eighteen questions on the full page (*ταῖς σελίσιν ἐνεγράψαμεν*)¹⁴

⁸ i.e. there is a difference not only in the *arrangement* or order of the material, but also in Basil's reported speech or text. This is important evidence and indicates caution in attributing to the insertion of a later editor what may well have come from Basil himself in different contexts.

⁹ The scholion faces *LR* 16. 2, *PG* 31. 957 line 35; see *PG* 31. 958 n. 16 and Grib. 151 and 162.

¹⁰ i.e. Basil revised the rough draft taken down by tachygraphers during local sessions and sent it back to his questioners to make a 'fair copy'.

¹¹ This scholion is found at the head of the Index to the Longer Responses in one manuscript (Lavra 442) and at the end of it in another (Vatican 413). Thus *κεφάλαια* does not mean 'chapters', but rather 'capitula', the titles or captions for the various questions/answers; Grib. 159.

¹² Added to the 18 just referred to, or 32 altogether? Grib. 157 argues for the latter.

¹³ The use of *κατά*, combined with some imprecision in his references suggest that the Scholiast/Vulgate editor consulted these MSS *in situ* during a study tour; Grib. 163. In the 6th cent. the 'east', formally, was the civil diocese of Oriens, centred on Antioch.

¹⁴ i.e. placed the chapter headings in the main column of text. Supplementary chapter headings were recorded in the margin.

and placed all the others on the side in the margin (τὰ δὲ ἄλλα πάντα ἐπιμετώπου παρεθέμεθα), for such also is the arrangement in the manuscripts that were from the east.

Scholion 6

In the volume from Caesarea, the chapter headings (κεφάλαια) of the ascetics' questions are all joined together (συνῆπται),¹⁵ as is also the case in the manuscripts that were in the east. But a better case obtains in the oldest volume from Pontos, for in one section are the more extended answers (πλατυτέρων ἀποκρίσεων)—which the great Basil himself was wont to call 'longer' (κατὰ πλάτος)¹⁶—and in another section the shorter answers (τῶν συντομωτέρων). However, in the actual arrangement of these shorter answers there is considerable discrepancy. In the manuscripts from the east, for example, there are 252; while a small number of chapter headings are found only in this volume and some only in one of the others.

For our part, we have written out everything according to the sequence (ἀκολουθως) of the volume from Pontos, and we have added at the end (ἐπι τοῦ τέλους) those questions not contained in this volume out of the volume from Caesarea.

Scholion 7¹⁷

This volume was written (ἐγγράφη ἢ βίβλος) from the oldest manuscript that was brought from Pontos and those places in which the great Basil practised the monastic life (τὸν μονήρη βίον ἡσκησεν); it has also been read against (ἀντανεγνώσθη)¹⁸ the volume from Caesarea, which was found in the poor-house (τῷ πτωχείῳ) built by him in what is now called the *Basileiados*.¹⁹ Some 27 chapters (κεφάλαια)²⁰ and the *epitimia* have been added out of the volume from Caesarea.

Scholia 6 and 7 basically mean that the Scholiast found two kinds of 'chapter headings' or titles: those inscribed in the text on the full

¹⁵ i.e. were organized in a single sequence.

¹⁶ See Shorter Responses 74, 103, and 220.

¹⁷ This Scholion appears after *SR* 286 in several MSS, e.g. Vatican grec 413 (see Grib. 151); while a summary of it, Scholion 8, appears in Venice, Bibl. Marciana 63 and in a Georgian manuscript; in Lavra 442, there appears an even shorter summary, Scholion 9.

¹⁸ i.e. not 'interweaving' the two texts, but one read against the other to compare them.

¹⁹ For Basil's 'Christian community complex', the so-called *Basileiados*, which included an ἀδελφότης (ascetic community), see Letters 94, Def. II. 148; a πτωχοτροφεῖον (hospice for the poor) 142, Def. II. 345; 143, Def. II. 347; 144, Def. II. 349; 150 (to Heracleidos), Def. II. 367; 176, Def. II. 461 and Letters 301, 313, 315, Def. IV.

²⁰ The context suggests this means chapter headings and all that follows, i.e. chapters.

page, and others added on the side of the text in the margins, more in the nature of suggestions for further topic headings. He found different proportions of these two types of headings in the various sources. He found already to hand *two* sequences of enumeration in the Pontic manuscript, one of the ‘Longer Responses’, and another of the ‘Shorter Responses’, whereas the other manuscripts presented all the Questions/Responses in a single numbered sequence. It bears emphasizing, the Scholiast did not invent the two sequences of Longer and Shorter Responses, the Pontic editor did. The Scholiast decided to follow the Pontic manuscript, but augmented it with the extra material he discovered in the Caesarean volume.

To sum up: the Scholiast or Ask. 4 editor is responsible for the final synthesis of chapter headings in his own edition. But he is not responsible either for the basic division of the Asketikon into ‘Longer’ and ‘Shorter’ Responses, or for the thematic organization of the Shorter Responses in his own edition, because this is as he found it in the Pontic manuscript.²¹

THE *EXTRAVAGANTES* AND VARIANT PASSAGES

Further evidence of the periodic revision and enlargement of the Asketikon is provided by the so-called *extravagantes*, texts of questions/answers that do not appear in Ask. 2, 3, or 4, but in a few manuscripts of Ask. 5, the Oriental recension (see below). They fit the remarks of Scholion 6 on the manuscripts from the east: ‘a small number of chapter headings are contained only in this volume’. The Scholiast does not testify that he made a point of including them in his recension, as he did with the material from Caesarea. Gribomont examined the style of the *extravagantes* and is certain that they are genuinely Basilian.²²

How and why did they disappear from the mainstream recensions? One reason is that most of them were doublets or cross-references to

²¹ To complete the record for the reader, Scholion 1 is as follows: ‘Here the Asketikon begins: yet there are others who, I do not know why, have prefixed another prologue, which begins with “There are many things shown through the God-inspired Scripture . . .”. But this is not contained in the oldest manuscripts and moreover, it does not contain the description of this treatise, for it is simply part of a letter written by Saint Basil himself to a canoness.’ The Scholiast refers to Letter 22, Def. 1. 128–41, which was originally part of Letter 173 to Theodora, Def. 11. 448–53; Grib. 161, 300. Scholia 8 and 9 are summarizations by later copyists of Scholion 7.

²² See Grib. 179–92.

other material on the same subject. *SR* 314 is the notable example.²³ It treats the same topic as the present *LR* 55, the Christian attitude to the ‘medical art’, and there is much overlap in the scriptural examples chosen, but it is much shorter. *LR* 55 by comparison is Basil’s later, more nuanced and mature synthesis of ideas on this subject. He displays a more positive attitude to medical art, perhaps because in the interim he has had more experience of the hyperascetics’ tendency to despise its use.

SR 314 shows especially clearly how copies of Basil’s earlier statements were retired from service in the light of later fuller statements—and that often the relegation of superseded texts was an editorial decision made by Basil himself. This is clear from some of the shorter *extravagantes*, where Basil simply refers his questioners to earlier statements on the subject in one of the Longer Responses.

There are also several notable variant passages. The text of most of these Garnier noted in his edition. In the light of remarks on the *extravagantes* above, it is naïve to presume that one or other variant must be the work of an editor *after* Basil. It is more likely that they are samples of Basil’s own treatment of the same subject in different places, which have survived in one transmission but not in another. This is exactly the Scholiast’s assessment in Scholion 5.

THE RECENSIONS OF THE ASKETIKON IN *BBV* III

It is now opportune to present a synoptic view of all the recensions of Basil’s Asketikon as they appear in Paul J. Fedwick’s magisterial work, *Bibliotheca Basiliana Universalis*. Volume III: *Ascetica* (*BBV* III) contains more than 800 pages, some 600 of which are devoted to a study of the textual transmission of the Asketikon. The seven recensions enumerated by Fedwick are listed below in summary form from *BBV* III, p. vii—with one difference: here a clearer distinction is made between the two fundamental stages of Basil’s Asketikon, the *Small* and *Great* Asketikons. The list is in the order of the chronological appearance of the recensions, and within each recension, of the sub-recensions. ‘Ask.’ is an abbreviation of ‘Asketikon’.

The Small Asketikon

Ask. 1, the Small Asketikon, surviving in a few fragments; mid-360s.

²³ Edited in Grib. 180–3.

Ask. 1r, the Small Asketikon as translated into Latin by Rufinus of Aquileia in 397, otherwise known in the West as the *Regula Basilii*.
Ask. 1s, the Syriac translation of the Small Asketikon, possibly made in Basil's lifetime.

The Great Asketikon

Ask. 2, the 'Basiliad', recension of the Great Asketikon closest to that of the 'volume found in the *Basiliad*' (Scholion 7); established as a distinct recension by Fedwick from a manuscript in the Library of the Patriarchate in Istanbul, Fedwick's 'i225', *BBV* III. 58–62;²⁴ early 370s.

Ask. 2p, a first Georgian translation by the monk Procopius, in the monastery of St Sava, Palestine, early 10th century.

Ask. 3, the 'Caesarean' recension = Gribomont's 'Studite';²⁵ late 370s.

Ask. 3h, the ancient Armenian version of this recension, 5th century.²⁶

Ask. 3t, a Hellenizing Old Slavonic translation (Middle Bulgarian + some Serbian elements) late 13th century.²⁷

Ask. 4, the 'Pontic' recension = Gribomont's 'Vulgate', by an erudite 5th–6th-century Byzantine editor, who based his edition on a 'very ancient' Pontic manuscript, with which he collated a Caesarean manuscript and certain 'manuscripts from the east'.

Ask. 5, the 'Oriental' recension, closest in arrangements to the 'manuscripts from the east' as described in Scholia 4 and 6; the 55 Longer Responses of Ask. 4 are divided into 20.²⁸

Ask. 5/6a, the Arabic versions, reflecting Oriental and Italo-Greek sources.

Ask. 5/7a, the 14th-century Latin translation of a text from *Meteora* by the Franciscan Spiritual, Angelo Clareno.

²⁴ '3f1', Fedwick xx. Subsequently, Fedwick has much promoted the text attested in this manuscript and corroborated by a Georgian translation.

²⁵ Named after the oldest manuscript witness, dated and signed on 1 Aug. 880, by the monk Athanasius, at the Stoudion monastery, Constantinople; *BBV* III. 72.

²⁶ Might the translator have been Mesrop Mashtotsz (361–440), inventor of the Armenian script, translator of the Armenian Bible and founder of Armenian literary tradition, who was also founder of a monastery 'according to the institutes of Basil'? Some scholars regard him as the real author of a homily to ascetics attributed to St Gregory the Illuminator which shows familiarity with the Armenian Asketikon. See Grib. 74–5; Fedwick 473–80. Fedwick, however, assigns it to the second half of the 5th cent. (*BBV* III. 184).

²⁷ See Fedwick's survey of Old Church Slavonic translations, (Fedwick 503–12), and his magisterial analysis of the manuscript tradition, *BBV* III. MS 241–98.

²⁸ It survives uncontaminated in only one 11th-cent. MS from Patmos. See *BBV* III. 116–31, with comparative table of A5 and A4 at 117–26.

Ask. 6, the ‘Italo-Greek’ or ‘Calabrian’ recension = Gribomont’s ‘Nil’ (for St Nilus, 10th-century founder of the Greek monastery of Grottaferrata, from which this recension was mostly disseminated).

Ask. 7, the ‘Misogynist’ recension, from Mt Athos, with all references to female community members excised.²⁹

Only the following recensions will be used in this work: the Ask. 11 (*Regula Basili*), Ask. 15 (Syriac), Ask. 2 (‘Basiliad’), Ask. 3 (Caesarean/Studite), and Ask. 4 (Pontic/Vulgate) recensions. Tables collating these five recensions, selected from Fedwick’s far more extensive tables, may be found in the Appendices.

SORTING ASK. 2, 3, AND 4

BBV III tends to be dismissive of the Scholiast/Ask. 4 editor and the Pontic manuscript on which he based his recension. On p. 62, Fedwick says of the Ask. 3 recension, that it ‘made no distinction between the *so-called* Longer and Shorter ErAp’, and on p. 87 that ‘these divisions [into 55 Longer and 313 Shorter Responses] were the work of editors and readers *and not of Basil*’. Yet we have the fact that Basil himself refers three times to the ‘More Extended’ or ‘Longer’ Responses e.g. *SR* 74: ἐν τοῖς κατὰ πλάτος εἰρημένοις. The clearest example of Basil’s inserting a reference to the ‘Longer Responses’ in an earlier Small Asketikon text appears in *SR* 220.

Moreover, Basil makes other references to the ‘Longer Responses’ in the discarded *extravagantes*, as mentioned above. A division between ‘more extended’ treatments of general principle (*RBas.* 1–11) and briefer responses to *ad hoc* issues (*RBas.* 12–203) is already discernible in the Small Asketikon itself—though as yet they form part of a single sequence. It simply remained to render this

²⁹ i.e. all references to women in the Great Asketikon were edited out; see Grib. 54 and 60. ‘Misogynist’ is perhaps an unfortunate term. After legislation against ‘double monasteries’ in Justinian’s *Novella* 123: 36 and Canon 20 of the 2nd Council of Nicaea in 787, such provisions were considered obsolete in a monasticism now defined in terms of single-sex communities. Nicaea II, Canon 20 at first forbids the founding of any new double monastery (διπλοῦν μοναστήριον), but then concedes: ‘The double monasteries (τὰ διπλᾶ) that have existed up to now should continue to exist according to the Rule (τὸν κανόνα) of our holy father Basil and their constitutions should follow his ordinances’ (Norman P. Tanner (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* (London: Sheed & Wards, 1990), II. 154–5). The Athonite tradition of rigorous exclusion of all females stems not from any Cappadocian or Greek tradition but more from Syrian and Egyptian monastic ideas.

primitive division more explicit, which was accomplished during the Pontic revision in the mid-370s.

A careful study of the concordances of the different recensions reveals that essentially the same body of Longer Responses is found in *all* the recensions of the Great Asketikon, however differently divided and enumerated they might be. The only innovation that the Scholiast editor introduced is to have contributed to the subdivision of some of the Longer Responses by recording in the margins all the *kephalaia* he found in all his sources. The content as such is not really affected. Thus, the 44 longer Questions/Responses of the Halki manuscript (Ask. 2) and the 41 Questions/Responses of the Ask. 3 recension correspond *exactly* to the 55 Longer Responses of Ask. 4.

In a very important piece of evidence *SR* 318 shows that Basil himself had instituted a sequence of numbering specific to the Shorter Responses, that is, in the Pontic revision he reordered the Longer and the Shorter Responses into two distinct series of numeration. The Scholiast copied the idea of a second sequence of numbering for the Shorter Responses from the Pontic manuscript itself.

Another innovation in Ask. 4 over Ask. 2 and Ask. 3 is the rearrangement of the Shorter Responses on thematic lines. But again, this is not the Scholiast's doing, who makes it very clear that he is but following the sequence he found in the ancient Pontic manuscript.

Fedwick establishes that the oldest *ordering* of the Great Asketikon is that of the Ask. 2 recension, for it is closest to that of the Small Asketikon. This means there was also some subsequent editing in Caesarea itself, which somewhat rearranged this primitive Great Asketikon into what is now the Ask. 3 recension. Later, the Pontic editor effected a wholesale reordering of the Shorter Responses. Significantly, a series of complex tabulations carried out by Gribomont shows that each of the twelve thematic blocks of the Pontic 'Shorter Responses' (see below, 'The thematic structure'), shows an internal order corresponding to that of the Ask. 2 recension rather than the Ask. 3 recension. To put it in plain words, the Pontic editor reworked a copy of the Great Asketikon in its earlier recension (Ask. 2) rather than in its Caesarean revision (Ask. 3), which accords well with the historical sketch outlined above.

But there is another consideration. We know that of the twelve thematic blocks of Shorter Responses in Ask. 4, the twelfth consists of supplementary material the Scholiast editor found only in the volume from Caesarea. However, the second-last block, the eleventh, contains material also of no consistent theme. It looks very like

supplementary material added *after* the completion of the Pontic revision in the mid-370s. Therefore Basil was still alive and still answering questions from ascetics *after* the reorganizational work of the Pontic editor. This confirms again that the Pontic editor was Basil himself.

Some of Gribomont's and Fedwick's remarks in this regard are worth noting. On p. 160 Gribomont dates the 'most ancient' Pontic manuscript used by the Scholiast editor to the early fifth century, on p. 236 he goes so far as to make the following statement: 'Le manuscrit du Pont, ancêtre principal de V, représentait, au moins pour les GR, un remaniement littéraire de S. Il est très rare que cette révision touche au sens; jusqu'ici, *elle semble être le fait de Basile* ("it seems to be the work of Basil"; my emphasis).' Finally, in his chronology, 1980, p. 17, Fedwick himself dates the 'Pontic collection' to 376 or 377, that is, to the period of Basil's last visit to Annisa. This is exactly the position taken here.

CHOOSING A RECENSION FOR TRANSLATION

In Fedwick's opinion, p. 671, a new edition of Basil's Great Asketikon 'ought to be based on Ask. 2 and must find room for all the extra pieces in order to show better the development of Basil's thinking, always alert to concrete circumstances rather than abstract principles'. He has constructed a hypothetical scheme called 'Ask. B' (for 'Asceticon Basili'), which he proposes as the form of a new critical edition. 'Ask. B' includes all the *extravagantes* and the doublets of Questions/Responses from all the editions in a supplement.

The present author, however, is less than convinced that a new English translation of the Great Asketikon, or even a new critical edition of the Greek text, should follow 'Ask. B', or even be based on Ask. 2. Fedwick's relegation of the Scholiast/Ask. 4 editor to inferior status is unpersuasive, if, as has been shown above, the Pontic editor on whose work the Scholiast based himself was none other than Basil himself.

So, which recension to choose for a new translation of the Great Asketikon? On the one hand, Ask. 2 reflects the oldest format of the Great Asketikon, that is, the order least subject to later revision. On the other hand, the Scholiast redactor has safeguarded the Pontic 'Great Asketikon', which preserves Basil's final reordering of his own material. Which is preferable, an interim arrangement of the Great Asketikon undoubtedly to be traced to Basil himself, or a

version incorporating Basil's own final editorial stamp, together with some later rearrangements which do not affect the content? Which is more 'authentic'?

The choice of the present translator is for the second option, the Ask. 4/Pontic/Scholiasist recension, since there is a value, if accessing the *last state* of Basil's own mind is our concern, in acknowledging not only the content but the reordering and perhaps thematization that was carried out in Pontos. Certainly the Ask. 4 editor *edited* his material, but it seems to me that his version is the best means we have for accessing the last state of reordering mandated by Basil himself, without inventing yet another recension.

In the absence of a new critical edition of the Greek text, Garnier's edition, as a specimen of Ask. 4, is still remarkably serviceable. Speaking of the text family he calls 'Vb' Gribomont says that 'serait la forme la plus fidèle au modèle Pontique. Cette recension B, largement diffusée, s'est bien conservée, et mérite toujours d'être consultée.' This judgment is confirmed in *BBV* III. Gribomont's text family 'Vb' is Fedwick's 'pa' (*BBV* III. 99–108), which he confirms is the *best* of the Ask. 4 text families (*BBV* III. 99). Fortunately, this very text family of Ask. 4 was not only among the texts collated by Garnier, but he made it the structural basis of his entire edition. The exemplar of this text family used by him is Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale gr. 964, which he referred to as 'Regius Tertius' (Fedwick 1303, *BBV* III. 101). Given the choice of the Ask. 4 recension, the following assessment by Fedwick is not unwelcome: 'The edition of the works of Basil prepared by Julian Garnier and Prudentius Maran remains to this day, on the whole, unsurpassed.'³⁰

Nevertheless, to accede to Fedwick's just plea, all the *extravagantes* will be added at the end of the Shorter Responses. They are translated from Gribomont 180–6. They follow Gribomont's sequence, except that the brief 'cross-references', which, excepting one, are not accorded an *SR* number anyway, are postponed to the very end. One 'cross-reference' piece is accorded the title of 'SR 314 bis', though it is not a doublet of *SR* 314, but an *LR* 55 cross-reference. It finds its place in this translation under that heading. At this stage it has not been possible to include translations of the three Questions/Responses that survive only in the Syriac.

³⁰ P. J. Fedwick, 'New Editions and Studies of the Works of Basil of Caesarea', in G. A. Privitera (ed.), *Paideia Cristiana* (Rome: GEI, 1994), 613–27 at 613. Grib. 329 says that Dom J. Garnier spent twenty years on the preparation of the edition. The third volume, containing the ascetica, first appeared in 1722. It represented a huge advance in systematic treatment of textual transmissions.

MANUSCRIPTS COLLATED FOR GARNIER'S EDITION

Since it is necessary on occasion to refer to the Greek manuscripts Garnier collated for Basil's *ascetica*, they are noted here. They are discussed in the third volume of the second edition of the *Opera Omnia*, 1839, reissued as *PG* 31, columns 159–60. They are listed below with the recension to which each belongs, and with references to treatment in J. Gribomont, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de S. Basile*, and in Fedwick, *BBV* III, ending with Fedwick's code for the manuscript.

Regius primus, formerly Regius codex 1908, collated by François Combefis for his 1679 edition, though with the omission of many variant readings = Paris, Bibl. Nat. fonds grec 505, 12th century; Ask. 3; Grib. 38; *BBV* III. 80, 1253.

Regius secundus, formerly Regius codex 2288, a fragment consisting of three folios, collated by Combefis = Paris, Bibl. Nat. fonds grec 504, 12th century, showing aspects of both Ask. 4 and Ask. 3, once of the abbey of St Justin at Padua; Grib. 23; *BBV* III. 80, 1253.

Regius tertius, formerly Regius codex 2895 = Paris, Bibl. Nat. fonds grec 964, 11th century; it represents the best text family of Ask. 4 and supplied the structure of Garnier's edition; Grib. 16; *BBV* III. 101, 1303.

Colbertinus codex 3093 = Paris, Bibl. Nat. fonds grec 503, 12th century; Ask. 6, Grib. 47; *BBV* III. 144, 1399.

Coislinianus primus = Paris, Bibl. Nat. fonds Coislin 231, 11th century; Ask. 3 (mediocre quality); Grib. 31; *BBV* III. 75, 1237.

Coislinianus secundus = Paris, Bibl. Nat. fonds Coislin 233, 11th century; Ask. 7; Grib. 62; *BBV* III. 174, 1418.

Vossius codex, named after onetime owner G. J. Vossius, collated by Andrea Scottus = Leiden, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit BPG (Greek collection) 1, late 10th century; the best witness of Ask. 3 known to Garnier; Grib. 31; *BBV* III. 75, 1238.

Garnier also consulted the *editio princeps* of Basil's *ascetica*, based on a collation of four manuscripts, which was published at Venice in 1535³¹ and again in Paris in 1618 and 1638; it is usually referred to in the notes as *lectio editi*; Grib. 326–9.

³¹ Though published under the name of the printer, Niccolini da Sabbio, it was actually the work of Reginald (later Cardinal) Pole and his secretary; Grib. 326.

THE *REGULA BASILI*

The Small Asketikon is the earliest stage of the composition of the Great Asketikon, even in terms of its strictly Pontic transmission. But since the Greek text of the Small Asketikon does not survive except for a few fragments, and since there is as yet no critical edition of the Syriac version, Rufinus' Latin translation, the *Regula Basili*, remains the privileged witness to the Small Asketikon. The critical edition published by Klaus Zelzer in 1986 is used in this translation. Notes on the manuscripts collated by Zelzer may be found in Appendix 4.

THE THEMATIC STRUCTURE OF THE PONTIC RECENSION

De Vogüé resolved the structure of the Longer Responses into seven subsections:³² (1) *LR* Prol.–7: the importance of obedience to the commandments; (2) 8–15: renunciation and entrance into the community; (3) 16–23: the discipline of the passions; (4) 24–36: the good order of the community; (5) 37–42: work; (6) 43–54: the duties of superiors; (7) 55: the Christian use of medicine.

Clarke resolved the Shorter Responses into thirteen subsections:³³ (1) *SR* 3–20: repentance and conversion; (2) 21–84: sins; (3) 85–95: poverty; (4) 96–113: the duties of superiors; (5) 114–25: obedience; (6) 126–40: fasting; (7) 141–56: work; (8) 157–86: interior dispositions; (9) 187–90: relations with family; (10) 191–238: the virtues according to scriptural teaching;³⁴ (11) 239–78: moral exegesis of scriptural passages; (12) 279–86: a miscellaneous first supplement; (13) 287–313: the Caesarean supplement.³⁵

³² A. De Vogüé, 'Les Grandes Règles de saint Basile: Un survol', *Collectanea Cisterciensia* 41 (1979), 204.

³³ W. K. L. Clarke, *St. Basil the Great, a Study in Monasticism* (Cambridge: CUP, 1913), 64. The analysis is confirmed by Grib. 247–8. Gribomont's 'X' sequence, 166–78, 193–208 corresponds to that of Clarke's. See also *BBV* III. 87. 1.

³⁴ Grib. 206 observes that the questions often have a Messalian flavour, perhaps due to the influence of Eustathius of Sebasteia; Basil's answers are always sober.

³⁵ Grib. 206–7 accounts for the appearance of the first three, *SR* 287–9 in the Small Asketikon by suggesting that Scholion 7 was displaced by three numbers. Beginning from the index of the Caesarean MS the Vulgate editor counted the number of questions/answers missing from the Pontic MS and it came to 27. The index, however, may still have been counting the *extravagantes SR* 315–17, doublets which by then had already been edited out of the body of the Caesarean text. At a very early stage a copyist would have moved the Scholion three Q/Rs backwards to find the number 27 declared by the Scholiast.

The Short Responses at the beginning of each of these blocks are certainly Pontic material, confirmed by equivalents in the *RBas.* (Small Asketikon). But there are no *RBas.* equivalents toward the end of the blocks. It has been suggested that the Ask. 4 redactor may not only have added new Caesarean material at the very end of the Great Asketikon (*SR* 287–313) but also inserted it intermittently in the main body of Pontic material, toward the end of each thematic section.³⁶ It is possible, however, that the extra material without *RBas.* parallels within each of these blocks may be referred to the ‘Pontic’ Great Asketikon rather than the additional Caesarean material.

THE GRAPHIC PRESENTATION OF THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION

The aim is to show as clearly as possible how the Small Asketikon, as retrieved from Rufinus’ Latin version, is embedded in the later Great Asketikon. The comparison between the two texts is distilled as far as possible in the following graphic features of the translation:

1. **Bold text:** text considered common to both the Small Asketikon (through the *RBas.*) and the Great Asketikon.
2. Plain text: later text found *only* in the Great Asketikon.
3. (Text in parentheses): Rufinus’ glosses of his original *text*, i.e. the lost Greek Small Asketikon.
4. Sans serif text: text of the Small Asketikon preserved *only* in the *RBas.*, either (1) absolutely, or (2) text so heavily re-edited and dispersed in the Great Asketikon, that it merits being considered original text in its own right.

This graphic presentation of the translation has a very practical purpose. It is designed to show as immediately as possible: (1) How Basil edited his earlier work. (2) How Rufinus edited the Small Asketikon in the process of translation. It is intended as something of a working diagnostic tool, a sophisticated ‘crib’, so to speak, for the comparison of texts, whether of the Latin and Greek, or of the earlier and later editions of the Asketikon.

Technical examinations of Rufinus’ translation techniques in the *Regula Basili* and Basil’s editorial techniques in the Great Asketikon do not, of course, make for easy reading. Though such detailed work is the indispensable basis of the historical investigation, it is perhaps best postponed to the latter part of these introductory studies. The

³⁶ See Rousseau, appendix II, 358–9. There is one anomaly. The first three Shorter Responses in the Caesarean addition, i.e. *SR* 287–9 have parallels with the *RBas.*

less technical reader can bypass it, while specialists can consult it at leisure. At this stage, the reader should be sufficiently informed to engage both the text of the translation and the historical argument.

THE APPROACH TO TRANSLATION

The translations of the Great Asketikon by W. K. L. Clarke and the *Longer Responses* by M. M. Wagner have been consulted. It has been interesting to observe how these authors treated the Greek text. Both take a more liberal approach to translation than would be suitable for the present work. Clarke frequently reveals himself as translating from the Latin translation of the Greek provided by Garnier. Sometimes he over-interprets to the point of mistranslation. On occasion his preconceptions mislead him as to what he thinks he sees in the text. This is true, for that matter, of Garnier himself, who notwithstanding meticulously supplies alternative readings in his apparatus. I gladly acknowledge that I have retained some of Clarke's happy turns of phrase. He was a good stylist in the English language, if of his time. Wagner's pleonastic translation was not found so useful.

A formal approach to translation is necessarily taken here. The aim is to respect the integrity of the original text as far as possible, even to word-for-word correspondence and a sensitivity to the original syntax. Yet a wooden effect is not acceptable either. For Basil intended to communicate, heart to mind and mind to heart. If one is to translate well, it is also necessary to enter with sympathy into this intention. So one strives to coordinate the variant concerns. A favourable factor is the usually spare and direct quality of Basil's ascetical discourse. It is not the glorious poetic theological prose of St Gregory Nazianzen! Yet the contemporary English-speaking reader must accustom him or herself to the fact that to the educated ancients, a *sententia* was most often conceived of in terms of what we would call a paragraph. A sustained flow of logical sequence, involving subordination and nuanced consequences and contrasts maintained in a single long sentence or across several sentences, is of course somewhat confronting to modern popular English, now so formed by the instant character of visual media. This translation aims to combine both solid material serviceable for scholarship and the appeal to the heart that Basil's teaching was intended to be. It will not repay a 'quick read' that demands an instant leap from text to the top of the head, but a thoughtful, patient savouring that allows time for the text to reveal its texture and its riches.

The Ascetic Community in the Two Versions of Basil's Asketikon

INTRODUCTION

When the texts of the Small Asketikon and the Great Asketikon are distinguished as clearly as possible,¹ the forms of the ascetic community as they appear in the two versions can be elucidated and compared. But it is necessary first to anticipate some historical discussion and introduce two vitally important documents to the inquiry, the Canons of the Council of Gangra and the *Life of St Makrina (VSM)*. Both these works are indispensable for understanding the issues and clarifying the questions to be asked in comparing the two versions of the Asketikon.

THE COUNCIL OF GANGRA: CURBING ASCETIC EXAGGERATIONS

About the year 340² a council of bishops met at Gangra, the metropolis of Paphlagonia, the province just west of Pontos. A covering letter and a list of canons were drawn up and sent to the bishops of Armenia. The issues of concern were disturbances to the Church caused by an upstart ascetic movement, whose leader they named: Eustathius (i.e. of Sebasteia). The preamble and the canons detail the socially and ecclesially disruptive tendencies of this movement: the disparagement of marriage, the unilateral adoption of celibacy by ascetic-minded spouses; the subverting of parent-child, slave-master relationships; the provocative stance of ascetics with regard to the local church; their commandeering of church funds for distribution to the poor; their wearing of outlandish clothing; women behaving as if the ascetic life emancipated

¹ See the detailed analysis in Chs. 5 and 6.

² See Appendix 7 for Greek text and English translation and for discussion of the problems in dating the council. The earlier dating to 340/1 is argued there and maintained here.

them from sexual differentiation, shown by their cropped hair and male attire.³

Gangra shows that the negotiation of a *modus vivendi* between Christians who aimed at a maximal interpretation of their faith and Christians who followed the ordinary way of life of those in the world, was not achieved overnight. After issuing a list of twenty anathemas, the epilogue (or ‘Canon 21’) makes a stern but not unsympathetic appeal to the enthusiasts. This peroration is highly relevant to our assessment of Basil’s ascetic programme. The character of its discourse should be noted: the emphasis on the Scriptures, the sense of the ‘Church of God’ and the necessity of inclusion and participation in it and especially the avoidance of a specialized terminology for Christian ascetics. All of these will mark Basil’s discourse.

THE LIFE OF ST MAKRINA AND THE COMMUNITY AT ANNISA

St Makrina the Younger (327–79), the first-born of Basil Senior and Emmelia, was the elder sister of Sts Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Peter of Sebasteia. During the 350s and 360s, through her influence, a monastic community was gradually fashioned out of the family household at Annisa near the river Iris, in Pontos. How this came about will be probed at depth in Chapter 4. Most information about Makrina comes from the *Vita Sanctae Macrinae*, or *VSM*, written by her brother Gregory no earlier than late 381, after a visit to Jerusalem.

The *VSM* gives us first-hand details about the community at Annisa as it was in the year 379 at Makrina’s death. It was a single community referred to as ἡ ἀδελφότης, comprising a women’s section (ἡ γυναικωνίτις or ὁ παρθενῶν),⁴ a men’s section (ὁ ἀνδρῶν),⁵ some provision for taking in and bringing up children, a hospice

³ St Jerome’s Letter 22 to *Eustochium* shows that these ascetic novelties were far from being a phenomenon peculiar to Anatolia. He ascribes to the urban ascetics of Rome practices very similar to those condemned at Gangra: ‘Other women change their garb and put on men’s dress; they cut their hair short and lift up their chins in shameless fashion; they blush to be what they were born to be—women—and prefer to look like eunuchs . . . those men also whom you see loaded with chains and wearing their hair long like a woman’s, in contravention of the Apostle’s precept; and with all this a shaggy goat’s beard, a black cloak and bare feet braving the cold’, from F. A. Wright (tr.), *Select Letters of St Jerome* (London: Heinemann, 1980), 117.

⁴ See *GNO* 411: παρὰ τῆς γυναικωνίτιδος [sic] and τοῦ παρθενῶνος.

⁵ See *GNO* 388: ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρῶνος and 411, ἐν τῷ ἀνδρῶνι.

(*ξενοδοκεῖον*)⁶ for receiving guests and housing lodgers (*GNO* 411, Callahan 189)—though they might be invited either to the men’s or women’s quarters as appropriate (*GNO* 411, Callahan 189). The men and women worshipped together in a single church (*ἡ ἐκκλησία*, *GNO* 388, Callahan 174), but in distinct choirs. The women and the men did not take meals together, but separately. The women wore distinguishably feminine attire, notably a veil (*GNO* 403, Callahan 184). Makrina lived in the women’s quarters and appears to have been the over-all head, for Gregory several times calls her *ἡ μεγάλη*, ‘the Great One’.⁷ A deaconess Lampadion was in charge of the women’s section under Makrina (*GNO* 402, Callahan 183). Peter, Makrina’s youngest brother to whom she had been ‘father, teacher, attendant, mother and counsellor of every good’ (*GNO* 383, Callahan 172), headed the men’s section (*GNO* 411, Callahan 189). At the same time he had a ministry to all as priest, for he had been ordained by Basil in c.371 (*GNO* 385, Callahan 173). Indeed, Gregory of Nyssa follows Basil himself in referring to Peter in terms of highest esteem.⁸

The Annisa community was characterized by a climate of assiduous prayer structured on the sung recitation of the psalms and Scripture, industrious work, hospitality, practical ministry to the needy of the district, and a spirit of collaboration with the local bishop and his clergy (*GNO* 407, Callahan 187), to whom Makrina had entrusted the distribution of her inheritance (*GNO* 393, Callahan 177–8).

Offering insight into the community arrangements is the passage where Gregory, very much the episcopal liturgist, organizes the funeral rites. He separates the men and women streaming in from the countryside and assigns them to either the ‘choir (*choros*) of virgins’ or the ‘rank (*tagma*) of monks’ (*GNO* 407, Callahan 187)⁹ and then coaches them in harmonious psalmody. Here is an emphasis, very Basilian one might think—scriptural and apostolic as far as Basil was concerned—on ‘good order’, on the synthesizing of all elements such that none are belittled, none exceed their due bounds, none are confused with others. These are strongly practical

⁶ See *SR* 155, 286 and *LR* 15. 1 and note.

⁷ On this implication of the epithet see Stramara 299–300.

⁸ See Gregory of Nyssa, *VSM* 9: ‘he attained such virtue that in later life he seemed in no way inferior to the great Basil himself for eminence in virtue’.

⁹ The parallelism between *τῷ τῶν παρθένων χορῷ* and *τῷ τῶν μοναζόντων τάγματι* should be noted. When Gregory uses the formulaic phrase ‘choir of virgins’, the word ‘choir’ means more than simply an ensemble for singing, but a rank or order.

reverberations of a neo-Nicene doctrinal perspective: trinitarian, ecclesial, personal, and ordered.

Before one even begins to look at the community in the Small Asketikon, it will be perceived immediately that the caveats of the Council of Gangra are certainly operative in the Annisa community in 379.

FEATURES OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE SMALL ASKETIKON

1. *Basil's ascetic teaching in the Small Asketikon*

The entire Small Asketikon is an exercise in the intense *ressourcement* of the Christian life in the Scriptures, beginning with the 'precepts of the Lord' in *RBas.* Prol. 4 (*SR Prol.*), the 'commandments of God' (*RBas.* 1. Q), and the 'God-inspired Scriptures' in *RBas.* 1. 5 (*LR 1*), and so on.

The questions asked of Scripture in the Small Asketikon are predominantly of a moral kind: *how do we act?* This moral bent is reflected throughout the Small Asketikon in an emphasis on work and obedience (Elm 70–2). Yet before such concerns can be engaged, Scripture must be questioned anagogically: *whither are we going?* So *RBas.* 2 (*LR 2–6*) presents a sophisticated religious anthropology, perhaps with some Stoic and Origenistic colouring, but above all scripturally sourced, aiming to show that the call to intimacy with God is something innate to human nature, implanted in us by God at our very creation, both as a race and as individuals. But this Godward call is only inchoate, a 'seed of the word': *logos spermatikos*. It will not attain its end automatically, but needs to be addressed and nurtured by the Word from without, above all in the form of the divine commandments, if it is to reach maturity.

The basis of authority in the community is the educative 'ministry of the word', proposed very much in New Testament terms (*RBas.* Prol. 3/*SR Prol.*). The conception underpinning the entire Small Asketikon is that of a collaborative inquiry into the scriptural word under the guidance of an attested and approved teacher. To be 'attested' is very important. The charismatic gift of the word and the skills needed to accompany it must be demonstrably present before a person is approved to preside over the community or is assigned one of the subordinate offices in the community. Basil himself is the model example of such an attested and approved teacher. Basil, though not yet bishop, speaks authoritatively. He is more than respected, he is sought out as a teacher among teachers.

Collaborative obedience to the scriptural word informs the practice of evangelical mutual correction in community (e.g. *RBas.* 15, 16, 119. 5 = *SR* 98, 3, 45). The Small Asketikon already evinces a sophisticated treatment of the dispositions and motivations of human behaviour (e.g. *RBas.* 22/*SR* 289 and note).

The rationale for the existence of dedicated ascetic communities is derived from no other source than that vocation proposed to *all* the baptized—it is never couched in any other way. The term ‘philosophy’ or ‘to philosophize’ as a synonym for Christian ascetic life never appears in the Small Asketikon. This is an obviously deliberate exclusion since it was common parlance at the time as the discourse of the two Gregorys, Socrates, and Sozomen shows. Other specialist terms, such as ‘monk’ are also studiously avoided. Showing little conception of ‘two’ ways of life for Christians, or of the later distinction between Gospel ‘precepts’ and ‘counsels’, the Small Asketikon addresses ‘Christians’ who mean to embrace all the implications of baptism and the commandments of the Lord in their entirety. Aspects of ascetic life that will become prescriptive norms of monastic life are here argued from the Scriptures inductively and cohortatively. Examples are: withdrawal from worldly life (*RBas.* 2. 94–112/*LR* 6), the necessity of ordered community life (*RBas.* 3/*LR* 7), the wearing of a poor common dress (*RBas.* 11/*LR* 22). Celibacy, at first simply implied as part of Gospel teaching on renunciation,¹⁰ receives explicit attention in *RBas.* 7. 3 (*LR* 15).

2. The structure of the community

1. First, the type of community envisaged in the Small Asketikon is a single community referred to by the New Testament term of ἡ ἀδελφότης.¹¹ It has the same comprehensive structure reported of Annisa in the *VSM*. It includes men, women, and children who live in regulated separate houses (*RBas.* 7. 7/*LR* 15. 1). The acceptance of

¹⁰ See the use of Luke 14: 26 at *RBas.* 4. 16/*LR* 8.

¹¹ This must be deduced from the Latin translation. Whenever ἀδελφότης (deriving from 1 Pet. 2: 17) occurs in parallel texts it is not translated *fraternitas* but usually in a form of *fratres* prefixed with a preposition, as in *ad fratres*, e.g. *RBas.* 196. Q (*SR* 94. Q), 192. Q (*SR* 105. Q). Gribomont avers that ἀδελφότης first appeared only in the Great Asketikon (e.g. ‘Le Renoncement au monde dans l’idéal ascétique de s. Basile’, *Ivénikon* 31 (1958), 299; and ‘Sainte Basile’, *Théologie de la vie monastique* (Paris: Aubier, 1961), 106), but this does not stand to reason. Rufinus does use *fraternitas* once, at *RBas.* 6. 9 (*LR* 10. 1), in a passage where ἀδελφότης also occurs, but there is such awkwardness between the two texts it is not possible to make a firm judgment. Comparison with the Syriac text would be helpful here.

children is particularly significant to our historical enquiry. It means that Basil's circle, and hence Annisa, did not have to wait for the Great Famine (c.369) and Makrina's rescue of orphans for the exercise of this ministry to children.

2. There is specific mention of women in *RBas.* 132 (*SR* 153), *RBas.* 174 (*SR* 220), *RBas.* 197 (*SR* 108) *RBas.* 198 (*SR* 109), *RBas.* 199 (*SR* 110) and 201 (*SR* 111). Otherwise they are just as much comprehended by the provisions of the Small Asketikon as are the men. They take care of women's traditional textile work for the entire community (*RBas.* 132). There is a male superior (*presbyter/proestos*) and a female superior (*presbytera/proestosa*). The *presbyter* appears to have some presidency over the whole, probably—this has to be somewhat teased out—because the priesthood comes to be increasingly associated with his role (*RBas.* 21 and 199). While she is in some sense subordinate to the *presbyter*, he may not act unilaterally towards the sisters without her: *RBas.* 197 (*SR* 108), *RBas.* 201 (*SR* 111). So in practical terms the *presbytera* acts largely as a *co-ordinate* superior. Concord between them is maintained by regular consultation: *RBas.* 198 (*SR* 109). Among the women, there will be a number of office-bearers subordinate to the *presbytera*, such as the sister in charge of the wool-workers (*RBas.* 132).

3. The community is constituted as a well-ordered body of Christian men and women distinguishable from the general way of life of Christians and of society at large. They are an ἀδελφότης, a 'brotherhood', *RBas.* 15. Q (*SR* 98) of 'those dedicated to God', *RBas.* 5. Q (*LR* 9. Q), which implicitly means professing virginity or celibacy. They wear a common poor habit, which identifies their profession when they are abroad, *RBas.* 11 (*LR* 22, 23). A certain privacy is maintained: the 'discipline and order of the brothers' could be upset if visitors or even one of the brothers freely wander into work areas within the community, *RBas.* 101 (*SR* 141).

4. They practise 'communion' both within the community and with the local church and an ordered hospitality, *RBas.* 31.4 (*SR* 187). Visitors might stay for a while to learn the way of life; hopefully they will be attracted to a permanent commitment, *RBas.* 87 (*SR* 97). Those wishing to enter are carefully tested over a period of time: *RBas.* 7 (*LR* 14, 15). Acceptance into the community means a definitive break with one's former life and one's relatives in the flesh (*RBas.* 31–3/*SR* 187–9); such a step intended stability in the community, the breach of which was looked on with the utmost seriousness—so much so that *RBas.* 7. 14–15 regards those who 'transgress their profession' as apostates from God. The Small

Asketikon in no way regards profession in the community as a provisional arrangement that might yield later to a change of mind, but considers it a lifelong commitment.

5. A function of this lifelong incorporation in community is the complete abdication of personal property, *RBas.* 29 (*SR* 85). The importance of disbursing one's property to the poor on 'entering the service of God' is emphasized in *RBas.* 5 (*LR* 9). Once this responsibility is discharged, strict self-divestment and voluntary personal poverty is of the highest importance for a life of evangelical trust in God and for life in community.

6. The community lives in obedience under a superior: δ *πρόεδρος*, *is qui praest*, 'the one who presides'—*RBas.* 15. Q (*SR* 98), *RBas.* 44. Q (*SR* 27), *RBas.* 197. Q (*SR* 108) appearing in feminine form also, *RBas.* 198. Q (*SR* 109) in feminine form likewise, *RBas.* 80. Q (*SR* 120), *RBas.* 96. 1 (*SR* 134), *RBas.* 106. Q (*SR* 146). In the context of collaborative obedience to the word and mutual correction, members must obey the commandments as the Lord obeyed the Father 'even unto death': *RBas.* 83 (*SR* 199); and obey their superiors as they obey the Lord: *RBas.* 70. 3 (*SR* 38); this order of priority is most important: the Lord first, and in the Lord, one's superiors. There is a body of office-bearers within the community subordinate to the superior: the *presbytera* in charge of the women, whose office is co-ordinate with his: *RBas.* 198 (*SR* 109) and 201 (*SR* 111); those in charge of children: *RBas.* 7 (*LR* 15); a steward or cellarer: *RBas.* 105, 111, 112, 113 (*SR* 145, 148, 149, 150); the one who dispenses alms for the community: *RBas.* 98 (*SR* 100); and various overseers of work: *RBas.* 101, 102, 131, 132 (*SR* 141, 142, 152, 133).

3. Remedies of Eustathian excesses

Does the Small Asketikon know of the ascetic correctives issued by the Council of Gangra?¹² Consider the following instances:

1. The concluding paragraph to the Gangra Preface deplors the fissiparous individualism of the enthusiasts. So too, the Small Asketikon wages war on all symptoms of individualism and self-pleasing (*RBas.* 3.26/*LR* 7); Basil inculcates an obedience diametrically opposed to the independent if not to say arrogant manner of the enthusiasts (*RBas.* 70.3/*SR* 38). Here, in his earliest edition he insists on the necessity of the cenobitic life, the ordered life in

¹² The argument of the following few pages was presented at the 14th International Conference on Patristic Studies at Oxford in 2003, and will appear in *Studia Patristica*, 2005.

communion and the imperatives that flow from it, for the Gospel requires community life: *RBas.* 3 (*LR* 7).

Other examples of militancy against self-pleasing are: one may not follow one's own unattested ideas about what is good: *RBas.* 12 (*SR* 1); 'idiorrhymic' tendencies are disallowed: *RBas.* 30 (*SR* 86); one may not travel about without a mandate from the superior: *RBas.* 80 (*SR* 120); one may not 'get back' at a superior by going on a hunger-strike: *RBas.* 133 (*SR* 122); ostentatious and self-serving ascetic exaggerations are to be avoided because self-control has reference above all to one's own will: *RBas.* 88, 89, 129 (*SR* 128, 129, 90); private fasting is to be entirely subordinated to the common life: *RBas.* 181 (*SR* 137).

2. Gangra, Preface 5 and Canons 6 and 7 censured the Eustathians' tendency to assert their independence from local congregations, priests, and bishop and to commandeer the distribution of church funds to the poor. Likewise the Small Asketikon promotes collaboration with local church authorities, teaching in *RBas.* 31.4 (*SR* 187) that distributions of property are to be entrusted to 'those who preside over the local churches', that is, the local bishop or his deputy. Such is the similarity between the two texts there may even be verbal echoes. It is likely Basil took example from Makrina here, who had made this her practice as far back as the mid-350s.¹³ Extending this disposition within the community are *RBas.* 98, 99, 186 (*SR* 100, 87, 91): ministering to the poor belongs to those duly entrusted with the task.

3. One of the hyperascetics' tendencies had been the loose association of men and women ascetics as in the examples of Glycerius reported by Gregory Nazianzen, and of Aerius reported by Epiphanius. The Small Asketikon, on the other hand, envisages neither separate 'one-sex' communities nor 'mixed' communities where men and women ascetics live together indifferently. Instead, both sexes are brought together under the umbrella of a single ἀδελφότης, though they live in separate houses and their meetings are subject to authorization and witness: *RBas.* 174 (*SR* 220).

In line with the concerns of Gangra, Preface 7 and Canons 13 and 17 that women ascetics were adopting male attire, the Small Asketikon observes a distinction between male and female dress: *RBas.* 143.2 (*SR* 210) and, implicitly, *RBas.* 11.27-30 (*LR* 22.3). This had also been Makrina's practice (*VSM*, *GNO* 403, Callahan 184). A distinction of dress may also be inferred from Letter 2, Def. 1. 20-1,

¹³ See *VSM*, *GNO* 393, Callahan 177-8.

where Basil frowns on the practice of men wearing their belts high on the waist as *γυναικῶδες*, ‘proper to women’.

4. Transparently answering the complaints addressed in Gangra, Canon 16, where children were in no way to secede from their parents on a plea of piety, Basil teaches that children brought to the community must be received from their parents to the testimony of many witnesses, so as not to give a pretext to ‘those of ill-will’: *RBas.* 7. 4 (*LR* 15. 1).

5. *RBas.* 144 (*SR* 50) echoes the misgivings of Gangra, Preface 4 and Canon 12 over the ascetics’ use of exaggerated clothing, usually of an ostentatious meanness. This, together with Basil’s care to speak only of the ‘clothing fitting for a Christian’, makes a Gangra reference almost transparent.

6. *RBas.* 168 (*SR* 248) and *RBas.* 124 (*SR* 204) appear to be dealing with the temptation to *gnosis* or spiritual elitism, a feature of the Anatolian hyperascetics from the extreme Eustathians of the mid-fourth century to the Messalians at the century’s end.

7. Gangra, Preface 9, Canon 2 dealt with the importance attached by the hyperascetics to distinctions between classes of foods. Basil certainly encountered Judaizers of whom this was true and perhaps Manichaeans as well.¹⁴ In *RBas.* 181 (*SR* 137) he rules out such an attitude for Christians.

8. *RBas.* 87 (*SR* 97) deals with another tendency of the enthusiasts: ‘ascetic homelessness’.¹⁵ Basil takes a pastoral approach. These wanderers would be better won over to stability in the community, but, because of potential duplicity, there must be careful discernment in receiving them.

9. *RBas.* 127 (*SR* 207) addresses another typical temptation of the hyperascetics: to consider themselves beyond the necessity of mundane work. Basil on the contrary could hardly insist more strongly than he does on the necessity of diligent work in the communities; its basis, however, is not that of serving oneself, but of obeying the dominical and apostolic call to serve the needy; for one’s own needs one must trust to the Lord’s provision through the community.

10. The epilogue of the Gangra legislation (or ‘Canon 21’) almost reads as a charter of Basil’s ascetic reform and discourse, if from the perspective of bishops looking on the ascetic movement from

¹⁴ Basil brusquely dismisses vows to abstain from pigs’ flesh in Letter 199, Def. III. 102–35, Canon 28 at 119. He mentions the Manichaeans in Letter 188, Def. III. 11.

¹⁵ They were the spiritual ancestors of the ‘gyrovagues’ or wandering monks deplored in *RB* I. 10–11.

without, whereas Basil operated very much from within it. A comparison of the linguistic register of the Small Asketikon and of the Gangra legislation shows common features: the same avoidance of specialist terminology, the same focus on the Scriptures, the same promotion of but one Christian ‘way’, the same imperative of inclusion in the one Church of all Christians.

4. *The community of the Small Asketikon: Conclusions*

The evidence is clear: Basil was well aware of hyperascetic tendencies in general and of Gangra’s censures of ascetic excesses in particular, even at the earliest stage of the Small Asketikon, in the mid-360s. Not only that, but the way that Basil speaks with his interlocutors suggests that he and the communities have been working with these ideas for some time. The view expressed in Fedwick 15 n. 81 that ‘most of these texts correcting the Eustathians’ excesses are found only in *Asc. 2 and 3* [= The Great Asketikon] but none in *Asc. 1* [= the Small Asketikon]’,¹⁶ is not borne out by the evidence.

That Basil never mentions the council *explicitly* is not difficult to explain if we accept the identification of the first listed bishop as Eusebius of Nicomedia: for Basil, the memory, though not the ascetic doctrine of Gangra would have been clouded by its being held under the auspices of this leading Arian bishop: for example, Letter 263, Def. iv. 95, ‘Eusebius of Constantinople who indeed was second to no one in sponsoring the impious doctrine of Arius’.

If Basil felt obliged nonetheless to inculcate Gangra’s concerns at least *implicitly*, it is because Eustathius, the mentor of his youth, had long done so, being himself a reformed ‘Eustathian’, of which more discussion in the next chapter. Throughout the 360s there was nothing but complete collaboration between Eustathius and Basil on what was needed for the reform of the Christian ascetic life in community.

The picture of Basil’s ascetic teaching and of community structure that emerges from the above analysis does not confirm any image of a Basil benignly offering ‘advice’¹⁷ to an *ad hoc* party of lay-

¹⁶ The italics and emphasis are Fedwick’s.

¹⁷ Gribomont, ‘Obedience and the Gospel: St Basil’, *Hallel* 12 (1984), 8. The article is a translation of ‘Obéissance et Évangile selon Saint Basile le Grand’, in *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle* 21 (1952), 192–215. It is important early evidence of the approach Gribomont would take in the interpretation of Basil’s *ascetica*. His magnum opus, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de Saint Basile* (Louvain: Muséon, 1953) strictly confined itself to textual matters. See also ‘Le Renoncement au monde dans l’idéal ascétique de s. Basile’, for further revisionist interpretation of Basil’s ascetic doctrine.

enthusiasts who might be considered free to come and go and do as they please, the ‘spontaneous groups of Basilian ascetics’¹⁸ that some scholars persuade themselves constitutes the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the Small Asketikon. No, the earliest version of the Asketikon condones no such sarabaitic lifestyle. Rather, it sets out to correct it.¹⁹ It was precisely Basil’s intention to win such freelance enthusiasts from their way of life, a transition which he himself had to some extent made. In the mid-360s he teaches from the Scriptures the necessity of the cenobitic life properly so called—a sober, disciplined, doctrinally coherent and well-grounded form of community life.²⁰

Another important conclusion is that the form of the community at Annisa as portrayed in the *VSM* and the form of community envisaged in the Small Asketikon are in overwhelming agreement.

Thus by the time of the Small Asketikon there had already been considerable prior development in the Anatolian ascetic movement

¹⁸ Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé and the Great Monastic Tradition’, *American Benedictine Review* 36 (1985), 255.

¹⁹ Sarabaites (a word of Coptic origin) were ascetic enthusiasts who lived in small informal groups. A classic definition of ‘sarabaites’, from a late, pejorative point of view, is found in *RB* 1. 6–9; its background is Cassian, *Conferences* 18. 4; 18. 7, where Abba Piamun tells of his visit to Pontos and Armenia during the reign of Valens. He found that the class of sarabaites was flourishing and ‘the system of coenobia in some cities few and far between, yet we never made out that even the name of anchorites was heard among them’. In short, the form of ascetic life Basil originally took up in 357/8 in his retreat at Annisa was more nearly sarabaitic than cenobitic.

²⁰ In all this I take exception to the ‘anti-monastic’ reading of Basil’s *ascetica*. The earliest exponent of this attitude seems to have been Gribomont, as noted above. A legitimate concern to avoid an anachronistic eisegesis of later monastic developments in the reading of Basil’s text, becomes overriding to the point of distortion when it obscures any evidence that in the Small Asketikon Basil is dealing with distinct ordered cenobitic communities. There seems to be some animus against any sign of latter-day ‘religious life’. Given the facts as presented here, such a view necessarily leads its proponents into many inconsistencies. This anti-monastic hermeneutic is a feature of Fedwick’s *Charisma*. On 17–18, for example, Fedwick hesitates over ‘the fact that some passages of Basil’s ascetic works can be interpreted as favouring the constitution of particular (“monastic”) communities’. To him they are ‘ambiguities’. On 163 he professes to find very few traces in the Small Asketikon of an advanced cenobitic life and then infers that ‘at least at the beginning of his career, Basil did not contemplate the practice of ascetic life as being necessarily confined to Christians living communally’, but that it was ‘applicable to all Christians’. But, of course, the Small Asketikon does not represent the beginning of Basil’s ascetic career. It is the culmination of much prior development in his thinking. On 164 Fedwick asserts ‘only at the time of the *Great Asketikon* does there seem to be emerging a difference in the status of Christians living in the world and cenobites’[!]. Rousseau at first (191) shows himself influenced by the anti-monastic thesis, but on 193 and 196 shows some independence and by 216–17 he refers to ‘the ascetic community’ when citing a series of Small Asketikon texts.

and in Basil's own thinking. The Small Asketikon is both the fruit of years of antecedent development and the earliest stage of a literary process culminating in the Great Asketikon itself. It documents the reforms that Basil had been working to achieve in the period 363–5, marking the stage reached by his ascetic doctrine at the time of his return to Caesarea in late 365. It is patent that under Basil's guidance, the Christian ascetic community was already making great strides in the direction of what would become canonical monastic life.

FEATURES OF THE COMMUNITY IN THE GREAT ASKETIKON

1. *A continuity of oral setting*

Much, though not all, of the new material in the Great Asketikon arose in the same kind of extemporized oral context as did the Small Asketikon, that is, meetings between Basil and the ascetics in which questions were put to him and answers given, all taken down by tachygraphers. The new cases reflect concerns of the questioners, pastoral exigencies and practical situations not yet met with in the period of the Small Asketikon. Some of the issues, especially those raised in the entire block of Longer Responses 24–55, indicate a way of life that has evolved beyond the stage reached in the Small Asketikon.

As an example of the continuing 'case law' character of the Great Asketikon is the discussion of possible reasons for departing from the community. The following are cases that had not been previously considered in the Small Asketikon:

1. *LR 36*, those who would transfer to another community, which Basil curbs as incipient gyrovagrancy, and those who want to return to the world. The argument oscillates between the two cases. Both are treated as defection from one's profession.

2. *SR 74*, those wishing to leave to become hermits.²¹

3. *LR 36* and *SR 154*, brothers who are absent for spiritual ministry to other communities do so not only legitimately but commendably.

4. *LR 36*, the only legitimate departure from the community is

²¹ Clarke 293 n. 3: 'There are occasional hints in the Shorter Responses which suggest that Basil is tolerating practices which the Longer Rules exclude', an example of which, according to Clarke, may be his treatment of those wishing to go out from the community to live as hermits in *RBas.* 3. 67 (*LR 7. 1*).

the case of a brother who may leave if he is receiving harm. But he must openly denounce what is in error and seek his community's amendment first. If this proves futile, then he must leave, but even then he has an obligation to show the matter to those who have the competence to judge, the ecclesiastical authorities or superiors of other communities.

2. *Remedies of Eustathian excesses continued*

1. New measures appear that are clearly related to the concerns of Gangra: slaves are to be received only with the consent of their masters, otherwise they must be returned. The only exception is if their allegiance to God is at risk (*LR* 11). If spouses wish to enter the community, their mutual consent also is required as a matter of scriptural teaching (*LR* 12). The only children allowed to be received to the community without the mediation of guardians are orphans (*LR* 15).

2. Related to the complaints dealt with in Gangra, Preface 2, 3, Canons 5, 6, *SR* 310 warns that the celebration of the Eucharist belongs in a properly constituted church, not in an ordinary house, except in exceptional circumstances. *SR* 265 affirms the distinctive character and necessity of the priestly office. On the issue of boycotting married priests (Gangra, Preface 12, Canon 4), the Great Asketikon is silent. From all that we know of Basil's view of celibacy and the 'pneumatic' character of the priestly office, it is unlikely that he would have been a force for fostering the custom of married priests in the Church. It had, at best, his tolerance.²²

3. Gangra, Preface 13, Canon 20 concerned the Eustathians' practice of spurning the chapels and feasts of the martyrs. Basil as bishop had perforce to make use of the festivals of the martyrs, although he valiantly strove to curb associated commercial activity—a tendency apparently inherited from pagan festivals.

²² Cf. Gregory of Nyssa's work *On Virginité* written to Basil's agenda. It is aimed at persuading young men to adopt the life of virginity for the Lord—and not just any young men, but above all Christian students in the schools of rhetoric in Caesarea. It might even be possible to discern Gregory's purpose more closely. The work ends with much talk of the priesthood, and we are perhaps somewhat startled at the recourse to Exod. 19: 15, which encourages sexual abstinence as a preparation for theophany, and then Exod. 19: 22, which applies the practice to priests. I would suggest that Gregory is targeting his own students who might be thinking of enrolling themselves in the clergy for eventual ordination. But instead of their marrying in the interim, he wants to attract them to the ideal of virginity, and that not in any freelance fashion, but under the guidance of the way of life of which Basil is the acknowledged master, the life of the monastic communities.

Concerning the presence of ascetics at these occasions, however, he is at best ambivalent. It is not quite clear whether he may have preferred *monks* as such to stay away from these festivals altogether, or simply from the marketing side of it (*LR* 40).²³

4. Continuing the principle in Gangra, Preface 9, Canon 2 and already briefly dealt with in *RBas.* 181 (*SR* 137), *LR* 18 lays down guidelines for avoiding the hyperascetics' cult of distinctions between classes of foods.

Taking into account the evidence in the Small Asketikon presented above, this new material cannot mean that the concerns of Gangra are only seen in the Great Asketikon, but that the hyperascetic enthusiasm, spiritual elitism, and independence from the Church already met with in Gangra in 340s and targeted in the Small Asketikon in the 360s continued to recur to the century's end, independently of any reforms promoted by Eustathius or Basil, until they reached their apogee in Messalianism.

3. *Admission to the community: New developments*

1. In *LR* 15 the requirements for admission to the community are given far more attention than they had received in the Small Asketikon. Besides the children already mentioned in *RBas.* 7, prospective entrants from the ranks of orphans (*LR* 15), slaves (*LR* 11), and of the married (*LR* 12) come under consideration.

2. There seems to be only one case of outright discontinuity between the teaching of the earlier and later Asketikons. Basil has had second thoughts on the issue of candidates' disposal of their property. Whereas in *RBas.* 5 entrants are dissuaded from resorting to court action against relatives unjustly holding back their property, this position is abandoned in the addition to the text at the end of *LR* 9. Indeed, Basil in this later stage would even provide a spiritual motive for recourse to secular coercive action.

3. While permanence in the community is already regarded with the greatest seriousness in *RBas.* 7. 14–15, the commitment is now given formal expression by means of a public canonical vow for monks in *LR* 15,²⁴ to be witnessed by the 'authorities of the Church'. The role of the bishop is in 'hallowing' and 'confirming' the consecration of the body as an offering to God. This is the first

²³ On this topic see J. Bernardi, *La Prédication des Pères Cappadociens* (Marseille: Presses universitaires de France, 1968), 77–85.

²⁴ See Clarke's comments in *The Ascetic Works of St Basil*, 177 and E. F. Morrison, *St. Basil and his Rule: A Study in Early Monasticism* (Oxford: OUP, 1912), 91.

attested appearance of a canonical vow for monks and it is a watershed in the history of religious life in the Church. Here Basil brings religious *impulse* on the subjective side, and sacramental church *order* on the objective side, into careful alignment. The sense of this vow is more than simply a reaffirmation of baptism (*contra* Fedwick)²⁵ for it involves an explicit commitment to *celibacy* in the context of professing permanent membership of a particular local community.

Basil underscores the seriousness of such a commitment. The strongly negative verdict on the defection of professed members already shown in *RBas.* 7 is re-emphasized in *LR* 14, which speaks of the ‘sacrilege’ of such persons; they are to be treated as ‘anathema’ to the community. Basil’s view here reflects the greater canonical sanctions he assigns elsewhere to virgins of the Church who have forsworn their public profession; for example, the canonical letters 188. 6, Def. III. 27 and 199. 18, Def. III. 105–9. Now, thanks to Basil, male ascetics imitate the ancient tradition of female consecrated virgins. But they gain church recognition as consecrated celibates only through a vow taken in community (Letter 199. 19, Def. III. 111).

It appears the commitment of male celibates needed this additional public sanction if their profession were to be accorded a gravity similar to that of female virgins (whether members of a community or not). Is this what the addendum to the canon about forsworn virgins in Letter 217. 60, Def. III. 251 is about? As it stands in the Greek, it is free of grammatical gender. Semantically it may well be taken to extend the penance of adultery to forsworn male celibates, men who have made a public vow of virginity in monastic communities and have subsequently forsworn their vow. There is no mention here of virgins living ‘in the world’ as contrasted with those living in a monastery. Perhaps under the influence of Gregory Nazianzen, Basil’s judgment has gained in equity between Letter 199. 19, Def. III. 111 and Letter 217. 60, Def. III. 251.

4. *Men and women*

As has been shown, Basil’s type of composite community with separate houses for men and for women is already well documented in the *RBas.* The Great Asketikon does not really add anything

²⁵ ‘The so-called ascetic profession (*ὁμολογία*) was to be nothing other than “a reconfirmation of the baptismal promises”’, Fedwick, *Charisma*, 165, quoting U. Neri.

substantially new, but consolidates and adds nuances to the already existing structure.

As discussed above, Basil in *LR* 35 shows himself strongly in favour of the establishment of a single community rather than the continuance of two separate communities in the same locality, for example, of men and of women. For Basil the incorporation of women and men in one community seems to have been partly dictated by a concern for women struggling to ‘go it alone’ either as individuals or as one-sex communities (*SR* 154).

The extensive additions to *RBas.* 7 in *LR* 15 afford a detailed picture of the composite nature of the community, showing how male and female children are brought up in the community and how they live in their own ‘houses’ separate from the professed members.

Other new sections on the topic of men and women are *LR* 33, *SR* 82 and 154. *LR* 33 gives a more considered treatment of a theme adumbrated in *RBas.* 174 (*SR* 220): the monitoring of meetings between brothers and sisters of the community. Perhaps motivated by the same concerns that lie behind *LR* 35, *SR* 154 considers that the presence and availability of both the brothers and the sisters in the community is the desirable ideal and that its forfeiture at times is an unfortunate necessity. *SR* 82 reflects the concerns of a superior—it may be a female one, a *presbytera*—in how to unite respect for the elder women of the community with their necessary correction.

5. *The preference for life in the country*

In considering what type of work the community should undertake, *LR* 38 is above all concerned to preserve the seclusion of the community from worldly engagements and disturbances. Basil wishes to keep the brothers resident and participant in community life as much as possible (*LR* 39). He is concerned to curb wandering about, especially in cities. With such aims in view, he encourages settling in the country and proposes agriculture as a particularly suitable type of work for the communities (*LR* 38).

It may be asked whether this preference for life in the country is implicitly another corrective of Eustathian tendencies. Ascetics were known—not always favourably—for their presence and activity in cities, particularly in church politics, for instance during the 340s at Constantinople and after the council of 360 in the same city. These turbulent urban ascetics can be linked in the early phase with Eustathius through his association with the Homoiousian leaders Macedonius, Marathonius, and Basil of Ancyra.

Perhaps part of the same concern is Basil's reluctance to have monks take part in the festivals of martyrs, for the character of these assemblies had degenerated, it seemed to Basil, even in his own lifetime (*LR* 40).

6. Confession and mutual correction

The Small Asketikon had already insisted on the necessity of repentance, confession, and the ministry of correction: *RBas.* 3 (*LR* 7. 3), *RBas.* 16 (*SR* 3), *RBas.* 17 (*SR* 4), *RBas.* 21 (*SR* 288), *RBas.* 24 (*SR* 158), *RBas.* 25 (*SR* 159), *RBas.* 26 (*SR* 7), *RBas.* 27 (*SR* 8), *RBas.* 28 (*SR* 9), *RBas.* 122 (*SR* 47), *RBas.* 191 (*SR* 182), *RBas.* 199 (*SR* 110), *RBas.* 200 (*SR* 229).

In the Great Asketikon, however, Basil canvasses this topic more extensively and in depth. As a result this most important aspect of Christian community life: mutual correction and encouragement in spiritual progress, acquires in the Great Asketikon a richly nuanced texture.²⁶ New notes that appear are: confession may be received by a body of seniors in the community who are not the superior (*LR* 26); the correction of a superior by a senior member (*LR* 27); superiors of communities mutually correct and encourage one another at regular conferences (*LR* 35 and 54); and in a development of the perspective in *RBas.* 13 (*SR* 114), the whole community may be called to amendment of life by an individual member who is not the superior. If the community will not listen, this member will ultimately bring in ecclesiastical witness (*LR* 36).

Basil's characteristic teaching on the 'equivalence of sins', already adumbrated in *SR* 4 (*RBas.* 17. 3) and the interdependence of all the commandments, already appearing in *LR* 16. 3 (*RBas.* 8. 21), are taken up again in *LR* Prol. 2 and developed at length in *SR* 293.²⁷

²⁶ See esp. *SR* 227 and note, *SR* 229 and note, *SR* 288 and note.

²⁷ Consequently the statement in Fedwick 14 n. 81, that this doctrine is not found in the *Asceticum Parvum* is puzzling. This doctrine is a central feature of the *De Iudicio Dei*, which Clarke 15 and 55–6 dates to the early 360s. Fedwick dates it to c.371. In the *De Iudicio Dei* Basil gives an account of his early conversion in the late 350s when he went through a spiritual crisis over the terrible confusion in the Church at the time. There is no mention of Eustathius, which is as noticeable as Gregory's silence about him in the *VSM*. If the silence can be construed as deliberate, it may point to a later dating. *De Iudicio Dei* is marked by an anxiety for unity within the Church; it is also evidence of Basil's teaching on the *monotropos bios*, the 'one way' of the Christian life in *LR* 20. On these ecclesial concerns see K. Suso Frank, 'Monastische Reform in Altertum', in R. Bäumer (ed.), *Reformatio Ecclesiae* (Paderborn and Munich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1980), 49.

7. *Communion between the communities*

A new note in the Great Asketikon which very much echoes Basil's ecclesiology is his concern to foster a practical *communio* not only *within* the community but *between* communities; it is what some modern commentators have called a 'congregational trend'.

In *LR 35* Basil, wishing to oppose the spirit of rivalry, contentiousness, and needless duplication of resources, urges in the strongest possible terms that neighbouring communities be joined together into one. This very probably addresses the situation encountered in *SR 181*.

LR 35. 1 and *LR 36* envisage that if any community has more than one member possessed of the charisms that fit them to be an 'eye' to the body, that is, a superior, they should be sent to other communities in need of such a guide. At the very end of *LR 35. 3* Basil even posits the idea of a supervisory body administering the affairs of several communities together.

This 'communion between communities' is also seen in *LR 44*, which suggests that a selected band of brothers from one community might carry out the marketing for a number of communities, and in *SR 285*, where Basil does not conceal his displeasure at communities haggling with each other over the price of goods for sale.

As another function of wider communion Basil, in *LR 54*, promotes regular conferences between superiors of the different communities and the practice of mutual supervision.

8. *The community of the Great Asketikon: Summary*

The form of the ascetic community in the Great Asketikon shows overwhelming continuity with the community in the Small Asketikon. Only one significant change of teaching was detected, concerning what to do if the property of an entrant is contested by relatives (*LR 9/RBas. 5*).

Consequently the ascetic teaching of the Great Asketikon in relation to that of the Small Asketikon may be considered to be one of development, broader application to particular cases, clearer definition, and consolidation. The Great Asketikon frequently spells out what is already latent in the Small Asketikon. The same or similar issues arising in new situations are given more nuanced considerations and receive more detailed norms. For example, while the ascetic community's inclusion in the greater Church is a theme already present in the earlier version, the Great Asketikon articulates it at greater length in a number of ways, especially when it

makes profession in the community a public, episcopally witnessed act (*LR* 15).

The Great Asketikon insists on a full Pneumatology, appropriate to the mid- to late 370s and aimed at weaning Pontic ascetic communities from the last vestiges of Eustathius' influence.

The Great Asketikon, in short, was always a 'work in progress' while Basil was alive, something of an ongoing collaborative project between the ascetic communities and their esteemed teacher and father, Basil, likely to be activated on suitable occasions. Only Basil's death brought the process closure. The body of teaching accumulated by then were considered the definitive compendium of the great Father's teaching on what can now be properly called *monastic life*, the ascetic movement integrated in the form of distinct cenobitic communities into the common purpose of the orthodox (neo-Nicene) Church—both on the level of the local churches and of the universal Great Church.

The Geography behind the History

INTRODUCTION

Few maps published in connection with the Cappadocian Fathers aim at much in the way of accuracy or comprehensiveness. Several repeat not a few of the misplaced guesses and mistakes in this area over the years.¹ Therefore it seemed best to focus historical geographic research in the composition of a new map, now facing the first page of Chapter 1. The map is far from definitive, but proposed as a working tool awaiting the results of further research.

It was necessary first to pay attention to ancient literary sources of important geographical information, to studies in Anatolian historical geography and to maps of both historical Asia Minor and contemporary Turkey.² Every place mentioned in Basil's letters and in

¹ e.g. Although Jerphanion in his 1911 article 'Ibora—Gazioura?' clearly showed the inadequacy of Ramsay's location of Ibora at ancient Gazioura—modern Turhal (see W. M. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (1890; repr. New York, 1972), 326–9), nearly fifty years later Calder and Bean's map repeated the superseded geography, as have more cursory maps since then.

² The following publications proved useful: David Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950), map in vol. 2 facing p. 1616; W. M. Calder and J. E. Bean (eds.), *A Classical Map of Asia Minor* (British Institute of Archaeology in Asia Minor, London; suppl. to *Anatolian Studies* 7 (1957)†), a revision of John Anderson's *Map of Asia Minor*, published in John Murray's Classical Series, 1903, which had drawn much on the pioneering work of W. Ramsay, *Historical Geography of Asia Minor*, 1890; David French, *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor*, fasc. 2, parts 1 and 2 (Oxford: British School of Archaeology at Ankara, 1998); F. van der Meer and Christine Mohrmann, *Atlas of the Early Christian World*, tr. Mary Hedlund and H. H. Rowley, 3rd edn. (London: Nelson, 1966); *The Times Atlas of the World*, Comprehensive Edition, 1975 (the systematic topography of this edition I found more accurate and useful than the picturistic evocations of more recent editions); and, most recently and helpfully, Richard J. A. Talbert (ed.), *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). Last but by no means least was Stephen Mitchell's *Anatolia*, vol. 1, map 8: Roads, garrisons and recruitment in central Asia Minor, and map 9: The Euphrates Frontier. Mitchell's maps present a schematic view of the road system in central Anatolia, usefully recording the military fortifications of the Euphrates frontier.

most of the Letters of the two Gregories within the parameters of the new map is included. The sees of bishops (very partially) and metropolitan bishops (comprehensively) are also noted. With regard to metropolitan sees, there is some uncertainty, because their designation tended to follow the civil organization of provinces and sub-provinces, which of course changed over time. A relevant example concerns the bishop of Tyana, who, according to Basil's letters, unilaterally claimed metropolitan status as soon as the Emperor Valens divided Cappadocia into two in 372 (or 373). Nicopolis is another case. Was its bishop a metropolitan? Bishop Euphronius' transfer from Colonia to Nicopolis suggests as much.³ At one time there were at least *three* divisions of Armenia.⁴ The following four provincial capitals and metropolitan sees might then be nominated: Nicopolis for northern Armenia Minor, Sebasteia for lower Armenia Minor, Neocaesarea for Pontos Polemoniakos, and Amaseia for Helenopontos.

Latinized forms of names that have had long acceptance in English have been retained; for example, Caesarea for Kaisareia. Alternative names in parentheses are most commonly the older names recorded in Strabo or Ptolemy, such as Mazaca for Caesarea or Cabira for Neocaesarea. Tentative placements, either the guesses of others or my own linguistically based guesses (e.g. Himmeria at Bethammaris or Getasa at Aza), are identified by question marks.

With the map in a portrait presentation, its horizontal parameters were set at Iconium on the left to mark Basil's extensive correspondence with Amphilochius there and at Trebizon on the right as the maritime end of the Roman eastern frontier. Vertically the map extends from Sinope on the Black Sea coast to Cyprus and upper Phoenicia in the south. If the coverage of the map tilts somewhat towards the east and Syria, this only reflects the preoccupation of Basil's correspondence in Pontic, Armenian, and Syrian affairs.

THE ROMAN ROAD SYSTEM

It is vital to gain a clear idea of the Roman road network, since this was the infrastructure of political, military, and commercial life.

³ See Basil, Letters 195 and 227-30, Def. III. The fact that Euphronius' predecessor, Theodotus of Nicopolis, was so concerned about the doctrinal vacillations of Eustathius of Sebasteia, makes all the more sense if it was the due concern of one metropolitan for a neighbouring metropolitan, a collaborative oversight required by Church Canons. See Letter 130, Def. II. 293.

⁴ See Rousseau 279.

Roads were one of the major communication systems of the times, the other being seagoing transportation. By their means legions were ferried to and from the eastern border during the intermittent wars with the Persians, and the imperial post was maintained with maximum facility. A programme of extending the Anatolian road system, begun in the Flavian period, had attained considerable sophistication by the late fourth century AD.

In his maps, Mitchell distinguishes roads for wheeled traffic and roads for pack animals. It was thought worthwhile here to add a category of 'major transit routes'. Nominated for this category are the Cilician Road (Pergamum–Ephesus–Tarsus) and four routes providing quick military access to the eastern frontier, namely the Pontic Road (Constantinople–Satala), the Cappadocian Road (Constantinople through Ancyra along the populous Halys valley through Caesarea to Militene), the route from Syrian Antioch to Zeugma, and the road that threaded the eastern border. There is also the Constantinople–Antioch route with a connection between the Cappadocian and Cilician Roads through Colonia.⁵ Checks with French's *Roman Roads* tend to confirm this choice of major routes, for example, the many Roman milestones found from north of Comana to Militene reveal the importance of the Cappadocian Road, even though at this stretch it traversed quite mountainous terrain.

Strangely, Mitchell, in his map 8 of volume i, does not indicate any road at all between Tyana and Caesarea. Perhaps this is because it was not a direction much needed for military movements and off the principal land route between Constantinople and Antioch. The omission is remedied in his map 3, volume ii, Western Cappadocia. It is entered on the map as a road for vehicular traffic, though French records only one milestone along this route.

The location of Nyssa and Venasa has received various solutions, depending on Gregory of Nyssa's Letter 6, to Ablabius.⁶ Mitchell's

⁵ Curiously, Rousseau 294 writes of 'Basil, placed midway at Caesarea on the major route between Antioch and the capital'. However, the major route between Antioch and Constantinople passed through the Cilician gates and through Ancyra and did not go through Caesarea. Perhaps Rousseau refers to the Cappadocian road just discussed, which might be approached from Antioch through Germanicia and Arabissus. The rough terrain from Germanicia to Cocussus allowed only for pack-animal traffic.

⁶ Ep. 6, *GNO* VIII/II. 34–7, translated as Letter 3 in *NPNF* 2nd ser. 5. 529–30. This letter records what seems to be Gregory's triumphant return to Nyssa after his exile. One of the manuscripts records his departure from a town of Earsou, the location of which much puzzled commentators. The Pasquali/Jaeger edition clarified that this was a corruption of the *ἐαυτῶν* found in other manuscripts.

two maps just mentioned are conflicting. Following his map 3, volume ii, Venasa is here provisionally located on the river Halys at modern Avanos.⁷ From there a road veers to the south-west and then to north-west along the flank of high country to join the Tarsus–Ancyra road north of Parnassus. Nyssa, in this construction, is located not on the river Halys, but on a tributary. A connection linking the road from Venasa to the Nazianzus–Colonia road appears in other maps as part of a connecting route between Caesarea and Iconium and is recorded here. As to Nyssa, modern Nevşehir has been suggested, but it seems too far south. Further work on its location is needed.⁸

When Makrina was on her deathbed her brother Peter left Annisa looking for their brother Gregory, but they missed each other (*VSM*). According to Gregory's Letter 19, he had paused in Cappadocia on a return journey from Antioch. If we understand this to be Caesarea, then he took the quickest route from there to Makrina's side, through Sebastopolis, Comana, and Ibora. Perhaps Peter sought him at Nyssa in western Cappadocia by taking a south-westerly route through Amaseia, Euchaita, and Tabia. To offer other possibilities two lesser routes are recorded: a route through Tavium down to the Chamanene district where Basil's family had extensive property and an Ancyra-bound route to the north of the Halys. A local route crossing the Halys to Nyssa along the valleys of tributary rivers must be assumed.⁹

During preparations for the Nicene council in 325 the Emperor Constantine extended the use of public conveyance to Christian bishops.¹⁰ Thereafter bishops frequently availed themselves of this

⁷ See N. Thierry, 'Avanos-Vénasa, Cappadoce', in H. Arweiler (ed.) *Geographica Byzantina* (Paris: Byzantinia Sorbonensia 3, 1981), 119–29.

⁸ The 'Cappadocian triangle' (Caesarea–Parnassus–Tyana), has now received the same kind of comprehensive investigation as carried out by Jerphanion for the 'Pontic triangle' of Neocaesarea–Annisa–Comana. See N. Thierry, *La Cappadoce de l'antiquité au moyen âge* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002).

⁹ Mitchell discusses Gregory of Nyssa's Letter 19 and the geography of his movements in 'The Life and Lives of Gregory Thaumaturgus', in J. M. Drijvers and J. W. Watt (eds.), *Portraits of Spiritual Authority: Religious Power in Early Christianity, Byzantium and the Christian Orient* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 112–14.

¹⁰ See Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 3. 6; Theodoret, *HE* 1. 6. Constantine had long employed this expedient. In a letter to the bishop of Syracuse he charges him to use a public vehicle (δημόσιον ὄχημα) on the way to the Council of Arles in 314; Eusebius, *Church History* 10. 6. 23. For its continued practice see *Life of Constantine* 4. 43.

imperial concession, though emperors might manipulate it as they sought to dominate the Church.¹¹ Emperor Julian revoked the privilege. This is of particular significance when considering the activities of Eustathius of Sebasteia, whose whole life and career may be constructed round his use of the Via Pontica. It will be seen that this was no minor factor in the history of his connections with Basil and his family, and in the emergence of monasticism from the ascetic movement of which Eustathius had been the *agent provocateur*.

OTHER LOCALITIES

Evaesae/Evesus (Letters 251, iv. 9 and 278, iv. 163) is placed on or near Mitchell's Caesarea-Tavium road. Deferrari, in a note on iv. 9 says it is the modern town of 'Yogounes' and at iv. 163, that it is about 50 miles north of Caesarea. A modern map of Turkey shows a town of Yoğunhisar, about that distance north-north-west of Kayseri, and a little to the north of Bogğazliyan which is clearly the site. Evesus appears again in Letter 278, Def. iv. 162-3. Basil speaks of 'the mountain' near by. There is in fact a Yezir Dağ at some 1,690 m just north of Yoğunhisar.

Three districts or places mentioned by Basil were unable to be located: Orphanene, which Deferrari states is in Armenia Minor, Corsagaena, which he states is in Pontos, and Attagaena where Basil held a synod. As to Corsagaena, Calder and Bean place a 'Carsaga' with a question mark to the west of Nicopolis. It is, however, in Armenia Minor. Perhaps more promising is the 'Gazacaene' found in Magie's map as a district immediately to the west of Amasia.

¹¹ Ammianus Marcellinus 21. 16. 18 describes the situation in the reign of Constantius: 'Since throngs of bishops hastened hither and thither on the public post-horses (*iumentis publicis*) to the various synods as they call them, while he sought to make the whole ritual conform to his own will, he (Constantius) cut the sinews of the courier-service (*rei vehiculariae*)', *Ammianus Marcellinus*, three vols., tr. John Rolfe (London: Heinemann, 1950), 2. 185.

WHERE WAS ANNISA?¹²

The location of Annisa, the country estate of Basil's family, was extensively researched in Jerphanion's article 'Ibora—Gazioura',¹³ and his conclusions in the main, though not all, are accepted here.¹⁴ Jerphanion was not only familiar with the literary sources and with subsequent Byzantine and Turkish history, but explored the terrain on foot. Ramsey had located Ibora at the ancient Gazioura or modern Turhal, but Jerphanion roundly discounted this and proposed instead that Annisa be located in an area on the Iris much more naturally accessible to Neocaesarea than is the site of Turhal. He drew attention to the village of Sounisa, Sanisa, Sonisa, or Sonnusa, as it was variously spelt in its Turkish form. He pointed out its obvious likeness to the name Annisa, and, of course it is also close to Ptolemy's Boinasa. The town, however, has had its name changed since Jerphanion's day and is now known as Uluköy.¹⁵

Uluköy is located about 8 km west of the junction of the Iris and the Lycus. This means that Annisa had ready access to Neocaesarea since it lay on the Via Pontica, the major artery of communication across northern Anatolia.¹⁶ This road forded the Iris just

¹² Historians have frequently used the form 'Annesi'. Though Jerphanion himself uses 'Annésoi' according to the usage of the *Studia Pontica* volumes, he points out (p. 347 n. 2) that the form 'Annisa' might just as correctly be derived from Basil's phrase in Letter 3: οἱ ἐν Ἀννήσοις, as Berisa/Verisa is derived from the phrase in Letter 86: πρὸς ἐν Βηρίσιοις. That is the choice made here. *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World*, map 87, records the name of the site as *Boinasa*, citing Ptolemy (2nd cent. AD), *Geographia* 5. 6. 8.

¹³ H. Leclercq, 'Ibora', in *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne et de liturgie* 7/1. 4–9 (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1926) is a reprise of Jerphanion's article. A useful summary is provided in Rousseau 62 n. 7: 'Annisa is now Sonusa or Uluköy, near the confluence of the Yeşil Irmak (the Iris) and the Kelkit Çayı (the Lycus); and that the Ibora is now the Ivëronü. While Basil's own ascetic retreat (vividly described in Ep. 14) was clearly situated in a steep, wooded valley, of which many run down in this district towards the coast, Annisa was close also to fertile plateau country to the south, attractive and profitable to any aspiring landowner.'

¹⁴ That the local bishop who led Makrina's funeral (together with Gregory) was the bishop of *Ibora*, and that the family homestead was 'on the opposite side' of the river from Basil's retreat, are two positions with which I take issue below.

¹⁵ In Sept. 2003 the former mayor of Uluköy, Durmash Sipahi, told a party (among whom was the present author), that the name was changed in 1958.

¹⁶ 'From Vezirköprü to Niksar the line is roughly: Vezirköprü—Havza—Ladik—Destek Boğazi—Boğazkesen Köprü—Doganyurt—Niksar . . . Several new milestones have been discovered along this route: . . . two at Uluköy (near Taşova, province of Amasya). Of the two at Uluköy, the second is numbered (MP XXXVI) from Neocaesarea. (Hence the territory of that city extended to the Destek Boğazi.) It bears the name of a governor, C. Iulius Flaccus Aelianus, David French, *Anatolian Studies* 35 (1985), 8–10.

north of its junction with the Lycus, at or near by the city of Magnopolis.¹⁷

For the location of Iborā, Jerphanion proposed Ivëronü,¹⁸ which is confirmed in the most recent assessment.¹⁹ It was well to the south of the Lycus, indeed seven kilometres further south than modern Erbaa.

These conclusions when applied to the geography of Gregory of Nyssa's *VSM* and Letter 19 cast no small light on the historical record. Araxios and his clergy appear to have been fetched at very short notice in the early morning for Makrina's funeral. This would surely be less feasible if he had had to come the distance from Iborā, a good half day's journey. Instead the credentials of Magnopolis as the seat of a chorepiscopus might be advanced. It was a town

¹⁷ On Magnopolis, see Strabo 12. 3. 30, *The Geography of Strabo*, tr. H. L. Jones, 5. 429, and J. G. C. Anderson, *Studia Pontica*, 1: *A Journey of Exploration in Pontos* (Brussels: H. Lamertin, 1903), xi, 'From Neocaesarea to the Halys', 74–8. Strabo describes it as 'at the junction' of the rivers . . . in the midst of the plain'. The town was first called Eupatoria after its founder Mithridates Eupator, but Pompey renamed it Magnopolis after himself. While the obvious spot for Magnopolis would seem to be at the ford at the junction of the Lycus with the Iris, the evidence on the ground there is scanty.

There is the site of a *kalé*—apparently a late Byzantine citadel—on a low hill more than a kilometre downstream on the east side. Its strategic advantage seems somewhat less than a site near the ford of the river, which would command not only entry to the gorge country northward but the route along the Via Pontica as well. It is difficult to see how this *kalé* in the gorge can be considered 'in the midst of the plain'.

More recently Magnopolis has been located a little to the south of the junction. 'La ville a laissé quelques vestiges architectoniques entre les deux rivières, à 1500 m au sud-sud-est de leur confluent, au témoignage de J. Biller et E. Olshausen, *Notizen zur historischen Geographie von Pontos*, dans *Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasien*, *Festschr. für F. K. Dörner*, 1, Leyde, 1978, 169 (et pl. LV, 3). Cette identification rend caduque la localisation sur une éminence rocheuse en aval du confluent, à l'entrée de la gorge qui traverse la Chaîne Pontique, proposée par J.C. Anderson, *Studia Pontica*, 1, 74–78 (photographies pp. 75 et 76), sans confirmation archéologique', Françoise Lasserre, *Strabon Géographie Tome IX (Livre XII)* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1981), 209–10.

As some confirmation of this statement, there are remains of a still older stone bridge, south of the Roman bridge, crossing only the Lycus. Perhaps the older road approached Magnopolis by one bridge over the Iris, and left it by another over the Lycus, and Pompey, sometime between 66 and 63 BC decreed the building of a single new bridge north of the confluence to expedite movement along the Pontic Road: as it might be called today, a 'by-pass'.

¹⁸ Jerphanion, 'Iborā—Gazioura?', 352. He asks if the name of 'Iborā' does not survive in 'Iver'.

¹⁹ E. Olshausen and J. Biller, *Historisch-geographische Aspekte der Geschichte des Pontischen und Armenischen Reiches*, vol. 1 (Wiesbaden, 1984), 137.

attested in the Byzantine era as having a bishop,²⁰ and was less than half the distance to Annisa than Ibora.

After Makrina's funeral, Gregory travelled back to Nyssa, where soon after the townspeople of Ibora sent him an embassy entreating him to look into the election of their new bishop, since their bishop had lately died. If this had been the Araxios who had so recently led Makrina's funeral with Gregory and whom he expressly had named—as Jerphanion supposed and many commentators unthinkingly repeat—it is strange that Gregory does not advert to his identity in any way.

Gregory not infrequently refers to Annisa as 'the remotest parts' of Pontos. On the face of it, the usage is a little puzzling, since the area around Annisa was well populated, as the *VSM* makes clear. The Via Pontica went past the front gate of the villa, if not right through the estate. The most that could be said for its 'remoteness' is that it was a day's journey from the metropolis (Neocaesarea), and that there was wild and mountainous terrain bordering the estate. It is perhaps better to translate his and Basil's use of the term *ἐσχατία* when applied to Annisa as 'retreat' rather than as 'remote spot'.

Jerphanion (p. 348) was told by the locals that in the vicinity of the town on the banks of the Iris were the traces of an ancient building that would have been a church, and that the Christians of the village used to make an annual pilgrimage there. Surely this would be a likely candidate for the site of the *martyrion* to the Forty Martyrs where Sts Basil Senior and Emmelia, St Naukratios and St Makrina were buried. Taking the distance indicated in the *VSM* as a guide, it seems best to locate the martyrion east of Sonnusa on the Iris/Irmak river, at a distance of perhaps 2 or 3 km.

WHERE WAS BASIL'S ASCETIC RETREAT?

Before discussing this question it is well to tabulate the information from the sources. It is surprisingly plentiful. Basil's retreat was:

1. In Pontos (Letters 14²¹ and 216).
2. Accessible to Neocaesarea, close enough to include both the villa and the metropolis under the general rubric 'here' (Letters 210²² and 216²³).

²⁰ See Jerphanion's discussion of Eupatoria on p. 343.

²¹ Def. I. 106–9.

²² Def. III. 196–7, written at Annisa itself to the Neocaesareans in c.375/6.

²³ Basil, Letter 216, Def. III. 238–9, referring to Basil's visit to Annisa in c.375/6.

3. Its name is Annisa (Letter 3).²⁴
4. It is not on a minor side-stream, but on a vigorous river (Letter 14), the river Iris itself (Letter 223²⁵).
5. It appears to have been on the *northern* side of a high mountain (Letter 14 and Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4²⁶), confirmed by Gregory's references to the darkness and sunlessness of the spot (Letter 4).
6. It is on the 'opposite side' from his mother's house (Letter 223), close enough for her to come with supplies (Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 5). But how can the 'village on the opposite side' (*ἀντιπέραν κώμης*) mean on the other side of the *river*, since both Basil and Gregory describe the river here as 'impassable'. It may be that Basil means the opposite side of the mountain, on its south side.
7. There is only one means of access, a narrow and precipitous mountain track (Letter 14; Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).
8. It was sufficiently close to Makrina and Peter's monastery, the Annisa villa, to be considered the same 'retreat' where his sister and brother also practise the same philosophy (Letter 210).
9. The neighbouring mountain is thickly forested (Letter 14).
10. Unfolding from the foot of the mountain is a gently sloping plain on which Basil's retreat is located (Letter 14).
11. The river flows around (*περιρρέοντα*) this plain (Letter 14).
12. On one side the river forms an unbroken and impassable barrier where it courses under (*ὁ ποταμὸς ὑπορρέων*) a cliff (Letter 14; Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).
13. There are ravines on either side of the plain, within crescent-shaped 'arms' of the mountain (Letter 14 and Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).
14. The river is apt to become especially wild with torrents in the winter storms (Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).
15. The river-bed is very rocky (Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4, Epigram 156²⁷).

²⁴ Def. I. 24-9. In this intriguing letter Basil speaks of 'women servants' who guarded Basil's 'house' and who had been beaten up by a renegade house-servant. This is difficult to picture in terms of Basil's ascetic retreat. It is probable that he wrote this letter seeking legal redress on behalf of his mother's household at Annisa, as it seems he wrote later on behalf of Makrina in Letter 315, Def. IV. 255. Though Basil is at some distance from the Annisa 'base-camp' so to speak, he identifies with it, as if his own retreat were but an extension of it.

²⁵ Def III. 302-3.

²⁶ GNaz. Letters 4-6, *NPNF* 2nd ser. 7. 446-8. Letters 4-6 are all in response to correspondence initiated by Basil's Letter 14.

²⁷ From book 8 of the *The Greek Anthology*, tr. W. R. Paton in 5 vols. (London: Heinemann, 1919), 2. 468-9.

16. Some kind of an eminence rising behind Basil's dwelling gives a sweeping view of the plain (Letter 14 and Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).
17. Basil can also see from his look-out the river rebounding from a rock into a deep pool, which provides abundant fishing for the locals—which means they must have been able to get to the banks of the pool easily enough from the other side (Letter 14 and Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).
18. The sound of the roaring water can be heard in Basil's dwelling (Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 4).

It should be remarked at the outset that the place for a retreat discovered by Naukratios, the first of the brothers to follow Makrina's ascetic path, was almost certainly the same spot later taken up by Basil as his retreat. The *VSM* (*GNO* 378, Callahan 168) specifies: 'So Naukratios went off to live by himself, having found a remote spot on the Iris River . . .'. Letter 14 mentions the basin of a cataract which provided abundant fishing. Gregory Nazianzen's Epigrams 156 and 157 also refer to the thundering eddies of the river where Naukratios drowned, caught in the fishing nets.²⁸ Gregory's Letter 4, in which he mocks the location of Basil's retreat, also speaks of 'the river rushing down', implying cataracts or rapids. The *VSM* describes Naukratios' retreat as 'bristling with deep forest and hidden on a flank with the mountain ridge overhanging' (*GNO* 379, Callahan 168). Basil's Letter 14 also speaks of deep forest and some kind of high ridge behind, confirmed by 'the hills over your head' in Gregory's Letter 4. With so many features in common, it is reasonable to conclude that Naukratios' and Basil's retreat were one and the same. In short, Basil simply took over both the place and the lifestyle vacated by Naukratios at his death.

With regard to its location, Jerphanion points out (p. 348) that the name 'Annisa' seems to have been 'susceptible d'une certaine extension: S. Basile l'emploierait pour désigné à fois le lieu de sa retraite, situé sur une rive du fleuve et la *κώμη* placée de l'autre côté'. In short, Annisa referred to the family's entire estate, not just the villa or 'homestead' at the heart of it. It appears to have encompassed all the domain within the bend of the Iris west of its junction with the Lycus.

²⁸ When Gregory says Emmelia was three days' journey from the accident, it implies nothing about her being at Annisa at the time. She might have been visiting any of the far-flung estates (*GNO* 380, Wagner 169). Similarly, Elm goes beyond the evidence to say (p. 83), that Naukratios and Chrysaphius died 'three days from home'.

Jerphanion (pp. 349–50), imagining that Basil's retreat was on the opposite side of the river Iris from the villa, and tending to emphasize its distance, suggested a spot to the south-west reached via modern Taşova, where the Iris passes narrowly through two ranges of hills. The 'mountain' in question would be Heriz Dağ (c.570 m). Basil's retreat would be west of the mountain and on the 'other side', south of the Iris. Jerphanion found a village Haçibey some 1.5 km from the river at the foot of an escarpment, which had a church dedicated to St Basil. He discovered a platform half-way up the mountain, with a view over Haçibey and the river to the north, accessible only by a narrow and circuitous track. It contained the foundations of a long ruined church, now thickly overgrown by trees. The local Greeks called the spot Hagios Vasilios ('Saint Basil') though they could not say why. There were signs of pilgrimage to the spot. The number of correspondences with the data are persuasive, though Jerphanion does admit some discrepancies, especially the distance from the Iris. If this were the place of Basil's retreat, its distance from Annisa would have been about 10 km across two valleys and a ford over the river.

Another possibility for Basil's retreat is proposed here. Examination of the map 1 : 200,000 Turkey Sheet SAMSUN 510, compiled in the 1930s and 1940s, reveals a mountain little more than 4 km to the *north* of Sonnusa (= Annisa), Ayalar Tepe, recorded at 815 m. Its incline is very steep to the south and west and it seems to offer a curved embrace of a plain gently sloping to the river on the NW/SNW. There even seem to be several eminences within the downward slope any one of which might have served as Basil's look-out. The Iris does not encircle the little plain, but it may be considered encircled by a tributary to the north and the Iris on the west.

So, at this stage the best estimate is that the Annisa villa and estate was located west of the confluence of the Iris and Lycus rivers, to the north of the Pontic Road and that Naukratios' and Basil's retreat may have been at either of the two localities suggested above, but it is by no means certain.

A VISIT TO ULUKÖY

Since writing the above, I took part in a reconnaissance trip through ancient Pontos in August–September 2003. It was sponsored by the British Academy Black Sea Initiative, under the administration of the British School of Archaeology at Ankara. We were fortunate to be led by Professor Stephen Mitchell. The

members of the party generously gave the major part of a day to the locale of my interest.

Our first visit was to Uluköy. The town is situated at the top of a gradual slope (hence the modern name 'high town') facing southward. To the south and east it has a panoramic view of the plain of Strabo's *Phanaroea*, in which the river Iris (Yeşil Irmak) eventually joins the Lycus (Kelkit Çayı) due east of the town. Immediately behind the town, blocking it off on the north side, is a long high bare ridge which continues eastward down to the junction of the rivers. Looking at the panorama from above the town, it immediately became clear why Jerphanion would have been drawn to the site of Haçibey: it is the only locality visible from Uluköy that could possibly suggest the features of Basil's Letter 14. It is separated from Uluköy by *two* valleys: the nearer valley of a tributary of the Iris, beyond that a low rise of ground, and beyond that, the Iris itself directly south, or SSW. Haçibey is on the far side, quite a distance from Uluköy. The Via Pontica passed along the nearer valley, so accessible it seems to have passed right through the estate. In a little park hidden from the market-place we discovered a collection of old stones, among which were a pillar engraved with the cross, and, most interestingly, more than one olive press: huge, very heavy stone basins, which, as Mitchell remarked, would not have been moved far from their original location. They might well have hailed from late antiquity, for Strabo described the Phanaroea as 'olive rich' and olive production ceased with the Seljuk conquest in the eleventh century.

A local teacher, Abdullah Seçkin, generously offered to lead us to the 'the Church Place' as it is called by the local Muslim population. It is about 2.5 km east of the town and perhaps 1 km or less from the Iris, situated at the end of a low rise, just high enough to avoid flooding from the river. Today the area consists of well-ploughed fields, scarcely offering the few ruins Jerphanion reported being told about. The remains of stone walls are evidently of a later period. Two items confirmed that the site was used in later centuries as a place of burial. One was a curious sarcophagus-like structure or grave, which would have accommodated three bodies. The other was a Turkish era cemetery monument recovered from the site.²⁹ All in all, I was well content to accept this as probably the site of the Martyrion to the Forty Martyrs where Sts Emmelia and Basil Senior and their first-born, Makrina, were buried long ago.

We visited the remains of the old Roman bridge, just above the

²⁹ In a building in the town we were shown a few pieces collected from the site. They included two capitals clearly from an older pre-Seljuk period.

junction of the rivers, about 8 km east of the town. By then it had become clear to me that on the far side of the ridge behind the town lay a very different type of terrain. The Iris passes north from the bridge into thickly wooded gorge country, then turns sharply SNW and, for a distance, follows a course more or less parallel with the ridge. Here at a spot perhaps 1.5 km downstream from the bridge on the east side, I looked across at the other side of the Iris, and suddenly Basil's Letter 14 appeared to fall into place before my eyes. The precipitous drop on the other side of the river illustrated what Basil and Gregory Nazianzen might mean by describing it as 'unfordable' on that side. The northward facing direction accords with Gregory's description of its shaded aspect. There was a small plain sloping to the river, the river 'flowing round' the little plain as it turned westward, the rocky river turbulent in spots even at its lowest ebb at the end of a dry summer. In full spate it would certainly be audible on the small plain above. Most interesting was a kind of high knob which might well be used as a vantage point. For a 'high mountain' there was the Ayalar Tepe visible in the near distance, if not the ridge itself. Access from the town would only be possible via some track over the ridge. Admittedly, there is the *kalé*, the remains of an ancient citadel on the same side of the river on which I was standing. It would not do to have Basil looking down on what some have suggested was the site of Magnopolis. The *kalé*, however, seems more likely the remains of a late Byzantine fortification, meant to ward off Seljuk access to the coast.³⁰

No firm conclusions are possible at this stage. But in addition to Jerphanion's site near Haçibey, this area lying north of the ridge behind Uluköy also deserves more detailed investigation in quest of the site of Basil's retreat.

³⁰ According to Anthony Bryer and David Winfield, *The Byzantine Monuments and Topography of the Pontos*, 2 vols. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 20 (Washington, DC, 1985), 41 and 103, the *kalé* is a medieval castle probably built to guard the route along the gorge.

4

The Emergence of Christian Monasticism in Fourth-Century Anatolia

INTRODUCTION

We are now in a position to use the results of comparative textual study and historical geography to re-examine the emergence of monasticism in Anatolia in the fourth century AD. Two all-important figures must be brought immediately to the fore. The first is Basil's eldest sister, St Makrina the Younger (c.327–79). The second is the eponymous leader of the ascetic movement in Anatolia, Eustathius of Sebasteia (c.300–79). There is also a third person: Peter the last-born of the family, who, it shall be argued, had a less well-known but by no means unimportant role in these events.

MAKRINA

St Makrina the Younger was a scion of the most remarkable family in Christian history. Her parents, Sts Basil Senior of Pontos and Emmelia of Cappadocia, were already the heirs of martyrs and confessors, were themselves accorded the cult of sainthood, and were destined to include four if not five recognized saints among the children: Makrina and three bishops, two of them renowned Fathers of the Church: Saints Basil of Caesarea, called 'the Great' and the 'shining light of the whole world'¹ and Gregory of Nyssa, called

¹ *Βασίλειος ὁ μέγας, ὁ τῆς οἰκουμένης φωστήρ*, Theodoret, *HE* 4. 16; and in Theodoret, Letter 146, *ὁ τῶν Καππαδοκῶν, μᾶλλον δὲ τῆς οἰκουμένης φωστήρ*—'the shining light of the Cappadocians, or rather, of the whole world'.

not less than ‘the founder of Mystical Theology’ in the Church.² Gregory for his part repeatedly calls his youngest brother ‘the great Peter’.³ And Naukratios, the second-born son, though he died young, himself received some recognition for sainthood. The hub of this galaxy of saints was Makrina. In various ways and at different times, Makrina was a spiritual mother and teacher to her own mother, Emmelia, and to each of her four brothers.

Most of our information about Makrina comes from the *Vita Sanctae Macrinae (VSM)*,⁴ written in 380 by her brother Gregory. That he should be her biographer is not without paradox, as he was the last—though not the least—of her disciples among the brothers.⁵ It seems he was prompted to write the Life of Makrina in c.381/2, because he did not want his sister’s memory to be entirely lost in the shadow of their illustrious brother Basil.⁶

² J. Daniélou, *Platonisme et théologie mystique: Essai sur la doctrine spirituelle de saint Grégoire de Nyse* (Paris: Aubier, 1944), 6. There are other glowing epithets: He was called ὁ τῶν Πατέρων Πατήρ (‘the Father of the Fathers’) by Epiphanius the Deacon at the 7th ecumenical council, Nicaea II (787), 6th session (Mansi XIII. 203–364 at 293E/Labbé and Cossart, *Concilia*, VII. 477), and ὁ τῶν Νυσσαίων φωστήρ (‘the shining light of Nyssans’), Nicephorus Callistus, *HE* xi. 19.

³ *VSM*, *GNO* 412, Callahan 189.

⁴ Other sources are Gregory of Nyssa, Letter 19. 6–10; *Dialogue on the Soul and the Resurrection*, *PG* 46. 11–160, separate edn. J. G. Krabinger (Liepzig, 1837), tr. Callahan 198–281; Gregory Nazianzen, *Epigrams* 156–8 (Naukratios), 161–2 (on Emmelia), 163 (Makrina), and 164 (Theosebia, another daughter of Emmelia). Though Basil never mentions his sister Makrina by name, there are some texts that may well refer to her or to Annisa, especially where he lauds women in the ascetic life, or depicts the ideal cenobitic community. See *Introductory Sketch of the Ascetic Life*, *PG* 31. 619–26, Clarke 55–9; Letter 207 and 210 (written from Annisa), *Hom. on Ps.* 44 *PG* 29. 388–413, Way 297–309; see also Letters 46 for three generations of women in a family very like his own and especially 315 on a female relative who is a *proestosa* (superior) taking care of orphans.

⁵ Makrina’s relationship with Gregory of Nyssa is an intriguing one. Early in 364 Gregory declined Makrina’s, Basil’s, and Peter’s ascetic ideal and took up a secular career in Caesarea. Between then and his attendance at her deathbed in 379 no slight change has been affected. He repeatedly calls her ‘the Great’, and his ‘Teacher’. It is a fair guess that by the time Basil had persuaded Gregory to service of the Church as bishop in c.372, Gregory had been to Annisa and consulted Makrina with a view to his spiritual life. Emmelia’s death may have been a moment for renewing the contact: in Letter 19 he calls Makrina ‘a mother after our mother’. She seems to be a presence behind his early work *De Virginitate* (371). He certainly visited Annisa c.372, the year Basil ordained him bishop. Since he came to the episcopacy from the profession of rhetoric, he probably received all three holy orders (at Basil’s hands) in instant succession. Lampadius refers to Gregory’s ‘priesthood’—*ιερωσύνη*—which she always honored’ (*GNO* 403, Callahan 184). The second-last time he saw her seven years or so before her death he was a new bishop.

⁶ Cf. ‘he [Basil] became famous everywhere under the sun and eclipsed in reputation all those conspicuous in virtue [e.g. Makrina]’ (*GNO* 377, Callahan 168).

An intriguing feature of the *VSM* is its total silence on the role of Eustathius of Sebasteia in Basil's conversion to the ascetic life and in the life of the family. It is a loud silence indeed for those who appreciate the fuller picture. In Letter 223 Basil tells of Eustathius' great influence on his own early engagement in the ascetic life. Yet Gregory never mentions him and implies that Basil's conversion from Hellenism to Christian asceticism was due solely to Makrina. It will be necessary to look behind this silence for the traces of Eustathius' influence on Makrina the Younger and indeed her whole family. Once that is recovered, we will be in a better position to assess Makrina's role in the emergence of monasticism in Anatolia.

EUSTATHIUS OF SEBASTEIA

Eustathius of Sebasteia was born about the year 300. According to Socrates,⁷ his father, Eulalius, was bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia. Most scholars from the time of Loofs⁸ reassign him to Sebasteia. In the early 320s Eustathius was a student in Alexandria and had some association with Arius.⁹ It is reasonable to suppose that while in Alexandria he became aware of the mood of ascetic experiment among the first Egyptian monks. Studies finished, he returned home to Armenia Minor in the second half of the 320s and was ordained priest by his father,¹⁰ even as he began living publicly as a 'philosopher' (ascetic). He soon drew a following and incurred the first of several censures perhaps as early as the late 320s, when his own father¹¹ found his son's attire and public style unbecoming a priest. Eustathius' subsequent wanderings are uncertain, until the

⁷ Socrates, *HE*. 2. 43. The passage is cited shortly below.

⁸ F. Loofs, *Eustathius von Sebaste und die Chronologie der Basilien-Briefe* (Halle: S. M. Niemeyer, 1898). Tillemont proposed Antioch as his see. Sebasteia, however, accords with Gangra's address to the church in Armenia. See Gribomont, 'Eustathe de Sébaste', in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. 4/2 (Paris: Beauchesne, 1961), col. 1709.

⁹ Athanasius, *Historia Arianorum* 4. 2 (*PG* 25. 697; *NPNF* 2nd ser. 4. 271); Basil, Letter 263, Def. IV. 94-5; cf. Letter 244, Def. III. 456-7.

¹⁰ Canon 11 of the Council of Neocaesarea in 315 set the minimum age for the ordination of a presbyter at 30 years, 'for our Lord Jesus Christ was baptized and began to teach in his thirtieth year', *NPNF* 2nd ser. 14. 84. This canon was confirmed at ecumenical councils and remained the benchmark for centuries until the Middle Ages, when so many dispensations were being made that the exception became the rule and the minimum age was reset at 25.

¹¹ Socrates, *HE* 2. 43.

late 330s, when his presence in Constantinople is attested, where he was known (unfavourably) to Eusebius of Nicomedia.

There were many links between Eustathius and the leaders of the 'Homoiousian' theological tendency.¹² Homoiousianism might be taken as an umbrella term covering a certain theological and church-political trajectory that took its course over several decades. It began with the stance of those in the 330s who wished to respect Nicaea but were hesitant about the *homoousios*, a stance in fact common to the moderate Arians,¹³ to the 'Macedonians' who opposed themselves to the old Nicene party in Constantinople in the 340s and 350s, to the 'Homoiousian' party strictly so-called that ranged itself against the Anomoians (ultra Arians) and attracted the ire of the Homoians (Arians) in the 350s and 360s, and finally to the Pneumatomachians who refused rapprochement with the neo-Nicene settlement and hedged on the divine nature of the Holy Spirit in the 370s.¹⁴ Later heresiologists designated the trend 'Semi-Arianism'. It was pre-eminently the party of a conscious theological 'middle ground'. It strove to avoid the Nicene description of the *Logos* (Christ as pre-existing his human nature) as *homoousios* or 'consubstantial' with the unoriginate God (the Father). But it also resisted the theological tendency to drive a wedge (Homoianism/Arianism), if not an unbridgeable gulf (Anomoianism) between God and the *Logos*, between the Father and the Son. In a council of the early 360s Athanasius prepared the ground for the neo-Nicene front, when confusion over the terms *ousia* and *hypostasis* was at last acknowledged. It now became possible to reaffirm the Nicene *homoousios* while marking it off with greater precision against Modalism. In the late 360s, many Homoiousians were reconciled to this neo-Nicene position, which after Athanasius' death was led by

¹² See esp. Elm's chapter 'Homoiousian Asceticism', 106–36. Major studies are: T. A. Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979) and H.-C. Brennecke, *Studien zur Geschichte der Homöer: Der Osten bis zum Ende der homöischer Reichskirche*, Beiträge zur Historischen Theologie 73 (Tübingen, 1988).

¹³ There was a wish to profess the legitimacy of the Nicene council, but, to put the best construction on it, a great reluctance about the unscriptural term *homoousios*, which to some seemed to suggest a unitarianism with regard to God and a modalism with regard to the Trinity, resulting in a blurring of distinction between Father and Son. This was the pretext for the activities of the leading Homoian, Eusebius of Nicomedia. An ostensibly Nicene-respectful, but anti-homoousian stance was the position taken at the last council dominated by Eusebius, the Dedication Council of Antioch in 341.

¹⁴ Meinhold, *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, 21/1, 1066–78 discusses the terms *Pneumatomachioi* and *Macedonioi* and how they were associated in later heresiology.

the Cappadocian Fathers and their circle of friends in Armenia and Syria. Some Homoiousians, however, reverted to a more Homoian (Arian) position, equivocating about the nature of the Holy Spirit, hence their epithet *Pneumatomachoi* or ‘Spirit-fighters’. This was the last position taken by Eustathius of Sebasteia. It resulted in a drawn-out, painful, and ultimately irretrievable breach with Basil. But he by then was Metropolitan of Caesarea.

In the wake of this rupture with one whom he had esteemed as a mentor in his youth and an important church leader in his adulthood, Basil and his circle found it necessary to ‘re-read’ their own religious past, as Philip Rousseau has put it.¹⁵ This religious leader, who once held so high a profile with them, became a name of ill-omen. Now he was more or less written out of the family’s religious history—or out of Gregory of Nyssa’s account of it at any rate.¹⁶

There were personal reasons for Gregory’s disaffection with Eustathius. In the winter of 375–6, Gregory was delated for financial irregularities at a synod in Ancyra. It was presided over by the Vicar of Pontos, Demosthenes, and filled with those courting imperial favour. Since the Emperor Valens was staunchly Arian, arinizing was the theological route of preference for opportunists.¹⁷ Demosthenes called a follow-up synod at Nyssa in the following spring (376), but Gregory did not attend it and was deposed. He lived as a fugitive till Valens recalled the exiled bishops not long before he died in August 378.¹⁸ Basil’s Letter 237 (Def. III. 406–11) reveals that a major agent in these machinations against Gregory of Nyssa was Eustathius of Sebasteia, whose reward was to have his interests promoted against those of Basil and the church at Caesarea. Demosthenes ‘favoured those attached to Eustathius’, says Basil, ‘with the greatest honours’.¹⁹

In this interval, Gregory was to write several works combating pneumatomachian views. When he came to writing the *VSM*,

¹⁵ See P. Rousseau, ‘Basil of Caesarea: Choosing a Past’, in *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity* (Rushcutters Bay: Australian University Press/Pergamon Press, 1990), 37–58 and Anna M. Silvas, ‘St Basil: Passages of Spiritual Growth’, in Pauline Allen *et al.* (eds.), *Prayer and Spirituality in the Early Church* (Everton Park: Centre for Early Christian Studies, ACU, 1998), 275–88.

¹⁶ On this point see also P. Maraval (ed.), *Grégoire de Nyssse: La Vie de Sainte Macrine*, Sources Chrétiennes 178 (Paris, 1971), introd. 51–2.

¹⁷ See Basil, Letter 225, Def. III. 320–5.

¹⁸ See also *VSM* (Callahan 174, 178), Gregory’s Letters 18, 22 and Gregory Nazianzen’s Letter 142.

¹⁹ ‘[T]he hand of the Emperor Valens can be detected behind the machinations of Demosthenes, vicar of Pontica, to place Arian sympathizers in the minor Cappadocian sees of Nyssa, Doara and Parnassus’, Mitchell ii. 78.

perhaps late in 381, he made sure to completely excise every memory of Eustathius from the record.

THE INFLUENCE OF EUSTATHIUS ON THE CHILD BASIL AND
HIS FAMILY

Evidence of the earliest definite link between Eustathius and Basil's family is found in a passage of Basil's Letter 244, written in 375 or 376, to Bishop Patrophilus of Aegae, who was puzzled at the rupture between Basil and Eustathius now made public:

You seemed like one at a loss and amazed, because that very Basil who from childhood (*ἐκ παιδός*) had ministered (*δουλεύσας*) to the fellow in such a way, who had done such and such things on such and such occasions, who had taken up war against thousands because of his care (*θεραπείας*) for one man—has now become different from what he was.²⁰

The operative phrase is *ἐκ παιδός*. It appears to mean that Basil knew Eustathius in his boyhood, some fifteen years or more before the testimony of his first surviving Letter 1 to Eustathius written in 357.²¹ By itself this would be remarkable but slim evidence. Yet there is also Letter 291, Def. iv. 192–7²² to Chorepiscopus Timothy. Here Basil uses the very same phrase, saying: 'you are that Timothy whom we knew *from childhood* (*ἐκ παιδός*), as being so intent upon the upright and ascetic life as to be accused of lack of moderation in these matters'. In short, Timothy had, in his youth, been something very like a Eustathian enthusiast.²³ This passage is all the more valuable in that it is 'off the cuff', so to speak—unconnected with any conscious construction of his own past on Basil's part. Together, these two pieces of evidence strengthen the impression that Basil as

²⁰ Letter 244, Def. III. 448–51.

²¹ For this dating, see Fedwick I. 6.

²² Moreover, Basil appears to have written this letter from Pontos (see p. 197 'from Pontos'). One thinks of the batches of letters he sent during his stay at Annisa in 375 or 376. See Letters 210 and 211.

²³ The fact that he later became a bishop tends only to confirm the association; consider the episcopal careers of Eustathius, Macedonius, and Basil of Ancyra, all prominent in the ascetic movement. Timothy also figures in Letter 24, Def. I. 149 and in Palladius, *Lausiaca History* 48 (and n. 453; tr. and annot. R. T. Meyer (New York: Newman Press/Paulist Press, 1964)), which tells of the Cappadocian, Elpidius, who became chorepiscopus of Timothy's monastery in Palestine. The succession of discipleship continued with the Cappadocian Sisinnius (*Lausiaca History* 49). He eventually returned to Cappadocia c.390, to found a 'community of men and women (*ἀδελφότητα ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν*)', i.e. by then a classic 'Basilian' type of community. See also Elm 186.

a child and his family had some contact with Eustathian-type ascetics and indeed with Eustathius himself.

Basil also uses the phrase *ἐκ παιδός* of the period his grandmother Makrina the Elder was teaching him.²⁴ It refers to his childhood years up to the age at which he began the traditional curriculum at his father's school, that is about 14.²⁵ If Basil's birth is placed in 329,²⁶ his childhood acquaintance with Eustathius could have occurred any time from the mid-330s up to the mid-340s.

The Small Asketikon (*RBas.* 7.7/*LR* 15.1) attests the presence and upbringing of children in the ascetic communities. The later expansions of *LR* 15 attest Basil's continuing interest in the education of children in the communities. The *VSM* testifies to Makrina's education of Peter the last-born of the family and to the orphaned children she and Peter brought up in the Annisa community.²⁷ The Eustathian ascetics were also known to be interested in the evangelization of children. The Council of Gangra, Canon 16 alerts us to the connection:

If any children, especially those of the faithful, withdraw from their parents on a pretext of piety and will not pay them due honour—as though, indeed, piety had a higher claim on them—let them be anathema.

All these factors corroborate the friendly contact between Basil's family and Eustathian circles during Basil's childhood, though on the part of the children there was no question of any abrogation of parental authority.

The late 330s and early 340s seem to have been a watershed in Eustathius' career. At this time he and his followers in the ascetic movement were being censured in at least two if not more councils. Socrates 2.43 reports:

²⁴ Letter 223, Def. III. 298–9.

²⁵ Commenting on the 'from childhood' text, Fedwick, in *Charisma*, 160, conjectures: 'If Basil's schools attached to his brotherhoods were indeed patterned, as seems to be the case, on the Eustathian model, an allusion could here be discerned to Basil's taking some of his early education in one of the Eustathian institutes flourishing in the area. The primary aim of such convent schools "was so to train the children that at a later age they might choose the monastic life as their own career" [Clarke, *Monasticism* 121].' However the evidence, as presented above, is that Basil received his early education at home, under the guidance of Makrina the Elder and Emmelia.

²⁶ Certainly no later. According to the *VSM* the second son, Naukratios, was 21 years old at the time of his ascetic conversion; the subsequent chronology of the 350s needs to be coordinated with that. Accordingly, Naukratios' birth is assigned to 330.

²⁷ Callahan 171–2 and 182–3, respectively.

But Eustathius bishop of Sebastia in Armenia . . . had long before been deposed by Eulalius, his own father who was bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, for dressing in a style unbecoming the priestly office . . . Eustathius indeed was subsequently condemned by a Synod convened on his account at Gangra in Paphlagonia,²⁸ he having, after his deposition by the council at Caesarea, done many things repugnant to the ecclesiastical canons.

This passage indicates that Eustathius was ordained priest at some stage after returning from Alexandria,²⁹ that he took to wearing a form of conspicuous clothing—evidently the ‘philosopher’s cloak’—and that despite being censured by his father, he continued his overt ascetic stance, being publicly identified with practices later condemned in the Gangra canons. The period is from the later 320s to the 330s.

It took several censures and some ten years or more before Eustathius began to acquire the art of adapting himself. Sozomen (4. 24), taking a retrospective from the Homoian (or Arian) Council of Constantinople in 360, reports still other condemnations of Eustathius:

Eustathius, they said, was deposed because, when a presbyter, he had been condemned and put away from the communion of prayers by Eulalius, his own father, who was bishop of the church of Caesarea, in Cappadocia; and also because he had been excommunicated by a council held at Neocaesarea, a city of Pontos and after this, by Eusebius, bishop of Constantinople, for the way he had discharged certain duties that had devolved upon him. He had also been deprived of his episcopacy by those who were convened in Gangra (*ἀφῆρέθη τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς παρὰ τῶν ἐν Γάγγραις συνεληλυθόντων* PG 67. 1192B) on account of his having taught, acted and thought contrary to sound doctrine. He had been convicted of perjury by the council of Antioch.³⁰ He had likewise endeavoured to reverse the decrees of those convened at Melitina; and, although he was guilty of many crimes, he had the effrontery to aspire to be judge over others and to stigmatize them as

²⁸ Socrates places this chapter 43 after his account of the Council of Constantinople in 360. But the qualifications in his account of Eustathius should be given full weight: *he had long before been deposed . . . was subsequently condemned.*

²⁹ Presumably by his father Eulalius, but Basil says it was by Hermogenes of Caesarea—Letter 243, Def. iv. 95. It was perhaps by confusing Hermogenes with Eulalius that Sozomen assigned Eulalius to Caesarea. Athanasius himself mentions Eustathius of Sebastia as one of a group of Arian sympathizers admitted to the presbyterate after the exile of Eustathius, bishop of Antioch (*Historia Arianorum* 4, PG 25. 700A). The dating of the Antiochene Eustathius’ deposition is uncertain. It happened sometime between late 320s and 335 when Athanasius himself was deposed at the Council of Tyre/Jerusalem.

³⁰ i.e. the Council of Antioch in 341, Gribomont, ‘Eustathe de Sébaste’, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*.

heterodox (καὶ πλείστοις ἐγκλήμασι ἔνοχος, ὧν, δικαστῆς ἡξίου εἶναι, καὶ ἑτεροδόξους τοὺς ἄλλους ἀπεκάλει).

Eusebius of Nicomedia died after the Council of Antioch, late in 341,³¹ which date appears to be an *ante quem* for three if not four of the condemnations: at Sebasteia (rather than Caesarea), at Neocaesarea, at Constantinople by Eusebius, and at Antioch. Basil confirms Eustathius' presence in Constantinople in Eusebius' life-time,³² and that he had incurred his displeasure.³³ Though Sozomen presents it as if Eustathius was a bishop at the time of Gangra, lending some credence to a later dating of Gangra, the text of Gangra itself yields no hint that this was so. It simply treats him as the leader of an ascetic movement which has upset the bishops and faithful of Paphlagonia, Pontos, and Armenia. All in all, the Council of Gangra finds its natural setting amid the spate of indictments incurred by Eustathius towards the year 340.

Eustathius began to adapt himself. It is highly unlikely that he would have been rehabilitated with his father in Sebasteia, found favour with the family of Basil Senior and Emmelia in the 340s as remarked above or had sufficient standing as an episcopal candidate in 355/6 without having demonstrated some willingness to accommodate the caveats of Gangra—to say nothing of responding to the other censures he had incurred.

For all these and other reasons,³⁴ the earlier dating of Gangra to 340/1 is to be preferred. Sozomen may have confused Gangra with the Council of Melitene in 358 when there was an unsuccessful attempt to replace Eustathius as bishop of Sebasteia with Meletius, the very same who was later bishop of Antioch and Basil's friend.

There are other hints of Eustathius' career. They concern his links with the Macedonius and Marathonius who were active in Constantinople in the 340s (Socrates 2. 12–13, 27, 38, Sozomen 4. 20–1).³⁵ Sozomen testifies in his *History* 4. 27 that Marathonius set

³¹ 'He died a short time after that Synod was held', Socrates, *HE* 2. 12.

³² Basil, Letter 263, Def. IV. 94–5.

³³ Basil, Letter 244, Def. III. 470–1: 'Hermogenes fell asleep and again they [i.e. Eustathius] changed to Eusebius, the chorus leader of the Arian circle . . . Falling away from this man for some reason or other, they ran back again to their fatherland.'

³⁴ See Appendix 7, no. 1 for further discussion on the dating of Gangra.

³⁵ Paul of Constantinople, an 'Old Nicene', had almost as turbulent a career as Athanasius. On Alexander of Constantinople's death in 337, he was consecrated, but irregularly. Constantius, on coming to power, expelled him and installed Eusebius of Nicomedia, father of renascent Arianism. After Eusebius' death late in 341, Paul's supporters tried to restore him, but the Arianizers installed Macedonius instead, not without bloodshed; they and Paul's supporters continued

up ascetic communities of men and women and hospices for the poor in the imperial city and that he had been directed in the ascetic life by no less than Eustathius himself.

Another text confirming a link between Macedonius, the Homoiousian party, and Eustathian asceticism comes from a historian writing some two or three decades before either Socrates or Sozomen. This is Rufinus of Aquileia, who in about 401 wrote in his additions to his translation of Eusebius' *Church History* 10. 26: 'For very many of those who apparently led a strict life and a great number of monasteries in Constantinople and the neighboring provinces and noble bishops, followed rather Macedonius's error.'³⁶

To sum up, already by the 330s and early 340s, Eustathius is associated with the Macedonian/Homoiousian theological party, has incurred the odium of Homoians (Arians), is known across the breadth of northern Anatolia as an inspirer of ascetic enthusiasm, and is esteemed in some quarters, but regarded with suspicion in others.

MAKRINA IN 340

It was shown above that the child Basil and his family had contact with Eustathius and his circle during the later 330s and early 340s. What of Makrina at this period?

In the year 340 Makrina was about 12 or 13 years old; the time had come to look into her marriage prospects. The *VSM* (Callahan 165–6) says that her father, Basil senior, chose a suitor, a young kinsman, a promising advocate and probably a graduate of his own training, to whom he would give his daughter 'when she came of age'—about 16

at loggerheads. Paul was murdered in exile c.351. Eventually Macedonius himself was deposed by the (Homoian) Council of Constantinople of 360, although officially the grounds were disciplinary, not doctrinal. He was replaced by the Arian Eudoxius (Soc. 2. 6, 7, 13, 16, 22, 26, 27, 2. 42. 3; Soz. 3. 3; Theodoret, *HE* 2. 4). See W. Telfer 'Paul of Constantinople', *Harvard Theological Review* 34 (1950), 31–92 and T. D. Barnes, *Constantine and Eusebius* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), 212–17.

³⁶ P. R. Amidon (tr.), *The Church History of Rufinus of Aquileia* (Oxford: Univ. Press, 1997), 35. On the three groups in question, see R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God* (Edinburgh, 1988), 557–636, 760–72. On Aetius, see Kopecek, *A History of Neo-Arianism*, 61–132. On Eunomius, see Kopecek, op. cit. 145–76, 299–543 and R. P. Vaggione, *Eunomius: The Extant Works* (Oxford, 1987). On Eunomius' leprosy, see Philostorgius 10. 6.

or 17.³⁷ In the interim, however, between the years 340 and about 344, Makrina's fiancé died.

This time Makrina asserted her choice for virginity and, says Gregory, 'her decision was more firmly fixed than her age would have warranted'. Her mother Emmelia had once inclined to virginity, but, being an orphan, had yielded to the exigencies of her situation and married to secure a protector for her life. Not so Makrina. She decided once and for all to spend the rest of her life 'by herself',³⁸ in pursuit of the 'philosophic' or ascetic life. She maintained that she had a right if not a duty to conduct herself as a widow—even if a virgin one. There was already a certain antipathy in the Church at that time towards the practice of 'digamy', marrying a second time even after the *death* of one's first spouse.³⁹ Makrina used this tradition to resist all efforts of her family to persuade her to marry, 'since', she said, 'marriage is, by nature, unique, as a birth and a death'. Casting her social role as that of a 'widow', that is, a socially respected form of being an unattached woman, she secured her commitment to virginity.⁴⁰

THE FAMILY'S RESIDENCE IN NEOCAESAREA

It will be recalled that according to Sozomen, in the passage cited above, Eustathius had been censured at 'Neocaesarea, a city of

³⁷ Basil nominated this as the earliest suitable age for profession of virginity or marriage in Letter 199, Canon 18 (Def. III. 108–9). See also *RBas.* 7. 3 (*LR* 15). But girls had been married at a younger age than this in the Graeco-Roman world. 12 was the earliest legal age. Since Makrina was already this age and yet had to wait, it appears that Christians, at least in this area, preferred a somewhat more mature age. See Elm 141 n. 13 for bibliography on marriageable age and also M. K. Hopkins, 'The Age of Roman Girls at Marriage', *Population Studies* 18 (1965), 309–27.

³⁸ *Kaθ'* *ἐαυτήν*. This traditional phrase derives from Plato (e.g. *Phaedo* 65) and denoted the pursuit of the 'philosophical' life. It was the linguistic register Basil used in his Letter 2 when referring to the Christian ascetic life, but which he eventually eschewed. The two Gregorians continued to use it in the Christian sense. See A.-M. Malingrey, 'Philosophia'. *Étude d'un groupe de mots dans la littérature grecque des présocratiques au IV^e siècle après J.C.* (Paris: Klincksiek, 1961) and K. S. Frank, *Angelikos Bíos: Begriffsanalytische und Begriffsgeschichte Untersuchungen* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlh., 1964), 136–9, Elm 44–5, and Rousseau ch. III, 'The Philosophic Life', 61–92, esp. 70–1, 77–82.

³⁹ See Percival, 'Excursus on second marriages, called Digamy', *NPNF*, 2nd ser. 14. 72–3.

⁴⁰ See Charlotte Methuen, 'The "Virgin Widow": A Problematic Social Role for the Early Church?', *Harvard Theological Review* 90 (1997), 285–99.

Pontos'. In the same city the family of Basil Senior and Emmelia lived during the 330s and 340s. It was Basil's native city and that of his parents, in particular his mother, Makrina the Elder.⁴¹ Here Basil Senior pursued an urban career as a legal advocate and a professor of rhetoric. Since the family's residence in Pontos is basic to the present history and there are not a few commentators, even contemporary ones,⁴² who suppose that the children were born or the family lived in Caesarea of Cappadocia and even that Basil Senior pursued his career in that city, it would be useful to set out the arguments for assigning Neocaesarea as the family's residence.

First, in Letter 210 (Def. III. 197) to the learned in Neocaesarea, Basil himself attests he was brought up in the region of Neocaesarea. He is writing, it is pertinent to note, during a stay with Makrina and Peter at Annisa in the mid-370s:

because of *my acquaintance with this region from boyhood* (ἐκ παιδός)—*for here I was brought up by my grandmother*—and because of my having dwelt here for the most part thereafter, when, on fleeing the troubles of civic life and learning that this was a suitable place for the practice of philosophy, I spent many years and because of my brothers (τῶν ἀδελφῶν)⁴³ now dwelling here, I . . . have gladly come to this remote spot. (emphasis added)

Gregory Nazianzen speaks of the *Pontic* refuge of Basil's paternal grandparents, *Oratio 43: Eulogy on Basil*, 6.⁴⁴ He also says that once past childhood Basil began formal education under his father, 'whom *Pontos* put forward at that time as its common teacher of virtue'. Basil lived at 'home' with his father, that is, in the city where his father pursued his career (ch. 12 McCauley 36). All of this points to Neocaesarea, the metropolis of Pontos Polemoniakos, not to Caesarea metropolis of Cappadocia, as the family's residence. Gregory Nazianzen also mentions the Armenians who were fellow students with Basil at his father's school, whom he met later in Athens (ch. 17 McCauley 41). This too indirectly supports Neocaesarea, ch. 17, which was more accessible to Sebastenes than was Caesarea. Only after his father's death (this has to be inferred—Gregory Nazianzen does not mention it), Basil *travels to Caesarea* in Cappadocia to fur-

⁴¹ See Basil, Letter 204, Def. III. 168–9, Gregory Nazianzen, *Panegyric on Basil* (*Oration 43*), 3.

⁴² e.g. Fedwick 5 would have Basil born in Caesarea—on what possible evidence?

⁴³ The term is inclusive of sisters and is unmistakable evidence that Basil was at Makrina and Peter's monastery at the time of writing.

⁴⁴ Leo P. McCauley (tr.), *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*, Fathers of the Church 22 (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 1953; repr. with corrections, 1968), 30.

ther his education,⁴⁵ where for the first time he met Gregory, a native Cappadocian.

In the *VSM* (*GNO* VIII/I. 393, Callahan 178) Makrina reminds Gregory that their father pursued his career in Pontos: ‘although he surpassed the rest in rhetoric, *his fame did not go beyond the Pontic region*’. Thus any career of Basil Senior in Cappadocia is absolutely ruled out. Also in the *VSM* (Callahan 168), Gregory speaks of the river Iris as ‘passing through our regions’; that can only mean Pontos, not Cappadocia. That Pontos (and indirectly Neocaesarea) was Gregory’s childhood residence is also shown in his Letter 19, where he says of his presence at Makrina’s death: ‘Such was my first visit *to my fatherland* after my return from Antioch’ (*GNO* VIII/II. 65). Thus the evidence is incontrovertibly in favour of the family’s residence in Pontos and in Neocaesarea.

If Basil as a child had dealings with Eustathius of Sebasteia, then the latter too was a visitor to Neocaesarea. The local geography and the Anatolian road system casts light on the situation. Neocaesarea was just ‘up the road’ from Sebasteia, so to speak, the junction where anyone from that part of Armenia Minor might access at its nearest point the great northern road, the Via Pontica (Pontic Road). This great highway was in a real sense the continuation of the Via Egnatia from Rome to Constantinople, taking over after the crossing of the Bosphoros and traversing northern Anatolia as far as the eastern frontier of the Empire at Satala just north of the Euphrates. The three provinces mentioned in the Gangra legislation are all threaded along the Pontic road. It appears that it was very much Eustathius’ main route of communication with the capital, in which city, all the sources intimate, he was no stranger. A passage in Basil’s Letter 244 (Def. III. 461) wonderfully shows how Eustathius used this major artery across northern Anatolia:

so swift was it that within a few days the letter was spread throughout Pontos and was current in Galatia. And some say that the messengers of these glad tidings even passed through Bithynia and reached the Hellespont itself.

How did the child Basil and his family come to meet Eustathius? Possibly Basil Senior and Emmelia came to know him through the

⁴⁵ There were, of course, maternal relations in Cappadocia. In Letter 59, Def. II. 5, Basil, lately made bishop, writes to his uncle Gregory, a chorepiscopus of Cappadocia, who had ‘taken a father’s place’ towards him ‘from the first’. This Bishop Gregory might well have been Emmelia’s brother. When the fatherless boys came to Caesarea for their senior studies he appears to have taken them under his wing.

Armenians—no doubt Sebasteians among them—who were sent to Basil Senior's college in Neocaesarea. Perhaps he and his wife offered their home as a way-station for Eustathius on his frequent journeys and there he met the children. The Eustathians, we have seen, took an active interest in the religious life of children. The 'services' the child Basil rendered him, may be the attentions paid to an honoured guest in the home. Or perhaps Eustathius stayed at an urban ascetic community under his influence, with which the family were on friendly terms. Somewhat against this scenario is the fact that Makrina did not join any Eustathian community to pursue her ascetic quest, if there had been one such available in Neocaesarea.

Chronological considerations are also suggestive. Eustathius' censure at Neocaesarea has been noted. Since this pre-dated Gangra, it may well be placed in 339, if not earlier. Eustathius' influence as a disseminator of exciting ascetic ideas is attested precisely in *this* city at *this* time. Sozomen, in *HE* 3. 14, tells of his influence as an ascetic leader across three provinces: Pontos, of which Neocaesarea was one of the two metropolises; Paphlagonia, of which Gangra was metropolis; and Armenia (Minor), of which Sebasteia was metropolis. Again we have the same string of northern provinces along the Pontic Road:

It is said that Eustathius, who governed the church of Sebasteia in Armenia, founded a society of monks in Armenia, Paphlagonia and Pontos and became the author of a zealous discipline.

This then, was the ascetic *Zeitgeist* in northern Anatolia and Eustathius was its preceptor. Given the period of his coming to public attention, the proven contact he had with the family, the family's residence in Neocaesarea, his earlier notoriety in the same city and the date of Makrina's resolve for celibacy, it is hard to avoid the impression that as a fervent young girl in Neocaesarea, Makrina was in some way affected by the ascetic enthusiasm he inspired. But, let it be noted, she did not bolt from her family into any mixed community of men and women such as Elm connects with Homoiousian asceticism, but maintained herself all the more firmly under her mother's authority. It looks rather like a scrupulous observance of Canon 16 of Gangra.

EMMELIA TRANSFERS THE HOUSEHOLD TO ANNISA

Some time after Makrina's fiancé died and she had resolved on a life of virginity, her father, Basil Senior, also died. A good working date

seems to be about 345–6.⁴⁶ The bereaved family now had no need to remain in the city in support of Basil Senior's career. So Emmelia transferred the family seat from Neocaesarea to a country estate on the river Iris called Annisa. Basil Junior left to complete his middle schooling in Caesarea of Cappadocia, where he had the benefit of maternal relatives.

In the Graeco-Roman world, a move from the city to the country was often associated with pursuit of the philosophic life. It proved similarly conducive to the Christian ascetic life. At first, however, from the late 340s to the mid-350s, Emmelia maintained her household along traditional aristocratic lines, for her nine surviving children were still growing up and had yet to be provided for. Makrina stayed by her mother's side as her inseparable helper; she took up a task typically carried out by slaves: bread-making, and also shared her mother's administrative burdens as the *κυρία* and *οἰκοδεσπότις*⁴⁷ of a far-flung property portfolio:

she furnished food for her mother from her own labor and in addition, she shared her mother's worries. Her mother had four sons and five daughters and was paying taxes to three governors because her property was scattered over that many provinces . . . in all these affairs, Makrina was a sharer of her mother's toils, taking on part of her cares and lightening the heaviness of her griefs (*GNO* 376, Callahan 167).

Meanwhile, the relationship with Eustathius of Sebasteia which had begun in the city during the 330s and 340s continued at the country estate during the 350s and the 360s. Basil in his Letter 223⁴⁸ reminds Eustathius that he was not just an occasional but a *frequent* visitor at Annisa and his mother's household. The point cannot be overemphasized. Eustathius, the renowned leader of ascetic communities, found a ready welcome in the household at Annisa presided over by Emmelia, because he was already an old friend of the family.

Preamble 10 and 11 of Gangra says of the Eustathians:

And they are unwilling to join in prayers in the houses of the married and indeed spurn prayers that take place in these circumstances.

⁴⁶ See Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration* 43. 12 and Fedwick 5 n. 5. We have to allow for the fact that Basil began his schooling under his father at about age 14—certainly no earlier.

⁴⁷ For the terms see W. M. Ramsay, 'A Noble Anatolian Family of the Fourth Century', *Classical Review* 33 (1919), 7. Pages 4–9 are devoted to an epitaph composed in hexameter by Magna, a Christian lady of Phrygian Antioch. Her skill in scansion attests her superior education (4–6).

⁴⁸ Letter 223, Def. III. 302–3.

Often they will not take part in the (Eucharistic) sacrifices which are made in these same houses, that is, of the married.

In the light of these texts, Eustathius possibly felt freer to visit the family once Basil Senior had died and they had moved to Annisa, for it was now the household of a devout widow and her ascetically inclined virgin daughter. In these circumstances he perhaps had fewer misgivings about offering the Eucharistic liturgy in the 'house of God' on the estate.⁴⁹ Back in the city there would have been no occasion for a 'chapel' in the household. At any rate, Eustathius, whatever other good qualities he had, was a political animal and here was a devout, wealthy and no doubt generous aristocratic family, with an outstanding woman at its head and promising young sons. This was a family worth cultivating.

The very location of Annisa lent itself to frequent contacts. Whenever Eustathius travelled to and from Constantinople using the Pontic Road, he literally travelled past the front gate of the Annisa villa. It would have been a suitable stopover a day's journey from Neocaesarea.⁵⁰

The second son of the family was Naukratios. In the year 351 when he graduated from his higher studies he was 21 years of age. On the brink of a promising career in rhetoric, he abandoned it for the ascetic life instead. He was the first of the brothers, by far, to follow Makrina's ascetic example. It was due to this affinity in piety, no doubt, that she regarded him as her 'dearest brother'. But Naukratios did not live back in the family household. Instead, he found a secluded spot in forested hill country on the river Iris, yet still accessible enough to his mother's household. There he devoted himself to a life of poverty, 'undistractedness', and work. Some features in Naukratios' way of life may almost be considered 'Eustathian'. For example, he does not live a cut-off existence as a hermit. Chrysaphius his former slave joins him as a 'brother' in the same way of life; and there is the characteristic note of practical charity to

⁴⁹ There was certainly a church easily accessible to Annisa. It was probably on the villa estate itself, serving the surrounding villagers. Indeed the 'village' seems to have been more or less an aggregate of the Annisa 'villa', to judge from Basil, Letter 223, Def. III. 303: 'how many days did we spend in the village on the other side (*τῆς ἀντιπέραν κώμης*), at my mother's . . .'. In the *VSM* (*GNO* 405, Callahan 185) Makrina spends all night in the sanctuary in prayer. *VSM* (*GNO* 395, Callahan 178) shows that there was a church in the community compound at the time of Makrina's death.

⁵⁰ Or to pick up Basil on the way to the Council of Constantinople in 360. Rousseau 99 and esp. n. 11 is also inclined to place Basil in Eustathius' entourage at this council.

the poor: he undertakes to furnish food for a group of the aged and sick poor by his own labour, by hunting in the forest⁵¹ and by fishing. Exactly following Makrina's lead, he looks to his mother as his moral and religious protector, 'steering his young manhood' by obedience to her. His 'being guided by the divine commandments' means the study and the sung recitation of Scripture, a very 'Makrinian' note. And surely, when Eustathius came visiting his mother's household, Naukratios would cross over to the villa to be in attendance, taking part in conferences with the master—if Eustathius did not also visit the young ascetic in his own abode, as he did later with Basil.

Meanwhile, Basil himself misses out on all these events, being away in Athens.

After five years of this lifestyle, both Naukratios and Chrysaphius perished in a hunting accident.⁵² The shock of this family tragedy appears to have triggered another passage in the life of the household. If Naukratios died in the Spring of 356, at the melting of the snows, two events are seen to follow soon after. First, Emmelia and her household enter a new phase of their existence. It would not have been possible if the younger children, except Peter, had not by then grown up and been provided for. Emmelia felt at last free to follow her daughter's lead and commit herself to the ascetic life more fully. The account of these events in the household immediately follows the report of Naukratios' death:

When the care of rearing the children and the responsibilities of educating them and establishing them in life was over and most of the resources connected with the more material life were divided up among younger members of the family, then, as I said before, the life of the virgin became for her mother a guide towards the philosophical and immaterial way of life. Turning her aside from all that she was used to, she led her down to her own standard of humility. She prepared her to put herself on a level with the community of virgins [ὁμότιμον ἀτὴν γενέσθαι τῷ πληρώματι τῶν παρθένων παρασκευάσασα, *GNO* 381] so that she shared with them the same table and lodging and all other things one needs in daily life and there was no difference between her life and theirs.⁵³

⁵¹ This was in the family tradition. Gregory Nazianzen relates that during the persecutions, Makrina the Elder and her husband survived their years in the Pontic forests by obtaining food from hunting (*Panegyric on Basil* 7–8).

⁵² Gregory Nazianzen composed three epigrams on Naukratios, nos. 156, 157, and 158 (see book 8 of the Greek Anthology), where we learn that the accident occurred while he was trying to free a net caught in the river (Iris); at a sudden onrush of water he became entangled. It suggests early Spring and the melting of the snows.

⁵³ *VSM*, Callahan 170, the translation is revised. This recapitulates the point Gregory had just been making when he thought to insert a little *vita* of Naukratios:

Secondly, Basil came home from Athens.⁵⁴ In his *Eulogy on St Basil* 24, Gregory Nazianzen says that Basil, in resisting those who wanted to hold him back from leaving, ‘detailed the reasons of his anxiety to return home’. Certainly something had disturbed Basil and hastened his departure, and it may have been the news of Naukratios’ death. Gregory attests that the tragedy ‘brought the entire family to misfortune and lamentation’ (*GNO* 380, Callahan 169). Gregory, Basil’s companion in Athens, was himself sufficiently affected to compose three epigrams on the tragedy.

Basil cut short his engagements in Athens, it seems in the late Spring or early Summer of 356. The disarray in the *VSM* at this point is itself suggestive. Gregory, having just spoken of Basil’s return and Emmelia’s ‘conversion’, suddenly remembers the importance of his long-dead brother in the trains of events. He then back-tracks to present a short *life* of Naukratios, after which he resumes his course, presenting a second, more considered account of the change in Emmelia’s household, which now appears to follow on the tragedy more directly.

In the light of the above analysis, what can be said of Gregory’s attribution to Makrina of Basil’s conversion? His account need not depart from what really happened or detract from Eustathius’ influence on Basil by much, because as we have argued Makrina herself had been affected by Eustathius’ ascetic inspiration as long ago as the year 340 or so. In 351 she gained her first wholehearted disciple in her brother Naukratios, then at the crossroads of his young adult life. Now she made good spiritual capital from the shock of his death. Having sent on one disciple from this life to the next, she gained two more: her own mother and her eldest brother. In 356 Emmelia, experiencing another crisis in her life, followed her daughter and abandoned the last aristocratic trappings for life on a level with the community of virgins. Emmelia was Makrina’s second disciple. Now her eldest brother returned home, also at a critical juncture in his life. Makrina was about to make a third conquest.

‘After the mother had skilfully arranged what seemed best for each of Makrina’s sisters, her brother, the distinguished Basil, came home from school . . . When there was no longer any necessity for them to continue their rather material way of life, Makrina persuaded her mother to give up her customary mode of living and her more ostentatious manner of life and the services she had long been accustomed to receive from her maids and to put herself on a level with the many by entering into a common life with her maids, making them her sisters and equals rather than her slaves and underlings’ (*VSM*, Callahan 167).

⁵⁴ Ruth Albrecht similarly analyses the sequence of events in *Das Leben der heiligen Makrina auf dem Hintergrund der Thekla-Traditionen* (Göttingen, 1986), 93.

MAKRINA'S INFLUENCE ON BASIL

The following is a considered reconstruction of events in late 356.

In Letter 1, Basil says that after he left Athens he 'ran past' (*παρέδραμον*) the city on the Hellespont, that is, Constantinople. He refers to Odysseus avoiding the Sirens. This seems to mean he 'passed through'⁵⁵ Constantinople as hurriedly as possible, crossed the Bosphoros and made his way home east along the Pontic Road to his 'fatherland', Pontos Polemoniakos, to the family seat at Annisa. After he had consoled his mother and his siblings over the loss of Naukratios, it seems he made his way down to his old school in Caesarea, where his brother Gregory was pursuing his higher studies. There he spent what was left of the year teaching rhetoric. The interval may have lasted at most a few months to judge from his Letter 1, Gregory Nazianzen's *Oration* 43. 25, and Gregory of Nyssa's Letter 13.⁵⁶ Before the onset of winter at the end of 356, he returned to Annisa. It all fits: Naukratios' death in early Spring, the news reaches Athens, Basil returns quickly late Spring, spends the remainder of the academic year at Caesarea and returns home.

This was Makrina's moment. 'She took him in hand', says Gregory, 'and quickly lured him to the goal of philosophy' (*GNO* 377, Callahan 167).⁵⁷ In one respect Gregory's presentation is

⁵⁵ *Παρέδραμον* can be used in the sense of 'passing through'. Compare the use of the term *παρὰπόμπη* to describe the official liturgy of escorting Roman soldiers or officials through one's city.

⁵⁶ Gregory of Nyssa, *Ep.* 13 to Libanius, *GNO* VIII/II. 44–6 = Letter 10, *NPNE*, 2nd ser. 5. 533, bears witness to a short period spent by Basil in the practice of rhetoric, during which the young Gregory was one of his students: 'Basil, my father and teacher', he calls him, saying 'I enjoyed my brother's society only for a short time and gained only just enough polish from his diviner tongue to be able to discern the ignorance of those who are uninitiated in oratory.' Basil, Letter 210, Def. III. 199 reveals that the Neocaesareans had at one stage begged Basil to come and teach their sons higher studies. From the tenor of Basil's refusal, the episode may be placed early in 358, at the beginning of his ascetic life at Annisa. They wanted him for their city's renown, not only because of his father's memory among them, but also because they had heard he had performed just such a service in Caesarea after his return from Athens in 356. Civic honour and rivalry was the issue. But of course, much had happened since his brief spell in Caesarea as rhetor. When Basil says he 'shunned those who praised and admired me', he echoes the terms of Makrina's summons as reported in the *VSM*. So the Neocaesareans' appeal is best placed not only after Basil's spell of teaching in Caesarea, but after his conversion, baptism, and journey to Egypt and Palestine.

⁵⁷ It seems that five years earlier Makrina achieved much the same purpose in much the same circumstances with their brother Naukratios. Having finished his higher studies in Caesarea *cum magna laude* and poised as he was for a career in rhetoric, Naukratios surely returned home to visit, which would have been the

inadequate: this was not a *new* call, but a *re*-call. Makrina was not proposing something new to Basil, but recalling him to the piety of their childhood upbringing and to the intention he had formed even in Athens to seek a life of ‘philosophy’. Perhaps there was already a ferment in his own heart as he witnessed the developments in his mother’s household.⁵⁸ She persuaded her brother to make a break once and for all with the conventional life of a catechumen highly educated in the secular curriculum. Now that he was at a new juncture, let him not resume by default the life their father had left off, that of the devout Christian aristocrat and professional man, excellent as far as it went, but seize the moment to embrace baptism and with it the life of Christian ‘philosophy’—virginity and asceticism, a way of life which both she and Naukratios, but lately dead, had been pursuing for years, and on which their mother, Emmelia, was now resolved. It was a life embodied in a family mentor whom both sister and brother had known and admired from their childhood years: Eustathius of Sebasteia.

Basil’s own account of events in Letter 223 says nothing expressly about Makrina. Yet it does reveal that the moment of his conversion, when he turned from ‘pagan eloquence’ to ‘the marvellous light of the Gospel’, distinctly preceded his setting out to look for Eustathius. The latter, therefore, was not the immediate catalyst of Basil’s conversion. Makrina’s role, as portrayed by Gregory, is secure.

So Basil set out on his journey to look for the family mentor. From Alexandria he addressed Letter 1 to ‘Eustathius the Philosopher’, whose identity with the ascetic leader Eustathius of Sebasteia is now well accepted.⁵⁹ We learn that Basil had failed to catch up with him, and that Eustathius had in fact returned to his ‘fatherland’, Armenia Minor. Whereupon Basil returned to his own country, Pontos, since it was, after all, eminently accessible to Eustathius, who often passed

moment for Makrina to win him over to baptism and the ascetic ideal. Gregory specifies that Naukratios had been ‘her dearest brother’ (*GNO* 381, Wagner 170), which must have had to do with their shared religious ideal and practice.

⁵⁸ See Letter 1, to Eustathius (Def. 1. 3): ‘Owing to the fame of your philosophy, I left Athens, scorning everything there’, and Gregory Nazianzen, Letter 1, *PG* 37. 21A (Gallay 3), *NPNF*, 2nd ser. 7. 446: ‘I had engaged even at Athens, at the time of our friendship and intimate association there . . . to join you in a life of philosophy (= Christian asceticism)’ and *Or.* 43. 19 (McCauley 53), on their time together in Athens: ‘philosophy was the object of our zeal’.

⁵⁹ See Gribomont, ‘Eustathe le philosophe et les voyages du jeune Basile de Césaréc’, *Revue d’Histoire Ecclésiastique* 54 (1959), 115–24. That the appellation ‘philosopher’ does not necessarily refer to a pagan is obvious to anyone familiar with its use by contemporary writers, e.g. Socrates and Sozomen, who regularly use it to refer to the Christian ascetic life.

that way. Back at Annisa he ventured on the ‘philosophical life’, as he himself still referred to it at the time, taking up the same ascetic way of life in the same retreat that Naukratios had lately vacated. The human resources he had available were not inconsiderable. They included Emmelia, Makrina, and the scriptural, ascetic tenor of their household, periods of fellowship with Gregory Nazianzen, influential Christian friends in Neocaesarea such as Olympius and Candidianus, correspondence with Apollinaris, and, last but not least, visits from Eustathius in person, through whom he very soon came into contact with—or was calculatedly initiated into—disturbing currents in the life of the Church at large.

THE LATER TRANSFORMATIONS OF MAKRINA’S HOUSEHOLD

Notwithstanding the changes effected in 356, Emmelia and Makrina’s household was to undergo further changes. The family’s first great passage, from a wealthy urban household to an aristocratic country household was presided over by Emmelia. Makrina, however, is portrayed as the agent of subsequent transformations. Under her influence, the household was steered more and more in an ascetic direction; first there was the emancipation of slaves, then Emmelia joined the community of virgins, but then, within a few years, it emerged as a fully fledged cenobitic community, with an ordered place for ascetic men, women, and children. The presiding genius, the patient but unwavering catalyst of these domestic ‘recalibrations’, was Makrina.

As we saw earlier, most of the hyperascetic correctives of the Council of Gangra were in place in the Annisa community in 379; examination of the community portrayed in the *Small Asketikon* showed an overwhelming agreement between the Annisa community and that taught in the *Small Asketikon*. Thus it was possible to ‘back-date’ the form assumed by the Annisa community to about the year 365 and the end of Basil’s second ascetic period in Pontos, the period of the *Small Asketikon*.

Peter’s adolescence and his choice of virginity and the ascetic life took place in the decade 356–365. Did Peter’s vocation precipitate the final transformation of the household into a fully-fledged community comprising both men and women? The evidence for Peter’s chronology comes from the *VSM* (*GNO* 383, Callahan 171). He was ‘the last offspring of our parents’, whose birth coincided with his father’s death. If these events are dated to c.346, Peter would have reached a minimum ‘vowable’ age of 16 or 17 in about the year

362/3, the very time when Basil became a priest during his first, abortive stay in Caesarea under Bishop Eusebius.

There are hints in some texts that Peter's unfolding vocation was a significant factor in the household's final transformation into a monastic community. Consider the following statements in the *VSM*: 'always their philosophy gave them additional aids for discovering goods leading them to greater purity. She was helped most of all towards this great goal of life by a brother from the same womb, Peter by name' (*GNO* 383, Callahan 171), and again: 'But then, rather than anything else, he lived with his sister and mother, co-working with them towards that angelic life' (*GNO* 384, Callahan 172). Peter therefore collaborated actively with his mother and sister through all the stages of the household until they achieved a workable, comprehensive form of ascetic community.

A very few years before, in the late 350s, Basil had found it expedient to retire at a reasonably accessible distance from his mother's household, just as Naukratios had done. Theirs was a freelance yet non-eremetical type of ascetic life similar to what the Egyptians called 'sarabaitic'.⁶⁰ Yet when it became Peter's turn, he did not take the track away from the villa and cross the ridge to pursue his ascetic life. He continued as part of the household. It seems that as the time of his profession in the early 360s drew near, his position as the youngest son in a family household came under review. A form of dedicated community life was required in which he could commit himself to the Lord for life: he would become a disciple and a brother in a single ordered community comprising distinct sections for men, women, and children. A house for male celibates was set up alongside the already existing community of virgins. These changes of arrangements must have been effected between 357, when Basil began his ascetic life, and 362-5, when Peter formalized his. Older accounts often style Basil as the 'founder' of monastic life in Pontos, or at Annisa, and Makrina's contribution as derivative and dependent on his.⁶¹ On the above argument,

⁶⁰ See the note on 'sarabaites' in Ch. 2, the section 'Features of the community in the Small Asketikon'.

⁶¹ Elm, 81, reports such views: 'Macrina founded a monastery for women on their estate at Annesi, where Basil had already founded a monastery for men . . . Macrina was not the head of the community of the women' (J. LaPorte, *The Role of Women in Early Christianity* (New York, 1982), 86) and 'some kind of association between men and women was inevitable at first, for women ascetics could not stand alone . . . For the actual form which the association took in Cappadocia and Pontos, Basil himself seems to have been responsible . . . His own early experience provided a model for subsequent arrangements' (Clarke 37-8). Really, it was Makrina and Peter's experience that provided a model for Basil's (later) arrangements.

however, if there was any ‘founder’ of the male section in the community at Annisa, or, at any rate, an agent of its coming into being, it was Peter. The alternative venue for male ascetics at Annisa over the ridge down near the river ceased from the date of Peter’s profession, or at least wound down shortly thereafter, as the men transferred to the new house of men and came under the joint rule of Makrina and Peter. By this time, Basil’s teaching ministry among the ascetics of Pontos was in full swing.

The Annisa household therefore achieved its final form not at the time of Emmelia’s adoption of community life with the virgins in 356, important a moment though that was, but when a way was found to integrate dedicated men into its ranks. It is a curious thing: the last breakthrough in the development of the Annisa community was not in finding a way to affiliate dedicated women to a community of male ascetics, but rather of incorporating the men in an ascetic community presided over by two women, first Emmelia, widow, and then Makrina, virgin, while Peter eventually took charge of the men. The watershed appears to have been Peter’s profession in the early 360s. Thus the centrifugal tendencies of freelance ascetic enthusiasm were domesticated through being regrafted into a form of community that was the fruit of the female-dominated domestic ascetic movement. This cenobitic life of men, women, and children consciously intended obedience to the example of the apostolic community in Jerusalem (Acts 2: 43–7, 4: 32–7) and the Pauline teaching that all are members of the one body of Christ (Rom. 12: 5), texts cited by Basil in the Small Asketikon at *RBas.* 3 (*LR* 7).

Basil uses a term perfectly expressive of the final settlement at Annisa: *συντάγμα*. It occurs in Letter 207, Def. III. 186–7, in which he describes the community at Annisa—where he may even be staying while writing the letter in the year 375/6. He boasts to the Neo-caesareans that ‘we have a body of both men and women (*καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν σύνταγμα*) whose citizenship is in heaven’. Elsewhere Basil uses the term *tagma*, ‘rank’ or ‘order’, when he speaks of a *tagma* of virgins and a *tagma* of monks, or male celibates.⁶² In Letter 207 the distinct *tagmas* are brought into alignment in one *syntagma*, or ‘ordered arrangement’, as, for example in a ‘battle-array’, but here rather a ‘prayer-array’, manifested above all when they gather together *ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τῆς προσευχῆς*, ‘in the house of prayer’.

⁶² For the distinct *tagmas* of men and of women see *LR* 34. 1 and note. In Letter 199 Basil speaks of τὸ τάγμα τῶν παρθένων—the order of virgins (Def. III. 106–7, Canon 18) and τῷ τάγματι τῶν μοναζόντων—the order of monks (Def. III. 110–11, Canon 19). For the houses of men, women, and children within the one community, see *LR* 15. 1 and note.

According to Gregory Nazianzen's *Eulogy on St Basil* 62, Basil brought the eremitic and 'mixed' life into ordered juxtaposition. Whether Gregory is expressly dealing with this situation or not, it does show the dispositions with which men and women might be gathered in a single regulated community. Gregory says 'he brought them close together yet kept them distinct'. Basil shows a very similar spirit in *LR* 35, when he discourages the continuance of separate communities in the same locale and insists on their coming together in a single community.

In Letter 295, Def. iv. 206–9, Basil exhorts certain monks, probably in Pontos, to adopt the cenobitic life. He has previously spoken to them in person. The letter illustrates his methods in calling freelance enthusiasts to 'take up community life in imitation of the apostolic way of life'. He wants them 'brought together', such that they are all 'guardians of each other's diligence and witnesses of each other's right actions'. What is most interesting is that he sends his 'most beloved brother' as an envoy to help guide them in this purpose. Deferrari thinks this is probably Palladius, but Peter may be proposed instead. This 'brother' is not styled a 'fellow-presbyter', as is Basil's envoy Meletius 'to the ascetics under him' (Letter 226, Def. III. 327). If Peter is the envoy, he would not yet be a priest (c.371), but simply an ascetic leader at Annisa, the pattern of an evangelical cenobitic community. This letter fits the period between the final refashioning of Annisa in about 362/3 and about 371.

In the years 368–9 Makrina and Peter worked together at the time of the great famine (*GNO* 384, Callahan 172). Makrina rescued abandoned girl orphans who were brought up in the community with the chance of becoming professed members (*GNO* 401, Callahan 183). In addition to his work of administering their resources, Peter evidently took care of boys in a like situation, for *LR* 15. 1 shows that there was also a place for them also in the community.

The above study strongly suggests that the antecedents of the classic Basilian community—what was later called the 'double' monastery—are not to be sought so much in a kind of sub-orthodox *modus vivendi* of male and female ascetics indifferently living together, increasingly curbed by an emergent neo-Nicene doctrinal position less favourable to women,⁶³ but rather in the inherent structure of the Christian family household itself, as it took on an

⁶³ Such is Elm's general thesis. See Elm, ch. 4; 'Homoiousian Asceticism', 106–34. Using many texts somewhat ambiguously, she builds up a picture of 'Homoiousian' (= Eustathian) communities characterized by the cohabitation of men and women ascetics, i.e. 'mixed' communities. For a useful discussion of the terms 'mixed', 'double', and 'twin' monasteries see Stramara 271–3.

increasingly explicit spiritual orientation. The phenomenon might be called ‘family asceticism’ or the ‘domestic ascetic movement’. This was a sphere of Church life in which women frequently played the leading role through their spiritual zeal, communitarian sensibility, and doctrinal allegiance.

Gregory of Nyssa provides a fitting reprise of the spiritual transformations of the Annisa household in his *On Virginit*y. This earliest of his works was written in about 371, in the interval between the earliest and the later editions of Basil’s *Asketikon*. It was suggested earlier that Gregory had visited Annisa and consulted with his sister in order to write the book. Indeed, Makrina’s teaching and inspiration may in some sense be considered the ‘ground’ of Gregory’s *On Virginit*y. Once the reader is alerted to the possibility, allusions to his sister almost leap from the page. Here then is Gregory, spiritually rereading the history of his own family. In doing so, he re-educates himself about the whole meaning of family by looking at Makrina:

The person planning a spiritual marriage will . . . show that he is from a family that is rich in the way that is most desirable, a family respected not because of its earthly possessions, but because of the abundance of its heavenly treasures. Such a person will not pride himself on having a family that is looked up to because of the good fortune which comes automatically to many, even to the foolish, but the good fortune that comes from the toil and effort of one’s own accomplishments, which only they achieve who are *sons of the light* (1 Thess. 5: 5) and *children of God* (cf. John 1: 12) and called well-born *from the risings of the sun* (Isa. 41: 25) through their illuminated deeds. He will not concern himself with his bodily strength or his appearance or with exercising his body or fattening his flesh, but quite the opposite; he will perfect the power of the spirit in the weakness of the body. I know the dowry in this wedding does not consist of corruptible things but of what is given us as a gift from the special wealth of the soul . . . It is clear that the eagerness for this kind of marriage is common to both men and women alike, for since, as the apostle says: *There is neither male nor female* (Gal. 3: 28) and Christ is *all things to all human beings* (cf. 1 Cor. 15: 28), the true lover of wisdom has as his goal the Divine One who is true wisdom and the soul, clinging to its incorruptible Bridegroom, has a love of true wisdom which is God.⁶⁴

THE DOMESTIC ASCETIC MOVEMENT

It can now be seen that the kind of cenobitic life associated with Basil’s name and proclaimed in the Great *Asketikon* was to no small

⁶⁴ *GNO* 247–343, Callahan 63–4, slightly adapted. On the closing part of the quotation see the comments of Stramara 287.

extent an outcome of the fourth-century ‘domestic ascetic movement’. By this is meant not so much individuals, typically women, living an ascetic life within their natural family,⁶⁵ but the commitment of the entire family to pursuing a life of Christian piety.

This phenomenon manifested itself first of all when spouses, with the wife typically in the lead, chose an early adult baptism and took its implications seriously. This was not the case of the many who in the post-Constantinian era enrolled as catechumens when a nominal Christianity at least was becoming convenient. These were the ones who typically postponed their baptism till death.

It was far otherwise with devout married converts. The values of the Graeco-Roman civic *politeia* gradually yielded to more explicitly Christian virtues. The cultural shift is seen especially in the fostering at home of the Scriptures and church traditions,⁶⁶ in the practice of hospitality, personal frugality, and a Gospel charity⁶⁷ in which the ruling idea is no longer philanthropy with a view to civic kudos, but self-effacing succour of the poor in imitation of Christ.⁶⁸ In these ways devout families redefined themselves as Christian in relation to civil society. Elena Giannerelli comments: ‘We have here one of the most interesting phenomena of IV century Christianity in east

⁶⁵ This is the limited conspectus of ‘familial asceticism’ in E. Amand de Mendieta’s study, ‘La Virginité chez Eusèbe d’Émèse et l’ascétisme familial dans la première moitié du IV^e siècle’, *Revue d’histoire ecclésiastique* 50 (1955), 777–820, esp. 800–5.

⁶⁶ In *De Iudicio*, for example, Basil speaks of learning the Scriptures from his parents ‘from infancy’ (*ἀπὸ βρέφους*) and in Letter 223 of learning the traditions of the church of Neocaesarea from his grandmother Makrina ‘from childhood’ (*ἐκ παιδός*). The *VSM* likewise shows Emmelia’s care to have her daughter Makrina educated in the Scriptures. This cultivation of the Scriptures was not simply a literary exercise of latter-day ‘Bible-reading’, but part of an oral culture: the Scriptures and especially the Psalms were *chanted*, at home as in the liturgy. Thus their memorization was facilitated.

⁶⁷ A striking example of this occurs in the *First Greek Life of Pachomius* 4–5 in *Pachomian Koïnonia*, vol. 1, ed. and tr. A Veilleux (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Cistercian Publications, 1980), 300. A 20-year old Pachomius, pressed into military service and held in prison, was so affected by ‘some merciful Christians’ who tended to his and his fellow-prisoners’ distress, it led to his conversion and gave to his piety a lifelong communitarian cast. Later on, the Emperor Julian felt constrained to borrow some features of Christian charity in his efforts to promote a neo-pagan revival.

⁶⁸ S. Mitchell examines these cultural shifts, with particular reference to Basil’s grandparents, in *Anatolia*, ii. 82. See also Evelyne Patlagean, *Pauvreté économique et pauvreté sociale à Byzance, 4e–7e siècles* (Paris: Mouton, 1977). One of Patlagean’s major points is that whatever ‘revolution’ Christian charity represented it took place within a context provided by traditional patterns of social dependence (Rousseau 136 n. 11).

and west: entire families, above all aristocratic families, giving themselves over to asceticism inside their own households, in which the female element has a leading function.⁶⁹ Such families were the seed-beds of a potential Christian radicalism. So it is not surprising that in times of crisis martyrs and confessors came from their ranks and in times of peace, virgins. While they did not normally cross the line into an ostentatious break with society's demands, yet when really put to the test they were willing to do so and they left to posterity memories of actually having done so.⁷⁰

This is the way of life followed by Makrina and Basil's paternal grandparents, Makrina the Elder and her husband.⁷¹ Their story, Gregory assures us, was 'but one chosen out of many' and mark what he says, 'typical of the rest'.⁷² A tantalizingly brief allusion to heroic resistance on the mother's side of the family also bears this out.⁷³ These Christian couples and their families put up an unfussy but firm resistance in times of coercively anti-Christian policies. They played an indispensable role as a leaven of the Christianization of Anatolia. It was their children or, perhaps more pertinently, their grandchildren who fastened on this latent radicalism and explored its potential as a life option, precisely in the mid- to late fourth century when the Church was becoming increasingly accommodated to the imperial and civic *politeia*.

What of the intermediate generation, the children of these Christian confessors, who were in turn the parents of virgins and ascetics? Mitchell ii. 68 comments:

The elder Gregory [father of Gregory Nazianzen] and the elder Basil [father of Makrina and Basil] were members of the first Christian generation to grow up under Constantine; they may even have been the personalities in Eusebius's mind when he spoke of the Cappadocians who were a

⁶⁹ Elena Giannarelli, 'Macrina e sua Madre: Santità e Paradosso', in *Studia Patristica* 20 (1989), 226.

⁷⁰ Basil's appeal to the presbyters of Nicopolis shows that this heritage of family piety was a widespread phenomenon: 'You are children of confessors and children of martyrs, who strove unto blood against sin. Let each of you use his own kin as example of constancy on behalf of piety' (Letter 240, Def. III. 423). Basil as bishop was keen to appeal to the martyr heroes, as a way of rallying the whole Church. Hence the importance he attached to the annual synod at Caesarea in honour of Euphrosinus, a very recent martyr, a married layman who had been executed at Caesarea in Julian's reign. See Letters 100, 142, 176, 252, 282.

⁷¹ See Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration* 43. 5-9 on Basil's paternal grandparents.

⁷² *Or.* 43. 8.

⁷³ His mother's grandfather had been killed and his property confiscated, 'by the anger of the emperor', evidently in Cappadocia. See *VSM, GNO* 391, Callahan 177.

match for anyone in their Christian education and learning [Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*, 4. 43].

Palladius provides another example of devout Christian spouses in his married friends at Ancyra, Verus and Bosporia (*Lausiaca History* 66). Everything he tells of their way of life, the abrogation of class distinctions in their household, their withdrawal to the country, and their practical charity to the poor, is equally compatible with their adopting celibacy or not. Like Makrina the Elder and her husband, this couple show that the very way baptized Christian spouses recalibrated their household along expressly Christian lines took on what one might almost call 'premonastic' features. The line between devout Christian households and dedicated ascetic communities could, in fact, be quite pervious.

Another stage in the domestic ascetic movement was marked by the commitment to *παρθενία* or celibacy. It can be observed most clearly in the households of devout and wealthy widows. In the late 340s and 350s there was Emmelia of Cappadocia herself, who exemplifies the tradition of widow ascetic. Frequenting the Annisa community in the 370s was the widow Vetiana, of the senatorial class in Constantinople (*VSM, GNO* 402, Wagner 183). The widow Magna of Ancyra, like Emmelia, reordered her household as a devout Christian community (*Lausiaca History* 67). In Antioch the devout Anthousa, widowed at 20 years of age, refused to remarry, drawing the admiration of the pagan rhetor Libanius.⁷⁴ In Constantinople towards the century's end, the immensely wealthy and very ascetic St Olympias, widowed at 22 years of age, resisted strong political and imperial pressures for a second marriage. She became the patroness of bishops, the friend of Sts Gregory Nazianzen, Gregory of Nyssa, Amphilochius, and the soul-mate of St John Chrysostom. To her community flocked many other devout widows and virgins known by name.⁷⁵ Rome harboured a whole class of

⁷⁴ She was the mother of St John Chrysostom. In *Ad Viduam Iuniorem* (Sources Chrétiennes 138, p. 120, ed. G. Ettliger) Chrysostom says that his old teacher Libanius, 'my sophist, who was of all men the most attached to pagan superstition', publicly praised his widowed mother Anthousa, exclaiming 'Bless me! What women there are among the Christians!' See D. G. Hunter, 'Libanius and John Chrysostom: New Thoughts on an Old Problem', *Studia Patristica* 22 (1989), 134.

⁷⁵ e.g. Elisanthia, Martyria, and Palladia, who all became deaconesses. On Olympias see Elm 178–80, with many bibliographical references; Elizabeth A. Clark, *Jerome, Chrysostom and Friends: Essays and Translations*, Studies in Women and Religion 14 (New York and Toronto: Edwin Mellen, 1979), translates the *Life of Olympias*, 107–57.

noble widow ascetics,⁷⁶ such as St Jerome's friend St Marcella whose house on the Aventine became a centre for the Roman ascetic circle, St Paula and her two virgin daughters among them. Perhaps the most outstanding Roman widow ascetic was the very wealthy St Melania the Elder—though indeed she was no friend of Jerome or Marcella. Leaving the Roman scene and her own son, she sailed for Egypt and Palestine, where she spent her life as a kind of 'entrepreneur' in an international monastic network.

Another stage in domestic asceticism was reached when spouses adopted celibacy while still living together. Again, the social consequences were more apparent when they were of the aristocracy and presiding over the ramified household typical of their class. In such a case the household gradually, almost organically, took on the aspects of a celibate Christian community. The records of the later fourth and early fifth centuries are studded with examples of spouses mutually turning to celibacy, with the consequent remaking of their households into monastic-like establishments.

Of special interest is a case in Basil's own circle. In Gregory Nazianzen's oration for his sister Gorgonia, he says that once his sister had borne children and wished to consecrate herself wholly to God, she persuaded her husband to join her in a life of celibacy.⁷⁷ It is worth noting that her husband was a priest.⁷⁸ Here, the priest's wife induced her husband to embrace celibacy. Exemplifying the classic family ascetic evolution their surviving children, two sons, became monks.

Basil's correspondence provides another example of celibate spouses in the 'noble' Palladius and his wife who persuaded him to baptism, which he may have followed up by becoming a monk and a priest.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ See Anne Yarbrough, 'Christianization in the Fourth Century: The Example of Roman Women', *Church History* 45 (1976), 149–65, who at 150–1 provides two stemmas, one of family descent, the other of spiritual relationship. In the latter case it may be clearly seen that there were generally two clusters of Roman women ascetics, one associated with Jerome (ultimately anti-Origenist), the other with Rufinus, Paulinus of Nola, and to some extent Augustine (interested in Origen and the Greek Fathers).

⁷⁷ Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration* 8. 8, *PG* 35. 797–8; *Funeral Orations by Saint Gregory Nazianzen and Saint Ambrose*, McCauley *et al.*, 105–6.

⁷⁸ Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration* 8. 11, *PG* 35. 801C. 'Who had such reverence for priests and especially for him who was her fellow soldier and teacher, of whom are the noble seeds and the pair of sons dedicated to God?' McCauley *et al.* 108.

⁷⁹ See, in the chronological sequence: Basil, Letter 292, Def. iv. 196–9; Letter 295, Def. iv. 206–9; Letter 258, Def. iv. 34–47, esp. 38–41; and Deferrari's hypothesis, iv. 206–7 note.

Italy at the end of the fourth century could show Sts Paulinus and Therasia of Nola. Therasia was the one who persuaded her husband to baptism and the ascetic life. They then lived in celibacy for years before he became bishop. Their household at Nola gradually took on the aspect of a monastic community. Rufinus and Melania's great friends, Apronianus and Avita, also adopted celibacy after baptism⁸⁰ and joined Paulinus and Therasia's community.⁸¹ This was a circle with a strong interest in the Cappadocians. Other ascetic couples were Aper and Amanda and Eucher (later bishop of Lyons) and Galla, who retired near the monastery of St Honoratus in Lérins.⁸²

The best known example of spouses turned ascetics, together with all their household, is surely that of Sts Melania the Younger and her husband Valerius Pinian.⁸³ The story of Pinian, whose resistance was gradually but inexorably worn down by his wife—indeed, he might well be described as 'seduced' to celibacy by his wife—is the textbook case of Basil's 'obstinate being led to concur in the right decision' (*LR* 12).

As can be seen from the above account, women were the leading force in the domestic ascetic movement, in all stages of its manifestation.⁸⁴ It is also clear that the type of ascetic community which issued from the transformation of a family household, was not something entirely different or alien to what preceded it, but the outcome of a progressive enactment of the radical, ascetic understanding of

⁸⁰ Rufinus addressed the preface to his translation of Basil's homilies to Apronianus, *PG* 31. 1723, considering them especially suited to devout women such as his wife.

⁸¹ See Paulinus, *Carmen* 21, CSEL 30, P. G. Walsh (tr.), *The Poems of St Paulinus of Nola*, Ancient Christian Writers 40 (New York: Newman Press, 1975), 173–201, Augustine, Letters 31. 6 and 127. 9 and Palladius, *Lausiaca History* 41. 5 and 54, where Melania the Elder instructs Apronianus, simultaneously converting him to Christianity and the practice of celibacy within marriage. Dyan Elliott aptly comments on the 'memorable frieze of a remarkable cast' in Paulinus' *Carmen* 21: 'The community is connected by both blood and purpose. There is no place for regret over the former humiliation of conjugal relations. Marriage, chastity and even virginity interlock to produce this tranquil vision', *Spiritual Marriage: Sexual Abstinence in Medieval Wedlock* (Princeton, 1993), 52.

⁸² See Paulinus, Ep. 43, 44, CSEL 29; Walsh (tr.), *Letters of St Paulinus*, ACW nos. 35 and 36.

⁸³ See Palladius, *Lausiaca History* 61. 2–3; Gerontius, *Vita Melaniae Iunioris*, ed. Denys Gorce, SC 90 (Paris: du Cerf, 1962) 130–1.

⁸⁴ The female 'predilection for chastity' did not escape contemporary notice. Elliott, *Spiritual Marriage*, 57, cites Augustine, 'Placuit continentia mulieri, viro non placet' (*De Adulterinis Coniugiis* 1. 4. 4, J. Zycha, CSEL 41. 351), i.e. sexual abstinence is more pleasing to women than to men. John Chrysostom reproved wives who acted this way for encouraging sin in their husbands rather than righteousness (*In epistola I ad Corinthianos homilia XIX* c. 1 ad 7. 5, *PG* 61. 153).

the Gospel and baptism in a domestic setting. All that we have seen in this section on the domestic ascetic movement suggests that between the households of devout and committed Christian spouses—especially but not exclusively when electing celibacy—and of ascetic ‘brothers’ and ‘sisters’ in community, too sharp a distinction is not to be drawn.

The evolution of devout Christian household to monastic community which was taking place all around the Mediterranean, is quintessentially typified at Annisa. Thanks to Gregory of Nyssa’s piety towards his dead sister, we see the process nowhere else in such detail. The way it took several stages over several decades, was as if the Christian impulse picked up ‘swell’ from one generation to the next. Perhaps the roots of the Annisa phenomenon ran all the deeper for the length of its maturation, as its influence in the life of the Church was destined to be far-reaching. The stages may be summed up as follows:

1. from Makrina the Elder and her husband, the zealous converts and confessors of the faith early in the century,
2. to the devout married urban household of Basil Senior and Emmelia in the 340s offering hospitality and friendship to ascetics
3. to the aristocratic country villa presided over by Emmelia the widow ascetic in the late 340s and early 350s
4. to the abolition of class distinctions and the adoption of the common life of virgins in the mid-350s
5. to the incorporation of male celibates at Peter’s profession in the early 360s
6. to the archetypal monastic community in the 360s and 370s, comprising men and women ascetics, children, and guests presided over by Makrina and Peter as priest and head of the men’s section.

Peter Brown, in a brilliant line, says ‘From her retreat in Pontos, ten days’ journey from Caesarea, Makrina presided over the disintegration of a civic dynasty’.⁸⁵ That is one modern judgment—‘from below’ so to speak. From her own intensely anagogical perspective, however, Makrina presided over the patient but thoroughgoing transposition of the natural order into an ‘angelic’ order, whose *citizenship* (πολίτευμα) was in heaven (Phil. 3: 20).⁸⁶

⁸⁵ P. Brown, *The Body and Society* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1988), 278.

⁸⁶ Basil cites the text in *LR* 5. 2, 8. 3; Letter 207, Def. III. 186–7; and *Hom.* on Ps. 45, *PG* 29. 421C; Way 302. The Church as ‘polis’ is a theme of this homily and *Hom.* on Ps. 59.

Basil's insistence on community life for ascetics and his conception of it as a well-ordered 'multi-function body-corporate' comprising men, women, children, and guests who professed a kinship based on evangelical love and a common goal of piety, the emphasis on voluntary poverty, productive work ordered to service, careful pedagogy of the young maintained in adulthood by a system of mutual witness and correction, collaboration with the wider Church and communion with the bishop, frequent use of 'family language' (brother, sister, father, mother, household, family, kinship, communion) very much suggests that the roots of classic Anatolian ('Basilian') monasticism are to be sought not the least in the devout Christian family household, which was embodied in an exemplary fashion at Annisa.

It is perhaps a significant fact that the Greek language did not have a word that quite covers the sense of the 'nuclear' family of today, a discrete group of parents and children. The noun/adjective *οἰκεῖος*, like the Latin *familia/familiaris*, refers to membership not only of a 'nuclear' family, but also of the extended family and all who might belong to the 'household' in one way or another and close friends. The traditional aristocratic household had separate quarters for men, women, children, slaves and other functionaries, and dependants. In the case of a country villa, the household might present as something of a village, with a complex of workshops, quarters, and for Christians, a 'house of prayer'.

There are other linguistic considerations. The Greek vocabulary Gregory used to describe the community at Annisa, itemized in an earlier section, is overwhelmingly the same as that used for the traditional composite household of the Graeco-Roman aristocracy and of other cultural entities such as temples. A check of the relevant entries in Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* ('LSJ') confirms the fact. 'The altar to Zeus Ἐρκεῖος stood in the middle of the open court (αὐλή) which occupied the central part of the ἀνδρωνίτις, 'men's quarters'. Compare also ὁ ἀνδρῶν, 'men's apartment in a house' (LSJ 129): ὁ ἀνδρωνίτις. ὁ ἀνδρῶν is the very term used in *VSM* (GNO 388, 411): ἐκ τοῦ ἀνδρῶνος, 'from the men's quarters'.⁸⁷ Compare ἡ γυναικωνίτις, 'women's apartments in a house', used also of the women's court in the Jerusalem temple (LSJ 363). It is the same term used in the *VSM* (GNO 411 bis): παρὰ τῆς γυναικωνίτιδος, 'from the women's quarters'. A parallel term, however, is now also used, ὁ παρθενῶν *VSM* (GNO 388, 411: τοῦ παρθενῶνος).

The fact that the evolved community of Annisa and of the two

⁸⁷ Omitted in Callahan's translation, 174.

versions of the Asketikon should show segregated men's and women's quarters no doubt represents a resolution, but not a revolution. It may be seen as simply an adaptation of the proprieties of a traditional Graeco-Roman household to the scriptural imperatives of Christian community life and, given the commitment to celibacy, a prudent and realistic exclusion of *syneisaktism* even of a communal kind and of other hyperascetic tendencies, as itemized in the Gangra legislation. There is no note of surprise in such arrangements whenever they are adverted to in Basil's or Gregory's writings. They are quite taken for granted. The surprise is in us, who are more familiar with the later course of religious life which became 'canonized' in the form of one-sex communities.

Thus we have the—quite literally 'home-grown'—Anatolian version of cenobitic monastic life, rather different in genesis from that of Pachomian cenobitism in Egypt, to say nothing of anchoritism. The significant factor is the domestic ascetic movement, which surely deserves to be accorded greater weight in the history of early Christian monasticism.

WAS EUSTATHIUS A REFORMER OF EUSTATHIANISM?

Another important question arises in connection with events at Annisa and Basil's ministry among the ascetics of Pontos. Did Eustathius himself accept the correctives of the Council of Gangra? Did he support reforms among the ascetics who looked to him as a guide?

Certainly, Sozomen, in a continuation of a text cited above, suggests that what was found blameworthy in the ascetic movement was due to Eustathius' followers rather than to him:

Some assert that he was the author of the ascetic treatises commonly attributed to Basil of Cappadocia. It is said that his great exactness led him into certain extravagances which were altogether contrary to the laws of the Church. Many persons, however, justify him from this accusation and throw the blame upon some of his disciples . . .⁸⁸

Yet it is true that Gangra indicts not only his followers, but Eustathius by name and there is the fact of all his other indictments. Surely he *was* the inspirer of some of these hyperascetic tendencies in an earlier phase. But if his overall career shows him eminently capable of theological manoeuvring, there is no reason why he could not acquit himself of the same in ascetic practice. Just such an

⁸⁸ See Sozomen 3. 14.

example of accommodation is reported later in the same chapter of Sozomen:

It is said that from that time, Eustathius exchanged his clothing for the stole and made his journeys habited like other priests, thus proving that he had not introduced and practised these novelties out of self-will, but for the sake of a godly asceticism.

Chapter 75 of Epiphanius' *Panarion* describes the career of Aerius,⁸⁹ a presbyter and ascetic of Sebasteia, whom Eustathius as bishop had placed in charge of the hospice of the poor. Aerius, however, found that his erstwhile preceptor was becoming too *moderate* now that he was a bishop. His breakaway from Eustathius may be dated to the mid-360s, with a disaffection perhaps going back to the late 350s. Aerius quit the city and led a band of men and women to live in penury in the wilderness in contempt of society and many of the practices of the Church. To judge from Epiphanius' report, they replicated most of the behaviours censured at Gangra. Clearly, Aerius is a textbook case of the 'extreme' Eustathian as opposed to Eustathius himself: a hyperascetic on a one-way track to Messalianism.

It is clear, then, that Eustathius tempered some of his old ascetic exaggerations. He, as bishop—but undoubtedly well before that—made the first moves toward reintegrating religious enthusiasm with life in the Great Church. Indeed, he must have been known to do so soon after Gangra, because as has been argued above, how else could he have gained the demonstrated confidence of Basil Senior and Emmelia's family in the 340s? Sozomen 3.14⁹⁰ confirms this judgement:

yet he [Eustathius] had admirable sense and a high capacity of persuasion, so that he induced many men and women who were living in fornication, to take up a disciplined and serious course of life. It is related that a certain man and woman, who, according to the custom of the Church, had devoted themselves to a life of virginity, were accused of coming together (*ἄνδρα τινὰ καὶ γυναῖκα κατὰ Θεσμὸν Ἐκκλησίας παρθεनीαν προσποιουμένους, καὶ εἰς ταῦτόν συνιέναι διαβαλλομένους*). He endeavoured to have them cease from their familiarity (*σπουδάσαι τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὀμιλίας παύσαι*—ut eos ab huiusmodi consuetudine revocaret);⁹¹ but, failing to have any effect on

⁸⁹ *Panarion*, ch. 75, *PG* 41–3. See Elm 189, 193.

⁹⁰ The Greek text is from *PG* 67. 1080–1. See also the critical edition, J. Bidez and G. C. Hansen (eds.), *Sozomen, Historia Ecclesiastica*, GCS (Berlin: Akademie, 1960).

⁹¹ The case is that of the cohabitation of male and female ascetics, i.e. *syneisaktism*, a common early expedient in the ascetic life, repeatedly and increasingly condemned as the 4th cent. progressed. What Eustathius is trying to persuade them

them, he sighed deeply and said that a woman who had been lawfully cohabiting with her husband (ὡς κατὰ νόμον ἀνδρὶ συνοικοῦσα γυνή), having heard him discourse on the advantage of self-restraint (τοὺς περὶ σωφροσύνης λόγους ἀκούσασα αὐτοῦ), was so deeply affected by it that she abstained from that intercourse it is right for wives to share with their own husbands (συνουσίας ἀπέσχετο ἧς γαμεταῖς θέμις πρὸς ἰδίους ἀνδρας κοινωνεῖν) and that the weakness of his powers of persuasion was, on the other hand, shown by the fact that the parties above mentioned persisted in their unlawful course.

Now it is a strange thing that Elm, who is at pains to portray Eustathius as an exemplar of ‘Homoiousian asceticism’, never addresses this important text. For here indeed is a picture of Eustathius militant on behalf of chastity in general and celibacy in particular, but also insistenty opposed to *syneisaktism*, the cohabitation of male and female ascetics.⁹² But this, according to Elm, was a defining practice of Homoiousian asceticism. It seems there is cause to question the way Elm uses the evidence to suggest and then presume the practice of male and female cohabitation among Homoiousian ascetics.

As demonstrated in an earlier section, not a few of the caveats of Gangra are already operative in the Small Asketikon. Since this reflects the situation in the ascetic communities of Basil’s circle in the mid-360s, when we know Basil and Eustathius worked in close association, it is clear that Eustathius himself supported Basil’s promotion of these reforms.

Surely it is precisely because Eustathius was prepared to correct exaggerations in ascetic practices, that it took Basil all the longer to see through the man, for *never* was his animus roused against him on account of his ascetic doctrine. Indeed, events of the mid-360s

to do, is not so much to give up physical relations, of which they may not be guilty, but to cease the practice of celibate cohabitation, with its attendant grave risks, not only of fornication, but of an ambiguous public witness leaving them open to just such accusations as they have incurred. His *a fortiori* argument appears to be that if lawful spouses could be persuaded to suspend sexual relations, surely it should not be harder for celibates to suspend cohabitation. In Letter 55 (Def. 1. 346–51) soon after he becomes bishop, Basil deals bluntly with a priest in a similar case. This passage calls into question Elm’s consistent presentation of the cohabitation of male and female ascetics, either in pairs or in mixed communities (as distinct from communities with segregated houses), as a feature of ‘Homoiousian asceticism’. It would be convenient to think that this was so and was later ‘reformed’ by Basil. But here it is Eustathius who is correcting the practice.

⁹² Note also that the Homoiousian leader, Basil of Ancyra, decries the cohabitation of male and female ascetics in his *De Vera Virginitate*, PG 30.753–6 and 753B–756C.

disarmed him even on the score of Eustathius' theology, for Eustathius brought back from Rome a creed in which he had professed the *homoousios* before Pope Liberius and flourished it before the synod of Tyana (366–7). The falling out did not come till the early 370s and then on theological and political grounds. When Basil reviewed Eustathius' influence on his own ascetic life he never referred to Gangra. This is because the concerns of this council had long been addressed in the reforms of both 'Eustathian' and 'Basilian' ascetic communities—which in the 360s are scarcely distinguishable—and besides, Basil would not have been keen to advert by name to a council tainted, it seems, by its Arian connections.⁹³

THE REVOLUTION IN BASIL'S ASCETIC DISCOURSE, 356–365

In examining the period from 356 to 365 above, the focus was largely on Makrina, Peter, and developments at Annisa. Now we need to look at what was happening with Basil at this period more closely. This decade was a period of the utmost importance for his maturation on a number of fronts. During this time his views on the desirable form of ascetic life, above all for males, underwent a transformation. The change is particularly noticeable in *LR* 35, for example. Contradicting his own initial pursuit of a more or less freelance type of ascetic life, when he retired to a wild spot removed from the household, he now strongly urges nearby communities to join together into a single community inclusive of men, women, children, and guests. Letter 150 (Def. II. 360–71) also highlights the change. It shows a young lawyer sick of the worldly life and minded to do just what Basil had once done—go off 'wandering in the wilderness' among 'the caves and the rocks'. Basil now thoroughly discourages such a project and urges him to take up the cenobitic life, the well-ordered life in community, under an attested spiritual guide.

These two texts are from Basil's later period. Yet a dramatic shift in the character of his ascetic discourse can be seen even in texts from the first ten years of his ascetic life (c.356–66). The change began slowly, but gathered pace as time went on. If Letters 1, 2, 4, 14, and 22 are read in chronological sequence: 1, 14, 4, 2,⁹⁴ 22, it can be seen that Basil's ascetic discourse progresses from a philosophical

⁹³ See Appendix 7, n. 1 on the dating of Gangra.

⁹⁴ I follow Paul J. Fedwick in his 'A Chronology of the Life and Works of Basil of Caesarea', in *Basil of Caesarea, Christian, Humanist, Ascetic*. On p. 6 he places Letter 14 before Letter 2.

discourse, virtually indistinguishable from that of the pagan ascetic traditions (Letters 1 and 4), through letters which increasingly combine such discourse with more overtly Christian content (Letters 14 and 2) to one which is thoroughly Christian and scriptural in tone (Letter 22).

In Letter 1 (356/7) to ‘Eustathius the Philosopher’, that is, of Sebasteia⁹⁵ Basil uses terms such as ‘philosophy’ for the ascetic life⁹⁶ and speaks of *Tύχη*, or fortune, as determining human affairs. The letter is replete with graceful allusions to the *Odyssey*. Only at the end does he come to a very generic ‘God’ as the dispenser of our affairs.

Letter 14 (357/8) on the eve of Basil’s retirement to his ‘philosophic’ retreat on the Iris shows much the same ambience. The classical allusions continue; what he proposes to do is not unlike a traditional philosophical withdrawal from city life to a country villa. It shows the traits of private enthusiasm—perhaps even of dilettantism. He has found a spot, he says, exactly suited to his taste, far from the disturbances of the city, where his friends might come and join him in hunting. Nevertheless, ‘God’ appears almost from the beginning of the letter and under a somewhat more personal colouring than in the letter of a year or so earlier.

Letter 4, is written to Olympius, a cultured friend in Neocaesarea. Basil is only a short time into his retreat; the freshness and enthusiasm of the venture are still upon him. His friend from the city has sent in ‘relief supplies’ for his poverty. Basil playfully defends what he calls his ‘philosophy’ with allusions to the Stoic philosophers Zeno, Cleanthes, and Diogenes and speaks of *Tύχη*, Fortune, driving him into the *τριβώνιον*, the ‘tattered’ cloak or philosopher’s mantle. God is not mentioned, though at the end when he gives up the banter he speaks of praying for his friend and of his holy or sacred soul.

When we come to Letter 2 (358), Basil has actually been practising his new lifestyle for some time, a year or more. There are observable shifts. The use of Scripture appears for the first time, though as yet he speaks of it as only *one* of the means for discovering ‘duty’—

⁹⁵ For the identification of Eustathius see Gribomont, ‘Eustathe le Philosophe et les voyages du jeune Basile de Césaréc’, 115–24.

⁹⁶ Literary exemplars of the pagan philosophic ascetic tradition are Porphyry’s *Life of Plotinus*, Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, Eunapius’ *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, Libanius’ autobiography (*Oration I*), and Iamblichus’ *Life of Pythagoras*. See Malingrey, ‘*Philosophia*’ and A. Meredith, ‘Asceticism—Christian and Greek’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS 27 (1976), 312–32 and Rousseau, *Basil of Caesarea*, on Eunapius, 35, Libanius, 57–61, and generally 70–2.

not unlike the eclectic approach one might take toward the pagan classics. Much of his ascetic discourse retains a generic quality; it would suffice for either Christianity or Hellenism: for example, the Platonist-sounding: ‘the mind . . . withdraws within itself and of its own accord ascends to the contemplation of God’. Yet the description of the ‘discipline of piety’ stems clearly enough from a Christian. Specifically Christian themes appear, sometimes shyly in a classical guise, sometimes more straightforwardly. Basil appears to be straddling two types of discourse and has not quite sorted them out yet. Perhaps the most important new note in Letter 2 is that now, several months or a year into his new life, ‘prayer’ has come to assume a great importance for Basil and the ‘memory of God’ and the ‘yearning’ it engenders. Prayer was hardly conceded by the philosophers as a means to divine knowledge; indeed, Plotinus seems to have disdained it.⁹⁷

After a few years comes Letter 22, ‘On the perfection of the monastic life’.⁹⁸ It fits the period of Basil’s second Pontic retreat, 363–5, or soon after. Here the change in Basil’s thinking is complete. All talk of ‘philosophy’ and every classical allusion has fallen away. He nails his colours to the mast from the outset—the primacy of ‘the divinely inspired Scriptures’ appears in the first sentence; every line shows how deeply he has interiorized Scripture. He addresses unequivocally ‘the Christian’ who would ‘conduct himself worthily of the Gospel of Christ’. In what he proposes now, there is no more scope for a freelance, self-pleasing approach to spiritual endeavour; now the Christian must ‘not consider himself in some way as his own master’, but is called to live and work in an ordered community under approved guides.

To approach this letter after sustained exposure to the Small Asketikon conveys a forcible impression of perfect congruence of doctrine, language, and tone. Letter 22 reads very much like an epitome of the Small Asketikon. The scriptural allusions on every line are understood best against the explicit quotations and discussions of scriptural texts in the longer document.⁹⁹ Since Letter 22 is a

⁹⁷ See A. Meredith, ‘Plotinus’, in *The Study of Spirituality* (London: SPCK, 1986), 97.

⁹⁸ Gribomont in ‘Les Règles épistolaires de s. Basile: Lettres 173 et 22’, *Antonianum* 54 (1979), 255–87, argues that Letter 22 was originally subjoined to Letter 173 to the *Canonike* Theodora and proposes a later date, after 370. Fedwick 8 n. 29 refutes the later dating.

⁹⁹ Fedwick 8 n. 29 strangely implies that Letter 22 has an immature grasp of Scripture. Yet it is riven with scriptural allusions, very much as a summary statement of the texts treated more explicitly in the Small Asketikon.

work of literary composition, Basil may have written it from Pontos to the Cappadocian ascetics whom he had to leave behind in 362.

Therefore, by the years of his presbyterate and his emergence as a teacher of ascetic communities throughout Pontos, the years of both Letter 22 and the Small Asketikon, Basil had carried out a thorough de-Hellenization and Christianization of his ascetic discourse. The change is too marked and too consistent to be anything but deliberate.¹⁰⁰ He has abandoned the generic manner and will henceforth speak to ascetics, enthusiasts, and Christians exclusively in terms suited to the common Christian life of the Church instead. The one Gospel, the same Scriptures furnish him with the language and the rationale for *all* Christian life.

This revolution in Basil's ascetic discourse was accomplished by the mid-360s, the time of the Small Asketikon. This transformation long pre-dated the rupture with Eustathius in the 370s and the agony he experienced then as he reconsidered his early involvement with the ascetic life.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN BASIL'S THINKING, 356–365

What were the influences in Basil's life during the decade 356–65 that affected such a change in his discourse and thinking? What other developments can be observed in this most formative period of his life?

A suitable point of departure is the autobiographical account given in the *De Iudicio*, the first of two prefaces to Basil's *Moralia*. Its composition is best dated to late in his second Pontic period before he returned to Caesarea.¹⁰¹ *De Iudicio* is both retrospective

¹⁰⁰ It is noteworthy that long after this change in Basil's discourse, both Gregorys continued to refer to the ascetic/monastic life as the life of 'philosophy'. Basil, of course, still had the resources of his Greek *paideia* to use as need warranted it, e.g. Letters 118, 135, 373. He exercised a certain 'genre critique' in his choice of style. What he has to say about literary style in Letter 135, Def. II. 307, fits the matured simplicity of his own preferred style which he used in all matters dealing with the ascetic life.

¹⁰¹ With Clarke (78), Rousseau (228 n. 211), and Elm, this work and its accompanying *De Fide* and *Moralia*, is to be dated earlier rather than later. Fedwick, however, dates its final redaction to the mid-370s (14 n. 81). Not once but three times Basil uses phrases which appear to refer to circumstances present at the time of writing: 'now, if ever (*νῦν, εἴπερ ποτέ*) when the Anomoians have sprung up (*ἐπιφύετων*)' (PG 31. 653B, Clarke 77), and 'I considered this also about the present situation' (*ἐλογισάμην καὶ περὶ τῶν παρόντων ἐκείνος* PG 31. 656A, Clarke 78) and 'perhaps even now . . .' (*μήποτε καὶ νῦν* *ibid.*). Fedwick, *Charisma* 150–1, argues that

and prospective. Basil takes stock, looking back over his progress up to the present. He begins with this statement about his childhood upbringing:

I was delivered from the deceitfulness of the tradition of those outside, having been brought up from the very beginning by Christian parents. With them I learned from infancy (*ἀπὸ βρέφους*) the holy Scriptures.¹⁰²

Then he refers to his studies abroad and the harmony he noticed among the students in each discipline. But with the Church it was very different. Basil had scarcely begun his ascetic retirement late in 357, when he was confronted with the fierce doctrinal turmoil of the contemporary Church. The source of his enlightenment was obviously Eustathius, who, strategist that he was, decided it was the pedagogical moment to introduce this brilliant and fervent young man to Church affairs. The Homoiousians held a synod at Ancyra early in 358.¹⁰³ Returning home along the Via Pontica, Eustathius stopped off at Annisa to brief Basil. The following two years were filled with the intense political vacillations of the councils of Rimini and Seleucia. They resulted in the imperially engineered Homoian (Arian) triumph at the Council of Constantinople in 360. Basil (of Caesarea) attended it in a minor capacity,¹⁰⁴ probably in Eustathius' entourage. At this council Basil of Ancyra, Macedonius, Eustathius, and the Homoiousian bishops were rudely ousted, and the ascetics

first *νῦν* and *ἐπιφύετων* above are governed by the imperfect main verb *ἔθέωρον*, so that *νῦν* really means not 'now' at the time of writing but 'then', when the Anomoians had sprung up. Even if one concedes this reasoning, it does not invalidate composition in c.365, when he could look back to the Anomoian resurgence in 361 even before the accession of Julian and all that had intervened since then, notably his own work on the *Contra Eunomium*.

¹⁰² *De Iudicio*, PG 31. 653–76, using the English version in Clarke 77–89.

¹⁰³ At this council they contrived to exclude the *homoousios* with many a sophisticated circumlocution. J. T. Lienhard, 'The Epistle of the Synod of Ancyra, 358: A Reconsideration' in R. C. Gregg (ed.), *Arianism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1985), sets Homoiousianism in its relative context, regarding it as a distinctive theological trend in its own right. The Ancyra synod aligned itself with the Dedication council of Antioch (341), the Synod of Sardica (Philippopolis 343), and the 1st Synod of Sirmium (351); it did not even allude to the Council of Nicaea. The synodal letter began its doctrinal exposition with the baptismal formula of Matt. 28:19, which would become very characteristic of Basil of Caesarea. Yet they posited a Creator/creature dichotomy of Father/Son, even if the 'creature' is real and perfect. This is surely of an Arian or Subordinationist stamp. On the other hand, J. N. Steenson, 'Basil of Ancyra on the Meaning of Homoousios', in Gregg (ed.) *Arianism*, 267–79, casts Homoiousianism as a pro-Nicene, even 'homoousian' position. Such are the contrasting understandings even among modern commentators.

¹⁰⁴ See Gregory of Nyssa, *Contra Eunomium* 1.9, in *NPNF*, 2nd ser. 5, trans. 43–4.

in Constantinople who supported Macedonius caused no small uproar on behalf of their leader. The state of mayhem in the Church was starkly brought home to Basil. *De Iudicio* reveals that he was so disturbed by this confusion that it precipitated him into a period of profound darkness, indeed a spiritual crisis. The issue, he began to see, was the excessive disorder, impiety, and individualism abroad in the Church. He characterized it as ‘mob-rule’ (πολυαρχία), the lack of a common obedience to ‘the one great true and only King and God of all’, leading to ‘such great dissension and strife taking place among churchmen, each man deserting the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ and arbitrarily claiming the right of arguments and definitions of his own, wishing to rule over against the Lord rather than be ruled by Him’ (Clarke 78).

A threefold remedy crystallized in Basil’s mind: obedience to the Lord and his teaching, a passionate commitment to the Church and its apostolic tradition, and the necessity of each Christian’s engagement in the moral and spiritual endeavour required by baptism; in brief: Scripture, Church, and piety, not one sustainable without the other.

Basil’s early years at Annisa were engaged in struggling to attain these ends in himself. These were his ‘hinge years’, in which he lay the spiritual groundwork for his life of pastoral labour. In tandem with prayer, fasting, and manual work, Basil developed what can only be described as a passion for Scripture. He dredged the Scriptures on the crises of the day, making systematic notes under subject headings—the early drafts of the *Moralia*. Gregory Nazianzen, in his Letter 6, speaks of the ὄροις γραπτοῖς καὶ κανόνων, ‘written rules and regulations’, which the two of them compiled during Gregory’s stay at Annisa between 359 and 361. Gribomont remarks the importance of Basil’s scriptural study in this period:

At the beginning of his conversion, alerted by the squabbles and excesses which were apparent to right and to left, as equally among the ascetics as among the bishops (and Basil has no qualms about criticizing them, individually and in the mass) the Saint devoted years to coming to know the scriptural standard in all its details, with the words of Jesus as the norm. Whenever he speaks out later on, we can be sure that before speaking, his enlightened gaze has picked out whichever Gospel precepts are applicable and to which he must lead his hearers.¹⁰⁵

But Makrina’s passion for Scripture had long preceded Basil’s. The *VSM* attests that her education under her mother’s guidance

¹⁰⁵ Jean Gribomont, ‘Christ and the Primitive Monastic Ideal’, *Word and Spirit* 5 (Still River, Mass.: St Bede’s Publications, 1983), 109.

was based not on secular works but on the Scriptures.¹⁰⁶ Unlike Basil, Makrina had never ceased eating, drinking, and breathing the Scriptures from her childhood. She educated her youngest brother, Peter, in the same way. We are fortunate to have an independent confirmation of this scriptural bent from the pen of Peter himself. In his only surviving writing, a letter responding to Gregory's *Contra Eunomium* I, Peter sounds an unmistakably Makrinian—and Basilian—note:

As *bread cannot be eaten*, according to Job, *without salt* (Job 6: 6), so the discourse which is not seasoned with the more stringent qualities¹⁰⁷ of God's word will never wake, and never move desire.¹⁰⁸

Makrina's presence nearby at Annisa, therefore, cannot but have been a material factor in Basil's own turn, or preferably *re*-turn, to Scripture and in the resultant 'Christianization' of his ascetic discourse. There can be no doubt that it was obedience to Scripture itself, embodied close at hand in the witness of Makrina and her household, in tandem with his urgent quest for the principles of *koinonia* and cohesion in the Church, that moved Basil away from the 'sarabaitic' life he had initially taken up, towards a Christian and ascetic life conceived of in terms of a well-ordered and comprehensive community life. By the period of the Small Asketikon Basil was emphasizing the example of the apostolic community of Jerusalem and the Pauline teachings on the Church as the one 'body of Christ' embracing many members (*RBas.* 2. 58–69/*LR* 3).

The fundamental shift in Basil's conception of the Christian ascetic life must have been well-nigh complete by the time Basil submitted himself for the presbyterate at Caesarea in 362, for he was preaching a fully-fledged cenobitism during his second period in Pontos, 363–5.

His brother Peter may have been another factor in the shift. As has been conjectured above, during 360–2 young Peter's prospects

¹⁰⁶ Notwithstanding the strong probability that she acquired something of Hellenism. Her role as 'Teacher' in Gregory of Nyssa's *Dialogue on the Soul and the Resurrection* suggests as much. Gregory would hardly have constructed such a picture of her for those who knew her without some basis of verisimilitude.

¹⁰⁷ ἀμυκτικωτέροις, FZS. μυστικωτέροις, LBV, 'inmost sentiments'. ἀμυκτικός, ἦ, ον was used by Soranus (2nd cent. AD) for medicinal remedies of an 'irritant' character. In invoking the bracing, pungent qualities—the 'salt'—of God's word, Peter shows the familiarity with medical terminology characteristic of all the Cappadocians. He used a medical term not understood by some later scribes who copied 'mystical' instead.

¹⁰⁸ From the exchange of correspondence between Gregory and Peter in connection with Gregory's *Contra Eunomium*, book 1; see *NPNF*, 2nd ser. 5. 34.

must have come up for discussion between Emmelia, Makrina, and Basil—and, of course, Peter himself. In such discussions the form of an inclusive yet discreetly segregated community was worked out that would have enabled Peter to make his profession and continue his ascetic life at the Annisa household without ever having to depart for the retreat in the forests, as Basil once had. Or perhaps Basil met the final synthesis of community arrangements at Annisa when he returned to Pontos in early 363, and it then crystallized for him the tenor of his own groping toward the cenobitic life.

Either way, Annisa by 362/3 provided him with the living model of a stable, comprehensive form of community life. Letter 19, to Gregory Nazianzen (Def. 1. 120–3) comes from this very period.¹⁰⁹ How significant that it expressly mentions Peter, who can scarcely have been 20 years old! Thus if the argument being advanced here is correct, Makrina was not only the catalyst of Basil's ascetic conversion and recalled him to the primacy of Scripture, but, together with Peter, influenced him as to the desirable form of community life. This took place either before his departure for Caesarea or after his return to Annisa as a priest, certainly before he took up the business of promoting the reformed cenobitic way of life among the devout Christians and the ascetics of Pontos.

There was another significant personal influence at this early period. This was Apollinaris, who became bishop of Laodicea in Syria in 360. He served Basil in this early period as a kind of doctrinal counterweight to Eustathius.¹¹⁰ Basil's letters 361 and 363 to Apollinaris confirm the portrayal in the *De Iudicio* of his early anguish over the confusion in the Church. Letter 361 may date from as early as 359, after the Council of Seleucia. It reveals that Basil has written to Apollinaris before—how long before one might wonder? Here Basil is showing a rising keenness for the Scriptures. Doctrinally, he is disposed to accept the *homoousios*, but hesitates, with the sort of cautiousness one might expect of someone with esteemed Homoiousian friends. In his reply, Apollinaris shows himself (at this stage) a theologian of the old Nicene type, straightforward about

¹⁰⁹ Fedwick 8 follows Courtonne in dating it after his ordination but before his final return to Caesarea.

¹¹⁰ In assessing Basil and Apollinaris, I am much indebted to Rousseau's discussion, 250–4, especially his summary statement on 253. Whereas Fedwick xxx places the Apollinaris correspondence (Letters 361–4), or at least Basil's part of it (Letters 361, 363) among the *Dubia*, Rousseau, following G. L. Prestige, *St Basil the Great and Apollinaris*, ed. H. Chadwick (London: SPCK, 1956) and H. de Riedmatten, 'La Correspondence entre Basile de Césarée et Apollinaire de Laodicée', *Journal of Theological Studies*, NS 7 (1956), 199–210, is strongly in favour of authenticity.

confessing the Nicene *homoousios*. The message he kindly but firmly communicates to Basil is: stop cavilling in this manner, this is a council definition and you need to give it your frank allegiance. Letter 363 shows that Basil's love of the Scriptures has progressed: 'Now the love (*ὁ ἔρως*) of the knowledge of these divine sayings lays hold of my soul more than ever.' Letter 364, from Apollinaris, appears to be some time later, either in 362 or 365, just as Basil returns to Cappadocia. It confirms Basil in loyalty to Nicaea and to the Scriptures, warns him off Homoiousian equivocations and affirms the divine nature of the Spirit. In all, it could well be Apollinaris' considered response to Basil's *Contra Eunomium*.

On the one hand, Apollinaris unambiguously ranked the Son on the side of the uncreated Father, but on the other, through the 360s he developed this stance into a kind of pre-Monophysite Christology and so earned a place for himself as an heresiarch. By the 370s this development played into Eustathius' hands, who brandished the charge of 'Apollinarism' against Basil and anyone professing the neo-Nicene position. By then, Basil's early correspondence with Apollinaris had become an acute embarrassment for him.¹¹¹ But to be fair, during the all-important decade of 356–65, Apollinaris seems to have been a worthwhile formative influence on Basil, prodding him to take an independent line from the Homoiousians, confirming his turn to the Scriptures and insisting on the importance of the council Fathers and Church tradition.

Doctrinally, Basil in 360 might be styled as a 'homoiousianizing' Homoousian, meaning that he was of a basically Nicene disposition,¹¹² but, being still 'young' in theological and church affairs, his dealings were affected by his admiration for Eustathius on ascetic grounds and his familiarity with his circle. As the 360s progressed, however, he worked his way towards an unqualified Homoousian, or neo-Nicene position.¹¹³ The stages may be traced beginning with his Letter 9 to Maximus the philosopher, written in 361/2. It shows his Homoousian and Nicene preferences, yet also certain qualifications. He was prepared to bracket a Homoiousian *ὁμοιος κατ' οὐσίαν*

¹¹¹ And so, as Rousseau brings out (254), his relationship with Apollinaris became yet another of Basil's ruptured friendships.

¹¹² Independently of Eustathius or Apollinaris, Basil was heir to the Neocaesarean tradition with its predisposition to the *homoousios*. See Letter 204, Def. III. 157, 169.

¹¹³ Others qualify him as originally Homoiousian, e.g. V. H. Drecoll, *Die Entwicklung der Trinitätslehre des Basiliius vom Cäsarea: Sein Weg vom Homöusianer zum Neonizäner* (Göttingen, 1996). M. V. Anastos goes even further, 'Basil's Lapses into Arianism and how Athanasius had Avoided them', *ΚΑΘΗΓΗΤΡΙΑ* (Camberley, Surrey, 1988), 153–71. *Contra*, see previous note.

together with the Nicene *ὁμοούσιος*, if ἀπαραλλάκτως (from the Council of Antioch, 341) were added. Yet in his first major theological study, the *Contra Eunomium*, written in the lead-up to the Council of Lampsacus in the autumn of 364¹¹⁴ and intended expressly for the use of Eustathius, he seems to retreat from this position. While it shows his intense appeal to Scripture, his quest for the principle of communion in the Church, and his concern for the manner in which theological inquiry may be rightly conducted,¹¹⁵ he does not refer to Nicaea and predicates the *homoousios* of the Son just once.¹¹⁶ He cites the Homoiousian formula without any qualification. Only with Letter 159 (Def. II. 394/5), do we finally come to an unqualified insistence on the Nicene *ὁμοούσιος*.

The watershed for Basil appears to have been the Council of Tyana, held early in 367. Though convened under Eusebius of Caesarea, there is little doubt that Basil prepared the groundwork for this council and was himself present.¹¹⁷ He reports that Eustathius brought his confirmation from Pope Liberius, before whom he had confessed the *homoousios*.¹¹⁸ The Council of Tyana and the events

¹¹⁴ Following Fedwick 10 n. 57; see Sesboüé, 'Introduction', to *Basil, Contre Eunome*, 1. 42. On Lampsacus, see Sozomen, *HE* 6. 7 and Basil, Letter 223, Def. III. 302–3.

¹¹⁵ See Rousseau 107, 113.

¹¹⁶ 'Even then (the early 360s) Basil was making theological adjustments. The *Contra Eunomium* itself we have to associate to some extent with the purposes of Eustathius' (Rousseau 102). This observation is important. Basil seems to be accommodating himself to the concerns of the Homoiousian bishops, who were affected by the recent accession of Valens and the re-enactment of Constantius' legislation of 360, suspended during Julian's reign. M. Anastos's extensive study, 'Basil's *Κατὰ Ἐυνομίον*' in Fedwick 67–136 probes Basil's complexities, contradictions, and cautions in ascribing the *homoousios* to Christ in this work; see especially 127–34; 128 on the contrast between Letter 9 with the *Contra Eunomium*; 129–32 on Basil's *oikonomia* concerning the Holy Spirit. The only Cappadocian Father to openly declare the Holy Spirit *homoousios* with the Father was Gregory Nazianzen (n. 233). The phrases on the Holy Spirit added to the Nicene Creed in 381 at Constantinople, teaching the Spirit's divine nature but stopping short of predicating His *homoousios*, echo Basil's manner. Anastos on 132 n. 239 refers to an article on this subject by R. Staats, 'Die Verherrlichung des Heiligen Geistes auf dem Konzil zu Konstantinopel 381'.

¹¹⁷ On Basil's presence at Tyana see Rousseau 101, n. 17; on this point he refers to Gribomont, 'Eustathe de Sébaste', *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques* (Paris, 1967), 16. 29 ff.

¹¹⁸ Basil refers to the Council of Tyana and to Eustathius' presence in Letter 226, Def. II. 336–7, and Letter 244, Def. III. 462–3. The concluding comments of Letter 67, Def. II. 32–5, intimate that Basil himself was present. On Tyana see also Socrates, *HE* 4. 12 and Sozomen, *HE* 6. 10, 11; a follow-up council was to be held in Tarsus at the end of Spring, but, at the instigation of the Arian bishop Eudoxius of Constantinople, it was thwarted by order of Valens.

that followed it were the Homoiousians' turning point. Here they came to terms with Meletius of Antioch and his supporters, one-time moderate Homoians who had been gravitating steadily to a neo-Nicene position since the Anomoian resurgence in the early 360s. That there were different usages for the terms *ousia* and *hypostasis* was admitted at the Synod of Confessors in 362 under Athanasius. Now the terms were clearly defined, eventually Homoiousians either merged with this neo-Nicene front, or diverged as a separatist party, becoming known in the 370s for 'Pneumatomachian' views. But some years were to pass before Basil realized Eustathius' secret disaffection with this neo-Nicene turn of events.

It is fitting to conclude with some consideration of the mini 'corpus' of the *De Iudicio*, *De Fide*, and the *Morals*, for in these works Basil's state of mind on the ascetic life, doctrinal issues, and the Church towards the end of the formative decade of his life (356–65) can be seen to converge.

Eusebius succeeded Dianius as bishop of Caesarea in June or July of 362. Therefore Basil must have arrived in Caesarea at the summons of the dying Dianius and been reconciled with him in May or June of the same year.¹¹⁹ For information about what happened next we rely on Gregory Nazianzen¹²⁰ and he is rather guarded in his comments. There was some 'tumult' about the election of Dianius' successor. Is it possible that Basil himself was a contender? At any rate Eusebius, a layman, won. Perhaps as part of a settlement, Basil was ordained priest. Besides, a visit to Caesarea by the Emperor Julian was impending,¹²¹ for which Basil's presence would be an advantage. Basil's life in the Caesarean presbyterate, however, began poorly. For even then he was trying to live out his ideas of a remedy of the Church's ills, uniting the ascetic life with presbyteral ministry; it was this very combination that seemed to have piqued Eusebius and his supporters and led to the snubbing of Basil. A kind of stand-off ensued between the Cappadocian ascetics who backed Basil, and their metropolitan bishop. That this should have occurred at the outset of Basil's life as a presbyter, would scarcely have lightened his anxiety over the confusion in the Church. In his very attempt to promote a remedy, to be part of the answer, Basil was

¹¹⁹ See Letter 51, Def. III. 320–7; Garnier and Maran, *Vita* 8. 4; and Fedwick, *Charisma*, 13 n. 64.

¹²⁰ *Oration 43, Eulogy on Basil* 28–9 (McCauley 51–2).

¹²¹ Fedwick, *Charisma*, 14 n. 67 places Julian's visit to Caesarea in Sept. 362, because 7 Sept. became the annual commemoration of the martyrs Euphychius and Damas, who were executed by order of the Emperor during his visit to Cappadocia. See Letters 100, 176, and 252.

proving a conspicuous failure. On the advice of Gregory Nazianzen, Basil withdrew to Pontos and devoted himself to a ministry of reform and teaching among the ascetic communities there.

In the light of these events, the *De Iudicio*, *De Fide*, and the *Morals* corpus best fits the second Pontic period. The *apologia* with which *De Iudicio* begins and the brave diffidence he expresses at the end do not suggest Basil as bishop in the 370s; they accord well, however, with his early days in the priesthood and as an ascetic leader. The connection with *De Fide* projected at the very end of the *De Iudicio* backs up the idea that he is a priest, though the last paragraph was added later. In the *De Fide* there is the presbyteral tone of ‘the function of a faithful minister’ (90C) and ‘thus we baptize’ (Clarke 96). The connection with the *Morals*, clearly projected in the *De Fide*, shows clearly that he is presbyter as he writes. In the *Morals*, Basil definitely *is* a priest, showing himself very concerned to expound the nature of the presbyteral ministry; in sections 70 and 80. 12 he dredges the Scriptures on the issue.

Whom does Basil address in the *De Fide*? The ‘your piety’ of English is plural in Greek: τῆς ὑμετέρας εὐλαβείας, which is an honorific form of address and may or may not refer to a group. Towards the end (98D), however, Basil twice mentions ‘the brothers in Christ’—almost transparently ascetics. There is affection between them (90A, 91B). But they beg him for a written confession of his faith (90A), for there seems to be some question or puzzlement over Basil’s controversial work ‘against the heretics’, surely the *Contra Eunomium* (91A, 92A, 97D). This would provide the year 364 as the *post quem* for the time of writing. Basil’s intention to limit himself entirely to a scriptural mode of discourse is notable; so is his confession of the *homoousios*, intimately tied to Matt. 28: 12–20 (96C). His addressees are in some position of authority and will convey his reply in turn to ‘the brothers’. Basil, in short, seems to be addressing superiors of ascetic communities.¹²²

Thus the *De Iudicio*, the *De Fide*, and at least an interim version of the *Morals* may be dated late in the period of Basil’s presbyterate in Pontos, once rumours of his *Contra Eunomium* have begun circulating, perhaps early in 365. Since they are works of literary composition rather than of oral delivery, he appears to be writing to ascetics not in Pontos where he is presently situated, but in Cappadocia—the same ascetics who championed him during his stay there in 362 and with whom he has maintained contact. The disaffection and misinformation that lay behind his withdrawal from

¹²² This is also Clarke’s conclusion, 97 n. 4.

Caesarea have continued in some quarters after his departure. He writes in an expressly non-controversial manner to reassure his allies among the Cappadocian ascetics about his Nicene faith and to reinforce them in theirs (*De Fide*). The rationale for the Christian ascetic life is also his concern. To answer that, he will send them his forensic notes on the scriptural imperatives of baptism; people can draw their own conclusions. On the matter of combining the ascetic life and presbyteral office, it will be seen to be not only commensurate with scriptural teaching on the 'ministry of the word', but demanded by it (*Morals*). That this new man in the Caesarean presbyterate was committed to the ascetic way and was an evangelical maximalist was, as we have seen, a sticking point with Basil's opponents in Cappadocia in 362. The same animus was to re-emerge at the time of his election as bishop in 370.¹²³

¹²³ The same processes of accretion and revision may apply to the *De Fide* as with Basil's other *ascetica*. The full treatment of the divine nature of the Holy Spirit as one of the Trinity does seem to fit the 370s and lends support to Fedwick's late dating of the *De Fide* (as also the *De Iudicio*).

Comparative Chronological Tables

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Years	Imperial events	Church events	Eustathius of Sebasteia	Makrina and family	Basil of Caesarea	Gregory of Nyssa
320s	324 Constantine defeats Licinius, sole emperor; Church's <i>Pax Constantina</i> .	325 Council of Nicaea proscribes Arius, promulgates creed containing <i>homooousios</i> .	Studies in Alexandria, returns to Armenia as a 'philosopher' (ascetic).	327/8 , Birth of Makrina, first-born of Basil of Neocaesarea and Emmelia of Cappadocia.	329 Birth of Basil, the second-born, at Neocaesarea.	
330s	330 Constantinople set up as eastern capital; Eusebius of Nicomedia dominates Constantine's Church policy. 337 Death of Constantine.	329-35? Eustathius of Antioch (old Nicene) deposed; schism of Antioch begins. 335 Athanasius' 1st deposition at Council of Tyre/Jerusalem.	c.330 Censured by father, Eulalius of Sebasteia. Late 330s E. in Constantinople, annoys Eusebius of Nicomedia. 339? Neocaesarean censure.	Basil Senior practices law and rhetoric in Neocaesarea, the family's residence. 330 Naukratios third-born. Em. and Makrina Elder educates M. in Scriptures.	Learns Scriptures from parents 'from infancy' and traditions of Neocaesarean church from Makrina Elder 'from childhood'; serves Eustathius 'from childhood'.	c.335 Birth of Gregory, third of surviving sons, at Neocaesarea.
340s	Constantine's three sons contest spheres of power. 340 Constans (pro-Nicene) defeats Constantine II, becomes sole ruler in west; a restraining influence on his Arianizing brother, Constantius in the east.	c.340 Council of Gangra. 341 'Dedication' Council of Antioch (anti-Homooousian); Eusebius of Nicomedia dies. 342 Western Synod of Sardica reaffirms <i>homooousios</i> (Nicene). Late 340s Aetius in Antioch, (Anomoian/ultra-Arian).	340? E. and ascetic followers censured at Gangra; adapts himself to correctives. Ascetic guide of the 'Arians' Macedonius and Marathonius in Constantinople. 340s Friend to B.'s family in Neocaesarea, visits Annisa.	339/40 Makrina affianced. 340/4 Death of fiancé, M. decides to be virgin widow. c.346 Basil Senior dies, birth of Peter the last-born; Em. transfers household to Annisa estate on the Iris. N. begins school in Caesarea.	c.344 Begins middle studies at his father's school. c.346 Continues school in Caesarea; meets Gregory Nazianzen. 349 Higher studies in Constantinople; meets Libanius. c.350 To Athens for studies.	Gregory is too young to begin middle school with his father or to accompany B. to Caesarea. c.349 Begins middle school in Caesarea.

Years	Imperial events	Church events	Eustathius of Sebasteia	Makrina and family	Basil of Caesarea	Gregory of Nyssa
350s	<p>350 Constans killed by usurper Magnentius.</p> <p>351 Constantius regains western empire; becomes sole ruler in both east and west. Henceforth Homoian (Arian) policy is ascendant in the east.</p>	<p>351 1st Synod of Sirmium (anti-Homoousian).</p> <p>351, 353 Western synods of Arles and Milan (Nicene).</p> <p>357–9 Synods of Sirmium (Homoian and evasive).</p> <p>Early 358 Homoiousian (semi-Arian) Synod at Ancyra.</p> <p>359 Synods of Seleucia and Rimini; Homoian outcome.</p>	<p>356? Bishop of Sebasteia; accused of ‘moderation’ by Sebasteian priest, Aerius.</p> <p>358 Major player at Ancyra; attempt to replace him with Meletius (then Homoian) as bishop at Sebasteia.</p> <p>359 Major player at Seleucia; Frequent visitor to Annisa.</p>	<p>351 Naukratios, 21 years old, adopts ascetic life on the Iris not far from Annisa villa.</p> <p>Mid-350s children settled, Makrina educates Peter in Scriptures.</p> <p>Early 356 N. dies in accident.</p> <p>356 Makrina persuades Emmelia to common life with virgins and slaves.</p> <p>c.362 Peter’s profession; Annisa incorporates men and women ascetics in one community.</p> <p>363–5 Annisa hosts Basil during his 2nd Pontic period.</p> <p>369 Makrina’s and Peter’s rescue work in great famine, raise orphans in community.</p>	<p>Mid-356 Returns home, teaches rhetoric in Caesarea.</p> <p>Late 356 M. intervenes; B. baptized, ordained lector.</p> <p>Early 357 Travels Syria and Egypt, seeking Eustathius.</p> <p>Late 357 Adopts ascetic life on the Iris near Annisa.</p> <p>358 Hears news of Ancyra.</p> <p>362 B. at Dianius’ deathbed; ordained priest by Eusebius.</p> <p>363–5 2nd Pontic period, preaching tours of ascetic communities. 364 <i>Contra Eunomium</i>.</p> <p>Oct. 365 Returns to Caesarea.</p> <p>365–6 Small Asketikon.</p>	<p>Late 356 Briefly studies rhetoric under Basil, continues studies in classics privately.</p> <p>Late 350s Baptized and ordained lector, with clerical life in view.</p> <p>359–60 Interested in ascetic life at Annisa.</p> <p>360 Attends Council of Constantinople with Basil.</p> <p>Early 360s Tentatively participates at Annisa. Early 364 Quits clerical path, takes up profession of rhetoric in Caesarea; marries.</p>
360s	<p>361 Death of Constantius.</p> <p>361–3 Julian the Apostate; tolerates all Christian parties; forbids Christians the profession of rhetoric.</p> <p>Sept. 362 Julian in Caesarea.</p> <p>363 Jovian Emperor in east.</p>	<p>Jan. 360 Acacian Council of Constantinople (Homoian).</p> <p>361 Anomoian resurgence, Eunomius’ <i>Apologia</i>; Synod at Antioch deposes Meletius.</p> <p>362 Synod of Confessors at Alexandria (neo-Nicene front),</p>	<p>360 Deposed with Homoiousians at Constantinople.</p> <p>Through 360s Visits Annisa, supports Basil’s ascetic ministry.</p> <p>364 Consults with Basil against Eunomius; major player at Lampsacus (Homoiousian).</p>			

- 360s **364** Emperors Valentinian (pro-Nicene) in west, Valens (Homoian) in east.
Oct. 365 Valens visits Caesarea.
- 365** Professes *homoiousios* before Pope Liberius.
Early 367 Produces Liberius' confirmation at Tyana.
- 366** Prepares Tyana synod.
369–70 In Pontos/Annisa, augments Asketikon.
- 368–71** B. tries to enlist Gregory for Church service.
- 370s **Jan. 372** (or 373?) Valens in Caesarea; divides Cappadocia.
375 Gratian, Valentinian II emperors in west (Nicene).
Spring 378 Valens recalls Nicene exiles;
9 Aug. 378 killed at Adrianople.
Jan. 379 Theodosius emperor in east
Nov. 380 enters Constantinople, strong Nicene.
- 373** Athanasius, Marcellus die.
374 Ambrose bishop of Milan.
376 Synod of Cyzicus (Homoiousian/Pneumatomachian).
379 Council of Antioch (neo-Nicene); Meletius presides.
381 Council of Constantinople (neo-Nicene triumph).
- 372+** Openly prosecutes Pneumatomachian line, accuses B. and circle of Apollinarism.
375–8 Collaborates with Valens' policy, hostile to B. and Gregory of Nyssa; leader at Cyzicus.
378–9? Death.
- 369/70?** Emmelia dies.
370/1 B. ordains Peter priest; P. men's superior at Annisa; Makrina presides over all.
376 Makrina and Peter receive B. at Annisa, they review ascetic and church positions.
Sept. 379 G. visits Annisa; Makrina's death.
380/1 Peter bishop of Sebasteia.
- Sept. 370** Bishop of Caesarea.
372 Visits Annisa? Trouble brewing with Eustathius.
375 Climax of rupture with Eustathius, Letter 223.
376 In Annisa, writes Pontic letters; revises Asketikon.
377–8 Late Caesarean additions to Great Asketikon.
1 Jan. 379 (?) Death.
- 371** Writes *On Virginity* at B.'s request.
372 Ordained bishop; visits Annisa.
Early 376 Deposed, exiled.
Sept. 379 Returns from Antioch; at Makrina's death.
Nov. 379–80 Returns to Pontos (Ibora), invited to Sebasteia, elected bishop there; taken in custody.
381/2 Writes *Life of Makrina*.

Rufinus, Witness of the Small Asketikon

RUFINUS THE TRANSLATOR

Rufinus of Aquileia (c.345–411)¹ is one of the two most important translators of Greek texts into Latin in Late Antiquity. After some twenty-five years in Alexandria and Jerusalem he returned to the west in the summer of 397, bringing with him a considerable library of Christian Greek manuscripts. Among these was a copy of Basil's Small Asketikon which he and Melania had used in their double monastery on the Mount of Olives. His very first task on arrival was to translate the Asketikon,² which became known in its Latin dress as the *Instituta Basili* or the *Regula Basili*. In order to critically discern the Small Asketikon embedded in the text of the Great Asketikon it is necessary to appreciate the translation techniques used by Rufinus.

Rufinus' tendency to paraphrase, gloss his text, interpolate

An earlier form of this chapter has appeared as Anna Silvas, 'Rufinus' Translation Techniques in the *Regula Basili*', *Antichthon: Journal of the Australian Society for Classical Studies* 37 (2003), 71–93.

¹ On the life and chronology of Rufinus see F. X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works* (Washington, DC, 1945), and G. Fedalto, 'Rufino di Concordia; Elementi di una biografia', *Antichità Altoadriatiche* 39 (1992), 19–44. On 91 Murphy presents the older view that the *Regula Basili* was a drastic abbreviation of the Great Asketikon. Contemporary scholars were already discarding such an approach: F. Laun, 'Die beiden Reglen des Basilius, ihre Echtheit und Entstehung', *ZKG* 44 (1924), 1–61; H. Dörries, *Symeon von Mesopotamien* (Leipzig, 1941), 452–3; and Charles de Clercq, 'Les Règles de saint Basile et leur traduction par Rufin', *Proche-Orient* 1 (1951), 48–58.

² See A. Silvas, 'From Edessa to Cassino: The Passage of Basil's *Asketikon* to the West', *VChr.* 56 (2002), 247–59 and Appendix 6. I trace the geographic trail linking the Greek text of Basil's Small Asketikon current in east Syria in the 370s with the Latin text used by St Benedict in Campania in the 540s. Rufinus, the agent of this transposition, describes the circumstances in which he undertook the Latin translation in his Preface to the *Regula Basili* (Appendix 6).

material into it, and abbreviate or omit sections, has often been noted³ and deplored.⁴ He candidly explains his approach to translation in the prefaces to several works and is consistent in carrying out his intentions. The following statement from the preface to his translation of Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus* may be taken as characteristic:

When experienced teachers of the Sacred Scriptures try to convey something from the Greek language for Latin ears, they take care not to translate word for word, but sense for sense. And well they might. For if Latin discourse intended to imitate the Greek idiom, it would quite choke both the rhythm of speech and the sense of meaning. And this is also true for us in translating the life of Gregory Thaumaturgus from Attic speech. In recasting what the holy Gregory of Nyssa composed in a foreign, that is, in the Greek tongue, we have made many additions and many omissions, as the most suitable meaning required, attending to the sense while fittingly accommodating Latin readers.⁵

Rufinus, in short, sought to refashion his Greek source document as a Latin work of art in its own right. In this broad approach to translation he rather liberally follows an established convention of both pre-Christian and Christian translators. This topic of translation theory was well canvassed by Jerome in his Letter 57. In fact,

³ Useful summary studies are E. C. Brooks, 'The Translation Techniques of Rufinus of Aquileia (343-411)', *Studia Patristica* 18 (1982), 357-64, and M. Wagner, *Rufinus the Translator* (Washington, DC: CUA, 1945), esp. ch. 3, 'Adaptation Procedures', 29-64.

⁴ J. E. L. Oulton, 'Rufinus's Translation of the Church History of Eusebius', *Journal of Theological Studies* 30 (1929), 150, deplores Rufinus' approach: 'But even when no temptation lay upon him, Rufinus transgressed the bounds of freedom which every translator must be expected to observe. It is not merely that he eschews the bald literalism of Aquila or the Latin translator of Irenaeus: he is continually taking unjustifiable liberties with his original. He omits, abbreviates, transposes, expands according to taste: and perhaps his favourite method is to produce a kind of paraphrase which gives the general sense.'

⁵ Sanctarum scripturarum doctores egregii, cum de graeca lingua latinis auribus tradere aliquid statuerunt, non verbum verbo, sed sensum sensui reddere curaverunt. Et merito. Nam si latinus sermo graeco idiomati respondere voluerit, et euphoniae subtilitatem et rationis sensum penitus suffocat. Et nos beati Gregorii Thaumaturgi vitam ex loquela attica transferentes, imitando eam quam sanctus Gregorius Nyssenus pontifex in peregrina, hoc est in graeca lingua composuit, plurimis additis, plurimis adeptis, ut ratio utilissima postulabat, sensum attendentes latinis viris compediose curavimus ministrare.' For the text, see Mitchell, 'The Life and Lives of Gregory Thaumaturgus', 132.

Rufinus invoked Jerome himself as an exemplar of the approach he wished to follow.⁶

Rufinus' testimony above also highlights a significant cultural difference between his world and ours. In his time, even literary composition itself remained intimately bound to an oral culture. He translated his works not so much to be read silently with the eyes by solitary individuals, but to be read out aloud and heard by the ears, frequently in company. His care to ensure the credible 'Latinity' of his work reflects his concern for the oral and aural qualities perceived by the 'end-user'.

Other cultural factors affected the translation process. Rist contrasts the linguistic and cultural worlds of thought inhabited by Origen and by Rufinus.⁷ He shows that Origen's discourse presumes a philosophically conversant culture, disposed to speculative thought—certainly a Christian discourse, but often implicitly and sometimes explicitly intended to engage interested pagans as well. A century and a half later Rufinus' constituency is an explicitly theocratic Christian world in which the 'habit of authority' is more developed. Moreover, it continues the rhetorical, didactic culture of classical Rome in which the spirit of philosophical speculation was not entirely germane. Often the permutations of the Greek original in Rufinus' Latin text, says Rist, are due to 'the more subtle and often unconscious changes which arise from Rufinus' being the product of Latin rather than Greek culture'.⁸

What has been said about Rufinus and Origen, however, may not apply entirely to Rufinus and the Cappadocian Fathers, Greek-speakers though they were. Over the course of a century or more there had been cultural shifts among Greek-speaking Christians themselves. A theocentric, Catholic Christian culture was in the ascendant. Basil, at least, showed no great penchant for speculative inquiry. Thus, by the end of the fourth century, the degree of cul-

⁶ Much to Jerome's annoyance! Cf. Rufinus' Preface to the *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν* (*NPNF*, 2nd ser. 3. 427–8) and his *Apologia* against Jerome (*PL* 21. 541–624, *NPNF*, 2nd ser. vol 3: book 1, ch. 14, 441; ch. 16, 442; ch. 19, 445; book 2, ch. 8, 463, and esp. ch 27a, 472) where he comments on Jerome's Letter 57, insisting that he was only following the task set by Jerome himself and imitating his approach to translation—the same Jerome who had previously expressed contempt of *verbatim* translations and had inserted explanatory phrases into his translated text.

⁷ 'The aim of this paper . . . would be to identify and distinguish the worlds of thought in which Origen and Rufinus lived and to isolate substantial divergences between them', J. M. Rist, 'The Greek and Latin Texts of the Discussion on Free Will in De Principiis, Book III', *Origeniana*, ed. Henri Crouzel *et al.* (Bari, 1975), 99.

⁸ Rist, 'The Greek and Latin Texts', 111.

tural gap between Greek-speaking and Latin-speaking Christians is a moot point. A certain readership in the Latin west, notably Rufinus, Melania the Elder, and Paulinus of Nola's circle, found much in common between the Cappadocians' concerns and their own and sought out Greek authors eagerly.

THREE REGISTERS OF TRANSLATION

Before examining Rufinus' translation techniques in the *Regula Basili* it may be useful to distinguish three different translation 'registers' or spheres of interest in his treatment of his source material.

There is first a *theological* register, especially noticeable in the qualification or omission of doctrinally suspect expressions. This practice became controversial after Rufinus translated Origen's *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν* at Rome in 398. A veritable 'translation war' broke out following the publication of this work amid renewed polemics concerning Origenism. As a result, Rufinus' caution over doubtful doctrine in his sources was reinforced. Theological amendments in subsequent translations, says Oulton, reveal 'a burnt child who dreads the fire'.⁹

A second register is *historical*, in which Rufinus aims to upgrade the information value of the document he is translating. If he had access to new, better, or more interesting information, he wanted to pass on the benefit of it to his readership. This practice is particularly noticeable in his translations of historical narratives as, for example, Eusebius' *Church History*, or the *History of the Monks in Egypt*. He inserts new material and corrects mistaken information, either from what he has learned during his own travels in the places being dealt with, or on the basis of other documents he has to hand.¹⁰ His

⁹ Oulton, 'Rufinus's Translation of the Church History of Eusebius', 152.

¹⁰ Oulton has many examples, such as Rufinus' additions to the account of the martyrs in the Thebais and in Alexandria, deriving from an independent source (170). On 162 Oulton points out that Rufinus gives what is perhaps the most accurate description of the graphic layout of Origen's *Hexapla* in Late Antiquity, evidently because he has examined a copy himself. Mitchell also shows that additional material on Gregory Thaumaturgus inserted into the Latin translation of Eusebius' *Church History* derives from Rufinus' familiarity with Gregory of Nyssa's *Panegyric* and that Rufinus himself is very probably the translator of the anonymous Latin *Life of Gregory Thaumaturgus*.

independent historical information has been shown to be of considerable value.¹¹

A third register is *rhetorical*. In a host of ways Rufinus strives to enhance the oral and literary quality of his work, to naturalize it as a worthy specimen of Latin style. He may invest his translation with Virgilian cadences, echoes of other Latin classics, and elegant patterns of word order and prose rhythm. He is interested in the ‘incident’ quality in the story line and may omit tedious sections, add names, or in other ways strive to present an episode more vividly.

How are these three registers reflected in Rufinus’ translation of the Small Asketikon? As noted, this was his first translation project on his return from the east. He had not yet encountered the fires of renewed hostility from Marcella, Jerome, Pammachius, and their circle. From the very nature of his source material one would think he had little cause to use the theological and historical registers. The scope of Basil’s work is ascetic and moral,¹² offering little occasion to play with narrative incident or factual information. Moreover, in doctrinal matters, the Small Asketikon had very little of the speculative theology that might require caution. The manner of Basil’s discourse, his evangelical rigour, his appeal to Scripture and to the commandments as a divine oracle commanding obedience accords well with that religious sensibility shared by Rufinus and his readership.¹³ *A priori* then, one might expect that the only register he might be inclined to use would be rhetorical, for Basil’s usually spare, direct speech will certainly leave him scope for literary enhancement. But, having made allowances for that, how accurate is the *Regula Basili* as a translation? Can Gribomont’s judgment that

¹¹ e.g. the observations of Oulton, 162, on Rufinus’ additions to the *Church History* on Origen’s *Hexapla*: ‘Those most critically disposed toward Rufinus will hardly find fault with the clear and accurate account of the graphic layout of the Hexapla that Rufinus gives instead of translating Eusebius’s vague sentence . . . Here we have an independent description of the Hexapla by one who had evidently seen it, which is corroborated by a fragment which is extant. It is superior to the account of Epiphanius and perhaps even to Jerome’s: yet scholars do not seem to have given it the attention it deserves.’

¹² ‘[Basil’s] work is more moral in nature, fit for guiding souls toward the good life and for relieving them in their labour. In this also it possesses greater virtue in that the reading of it will be found most fitting for religious-minded women, and particularly for the admiring study of your lady wife, our daughter, for it is not burdened with questions of a dogmatic nature, but rather goes along as a most limpid stream, flowing softly and with sufficient calm’, *Rufinus to Apronianus*, prefaced to eight of Basil’s homilies translated for Avita, Apronianus’ wife, *PG* 31. 1723B.

¹³ Rufinus’ preface, however, shows that a Church Father was now being considered a source of authoritative teaching in his own right, an approved ‘way in’ to the Scriptures.

it is 'intelligent et fidèle',¹⁴ and that 'Rufinus translated faithfully'¹⁵ be confirmed?

RUFINUS' TRANSLATION TECHNIQUES

In estimating Rufinus' translation techniques, the *Regula Basili* must be read against the Greek text of the Great Asketikon. This is a daunting task because it is not a question of comparing a Latin translation with a Greek exemplar, but rather with an *edited and expanded edition of a now lost Greek original*. So it is constantly necessary to assess whether the differences between the Greek and Latin texts are due to Rufinus' translation techniques or to Basil's editorial techniques (and perhaps those of later editors and copyists). On the whole it can be said, however, that the major element in accounting for discrepancies between Greek text and Latin text is Rufinus' reworking of his text.

Rufinus' translation techniques in the *Regula Basili* are analysed below under nine headings. Under some headings it has been possible to provide a comprehensive list of examples, while under other headings, such as 'Glosses and Pleonasms' a full list would be impracticable. Sans serif is used in the Latin and underlining in the Greek to highlight the phrases that are under immediate discussion. Italics in the Latin text are imported from the critical edition and identify scriptural citations and allusions. Parentheses in the English translation represent Rufinus' glosses of his text.

1. *Preservation of distinctively Basilian text*

The *RBas.* appears at times to preserve distinctively Basilian text which has not survived in the Great Asketikon. These are of two kinds.

(a) Phrases reflecting the original oral delivery which occasionally disappear from a more formal Greek text.

(i) Interjections such as 'I think', or, 'It seems to me' and the like, seem to preserve Basil *viva voce*, but have been edited out in the later Greek version, though not a few such expressions remain. The

¹⁴ 'Intelligent et fidèle, la version latine de Rufin se présente comme le meilleur témoin du texte bref', Grib. 237.

¹⁵ 'Rufinus of Aquileia' by J. Gribomont, in J. Quasten (ed.), *Patrology*, vol. IV: *The Golden Age of Latin Patristic Literature from the Council of Nicaea to the Council of Chalcedon*, tr. P. Solari (Allen, Tex. 1996; orig. publ. Utrecht and Antwerp, 1963), 247-54 at 252. He adds, 'it may be questioned whether this text enjoyed a certain authority with the monks in the monastery on the Mount of Olives', a suggestion I wholly endorse.

disappearance of such phrases in the Greek may sometimes indicate that Basil has gained in the certainty of his conviction, as in the following example:

Honestius mihi videtur esse et
religiosus (RBas. 199. 1)

It seems to me more seemly and
pious . . .

Εὐσχημονέστερον καὶ
ἐλαβέστερον (SR 110)

It is more seemly and pious . . .

This question concerns whether it is advisable to have the *presbytera* present when a sister makes confession to the *presbyter*. In the later version, the tentative note disappears. Basil is quite definite about it. Other examples may be considered at LR 1 (RBas. 1. 5), LR 2. 2 (RBas. 2. 44), LR 3. Q (RBas. 2. 58), LR 7. 4 (RBas. 3. 32), LR 22. 1 (RBas. 11. 1), SR 55 (RBas. 159. 1), SR 97 (RBas. 87. 4), SR 173 (RBas. 137. 4). Might some of the ‘personal touches’ found only in the Latin text be Rufinus’ stylistic inventions? The question is not without merit, although such characteristic echoes of Basil’s living voice are abundantly preserved elsewhere in the Great Asketikon and his other works.

(ii) In fact there is a case where Rufinus *edits out* an authorial ‘I’ passage:

De isto scriptum est *Si te rogaverit*
inimicus tuus (RBas. 20. 1)

Concerning such a one it is written,
If your enemy should ask you . . .

Περὶ τοῦ τοιοῦτου γεγράφθαι
λογίζομαι· Ἐάν σου δέηται ὁ
ἐχθρός (SR 6)

Concerning such a one I consider it is
written, *If your enemy should ask*
you . . .

(b) Other types of passages present only in the Latin text are:

(i) RBas. 3. 25 (LR 7) speaks of the aid lent to prayer by life in community. It seems improbable that Rufinus completely invented it, for the style and the sentiment is eminently Basil’s. On the other hand, why would Basil have edited it out in the later text? This may be a case of early variants in the Greek text of the Small Asketikon (see 3 below). Basil in his editing and Rufinus in his translating may have been working from different transmissions.

(ii) RBas. 5. 9 (LR 9) preserves a citation of 1 Cor. 6: 7 which was deleted in the later version, because by then Basil had revised his own point of view and expanded his argument with the result that this particular scriptural passage was no longer relevant to his case.

(iii) RBas. 6. 1 (LR 10) preserves Basil’s brief positive conclusion from the Scripture; the later Greek version recasts it in a more nuanced fashion.

(iv) RBas. 7. 3 (LR 15. 1) preserves Basil’s earlier, succinct statement on the minimum age necessary for valid profession. In the later

version at *LR* 15 Basil has extensively rethought and expanded the whole topic.

2. *Preservation of an earlier form of text*

(a) At times the *RBas.* preserves an earlier form of text which is embedded in a partial and scattered form in the later Greek text. Here the earlier text served Basil as a springboard to revise and expand his teaching, sometimes very considerably. It usually affects only the nuances and not the substance of his doctrine. Examples occur at *RBas.* 1. 5 (*LR* 1), *RBas.* 6. 4–11 (*LR* 10. 1), *RBas.* 7. 3, 5–10, 11–13 (*LR* 15).

(b) The opening of *RBas.* 2 preserves the original form of the dialogue between Basil and his interlocutors which became scattered in the later text. *RBas.* 2. Q evidently preserves the questioner's opening remark: 'Since you say that the first of the commandments concerns love for God, tell us about this first of all' (*RBas.* 2. Q). This is simplified in the Greek text: 'Tell us first of all about love for God' (*LR* 2. Q). Basil begins his answer in *RBas.* 2. 1 with a lively compliment to his interlocutors for their choice of topic. But in the Greek text this opening comment is postponed to allow the insertion of a paragraph of anthropological argument. It then appears grafted on to the end of the inserted passage recast with a more explicitly trinitarian reference.

(c) The second half of the question in *SR* 5. Q, asking what the fruits of repentance are, is not found at that location in *RBas.* 18. Q, but in the following question, *RBas.* 19. Qb, which answers it. Consequently, this text appears twice in the Great Asketikon, in *SR* 5. Q and *SR* 287. Q. There seems little in the context to explain what might be due simply to diplography by an early copyist or inadvertence in later editorial work, when two topics originally brought up at the same time by the same questioner were separated and displaced. The duplication did not survive in *RBas.*, possibly because it came almost immediately to Rufinus' notice and he corrected it. Compare 8(a)(i) below. It seems that the Greek text here may preserve an older reading than the *RBas.*

3. *Textual variants in the Small Asketikon*

As mentioned at 1(b)(i), it may be asked whether there were textual variants among copies of the Small Asketikon itself, such that Rufinus was translating a different, longer Greek text than Basil had to hand in his successive revisions. This may be an explanation

of the discrepancies between texts noted in 1(b)(ii) and 2(c) above. Other possible instances that merit attention are *RBas.* 4. 3–6 (*LR* 8. 1), *RBas.* 11. 27–30 (*LR* 22), *RBas.* 24. 1 (*SR* 158), *RBas.* 58. 3 (*SR* 197), *RBas.* 161. 2 (*SR* 216), *RBas.* 189. 2 (*SR* 67)—see 7(g) below, *RBas.* 106. 1 (*SR* 146)—see 7(h) below, *RBas.* 170. 3 (*SR* 250).

The fact that sometimes the Syriac and the Latin agree against the Greek also argues for the existence of early variants in the Greek Small Asketikon. Examples are *RBas.* 2. Q (*LR* 2. Q), *RBas.* 4. 3–6 (*LR* 8. 1), *RBas.* 10. Q (*LR* 21. Q), *RBas.* 86. Q (*SR* 200. Q). Perhaps some personal interjections present in Rufinus' text but absent in the Greek may be explained this way. It may be that the Ask. 4 editor or very early copyists of the Great Asketikon took it upon themselves to smooth out what they thought were minor infelicities. See further the comments below on 4(d)(vi), (vii), (ix).

4. *Glosses and Pleonasms*

(a) Nothing is more characteristic of Rufinus than to expand his original text with words or phrases of explanation or interpretation.

(i) The following is a good general illustration of this tendency to gloss and to amplify:

Cur aliquotiens animae etiamsi non
satis agat sponte tamen quodam
genere incidit dolor quidam cordis et
compunctio timoris dei, aliquotiens
autem tanta securitas et negligentia
animum tenet, ut etiamsi cogat se
homo non possit dolorem aliquem vel
compunctionem cordis
assumere? (*RBas.* 123. Q)

Why is it that sometimes a (kind of)
sorrowing (of heart) and
compunction (from the fear of God)
fall upon the soul, without much
effort, spontaneously as it were, but
at other times, there is (in the soul)
so great an unconcern (or
negligence) that even if (a man)
forces himself, he cannot induce any
(sorrow or) compunction (of heart?)

Διὰ τί ποτέ μὲν ἡ ψυχὴ μὴ
σπουδάζουσα, αὐτομάτως σχέδον ὡς
ἐμπειρόντας πόνου, κατανύσσεται·
ποτέ δὲ ἄπονος οὕτως ἐστίν, ὡς καὶ
βιαζομένη κατανυγήναι μὴ
δυνάσθαι· (*SR* 16. Q)

Why is it that sometimes the soul
feels compunction without much
effort, a sorrow coming upon it
spontaneously as it were, while at
other times, it is so unconcerned
that even if it forces itself, it cannot
induce any compunction?

(ii) Later in the answer to this same question Rufinus recasts his text:

Non enim possibile est ut is qui neque meditationibus neque institutionibus divinis se ipsum iugiter exercuit subito veniat ad orationem et continuo obtineat quod requirit (RBas. 123. 5)

For it is impossible that one who has not continually exercised himself (in either meditations or the divine ordinances) should suddenly (turn to prayer and immediately) obtain (what he asks for).

οὐ γὰρ δυνατὸν ἄνευ μελέτης καὶ συγγυμνασίας πλείονας καὶ συνεχοῦς, ἐξαίφνης ἐπί τι παρελθούτα, περιγενέσθαι αὐτοῦς (SR 16)

For it is impossible that one should master a task as soon as one approaches it, without much concerted training with others.

The end of this same response (RBas. 123. 9–12) was recast by Rufinus in what is perhaps the fullest example of pleonasm in the *Regula Basili*. It also shows his manner of inserting extra citations of Scripture.

(b) Some glosses are regular features. When Basil refers simply to the ‘Acts’, Rufinus adds ‘of the Apostles’, for example, RBas. 29. 1 (SR 85). Likewise, when Basil simply uses the word ‘commandment’ Rufinus frequently adds ‘of God’, for example, RBas. 67. Q (SR 117).

(c) In a perfectly legitimate translation technique Rufinus often inserts a word to personalize a Greek impersonal or abstract construction, or to clarify elliptical expressions for his Latin readers.

(i) In the following example he uses the third person and slips in *homines* as an object:

ut possimus abstrahere homines a peccato et sociare deo (RBas. 162. 7)

that we may be able to withdraw (men) from sin and join them to God.

πρὸς τὸ ἀποστήσαι τῆς ἀμαρτίας, καὶ ἐπαναγαγεῖν πρὸς Θεόν. (SR 245)

so as to withdraw from sin and lead to God.

(ii) Again, an object of the verb is inserted in the following passage. The same response also shows other insertions of little ‘colouring’ particles and words of tone or emphasis.

cum faciunt aliquod boni operis ut videantur ab hominibus (RBas. 166. 5)

since they do (somewhat of good) in order to be seen by men.

ἢ κατὰ τὸ, ποιοῦσι πρὸς το θεαθῆναι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις (SR 247)

or they do in order to be seen by men.

(iii) In the following well-known case, *perfectioribus* is inserted

to specify a particular class of Christians, the ascetics or the monks, as Basil's addressees. A Latin doublet for ἔπερωτᾶν will also be noted:

quaedam vero secretius perfectioribus
quibusque disserere, et inquirere
atque interrogare volentibus (RBas.
Prologue 4, 5)

while at other times discourse
privately (before the more perfect)
who wish to inquire (and ask).

τὰ δὲ ἰδίᾳ ἐκάστῳ τῶν προσιόντων
παρέχειν ἑαυτοῦς κατ' ἐξουσίαν
ἐπερωτᾶν (SR Preface)

while at other times dispose
ourselves privately to the best of
our ability for any of those who
come to inquire.

(iv) In another famous passage¹⁶ Rufinus inserts *vasis* ('vessels') in the answer as a synonym for the *σκευῶν* found in the question. He also makes explicit the sense of obligation, which in the Greek response is simply assumed from the question.

Primo quidem sicut vasis dei vel his
quae deo consecrata sunt uti
debeant (RBas. 103. 1)

First (they ought to use them) as
(the vessels of God or) things which
are consecrated to God.

Πρώτον μὲν ὡς Θεῷ ὀνομασθέντων
καὶ ἀναθέντων (SR 143)

First as dedicated and consecrated
to God.

(v) In RBas. 36. Q (SR 160), Rufinus quite reasonably adds the adjective 'sick' to 'brothers', interpreting the Greek verb ὑπηρετεῖν as service to the *sick*, which is exactly as the response in the Greek text understands it.

(d) In glossing his text, Rufinus does not limit himself to one word or brief phrases. He inserts whole clauses and sentences.

(i) In the following example the 'faithlessness of the beneficiaries' of the Greek text is paraphrased in the Latin and expanded into a relative clause:

iste cognoscit tarditatem intellectus
non ex culpa eius descendere qui
dona distribuit, sed ex eorum qui
desidia et infidelitate sua id suscipere non
merentur. (RBas. 168. 2)

then one realizes that slowness of the
understanding does not (derive) from
the fault of the bestower (of the gifts),
but from those (who through their
own indolence and unfaithfulness do
not deserve to receive it).

οὗτος γνωρίζει τὴν βραδυτῆτα τῆς
συνέσεως οὐ παρὰ τὸ ὀκνον τοῦ
εὐεργέτου, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν
τῶν εὐεργετουμένων. (SR 248)

then one realizes that slowness of
the understanding is not from the
reluctance of the benefactor, but
from the faithlessness of the
beneficiaries.

¹⁶ This text was borrowed in RB 32. 10 becoming a *topos* of Benedictine spirituality.

(ii) In *RBas.* 60. 2 (*SR* 34) Rufinus introduces an *oportet* construction and effectively paraphrases *μετεωρίζεται* ('distracted') with an entire clause in which the meaning of the verb is interpreted expansively:

Non enim oportet sub praesentia
domini placere conservis ad
iniuriam domini et sui perniciem,
non domino sed conservorum nutibus
intuens (*RBas.* 60. 2)

Οὐδείς γὰρ ἐν ὄψει δεσπότητος πρὸς
ἀρέσκειαν συνδούλου ἐπὶ ἀτιμία τοῦ
δεσπότητος καὶ κατακρίσει ἑαυτοῦ
μετεωρίζεται (*SR* 34)

For no one ought in the presence of
his master to be pleasing his fellow
servant(s) to the dishonour of his
master and his own ruin (by looking
not to his master, but to the nods of
his fellow-servants).

For no one before the eyes of his
master is distracted into pleasing a
fellow servant to the dishonour of
his master and his own
condemnation.

(iii) *RBas.* 122. 16–17 recasts the end of *SR* 47 by using pleonasm, an explanatory gloss, a more vivid adjective, and the succinct re-expression and relocation of a clause:

(iv) The end of *RBas.* 130 (*SR* 151) adds a final sentence which seeks to explain the 'crying out' of Jesus in John 12:44 to which Basil has just alluded.

(v) In the following, Rufinus glosses Basil's text on the different types of 'judging' by adding a purpose clause:

sed differentiam iudicii nosse nos
docet ut sciamus in quibus oporteat
iudicare et in quibus non (*RBas.* 77. 2)

ἀλλὰ διαφορὰν κρίσεως
παιδιενόμεθα (*SR* 164)

but teaches us (to recognize) that
there are different kinds of judging
(so that we may know in what cases
we ought to judge and in what cases
not).

but teaches us that there are
different kinds of judging.

(vi) *RBas.* 58. 3 (*SR* 197) amplifies Basil's analogy of the craft-worker considerably. Yet the addition is in Basil's style and it may be asked whether it is a case of variant texts of the Small Asketikon (see 3 above).

(vii) Similarly, if *RBas.* 161. 2 (*SR* 216) is not a variant original text (see 3 above), but a Rufinian gloss, it explains effectively how the 'baseness' of adults socializes children to a haughty attitude.

(viii) In the following passage Rufinus fulsomely expands the original text with adjectives, adverbs, and extra clauses:

Moyses quidem continuato quadraginta dierum ieiunio adstittisse indefessus dicitur deo et meruisse legis auxilium humano generi deferre (RBas. 8. 12)

Moses (is said) to have persevered (without slackening) in continual fasting (before God for forty days and to have merited to hand down to the human race the aid of) the Law.

ὁ Μωϋσῆς διὰ τῆς μακρᾶς ἐν νηστεία καὶ προσευχῇ προσεδρίας τὸν νόμον ἔλαβε (LR 16)

It was after long perseverance in fasting and prayer that Moses received the Law.

(ix) Another excellent example of pleonasm extending to clauses and sentences is RBas. 11. 1 (LR 22). Indeed throughout most of RBas. 11 the original text is heavily recast. The topic is the proper dress of Christians (i.e. the monk's habit). There is a curious inversion of the sequence of verses in RBas. 11. 27–30, filled out with glosses and changes of nuance to such a degree it might be considered disturbed text. The pertinent example of the distinctive dress of a soldier is present in Rufinus but absent in the extant text of Basil. Again, one may ask whether here there may be a question of variant texts of the Small Asketikon.

(x) RBas. 2. 15–16 (LR 2. 1) contains a personal testimony to Basil's own mystical experience. At first sight it is not obvious that Rufinus has *not* preserved a lost text. Only close inspection reveals that he has in fact heavily embellished the original text. In fact, this is an outstanding example of his skill at glossing and rhetorical enhancement, as in the marvellous phrase: *amoris flamma quae animae secreta et interiora succendat sicut amor Dei*. A similar passage using the imagery of being 'set alight' is also present in RBas. 49. 1 but absent from the corresponding Greek text.

5. Doublets and triplets

One form of Rufinus' glossing is so prevalent it merits a heading of its own. This is his veritable 'mania'¹⁷ for coining doublets, expanding a single Greek word into a pair of synonyms. He has good classical precedents for doing so. This was Cicero's manner in translating Greek into Latin and a device of rhetoric discussed by

¹⁷ H. Marti, 'Rufinus's Translation of St. Basil's Sermon on Fasting', in *Studia Patristica* 16 (1985), 418–22 says 'A second stylistic phenomenon is what I am tempted to call a mania of Rufinus for repeating translated terms' (422).

Quintilian under several headings.¹⁸ The *RBas.* is liberally strewn with doublets on every page. Here a few examples must suffice.

(a) Doublets are commonly flagged by the conjunction *vel*, which often has the sense of: ‘*a*, or in other words *b*’, or ‘*a*, that is to say *b*’. Curiously the Latin word which might be considered closest literally to the Greek word is often the *second* element of the doublet, e.g. *RBas.* 123. Q (SR 16), given above under 4(a)(i).

(b) The following is typical, in which ‘crown’ is added as a synonym of ‘circle’.

unde voluerit quis initium sumere tamquam in modum circuli vel coronae (<i>RBas.</i> 1. Q)	καθάπερ ἐν κύκλῳ ἀρχὴν λαμβάνειν ἐπόθεν βούλεται (<i>LR</i> 1. Q)
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he could make a beginning anywhere on the circle (or crown).	he could make a beginning anywhere on the circle he wanted.
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(c) Verging on a triplet is the following case in which Rufinus expands ‘holy’ into a doublet, and then for good measure transcribes the Greek word. It is an excellent example of Rufinus’ sensitivity to nuance.

Quid est dignum vel sanctum quod Graeci ὁσιον dicunt, et quid est iustum? (<i>RBas.</i> 170. Q)	τί ἐστι τὸ ὅσιον, καὶ τί ἐστι τὸ δίκαιον. (<i>SR</i> 249. Q)
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What is (worthy or) holy (which the Greeks call ὅσιον) and what is just?	What is holy and what is just?
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(d) A triplet—if not a quadruplet—may be found in the following case. Having begun by qualifying σχῆμα as *status*, Rufinus then amplifies it into *honestas* and *habitus* and *ornatus* in an explanatory gloss.

Sicut si quis dicat De statu honestatis suae non deducitur; est enim propria quaedam honestas caritatis et habitus eius atque ornatus, . . . (<i>RBas.</i> 165. 1)	*Ἴσον τῷ εἰπεῖν, τοῦ ἰδίου σχήματος οὐκ ἐκπίπτει. Σχῆμα δὲ ἀγάπης . . . (<i>SR</i> 246)
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¹⁸ According to Brooks, ‘The Translation Techniques of Rufinus’, 360, Donatus at Rome had held that single words should be expanded, *Ars Grammatica* IV, ed. H. Keil (Leipzig, 1864), 395. For an authoritative statement on *amplificatio orationis*, see R. Kühner and C. Stegmann, *Ausführliche Grammatik der Lateinischen Sprache*, 3rd edn., vol. 2/2 (Leverkusen, 1955), sect. 10, 577–8. On Cicero’s refusal of literal precision in translating Greek see also R. Poncelet, *Cicéron traducteur de Platon* (Paris, 1957), 46. Cf. also Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, tr. H. E. Butler, 4 vols. (London, 1953), *amplificatio* 4. 3. 15, *congeries* (= *accumulatio*) 8. 4. 26–7, *repetitio* 9. 1. 33–8, 2. 4.

It is as if someone should say ‘it does not desert its own character’, for there is a certain seemliness and attire and adornment that are proper to love.

It is the same as saying it does not desert its own character. And the character of love . . .

6. Idiomatic and literary enhancement

Rufinus was constantly on the look-out for ways of enhancing the rhetorical quality of his text and of ‘naturalizing’ it as a Latin literary work. He frequently expresses more fully in a Latin idiom what is expressed tersely or elliptically in the Greek. Where he can, he renders expressions more sharply or vividly. He is so conversant in both languages that he knows well how to use an *idiomatic equivalent*. He personalizes impersonal constructions, often by using the first person plural and uses personal possessive pronouns that are absent or only implicit in the Greek.

(a) Rufinus sometimes employs a phrase, word, or term which, while within the general field of meaning of the original Greek word, shows a subtle shift of nuance. *πάθος* is commonly translated as *vitium*,¹⁹ for example, *RBas.* 67. Q (*SR* 117); *Θεόπνευστος* as *sanctum*, for example, *RBas.* 1. 6 (*LR* 1) where *θεοπνεύστοις Γραφαῖς* is translated *sanctis scripturis*; *ἀδελφότης* is not translated *fraternitas* but as *fratres* prefixed with a preposition as in *ad fratres* in *RBas.* 196. Q (*SR* 94. Q), 192. Q (*SR* 105. Q); *τῆ ἀδελφότητι* appears as *inter fratres* in *RBas.* 25. 3 (*SR* 159). *εὐλάβης*, ‘pious’ and ‘piety’, is commonly translated as *religiosus*, for example, *RBas.* 116 (*SR* 171); *χρεία* as *usus*, as in *RBas.* 95. 4 (*SR* 168); *κρίμα* as *sententia* (very commonly) and as *iudicium* in *RBas.* 100. 1, 2 (*SR* 169), *γνησίως* as *ex corde* as in *RBas.* 23. 12 (*SR* 16), *RBas.* 27. Q (*SR* 8), etc. In *RBas.* 159. 1 he uses an idiomatic equivalent for the qualifying adverb *τάχα* in *SR* 55 as a qualifying *puto*, ‘I think’ (unless Basil has wrought the change).

(b) The use of a possessive adjective instead of the bare article of the Greek may be seen at *RBas.* 1. Q (*LR* 1. Q), where *ὁ λόγος* becomes *sermo tuus* (‘your word’), with perhaps a change of emphasis from ‘the word’ of Scripture to Basil’s own pronouncement. See also *RBas.* 62. Q (*SR* 165. Q), where a generic *ὀργίζεται* becomes *propria iracundia*, to which a personal pronoun must be added in English to reflect the intended force of ‘his own’ anger.

¹⁹ The English word derived from the Latin, ‘vice’, is quite inadequate as a translation.

(c) Apparently in an attempt to express conditionality, Rufinus often uses a form of *possum* when translating a Greek future or subjunctive; for example, *SR* 198: ὁπῶς αὐτὴν κατορθώσομεν becomes in *RBas.* 62. Q *quomodo eam implere possumus*, in *SR* 32. Q πῶς αὐτὸν ἀποθώμεθα· becomes in *RBas.* 55. Q *quomodo hoc abicere*, in *SR* 202. Q πῶς κατορθοῖ τις becomes in *RBas.* 109. Q *quomodo id fieri potest?* See also 4(c)(i) above.

(d) After a long series of subordinate clauses in the protasis, *RBas.* 187. 4 (*SR* 179) sensibly repeats the first conditional clause just before the apodosis.

(e) A rich field of Rufinus' enhancements may be found in *RBas.* 2. *RBas.* 2. 73 (*LR* 4) improves on the style of the Greek, infusing some Latin elegance with a play on words between *pondus*, 'weight', and *gravioris*, 'heavier'. *RBas.* 2. 77 (*LR* 5) recasts the original more elegantly, personalizing it by using a cohortative mood and expanding a single adjective ἀνεξάλειπτον into a clause. In *RBas.* 2. 99 (*LR* 6) the more dynamic Greek verb περιγέεσθαι 'to prevail against former habits', appears twice, so Rufinus employs *variatio* and creates a doublet with a shift of verbal nuance: *reflectat et revocet* 'to re-examine and recall oneself from former bad [added] habits'. In the following sample the original text is artfully rearranged and expanded to add emphasis and rhetorical effect.

Tum deinde impedimentis et
interturbationibus atque
occupationibus quas communis
hominum vita habere solet, illud quod
maius omnium est et pretiosius,
memoriam dei, non potest
custodire, qua depulsa ab animis et
exclusa, non solum . . . (*RBas.*
2. 109–10)

Then by reason of (the obstacles
and) the tumults and
preoccupations with which the
common life (of human beings) is
usually filled, the soul is unable to
preserve that which is (greater and)
more precious (than anything else),
the memory of God. (With this
memory repulsed and shut out from
the soul) it not only . . .

εἶτα ὑπὸ τῶν θορύβων καὶ τῶν
ἀσχολιῶν ἃς ὁ κοινὸς βίος πέφυκεν
ἐμποιεῖν, τῆς ἀξιολογοτέρας μνήμης
τοῦ Θεοῦ ἀποσπωμένη, οὐ μόνον τό
. . . (*LR* 6. 2)

Then by reason of the tumults and
preoccupations with which the
common life is usually filled, the
soul is unable to preserve the more
precious memory of God, it not
only . . .

(f) In *RBas.* 8. 37 (*LR* 17. 2) Rufinus replaces τὸ μέγα . . . δέλεαρ with a more concrete and vivid image *muscipula*, 'rat-trap'.

(g) *RBas.* 22. 8 (*SR* 289) fills out *ἐαυτον . . . ἐν βάθει νοσοῦντα* with the more graphic image of sickness ‘lurking in his inner marrow’.

(h) *RBas.* 8. 30 (*LR* 17. 1) concerns the natural ‘passions of the flesh’ experienced by the Lord which tend to virtue. While Basil gives two examples: weariness and compassion for the afflicted, Rufinus very nicely adds two more: tears and grief.

(i) In the following case, Rufinus replaces an entire sentence turning on the word ‘commandments’—a key term of Basil’s discourse—with his own skilful composition.

Itaque omnimodo non quae nobis licita sunt sed quod aedificat proximos agere debemus, et non nobis placere sed proximis ad aedificationem; (*RBas.* 12. 12)

Thus we are to do, not what is permitted us, but what builds up our neighbours and to please not ourselves but our neighbours for their upbuilding.

Ὡστε παντὶ λόγῳ ἐπάναγκες ἢ τῷ Θεῷ ὑποτάσσεσθαι κατὰ τὴν ἐντολὴν αὐτοῦ, ἢ ἄλλοις διὰ τὴν ἐντολὴν αὐτοῦ. (*SR* 1)

Thus in every way we are either to be subject to God according to his commandment or to others because of his commandment.

(j) Embellishments are strongly in evidence in the answer to the question ‘how is one to cut out the passion of base desire?’ Rufinus, in full literary flight, paraphrases Basil. He expands the imagery of ‘blazing desire’, crafts phrases of a beautiful rhythm and assonance, and inserts a relevant Scripture passage.

Desiderio meliore, si magis ignimur et accendimur ad amorem dei secundum illum qui dixit *Eloquium domini ignivit eum, et Iudicia domini vera, iustificata in semet ipsa . . .* (*RBas.* 49. 1)

By a better desire! (That is, if we are all the more set alight and ablaze for the love) of God as was he who said (the *word of the Lord has set him alight* (Ps. 104: 19) and) *the judgments of the Lord are all of them true . . .*

Ἐπιθυμία διαπύρω τῶν θελημάτων τοῦ Θεοῦ οἷαν ἔδειξεν ἔχειν ὁ εἰπών· Τὰ κρίματα Κυρίου ἀληθινὰ, δεδικαιωμένα ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό· (*SR* 30)

By a burning desire for the will of God as he showed he had who said *the judgments of the Lord are all of them true . . .*

A similar passage using the same imagery and vocabulary of being set alight occurs in *RBas.* 2. 16 also missing from the parallel Greek text at *LR* 2. 1.

(k) *RBas.* 17. 5 (*SR* 4) offers this example of Latin elegance: *qui autem diligit, diligenter corripit.*

(l) *RBas.* 24 (*SR* 158) is a singularly successful piece of Rufinus 'improving' on Basil, in the way he has reconfigured the analogies of the physician and the father.

(m) *RBas.* 29.4 (*SR* 85) glosses the Gospel passage about laying down one's life for one's friends (John 15: 13) by adding a rhetorical question in which he drives home Basil's argument against personal possessions.

(n) *RBas.* 84. 1 (*SR* 166) shows examples of both a toning down and a vivifying of the idiom in a single sentence. While the Greek speaks of a child 'overcome with hunger' in Rufinus it is only 'hungry'. But whereas the Greek has the nurse inviting the child simply 'to partake' in Rufinus she invites it more concretely 'to her breasts'.

Et affectu quo esuriens parvulus
nutrici obemperat ad ubera
invitanti (*RBas.* 84. 1)

Μεθ' ὄϊας διαθέσεως τὸ παῖδιον ὑπὸ
πείνης κρατούμενον ὑπακούει τῇ
τροφῇ καλούσῃ ἐπὶ τὴν
μετάληψιν (*SR* 166)

With the same disposition with
which a hungry child obeys the
nurse who invites it to her breasts.

With the same disposition with
which a child overcome with hunger
obeys the nurse who invites it to
partake.

(o) In *RBas.* 191. 1, Rufinus 'fills in' the condensed syntax of the original text. In *SR* 182 Basil continues on the basis of the syntax of the question as he begins his response: τῆς συμπαθείας, κατὰ τὸ εἰρημένον ὑπὸ Ἀποστόλου ὅτι . . . Rufinus recasts it as a discrete sentence: 'si cum misericordia rem gerit et est in eo illud quod dicit Apostolus quia . . . '.

7. Changes of argument

Occasionally the *RBas.* paraphrases the text to the extent of affecting Basil's argument.

(a) Some shifts of meaning occur at a minor level of alternative translations.

(i) Whereas in *SR* 45 Basil has εὐφρανθῆ ('and be gladdened'), *RBas.* 76. 1 has *recipiat* ('may receive back'). One wonders if Rufinus has read something like εὐρεθῆ ('be found').

(ii) In *RBas.* 32. Q (*SR* 188) Rufinus has *eos qui nobis aliquando vel familiares vel consanguinei fuerunt (et proximi)*. Did he misconstrue some form of the last phrase of the Greek text: ἐρχομένους πρὸς ἡμᾶς, as *proximi*?

(iii) In *RBas.* 16. 5 (*SR* 3) the last phrase of the Scripture text quoted by Basil is ἵνα ἐντραπή ('that he may be ashamed'). Rufinus

adds a gloss ‘that is, at table’, which translated back into Greek would be *ἴνα ἐν τραπέζῃ*. It is a curious coincidence, if that is all it is.

(iv) The changing meanings of patristic Greek in Late Antiquity are at issue in a phrase occurring in *SR* 54 (*RBas.* 154. 1): *πολλὰ καταχρηστικῶς λέγεται*. Not only Clarke in the twentieth century²⁰ and Garnier in the eighteenth,²¹ but also Rufinus at the end of the fourth read the adverb *καταχρηστικῶς* in the register of ‘misuse, or misapply’. In the context, this does not make much sense. Rufinus has *Multa abusive dicuntur*. A search for ‘fuller meaning’ in Lampe’s *Patristic Greek Lexicon* gives the key to Basil’s usage: it means or can mean precisely ‘fuller meaning’. Hence a better translation is: ‘Many sayings use the sense *more fully*’.

(b) *RBas.* Prol. 1–11 (*SR* Prol.) contains three glosses to do with *perficere* and its cognates. Depending on one’s view of it, these glosses either subtly shift the tonality or legitimately explain what was implicit in the original. In *RBas.* Prologue 4 Rufinus has Basil discoursing before the *perfectioribus* and in the next verse he has those inquiring *de conversatione perfecta*. In the third instance, *RBas.* Prologue 7 (*SR* Prol.), there can be no doubt: with ‘perfection’ on his mind, Rufinus replaces *περὶ τῶν συμφερόντων* with a doublet, but in doing so distinctly alters the tonality: *de eminentioribus et perfectioribus*.

(c) *RBas.* 46. 1 (*SR* 29) sharpens the focus and somewhat alters the analogy by replacing *ἄρχοντας* (‘ruler’) with *iudicis* (‘judge’) and *κατατολμᾶ τινος τῶν μὴ ἀρεσκόντων* (‘doing what is displeasing’) with *ausus est aliquid suae indignationis ostendere* (‘showing anger’). Rufinus shifts the scene from the throne room to the court room, so to speak—and not ineffectively. A similar shift occurs at *RBas.* 108. 1 (*SR* 201).

(d) *RBas.* 70. 1 (*SR* 38) subtly shifts the tonality from *ὡς ἀντιλόγικος* (‘as contradicting’) to *quasi non obtemperans* (‘as disobeying’).

(e) (i) There is a subtle shift on the treatment of ‘pollution of the spirit’. For Basil, this is contracted through indifference towards those who condone or practise what is forbidden; that is, it comes from a failure in evangelical correction. Rufinus, however, presents it to mean an indifferent *mixing* with those of impious sentiments concerning the faith.

²⁰ ‘Many expressions are really a misuse of language . . .’, W. K. L. Clarke, *The Ascetic Works of St Basil* (London, 1925), 249.

²¹ *Multa dicuntur improprie*, Latin translation by Garnier, *PG* 31. 1119A.

(g) *RBas.* 22. 8 (*SR* 289) fills out *ἐαυτον . . . ἐν βάθει νοσοῦντα* with the more graphic image of sickness ‘lurking in his inner marrow’.

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A similar passage using the same imagery and vocabulary of being set alight occurs in *RBas.* 2. 16 also missing from the parallel Greek text at *LR* 2. 1.

(k) *RBas.* 17. 5 (*SR* 4) offers this example of Latin elegance: *qui autem diligit, diligenter corripit.*

(h) In the following example the Latin text portrays the relationship of a community member to the superior in terms of total obedience, whereas the Greek text sources it in the imperatives of charity and the common life. While the *propter mandatum domini* of Rufinus' text sounds a very Basilian note, it is difficult to identify any particular commandment to which the precise verbal phrases might be referring. Perhaps Basil himself later realized this and edited his own text with τῇ ἀλλῶν χρεία ἐν ἀγάπῃ Χριστοῦ. If so, Rufinus may have preserved an older reading, even as he altered its ambience. On the whole, the Greek text preserves an approach more recognizably Basil's, while the Latin text seems to reflect later developments in the understanding of monastic obedience.

Qui se ipsum et membra sua tradiderit in alterius potestatem propter mandatum domini, quomodo licebit de utensilibus contradicere, huic praecipue cui cura commissa est? (RBas. 106. 1)

How can one who has handed over himself and his own members (into the power of another because of the commandment of the Lord), dispute about tools with the one who is specially entrusted with their care?

ὁ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ μέλη ἀποδεδωκώς τῇ ἀλλῶν χρεία ἐν ἀγάπῃ Χριστοῦ πῶς περὶ τῶν σκευῶν ἀντιπεῖν δυνήσεται τῷ προεστώτι, ᾧ καὶ τῶν σκευῶν ἡ φροντὶς ἀνήκεν. (SR 146)

How can one who has handed over himself and his own members to serve others in the love of Christ dispute about tools with the one who presides to whom even the care of tools belongs?

(i) SR 4 cites a text from Prov. 13: 13 turning on the verb καταφρονῶ which has just been used. The focus in the Greek text is on the disposition of 'despising', or 'disdaining' which could dismiss any sin as a small matter. RBas. 17. 2, however, uses a text from Sir. 19: 1 similar in meaning but not in vocabulary, which turns on the theme of *parvum*, 'small', instead. Given that Basil was the last person likely to concede that *anything* to do with sin could be a 'small' matter, Rufinus seems to have 'improved' the scriptural reference but, in the process, subtly departed from Basil's thought.

nihil oportet contemni tamquam parvum, qui spernit minima paulatim defluit (Sir. 19: 1) (RBas. 17. 2)²²

nothing, however, should be despised as small, for whoever despises little things will fall little by little

οὐδενὸς δεῖ καταφρονεῖν ὡς μικροῦ. ὁ γὰρ καταφρονῶν πράγματος, φησὶ, καταφρονηθήσεται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ (Prov. 13: 13) (SR 4)

no one ought to despise anything as small, for whoever despises a matter, it says, shall himself be despised by it.

²² The Sept. text reads: ὁ ἐξουθενῶν τὰ ὀλίγα κατὰ μικρὸν πεσεῖται.

(j) In the following, there appears to be a slight theological or, preferably, anthropological correction by Rufinus, concerned to exclude even a hint of rationality in animals by using a common scale of comparison with humans. When translating Origen's *Περὶ Ἀρχῶν*, probably only a few months later, Rufinus tempered Origen's statement that instinct in war-horses and hunting dogs was so highly developed it approached reason.²³ See also 8(c)(iv) below.

scientiam sui donavit homini deus
et rationale animal fecit esse in
terris (RBas. 2. 44)

God gave man knowledge of
himself and made him a rational
animal on the earth.

ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ τῆς γνώσεως ἑαυτοῦ
ἀξιώσας, καὶ λόγῳ παρὰ πάντα τὰ
ζῶα κατακοσμήσας (LR 2. 3)

(and) God bestowed on man
knowledge of himself and adorned
him with rationality beyond all
animals.

(k) There is discord between RBas. 4. 3–6 and LR 8. 1. RBas. 4. 4 makes a clear distinction between *two* stages of Christian renunciation: baptism and commitment to the ascetic life. This Rufinian verse and the redundancy of Matt. 16: 24 in RBas. 4. 3a which immediately precedes it do not appear in LR 8. 1. By comparison with the Latin text, the shorter Greek text presents a more unified view of the stages of progress in the Christian life. This accords with Basil's characteristic teaching that there is only 'one kind' of Christian life.²⁴ So *prima facie*, RBas. 4. 4 is Rufinus' gloss on Basil's argument, in which he adapts the sequence of baptism and commitment to monastic life to the more developed situation in the late 390s.

Gribomont, however, reports that the Syriac translation of these verses also makes a sharper distinction between two stages of Christian progress (Grib. 244–5). He concluded that the Rufinian version corresponds more closely with Basil's original thought. Further study of the developments in Syriac asceticism in the 370s–390s is needed here, to establish whether the Syriac text itself may have independently adapted Basil's text.

For other instances of changes of argument, some to a greater, others to a lesser degree, see RBas. 11. 27–30 (LR 22. 3), RBas. 17. 2 (SR 4), RBas. 46. 1 (SR 29), RBas. 67. 3 (SR 117), RBas. 81. 2 (SR 96), RBas. 84. 3 (SR 166), RBas. 88. 2–3 (SR 128), RBas. 103. 1 (SR

²³ See Rist, 'The Greek and Latin Texts', 105.

²⁴ *Μονότροπος ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστιανοῦ βίος, ἕνα σκοπὸν ἔχων, τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ* (LR 20. 2). See Karl S. Frank on Basil's *monotropos bios* in 'Monastische Reform in Altertum: Eustathius von Sebaste und Basilius von Caesarea', in R. Bäumer (ed.), *Reformatio Ecclesiae*, Paderborn and Munich (1980), 35–49, esp. at 43–7, 'Die Einheit der Nachfolge Jesu'.

143), *RBas.* 126. 1 (*SR* 206), *RBas.* 147. 1 (*SR* 53), *RBas.* 195. 1 (*SR* 75).

8. Deletions

Sometimes Rufinus' deletions have to do with his rearrangement of Scripture citations. Sometimes they are a response to argument specific to the Greek language that he considers would be lost on his Latin readership, and occasionally they are concerned with simplifying Basil's expression.

(a) (i) There is a rather complicated case in *RBas.* 18. Q (*SR* 5), noted in 2(c) above, where Rufinus seems to have noticed a duplicated scriptural passage and removed it.

(ii) In *RBas.* 144. 2 (*SR* 50), besides using generous pleonasm, Rufinus, striving for *variatio*, removes a duplicated scriptural phrase and introduces an alternative text in its stead.

(iii) *RBas.* 159. 2–3 (*SR* 55), appears to omit a rather obscure Scripture text that survives in the Greek.

(iv) *RBas.* 183. 1 (*SR* 59) seems to remove Ps. 7: 9, a scriptural text not overly relevant to the case.

(v) *RBas.* 203. 4 (*SR* 275) deletes the last Scripture passage, thereby heightening the effect of the conclusion of the entire *RBas.*: *sed sufficia nostra ex deo est.*

(b) (i) In *RBas.* 8. 34 (*LR* 17) Rufinus simply omits the last phrase, ἀντὶ ἡλαρότητος, since it is a discussion about Greek synonyms, though he does transliterate a few Greek terms elsewhere.²⁵

(ii) In *RBas.* 139. 2 (*SR* 240) Rufinus abbreviates the argument, deleting Basil's philological discussion of the two words πλατεία ('wide') and εὐρύχωρος ('broad').

(iii) Similarly, in the next response, *RBas.* 140. 1–3 (*SR* 241), Rufinus prunes some of the Greek-specific discussion of the scriptural words στενόν ('narrow') and τεθλιμμένον ('constrained').

(iv) In an interesting case that combines both issues of scriptural citation and Greek-specific vocabulary, Rufinus removes an apparently redundant citation of Scripture—only it was not redundant. Basil had in fact been employing some allusive word play—intelligible, of course, only in Greek.

²⁵ On four occasions he includes the actual original Greek word in his text: θεωρίαν *RBas.* 14. 2 (*SR* 157), λοῖδοπος *RBas.* 41. Q (*SR* 24. Q) and ὄσιον *RBas.* 170. Q, 170. 1 (*SR* 149). Twice he transliterates: *mnas* *RBas.* 114. 3 (*SR* 203) and *eulogiam* *RBas.* 133. Q (*SR* 122). There are also Greek words already imported into Latin such as *paedagogus* in *RBas.* 11. 26 (*LR* 22. 3), *zona* in *RBas.* 11. 32 (*SR* 148), *elemosynam*, *RBas.* 5. 1 (*LR* 9. 1).

cum dei clementia omnes vocet per illam praedicationem qua dicit *Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis et ego reficiem vos*, non est sine discriminatione abicere quempiam venientem ad nos (RBas. 6. 1)

Since our loving God and Saviour Jesus Christ calls (everyone) in that proclamation where he says *Come to me all you who labour and are burdened and I will refresh you* (Matt. 11: 28), no one who comes (to us) is to be sent away without good reason.

(c) (i) It is not often that one can accuse Basil of overblown expression and Rufinus of brevity. Yet there are intriguing cases where Rufinus simplifies Basil, as in RBas. 134. 9 (SR 172).

(ii) RBas. 13. Q (SR 114. Q) shears away the Scripture passages and strips the question down to the fundamentals.

(iii) Similarly, RBas. 169. Q (SR 219. Q) prunes the overburdened expression of the question in the Greek text.

Si ab aliquo quid beneficii consequamur, quomodo poterimus et domino digne et integre gratias agere et ei qui beneficium praestitit, quali mensure ut debemus in utroque? (RBas. 169. Q)

If we receive some benefit from anyone, how can we worthily and wholeheartedly thank both the Lord and the one who bestowed the benefit, with the measure due to each?

τοῦ φιλανθρώπου Θεοῦ καὶ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κηρύσσοντος καὶ λέγοντος· Δεῦτε πρὸς με, πάντες οἱ κοπιῶντες, καὶ πεφορτισμένοι, κἀγὼ ἀναπαύσω ὑμᾶς· οὐκ ἀκίνδυνον ἀπωθεῖσθαι τοὺς τῷ Κυρίῳ δι' ὑμᾶς προσιόντας, καὶ ὑπελθεῖν αὐτοῦ τὸν χρῆστον ζυγόν, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐντολῶν φορτίον, τὸ πρὸς οὐρανὸν ἡμᾶς ἀνακουφίζον βουλομένους (LR 10. 1)

Since our loving God and Saviour Jesus Christ proclaims, saying *Come to me all you who labour and are burdened and I will refresh you* (Matt. 11: 28), it is not without a danger that we refuse those who come to the Lord through us, wishing to take up his *easy yoke* and the *burden* of his commandments that *lightens* us up to heaven (cf. Matt. 11: 30).

Ἐὰν εὐργετηθῶμεν παρὰ τινος, πῶς δυνηθῶμεν καὶ τῷ Κυρίῳ τὴν ὀφειλομένην εὐχαριστίαν καθαρὰν καὶ ὀλόκληρον ἀποδοῦναι, καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὸν εὐεργέτην ἐπιστημόνως πληρῶσαι, μήτε ἐλλείποντες, μήτε ὑπερβαίνοντες τὸ μέτρον; (SR 219. Q)

If we are benefited by someone, how can we both purely and wholeheartedly give the Lord due thanks and sympathetically give thanks to our benefactor, neither falling short of nor exceeding the measure?

(iv) Fairly obviously, RBas. 2. 34 (LR 2. 2) deletes Basil's mention

of ‘dogs and many similar animals’ as an example of the display of grateful affection. This may have to do with some theo-anthropological sensitivities. See above at 7(j).

(v) *RBas.* 20. 1 (*SR* 6), found above at 1(a)(ii), is an example of Rufinus’ trimming an authorial ‘I’ passage.

(d) (i) A subclass of deletions concerns scriptural allusions Rufinus has missed. In *SR* 1 Basil refers to the Holy Spirit in the terms of Ps. 142: 10: ὁδηγοῦ μὲν τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ ἀγαθοῦ Πνεύματος. The reference seems to have eluded Rufinus, who deletes ἀγαθοῦ—apparently as an inadequate description of the Spirit—and leaves simply *spiritu sancto* (*RBas.* 12. 4).

(ii) In *RBas.* 58. 1 (*SR* 197) Basil alludes to 2 Tim. 2: 5 when he speaks of ἀγωνίζεται νομίμως (‘strives lawfully’). Rufinus seems to have missed this reference when he uses a different construction and translates: *et ab opere legitimo* (‘and from lawful work’).

(iii) In changing the text at *RBas.* 168. 3 (*SR* 248), Rufinus appears to have missed the allusion to Ps. 33: 6, καὶ μὴ ἀναβλέπων ἵνα φωτισθῆ, since his translation stops short of it. Alternatively Basil may have tacked it on at a later stage.

9. Sharpening of scriptural references

In his other translations Rufinus reworked the Greek original by inserting, correcting, or amplifying citations of Scripture. One might have expected that there would be little need for this when working with so intensely scriptural an author as Basil, but there are, in fact, numerous cases where Rufinus sharpens Basil’s scriptural allusions in the form of distinct, sometimes amplified citations. The extemporized setting of Basil’s original presentation explains the frequent occurrence of inexact allusions.

(a) The following shows Rufinus’ typical manner of ‘upgrading’ a scriptural allusion to an actual citation.

sed et deflere magis invenitur eos qui rident dicens <i>Vae vobis qui nunc ridetis, quia flebitis</i> (<i>RBas.</i> 8. 31)	ἀλλὰ καὶ ταλανίζων τοὺς κατεχομένους ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ (<i>LR</i> 17. 1)
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there it is found instead that those who laugh shall lament all the more, where he says <i>Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall weep</i> (Luke 6. 21).	but indeed he declares wretched those who are overcome by it [i.e. laughter].
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(b) In a skilful exercise of *variatio*, Rufinus replaces Basil’s citation

of Phil. 2: 8, used just a few verses earlier, with a similar phrase from the Book of Wisdom.

et ad amorem unigeniti eius eo
amplius provocabitur, cum eum
videat *mortem turpissimam* pro
nostra redemptione
tolerasse. (*RBas.* 134. 8)

and [the soul] is stirred up even
more to love of the Only-begotten
when it sees that he bore a *most
shameful death* (cf. *Wisd.* 2: 20) for
our redemption.

καὶ τὴν πρὸς μονογενῆ αὐτοῦ Υἱὸν τὸν
ὑπακούσαντα μέχρι θανάτου ὑπὲρ τῆς
ἡμετέρας ἀπολυτρώσεως καὶ
σωτηρίας (*SR* 172)²⁶

and of love for his Only-begotten
Son who for our redemption and
salvation became *obedient even unto
death* (*Phil.* 2: 8).

(c) In the Greek text of the following passage Basil makes a passing allusion to Ps. 33: 6. By recasting the sentence and using the passive voice Rufinus comes nearer to the scriptural text.

qui est dominus noster Iesus
Christus cuius mandatis velut
radiis quibusdam
illuminamur (*RBas.* 12. 5)

that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, by
whose commandments we are
illuminated (*Ps.* 33: 6) as with rays.

αὐτοῦ τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ
Χριστοῦ τοῦ φωτίζοντος, ὥσπερ
ἀκτίσαι ταῖς ἐαυτοῦ
ἐντολαῖς (*SR* 1)

that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, who
illuminates us with his
commandments as with rays.

(d) Other examples of Rufinus' sharpening of scriptural references may be seen at *RBas.* 2. 53-4 (*LR* 2. 3), *RBas.* 3. 9 (*LR* 7), *RBas.* 8. 9 (*LR* 16. 2), *RBas.* 9. 15 (*LR* 19. 2), *RBas.* 10. 7 (*LR* 21), *RBas.* 11. 40 (*LR* 23), *RBas.* 12. 10, 11 (*SR* 1), *RBas.* 23. 9-12 (*SR* 16), *RBas.* 26. 3-4 (*SR* 7), *RBas.* 31. 5 (*SR* 187), *RBas.* 40. 1, 5 (*SR* 23), *RBas.* 42. 4 (*SR* 25), *RBas.* 49. 1 (*SR* 30), *RBas.* 77. Q (*SR* 164), *RBas.* 88. 2-4 (*SR* 128), *RBas.* 127. 3 (*SR* 207), *RBas.* 130. Q (*SR* 151. Q), *RBas.* 136. 6 (*SR* 208), *RBas.* 137. 3 (*SR* 173), *RBas.* 144. 2 (*SR* 50), *RBas.* 147. 4 (*SR* 53), *RBas.* 164. 4 (*SR* 56), *RBas.* 167 (*SR* 218), *RBas.* 180. Q (*SR* 222), *RBas.* 195. 8 (*SR* 75), *RBas.* 191. 3-4 (*SR* 182).

CONCLUSION

It is often considered that Rufinus' translation technique was modified by the strife that followed his translation of Origen's *Peri Archon* in 398. This episode, it is supposed, sensitized him to

²⁶ The Greek text shows a doublet not present in the Latin text. Since Rufinus was unlikely to refuse a doublet freely offered, a later editorial insertion in the Greek text is strongly indicated.

doubtful theological points in his source and the necessity of amending them in translation.²⁷ Such the present author had supposed when turning to his very first work of translation, the *Regula Basili*. The findings, however, suggest a reconsideration. Close attention to the translation techniques of the *Regula Basili* and in particular the results recorded in Sections 5 and 6 above show that Rufinus came to his first work as a translator with a methodology already well thought out. From the outset he showed himself quite prepared to qualify what one might call ‘ideological’ nuances.

Rufinus had lived for years in a bilingual culture in Melania’s monastery on the Mount of Olives, he had long been collecting Greek manuscripts, apparently with a view to undertaking translation work when the moment should prove suitable. His experiences in the first phase of the Origenist controversy in Palestine had schooled him to a certain caution even before he returned to the West. Thus when he took up the task of translation he already had a mature, well-thought-out approach to mediating between Greek Christian authors and a Latin readership. Therefore, I hold with Brooks²⁸ that Rufinus shows a ‘remarkable consistency of technique in all the translations’ from the outset, beginning with the *Regula Basili*.

One can certainly agree with Gribomont that Rufinus’ translation was ‘intelligent’.²⁹ Erudite in both Greek and Latin, Rufinus moved with great facility between the different idioms of the two languages, as the many specific examples above show.

But it is a more problematic matter to agree that Rufinus’ translation is ‘fidèle’,³⁰ It cannot be maintained that he is much closer to being that more scrupulous translator that modern scholars of lost Greek texts would wish he had been even in such theologically ‘safe’ material as the *ascetica* and *homiletica* of the Cappadocians. He showed no inclination to restrain the mediating role of the translator between the original author and readers in the receptor language. Instead, he focused on rhetorical ‘Latinity’, wholly orientating himself to his Latin readership according to his own judgment of their interests. It is not for his readers to accommodate themselves to the text; rather he will undertake the labours necessary to accommodate

²⁷ e.g. Oulton, ‘Rufinus’s Translation of the Church History of Eusebius’, 156: ‘At any rate, in his translation of the History we can see how careful Rufinus was towards the end of his life—himself suspect of unorthodoxy and singled with fires of controversy—to avoid language to which exception might be taken.’

²⁸ Brooks, ‘The Translation Techniques of Rufinus’, 359.

²⁹ Grib. 237.

³⁰ Grib. 237.

the text to them. At best it is a kindly meant, pastoral approach.³¹ But it means that, to some extent, Rufinus operates as the sub-author of a new text ‘inspired’ by the original.

Lastly, this study makes it clear that a critical edition of the Syriac *Questions of the Brothers*, collated with both the *Regula Basili* and the Great Asketikon is a task needing attention. Then we shall gain a clearer understanding of the relationship between the ‘first edition’ and the later editions of Basil’s ‘Asketikon’, and be able to form a more exact judgment of Rufinus’ techniques in his first work of translation.

³¹ On Rufinus’ pastoral motives, see the citation above at n. 12.

Basil and the Great Asketikon

BASIL'S EDITORIAL TECHNIQUES IN THE GREAT ASKETIKON

Building on the aspects of textual transmission dealt with in the first chapter, and armed with the critical awareness of Rufinus' translation techniques gained in the last chapter, it is now time to assess Basil's editorial techniques in the Great Asketikon, that is, the ways in which he reworked the text of the Small Asketikon in his later edition.

1. *Structural ramification*

The most obvious difference between the two versions of the Asketikon is their respective lengths: the latter version is about twice the length of the earlier. The second most obvious difference is that the Great Asketikon is divided into Longer and Shorter Responses, more obviously so in Ask. 4. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, this is a distinction implemented by Basil himself in a revision of the Great Asketikon carried out in the mid-370s at Annisa. This Pontic transmission became the basis of the Ask. 4 recension.

Generally, the Longer Responses deal with major issues of principle and practice, while the Smaller Responses treat particular cases and practical applications more briefly. Some Longer Responses are quite short, however, and a few Shorter Responses rather longish. The Longer Responses divide some of the longer texts found in the Small Asketikon into discrete topics, considerably expanding some in the process and leaving others more or less intact. Some of this subdivision is due to later editors, such as the Ask. 4 editor. However, the fact that all three major recensions of the Great Asketikon, Ask. 3 the (Studite), the Armenian version of it, and the Ask. 4, comprise essentially the same body of responses, if not the same enumeration and sequence, surely indicates that this basic twofold structure is due to Basil's own editing.

Basil's method of articulating the earlier text is particularly clear

with regard to the longest response in the Small Asketikon: *RBas.* 2. In Ask. 2 it is portioned out into four Longer Responses; in Ask. 3 and Ask. 4 it is portioned out into five Longer Responses: 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the Ask. 4 numeration.

RBas. 2. 58–69 on the second great commandment is detached and reallocated as a distinct topic in *LR* 3. The fact that the response is prefaced by no genuine new question, that *RBas.* 2. 58 is reused instead, indicates literary editing. Nevertheless, a first-person interjection is added even here. New text is closely interwoven with the earlier text while a scriptural passage is postponed and a longer exhortation introducing it is inserted. The last paragraph is new, consisting of further scriptural examples of the topic—a very Basilian touch.

Similar observations can be made about the redeployment of *RBas.* 2. 74–93 in *LR* 5. Here one can detect Basil in the very act of re-editing, as it were, when he prefaces a new passage with the statement ‘I think I ought to add a clarification’ (*LR* 5. 3). Another possible explanation might be that Basil has to hand two texts taken down by tachygraphers from oral delivery: the first one from the Small Asketikon and a second from a subsequent occasion on a related topic, and that he has woven them together as a literary whole.

2. *Reuse of earlier text unchanged*

Significant blocks are of course transferred from the Small Asketikon to the Great Asketikon more or less without change. These can be readily identified by the bold type in the English translation. A ready example is *LR* 1, which is virtually coterminous with the text of *RBas.* 1, showing little emendation or addition. Similarly, *SR* 10 relays *RBas.* 27 with very little change except for the fuller citation of a Scripture text. Other examples are *SR* 115 (*RBas.* 64) and *SR* 104 (*RBas.* 124).

3. *Interpolation and expansion of earlier text*

It is far more characteristic of Basil to use the earlier text as a springboard to rearrange, amplify, and re-express his teaching, sometimes to a considerable degree. Thus the earlier text now appears more or less embedded and dispersed in the revised text. The adaptations are largely aimed at accentuating the exhortative and persuasive value of his text. Usually they affect his doctrine only in nuances, not in substance.

(a) A clear case of expanded text occurs in *SR* 220 (*RBas.* 174. 1). Here Basil inserts a phrase ‘in the Longer Responses’, evidently referring back to *LR* 33 which did not even exist in the Small Asketikon.

(b) In *RBas.* Prol. 5 (*SR* Prol.) the Greek adds a new phrase on the importance of soundness in faith.

(c) The vigour of *RBas.* 2. 25–7 is somewhat toned down in *LR* 2. 1. The revised text is still very strong, but somewhat moderated, due no doubt to longer experience. In *SR* 41 (*RBas.* 73) the questioner continues the same topic raised in the previous question at *SR* 40 (*RBas.* 72) about one brother who grieves another. The Greek text makes the continuity more explicit by inserting ‘he who grieves another’.

(d) In *LR* 9. 1 (*RBas.* 5. 3), Basil takes his cue from the simple citation of Jeremiah in the earlier version on negligent administration, adds further considerations on the topic and finally concludes with the same text.

(e) *LR* 19. 2 (*RBas.* 9. 15) presents an interesting case. It is hard to decide whether Rufinus has trimmed the original Greek, or Basil has added extra emphases in the second version. In the latter interpretation, Basil wishes to accentuate the frugality of the meal Christ set before the crowd. He uses a doublet that does not appear in Rufinus, expanding ‘simple fare’ to ‘frugal and simple fare’. It seems unlikely that Rufinus would refuse a doublet on free offer. *RBas.* 9. 15 quotes the Scripture verbatim, which could be Rufinus’ sharpening of references. Basil merely alludes to it, paraphrasing and glossing it as he goes: ‘by providing for them bread—made of barley at that—and besides the bread, a little fish’.

(f) Another interesting case occurs in *LR* 17. 2 (*RBas.* 8. 37). Only the Greek text has the vivid image of pleasure as the ‘fish-hook’ of sin. Since Rufinus has already made ‘snare’ more vivid by translating it as ‘rat-trap’, it is hard to know why he might omit the second vivid image that Basil provides; more likely Basil added it later.

(g) The most extensively rethought and expanded passage in the entire Asketikon is *RBas.* 7 (*LR* 15), on the suitable age for profession. Longer experience, new situations, and fresh demands for guidance stimulated Basil’s thinking on two fronts: how children being brought up in the community were to be educated and morally formed and how to put profession in the ascetic community on a more secure footing in relation to the Church at large.

(h) A personal interjection near the end of *LR* 15: ‘One thing I

forgot to say and had better add while there is still time' is clearly Basil's living voice as taken down by a tachygrapher. So it is probable that *LR* 15 conflates the record of a later question and answer session with the original text behind *RBas.* 7. It is even possible to suggest a dating for the subsequent session. Since one of his new topics concerns bringing in orphan children, there seems to be a link here to the great famine of 369. This social crisis is mentioned twice in the *VSM*, once directly in connection with Peter (*GNO* 384, Callahan 172) and again in relation to Makrina (*GNO* 341, Callahan 183), who is reported to have rescued starving orphans by the roadside and brought them up in the community. A 369 dating is strengthened by other considerations too. Basil's general reference to bishops as 'those who preside over the churches', is perhaps more suitable on the lips of one not yet a bishop himself. Compare his generic reference to the local bishop in *SR* 197. There are other signs that Basil is very much speaking from within as one of the ascetics himself, as when he uses the plural first person: we do this, we do that, etc. In the following year, 370, it was precisely Basil's reputation as a proponent of the ascetic life that drew such opposition to his election as archbishop from a certain block among the bishops and clergy. All in all, it seems best to date the additional material in *LR* 15 to a visit to Pontos in the period just before he became bishop, though there was subsequent literary editing.

(i) The second part of the question at *SR* 5, concerning the fruits of repentance, does not appear in its relevant place at *RBas.* 18, but as the following question, *RBas.* 19, where it receives its answer. It appears in the Great Asketikon as *SR* 287. Consequently, this particular question appears twice in the Great Asketikon, at *SR* 5 and *SR* 287, but is only answered in the latter. There is little in the context to suggest diplography on the part of an early copyist. Here we may have an example of inadvertence in Basil's editing, when he wished to separate two topics which had been originally raised at the same time by the same questioner, but in the process did not quite smooth out the inconsistencies. *SR* 5 and *SR* 287 are, after all, widely displaced from each other in the Greek text. They survived in the Greek text but not in *RBas.*, perhaps because Rufinus himself noticed the duplication, which came immediately to his notice and so was able to correct it. Here it seems we have a case where the Greek text preserves an older reading than the *RBas.*

4. *Modulations of the use of Scripture*

Scripture is frequently cited in the Great Asketikon with verbatim exactitude according to the Septuagint, though it sometimes reflects a minority recension. The New Testament text used is frequently a witness to the so-called 'Byzantine' or Greek lectionary recension, indicated in the references with a suffix: 'Byz.'¹ For an example of a passage that does not appear in the best attested New Testament text but in the Byzantine text see *SR* 303.

(a) There are cases where Scripture is more accurately cited in the Greek than in the Latin. It may be a nice point to decide whether Rufinus has altered what he had before him, or Basil himself has taken the opportunity of later literary revision to sharpen his text. An example occurs in *SR* 114/*RBas.* 13. 9, of 'the sheep who do not follow the voice of the Lord', according to Rufinus. In the Greek the first instance of 'the voice of' is correctly missing. In *SR* 195 there is the ascription 'as Solomon says' for which *RBas.* 195. 7 has instead 'as it says in Proverbs'. Rom. 2: 13 is alluded to in *RBas.* 17. 3 but using the passive voice: 'God is dishonoured'; it correctly appears in *SR* 5 with the active voice: 'you dishonour God'. *SR* 221 supplies a more correct and fuller text of 1 Cor. 10: 13 than appears in *RBas.* 179. 2, on asking the Lord for a way out in time of temptation. In *SR* 28, instead of the 'God' which appears in *RBas.* 45. 5 citation of Rom. 12: 17 there appears 'the Lord' of 2 Cor. 8: 21 instead. When *SR* 220 cites Matt. 12: 36 it correctly uses the third-person plural instead of the second-person plural which appears in *RBas.* 174. 3. Moreover it gives a fuller text.

(b) Basil not only expressly cites scriptural passages, but often alludes to scriptural phrases and words informally, borrowing from the well-pondered stock in his own memory. This is exactly what one might expect in an extempore setting. In such cases, he shows great facility in linking similar scriptural phrases or words coming from different passages. In the translation, allusions and less exact citations are indicated with 'cf.' Basil's many passing 'reminiscences' of Scripture provided Rufinus with a ripe field for corrections.

For example, consider *LR* Prologue 1, 'I appeal to you therefore, by the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for our sins'. Basil blends verbal elements of three similar texts, Gal. 1: 4, 2: 20, and Tit. 2: 13-14. Also in *LR* Prol. 1, he combines the 'great and terrible day of the Lord' of Joel 2: 13 and others with 'the Day' in which every man's work will be 'manifest' (1 Cor. 3: 13), into the

¹ Clarke uses the siglum 'K' for this recension.

strong expression ‘the dread and manifest day of the Lord’. In *LR* 2, with the word ‘commandments’ on his mind, he uses John 14:23, but replaces the ‘word’ of that verse, with the ‘commandments’ of John 14:15 and 14:21, which verses appear slightly earlier in the Gospel text. In *LR* 11 he remembers that the Apostle Paul ‘begot’ Onesimus and then adds ‘through the Gospel’ a phrase linked to the word ‘begot’ elsewhere in the Letters of Paul, but not as such in Philemon. In *LR* 17.2, speaking of ‘mortifying the body with all its passions and desires’, he uses a mix of vocabulary expressing the same idea from Gal. 5:24, Rom. 8:13, and Col. 3:5. Likewise in *LR* 30, he conflates one or more phrases from Mark 10:43, 44/Matt. 20:26, 27 with Mark 9:35: ‘If anyone would be first among you, let him be last of all and servant of all’. In *SR* 1 he adapts 1 Tim. 4:16 and perhaps Rom. 12:7 to the current syntax of his thought. In *SR* 28 (*RBas.* 45.5) he commences a citation with the participial form of the verb as in Rom. 12:17: *Προνοουμένοι*, but then follows it with the very similar text from 2 Cor. 8:21, where it commences in an aorist form: *προνοοῦμεν*. In *SR* 282 and 298 he synthesizes Matt. 23:5 and 6:5, in that sequence, to fashion a single, forceful ‘saying’ of the Lord. It became stamped in his mind in this form, as his repeated use of it testifies.

SR 64. Q seems to borrow from both versions of the one Gospel saying about scandalizing the little ones. It is presented according to the structure of Luke 17:2, yet it distinctly begins with the vocabulary of Matt. 18:6 and only then moves to a Lucan vocabulary. It appears that here we have a scriptural passage as remembered ‘off the cuff’ by one of Basil’s interlocutors and preserved as such by a tachygrapher.

5. *Expansion of scriptural references*

(a) In his later editorial work, Basil is often desirous of providing a fuller range of exemplary passages from Scripture. He sometimes inserts passages where none had appeared before in the Small Asketikon; he sometimes adds new passages to already existing citations. This occurs, for example, in *LR* 2, where he is teaching that the one commandment to love God embraces all the commandments. To illustrate this he originally cited Matt. 22:40 (*RBas.* 2.2), but when editing, prefaced it with a text from John 15:23, thereby expressing the message more forcefully.

(b) Sometimes the augmentation of scriptural citations can become overloaded. Compare, for example, the expansion in *LR* 2.1 of *RBas.* 2.20–4 which already had three citations. The end result is a

string of six citations. Similarly at the end of *LR* 7, new citations are grafted into the original text. In *LR* 8 the Greek text takes up the brief sharp contrast of *RBas.* 4. 8 and elaborates it at length, bringing in another scriptural citation, followed by a fuller rendering of the Scripture already alluded to.

(c) The following is a list of instances where the Great Asketikon adds scriptural citations. Given Rufinus' own propensity for *adding* scriptural passages, it is unlikely that the appearance of these new passages in the Greek can be explained by Rufinus' deletions.

LR 2. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 2), *LR* 2. 2 (*RBas.* 2. 22–4), *LR* 3. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 63), *LR* 3. 2 (*RBas.* 2. 69 ff.), *LR* 4 (*RBas.* 2. 73), *LR* 5. 1–2 (*RBas.* 2. 75–6), *LR* 5. 3 (*RBas.* 2. 83, 91, 92 ff.), *LR* 6. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 99 ff., 111), *LR* 7. 1 (*RBas.* 3. 5–6), *LR* 7. 2 (*RBas.* 3. 9), *LR* 7. 3 (*RBas.* 3. 23–4), *LR* 7. 4 (*RBas.* 3. 33, 37, 39), *LR* 8. 1 (*RBas.* 4. 2 ff., 8, 9), *LR* 8. 2 (*RBas.* 4. 17 ff.), *LR* 9. 1–2 (*RBas.* 5. 3–4, 9 ff.), *LR* 10 (*RBas.* 6. 11 ff.), *LR* 14 (*RBas.* 7. 15 ff.), *LR* 17 (*RBas.* 8. 26, 36 ff.), *LR* 19 (*RBas.* 9. 8, 14), *LR* 21 (*RBas.* 10. 7), *LR* 22. 1 (*RBas.* 11. 8 ff.), *LR* 23. 3 (*RBas.* 11. 39), *SR* 13. Q (*RBas.* 14. Q), *SR* 56 (*RBas.* 164. 3), *SR* 96 (*RBas.* 81. 2 ff.), *SR* 97 (*RBas.* 87. 5), *SR* 128 (*RBas.* 88. 2), *SR* 129 (*RBas.* 89. 2),² *SR* 136 (*RBas.* 97. 1), *SR* 147 (*RBas.* 107. 3), *SR* 175 (*RBas.* 155. 3), *SR* 196 (*RBas.* 57. 1), *SR* 252 (*RBas.* 173. 3 ff.).

6. *Deletions and refinements*

Sometimes the *RBas.* seems to preserve distinctively Basilian text which does not appear in the Great Asketikon. How is one to account for this? It may be due to Rufinus' glosses and prolixities in translation, on the one hand, or Basil's subsequent reorganization of the earlier text on the other. The greatest care has to be taken in discerning between them.

(a) But why would Basil prune his own text? First, it seems he may have wished simply to refine, reduce, or simplify his original text, removing redundancies, overblown expressions, and stylistic infelicities arising in the earlier extemporized setting. A manifest example of this removal of redundant text occurs in *LR* 8. 2 (*RBas.* 4. 17).

(b) The following is a list of examples where personal interjections, authorial first-person passages, appear in the *RBas.* but not in the Greek. These cases are candidates for deletion by Basil, or perhaps

² This and the preceding are cases where differing texts appear in the *RBas.* and in the Great Asketikon.

by a later editor: the end of *RBas.* 1. 5 (*LR* 1), *RBas.* 11. 2 (*LR* 22. 1), *RBas.* 1. 5 (*LR* 1), *RBas.* 2. 11 (*LR* 2. 1), *RBas.* 2. 18 (*LR* 2. 1), *RBas.* 2. 32 (*LR* 2. 2), *RBas.* 2. 43 (*LR* 2. 2), *RBas.* 2. 58 (*LR* 3), *RBas.* 2. 80 (*LR* 5), *RBas.* 3. 4 (*LR* 7. 1), *RBas.* 3. 32 (*LR* 7. 4), *RBas.* 11. 2 (*LR* 22. 1), *RBas.* 11. 39 (*LR* 23), *RBas.* 26. 1 (*SR* 7), *RBas.* 39. 5 (*SR* 163), *RBas.* 77. 2 (*SR* 164), *RBas.* 87. 4 (*SR* 97), *RBas.* 90. 2 (*SR* 130), *RBas.* 137. 4 (*SR* 173), *RBas.* 159 (*SR* 55), *RBas.* 199. 1 (*SR* 110).

(c) Sometimes revision gave Basil the opportunity to tone down what he had now come to consider less fitting. The end of *LR* 187 (*RBas.* 31. 6–7) is an example. Here a clause is omitted, which has the effect of somewhat toning down the prudence in the earlier version with regard to the credentials of church officials as trustees.

(d) Another example of deletion may be found at *LR* 7 (*RBas.* 3. 37). Basil appears to ‘tidy up’ his earlier expression, deleting a clause and turning out a more neatly defined tricolon. The alternative is that Rufinus has damaged a good sentence.

(e) In *LR* 22 there appear to be several deletions of redundant if not overblown expressions in *RBas.* 11.

(f) Sometimes a deletion occurs only in order to facilitate an expansion. The beginning of *RBas.* 2. 1 (*LR* 2) has a convincing ring of authenticity. Nevertheless it is missing in the Greek, which supplies a much longer preamble in its stead. This is a response where Basil appears to have dispensed with an earlier briefer statement, because in the interim he has considerably rethought and expanded his whole argument.

(g) Another example occurs at *SR* 67 (*RBas.* 189. 2), on the difference between uncleanness and sensuality. In the latter version, Basil deletes his earlier, brief definition of sensuality, reconsiders the matter at greater length, and adds other passages of Scripture.

(h) It may be worth asking whether in the midst of what seem to be Rufinus’ pleonasm there may occasionally be original material preserved that Basil later deleted. In *RBas.* 137. 3 (*SR* 173) the phrase ‘as we said above’ might reasonably be attributed to Basil.

7. *Changes of argument*

Sometimes Basil carries out amendments to accommodate a change in his argument.

(a) The outstanding case occurs in *LR* 9, which deletes the passage of 1 Cor. 6: 7 which is cited in *RBas.* 6. 9. Such a text too pointedly

discouraged *all* litigation among believers. Basil is just about to modify his earlier position and detail the circumstances in which he thinks that litigation in fact *should* be entered into—not without an appeal to the scriptural commandments. Furthermore, he has prepared us for the shift by inserting a text earlier on, before *RBas.* 4. 5, ‘We must be always on our guard in case, on the pretext of keeping one commandment we are found breaking another’. This shows Basil dealing with practical cases that had not been brought to his attention at the time of the Small Asketikon.

(b) In *LR* 6. 1 Basil moderates his former opinion in *RBas.* 2. 102 about the impossibility of living the Christian life in the midst of customary indifference.

(c) In *RBas.* 6. 1 (*LR* 10) Basil rethinks the application of the Scripture text already used. He replaces the original short sentence with a longer more thoughtful sentence in which he continues to use the same Scripture by allusion and word-play.

(d) An excellent example of Basil’s refining of his earlier text occurs at *SR* 28 (*RBas.* 45. 4). The *RBas.* text runs through the idea about someone bad bringing forth good words or someone good bringing forth evil words. In the original response Basil seems to have confidently disallowed that either could be a possibility, then immediately thought of a qualification—someone bad might after all put on a show of good. In the Greek version the first run-through of the idea is simply absent. The resultant modification may hint at a Basil sadder but wiser through subsequent experience, as when in *c.*373 onwards he discovered the invidious use of pretended fellowship by Eustathius and his circle.

(e) In *SR* 127 (*RBas.* 48), concerning the measure of abstinence from food, we find the opposite case; the Greek text appears to be nuancing the statement of the earlier text. The result is rather convoluted. Even the single word used in the English translation, ‘criterion’, is strictly a phrase, ‘principle of judgment’. The principle, in both the Latin and the Greek text, is utility. The Greek, however, seems to have become a little more cautious about the actual pursuit of what is displeasing as a motive of action; instead, pleasure in eating should be a matter of indifference, not of positive rejection. If so, it is something of a shift from Basil’s position in Letter 22 (Def. 1. 132–3) where he says ‘and should in no way be a lover of pleasure in food or drink’. Basil may be subtly responding to hyper-ascetic tendencies.

(f) In *SR* 174 (*RBas.* 150. 1–2) Basil deletes the phrase ‘if therefore

we believe in what has been promised' from the earlier text. By doing so, he momentarily puts to the side the 'theological' idea, so as to keep the section in a consistently anthropological register. Then he moves to the 'theological' level using divine revelation to give objective content and direction to this primordial desire-and-fulfilment structure of the human psyche that he has just been describing.

8. *Addition of new material*

(a) Much of the Great Asketikon is, of course wholly new material, having no textual connection at all with the Small Asketikon. The entire block of *LR* 24–55 is the most straightforward example.

(b) Much of this new material derives from question and answer sessions between Basil and monastic leaders that were held after the edition of the Small Asketikon. The extemporized sessions with the 'brothers' on which the Small Asketikon is based, continued at intervals in later years; Basil did not stop visiting the communities; the tachygraphers went on taking down Basil's responses as they had before. Compare, for example, the opening of the Prologue to the Longer Responses with the opening to the original Prologue of the Small Asketikon, now in *SR* Prologue. They have both very similar material.

(c) First-person interjections betray a continuing extempore setting. Examples occur near the end of *LR* 5 (after *RBas.* 2. 93): 'I think I ought to add a clarification', or near the end of *LR* 15: 'One thing I forgot to say and had better add while there is still time'. Another is the revealing comment in *LR* 20. 3: 'Have we not often guessed who or what was expected on observing the appearance and style of the preparations'. Indeed, the whole concern of *LR* 20 and Basil's way of responding to it, shows how well he understands the life of the ascetic communities 'from within'.

(d) The following are authorial first-person passages in the Greek text not paralleled in the *RBas.* While some may have been edited out by Rufinus, most, surely, belong to Basil's second edition: *LR* 2. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 1, 2), *LR* 2. 4 (*RBas.* 2. 56, 57), near the end of *LR* 17. 2 (after *RBas.* 8. 37), *LR* 22. 1 (*RBas.* 11. 8), *SR* 6 (*RBas.* 20. 1), *SR* 32 (*RBas.* 55. 1), *SR* 47 (*RBas.* 122. 13), *SR* 68 (*RBas.* 190. 5), *SR* 97 (*RBas.* 87. 5), *SR* 119 (*RBas.* 69. 1), *SR* 129 (*RBas.* 89. 2), *SR* 163 (*RBas.* 39. 5, 7), *SR* 164 (*RBas.* 77. 10), *SR* 289 (*RBas.* 22. 10).

9. *Literary re-editing*

It is also evident that in re-editing the Asketikon, Basil not only used the written records of later conferences with the communities, but also other documents, some from an oral genre, others of a more strictly literary composition.

(a) Indicative of strictly literary activity are the very many 'fine-tunings' of nuances, the interpolations of paragraphs and scriptural passages and the insertion of more carefully thought-out reflections on the topic, for example, the discussions of principle, as in *LR 2* on religious anthropology or in *LR 7* on the necessity of community life.

(b) *LR 15* is an excellent example of the conflation of two distinct documents each originally deriving from an oral setting: the older text of *RBas. 7* and the text of a subsequent question and answer session on a related topic, the oral character of which is signalled by authorial personal interjections.

(c) Basil used other types of documents. A conspicuous example is the exhortation to embrace baptism adapted and inserted into the Prologue to the Longer Responses. In its original setting this was certainly not a conference given to an ascetic or monastic audience or to baptizands, but a homily addressed to chronic, dilatory catechumens. So in a sense this too originally had an 'oral' rather than a literary provenance.

(d) It may be questioned whether other excursuses on particular topics may have also pre-existed as written documents that had been occasioned in a variety of circumstances. Examples are the extensive additions on the topic of renunciation in *LR 8*, which show a distinctly rhetorical quality; *LR 22* on the topic of hospitality, also showing heightened rhetorical qualities; the comprehensive treatise on the liturgy of the hours in *LR 37* and especially the lengthy treatise on the Christian use of medicine in *LR 55*. All these sub-documents show a matured, well-rehearsed treatment of their subjects, as if Basil had had to return to them again and again over the years.

CHRONOLOGICAL INDICATORS

(a) It is possible to discern a number of chronological indicators from the internal evidence of the Great Asketikon itself. Most conspicuous of all are texts that show a heightened trinitarian reference

by comparison with the Small Asketikon. They point to a dating in the mid-370s, in the wake of the Pneumatomachian controversy, when Basil was striving to secure communities from the doctrinal and personal influence of Eustathius. Examples occur in the *LR* Prologue where the Greek text inserts explicit references to the Trinity into the text of *RBas.* Prol. 13.

(b) The addition of the formulaic phrase in *LR* 37 *the glory of God and his Christ*, indicates composition at an intermediate stage *after* the Small Asketikon, but *before* the use of the same phrase in *LR* Prol. 1 where it is expanded with a very specific reference to the Holy Spirit, clearly of a date in the mid-370s.

(c) The insertion of new material on orphans in *LR* 15. 1 suggests a response to events during the famine of c.369. The *VSM* twice alludes to the great famine which occurred about that time, when Makrina—and it seems Peter too—rescued abandoned orphans by the wayside and brought them up in the Annisa community, where most if not all of them made their profession.

(d) Also to be assigned to this intermediate stage of composition is Basil's treatment of the topic in *LR* 40 as to whether members of the ascetic communities should attend the *synods*. These were ostensibly Christian celebrations at the martyrs' tombs which took on some rather unpious aspects. Though in *LR* 40 Basil warns the ascetics against the attendant commercial activity, he does not mention the revelry at these celebrations. Perhaps this is because it had not yet become for him a pastoral issue. Once he is bishop, the references in his writings to such improper revelry multiply. Thus *LR* 40 (as perhaps most of the block of *LR* 24–54) may pre-date his episcopal election in mid-370.

(e) In *SR* 181 a situation of inequity between neighbouring communities is considered. Since in *LR* 35 Basil very strongly urges, or more exactly, *requires* the joining together of such communities, it may be that *SR* 181 is material post-dating the Small Asketikon but pre-dating *LR* 35.

(f) The exhortation to baptism inserted into the *LR* Prologue may be dated most plausibly to Basil's pastoral activity as bishop in the early 370s.

(g) As mentioned above in Section (a), the insertion of specific references to the Holy Spirit is a particularly clear marker of editing in the mid-370s. Examples occur at *LR* Prol. 1. 1, *ibid.* 1. 4 (*RBas.* Prologue 13), *LR* 2. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 2), *LR* 3 (*RBas.* 2. 63), *LR* 5. 1 and the final sentence of *SR* 23 which more pointedly expresses the text of *RBas.* 40. 5 in favour of the Holy Spirit.

(h) In *RBas.* Prol. 5 (*SR Prol.*) the Greek text adds a note on soundness of faith. Such explicit concern for orthodoxy in connection with the ascetic life points to editing after Basil's breach with Eustathius who had ultimately scandalized Basil as being a man of ascetic temper and practice, but unsound in doctrine.

(i) The tone of personal authority in *SR* 304: 'but *we permit* the one who presides to decide', may be a sign of late composition. This manner is certainly found among the final questions and answers of the Shorter Responses, the 'Caesarean' addition, discussed in Chapter 1. There are also items of vocabulary in this supplementary collection which are uncharacteristic of the rest of the Great Asketikon (see (l) below). This suggests either a shift in Basil's discourse late in his career at Caesarea, or posthumous editing by those in Basil's circle.

(j) Another possible example of a late Caesarean addition occurs in *LR* 34 with the recommendation of safeguards against homosexuality. The sentence containing *ἐν τοῖς ὁμογενέσι πρὸς τοὺς ὁμογενεῖς* is in an Ask. 3 manuscript, Reg. primus, but absent from other manuscripts and the early printed editions. It reflects the case of juniors who wish to speak with seniors of the same sex to whose responsibility they are *not* entrusted. The issue at hand is to be brokered between the responsible seniors.

(k) Another example of a late phase of revision occurs in *LR* 17. 1. While 'Whence Solomon . . . smile quietly' is found in an Ask. 4 (Pontic) text, Garnier omitted it from his edition, following an Ask. 3 (Caesarean) text. The mention of Solomon, however, is confirmed by *RBas.* 8. 28 which mistakenly uses it to introduce all three scriptural passages: 'This kind of laughter usually dissolves and undermines gravity and constancy of disposition, whence Solomon says: *Of laughter I have said it is madness* (Eccles. 2:2) . . .'. Evidently Basil corrected the assignation of scriptural authors in the late Pontic revision that did not find its way into the Caesarean text.

(l) Other markers of this last phase are items of vocabulary that are not characteristic of the earlier stages of the Asketikon. Such is the use of *βιωτικῶν* for those living a 'secular' life in *SR* 292. Q, *οἰκονόμος* for the one in charge of managing the material side of the community's life in *SR* 302, *ἡγουμένος* for the superior in *SR* 307, and *λαϊκοί* for Christians not belonging to an ascetic community in *SR* 312. Q.

OVERVIEW: SETTINGS AND STAGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF
THE ASKETIKON

The Great Asketikon was therefore very much the fruit of gradual accretion and of being reworked. Nevertheless, it is possible to distinguish a number of critical junctures in the expansion of its material.

The Small Asketikon is the earliest stage; it belongs to the years 363–5, when Basil, a newly ordained priest, withdrew from his uneasy position with the new archbishop of Caesarea, Eusebius. He spent the next two or three years based probably at Annisa, while he evangelized the churches and ascetic communities of Pontos.

The material of the Small Asketikon began to be recorded in these preaching tours. The scene is conveyed in *RBas.* Prol. 1–11 (*SR Prol.*) and 12–17 (*LR Prol.* 4). Basil visits a local church and preaches at a vigil. When it ends, apparently in the early hours of the morning, a circle of the devout gathers round to question Basil more closely on the life of piety. He in turn instructs and encourages them as a ‘presbyter’ (*RBas.* 2).

Letter 223, Def. III. 286–313 at 302–3 shows how some of these question and answer sessions were recorded by tachygraphers—possibly arranged on occasion by his wealthy Neocaesarean friend Olympius. It also identifies these local congregations as ἀδελφότητες, ‘brotherhoods’ or ascetic communities:

And all the time were not your tachygraphers present with me as I dictated matters against the heresy?³ Were the most faithful of your disciples not in my presence the whole time? While visiting the brotherhoods and spending whole nights with them in the prayers, always speaking and hearing things concerning God without contention, did I not furnish precise proofs of my own mind?

In order to prepare for the Arian Emperor Valens’ visit to Caesarea in October of 365, which Eusebius would clearly be inadequate to handle, Gregory Nazianzen effected a reconciliation between Basil and the bishop. Perhaps the prospect of his own return to Cappadocia motivated Basil or his friends to finalize and publish these written testimonies of oral ascetic teaching for the communities he was leaving behind in Pontos. On this analysis, the publication of the Small Asketikon is fittingly dated to the year 365, or shortly thereafter, perhaps within a year or two of his return to Caesarea.

Basil’s connection with the Pontic communities did not cease

³ This refers to Basil’s *Contra Eunomium*, c.364.

when he rejoined Bishop Eusebius. On the occasion of later visits to Pontos, other question and answer sessions were recorded. Significant echoes of the great famine in 368–9 suggest that a fair body of this material, especially the block *LR* 25–55, may be assigned to a visit to Pontos at the end of the 360s, up to and including the first half of 370. The setting is one in which Annisa was consolidating itself as a cenobitic community and was eager to question Basil about a whole range of new or more complex situations that had arisen since his departure in 365.

Upon Eusebius' death in June 370, Basil was elected as his successor. Henceforth, his visits to the ascetic communities, especially in the north, were on a reduced basis. Basil's early episcopal period, 370–1, seems the most suitable setting for Gregory of Nyssa's youthful work *On Virginity*, which he undertook at Basil's instigation, for from his earliest episcopacy Basil had been trying to bring his brother's gifts into the service of the Church. He took Gregory where he found him, a practising rhetorician, and used him to encourage his students, especially those who might be thinking of enrolling in the clergy, to think seriously of virginity as a life option, especially as provided for by the acknowledged master, Basil, in the life of the monastic communities.

When did Basil carry out the reordering of the Pontic Asketikon into Longer and Shorter Responses? Did he implement this during a visit to Annisa just prior to his episcopacy, or during a visit in the early 370s? The *VSM* recounts, in a somewhat vague sequence, the death of Emmelia, Basil's becoming bishop of Caesarea, and Basil's ordaining Peter a priest (*GNO* 385, Callahan 173). This last event may have occurred during a return visit to Annisa, unless Peter himself travelled to Caesarea. Such an exchange seems to have taken place before Gregory of Nyssa's ordination as bishop (372).

But the most likely occasion for Basil's revisions was the mid-370s. Once the breach with Eustathius of Sebasteia had become public, Basil had to deal with the Pneumatomachian heresy and with Eustathius' Arianizing politics. Above all, he needed to secure the Pontic ascetic communities from Eustathius' influence—no mean task. The packet of letters 204–11 and 216–17, concerned with Pontic affairs, show that in the year 375/6 Basil sojourned at Annisa, where undoubtedly some of these letters were written. A major pastoral concern for him was to ensure that Makrina, Peter, and the Annisa community were put on a sound 'post-Eustathian' footing. It is possible that he took the occasion of this visit to Annisa to carry out a doctrinal revision of the Asketikon, when he inserted into his text pointed references to the Trinity and the divine nature of the

Holy Spirit. This may also have been the occasion when he reorganized his material, especially the Shorter Responses, into thematic groupings. It may be strongly suspected that he enlisted his brother Peter, the priest and the superior at Annisa, as his collaborator in the task—unless it was Peter who urged him to the task.

If the Pontic Asketikon was reordered into more clearly distinct blocks of Longer and Shorter Responses during this visit, it would mean that when Basil returned to Caesarea, he would have had to hand a copy of a fairly full version of the Asketikon that had *not* been reordered. Subsequent question and answer sessions, as, for example, in the ascetic community attached to the *Basiliad*, would then have been tacked on to this ‘unreordered’ Asketikon. Within a few generations of Basil’s death, these additions were incorporated into the structure of the Pontic Asketikon by the Ask. 4 (Vulgate) editor.

Thus there seem to have been four or possibly five significant ‘moments’ in the elaboration of the Great Asketikon:

1. The Small Asketikon *c.*365–6.
2. Expansions and additions made at Annisa prior to Basil’s episcopacy.
3. Additions made during a possible visit to Pontos in Basil’s early episcopate, *c.*372.
4. A structural re-editing at Annisa in the mid-370s which resulted in the basis of the Pontic recension.
5. Late additions made in Caesarea in the last two or three years of Basil’s life.

Conclusion

The basis of these studies has been an exhaustive comparison of the texts of the Great Asketikon and of the Small Asketikon as attested in Rufinus' Latin translation. The ample documentation of Rufinus' liberal approach to translation highlighted among other things the urgent necessity of a critical edition of the Syriac version. Nevertheless, it was possible to identify with some degree of exactitude what belongs to the Small Asketikon and what belongs to the Great Asketikon and to use this to probe the features of the ascetic community as revealed in either version. The 'first edition' of the Asketikon was shown to have its setting in Basil's pastoral activity among the ascetics of Pontos, 363–5, and its expansions leading to the Great Asketikon from the end of the 360s till Basil's death in 379.

One finding was of capital importance: responses to the caveats of the Council of Gangra over 'Eustathian' exaggerations can be detected not only in the Great Asketikon, but also in the Small Asketikon. Another finding was that the form of the ascetic community of Annisa of 379 as portrayed in the *VSM* thoroughly corresponds to the ascetic community not only of the contemporary Great Asketikon but even of the Small Asketikon from a decade and a half earlier. The essential features of the Annisa community could be effectively back-dated to the mid-360s.

Therefore the final transformation of the Annisa household must have occurred sometime between Emmelia's ascetic conversion in 356 and the mid-360s. Peter's profession of virginity and the ascetic life in about 362 was proposed as the likely occasion. The successive changes in this devout household were traced, from its urban setting in Neocaesarea to an aristocratic country villa at Annisa under Emmelia's governance, to a protomonastic community under Makrina's influence, with Peter in a newly constituted house for male ascetics. It was shown how developments at Annisa exemplified the widespread phenomenon of the 'domestic ascetic movement' in the fourth century. This helped clarify how the definitive cenobitic form of the Annisa community was the end-result of a series of more or

less organic transformations of a devout aristocratic household, progressively remade in accordance with scriptural teachings on celibacy and the ascetic life.

Eustathius himself was certainly involved in remedying the excesses of the Anatolian ascetic movement of which he was the eponymous head at least in the period of the late 350s–early 360s, because evidence of these reforms is found in Basil's Small Asketikon and at this stage Basil was in complete accord with him on the principles of the Christian ascetic life. 'Eustathian' and 'Basilian' communities were, in the 360s, effectively the same thing. It was argued, however, that these dispositions of reform shown by Eustathius must have been in evidence a lot earlier, for otherwise he would scarcely have gained the demonstrated confidence of Basil Senior's and Emmelia's family in Neocaesarea in the 340s.

The importance of the geographical background has been stressed throughout these studies. Such a focus highlights the pattern of Eustathius' movements across northern Anatolia, the significance of the Neocaesarea connection, and the strategic position that Annisa enjoyed—in particular its location on the great Pontic road connecting Constantinople and the Eastern frontier at Satala.

Some constructions of the so-called 'Homoiousian asceticism' in Elm's *Virgins of God* have been queried. It cannot be allowed that Eustathius, at the very least in his reform phase, promoted or condoned the cohabitation of male and female ascetics. The evidence assembled here suggests that antecedents of the community of the Great Asketikon or the classic 'Basilian' monastic community, are better sought in the domestic ascetic movement typified in the developments at Annisa, than in some kind of suborthodox experiment of male and female ascetics living together, emancipated from sexual differentiation. It is clear that the role of the domestic ascetic movement merits greater attention in the historical investigation of early Christian monasticism.

The historical study focused on Makrina the Younger as a central if somewhat 'hidden' figure in the emergence of Anatolian monasticism. It has been argued that in her youth in Neocaesarea Makrina was affected by the ascetic enthusiasm stirred up by Eustathius, since he was not only well known in Neocaesarea but well known to her own family even at this early stage. Makrina gained her first disciple in her brother Naukratios, followed by her mother, Emmelia. After Naukratios' tragic death, Basil returned from Athens. It was Makrina who recalled him from a secular career to baptism and the ascetic life. In fact this had already been his ideal but it threatened to be eclipsed by the experience of his successes in

rhetoric. Makrina continued to have a formative influence on Basil during the early ascetic period, helping to wean him from a residual Hellenism by representing to him afresh the importance of the Scriptures and by the lived witness of the community at Annisa as she steered it towards its classic form. By the time of Peter's profession, not only Peter but Basil himself found the earlier informal type of life for males in the forest hide-out on the river, split off from Annisa, untenable in the light of scriptural teaching on Christian *koinonia*. One gains the strong impression that the domestic ascetic movement, in which women played so prominent a role, acted as a reminder to male ascetics with their tendency to individualism of the intrinsically communitarian and ordered basis of the Christian way of life. It certainly seems to have acted this way on Basil, who at this time (c.360) was much troubled by the terrible disorder in the contemporary Church; increasingly he sought a remedy for these ills in application to scriptural teaching, trying to learn there the principles of *koinonia* and coherence in the Church. Once ordained a priest, he assumed a leading role among the ascetic communities of Pontos, many of them under Eustathius' influence. Both leaders were confirmed by visits to Annisa as if to the centre of a vital experiment in Christian community, a community fashioned by a great and holy woman: Makrina the Younger, one whom Gregory of Nyssa calls 'Mother' and 'Teacher' and who has a just claim to the title, 'Mother of Greek Monasticism'.

One thing we must be clear about: Makrina did not acquire her monastic life from Basil. It would be much truer to say that the lines of influence were the other way round. Makrina's trajectory as a virgin ascetic and a spiritual mother pre-empted, inspired, and illustrated the maturation of Basil's own cenobitic teaching. While he went on to become a major player in the Church through his episcopacy and his theological endeavours, she remained at the 'inner face' of the Church—to some extent (but not absolutely) removed from the rigours of Church politics. There she tended the fulcrum that could move an embattled Church, through her life of hiddenness, humility, and spiritual *élan*, communicated for the most part only in the local church and her circle of familiars. We are fortunate that she had a brother and one of such calibre, Gregory of Nyssa, who undertook to set this 'light hidden under a bushel' on a lampstand for all in the house of the great Church to see—not that she herself would have considered the achievement of such fame here below as a justification of her life and vocation.

Carrying on the baton, so to speak, from Eustathius, Emmelia, and Makrina, Basil was in a position through his public ministry to

promote the classic synthesis between the ascetic movement, life in the great Church, and the neo-Nicene doctrinal settlement. The result was the canonical form of the cenobitic monastic life. The influence of his great achievement was destined to affect the entire Church, both east and west.

In Basil's conception, the cenobitic community was the living ikon of Christian *koinonia*: the way of life, *de iure*, of the Church the body of Christ. It is the ordered community in which individual religious enthusiasm is brought into alignment with the Gospel call to communion, where the zeal of Christian maximalism finds its place in the 'one way' of life in Christ for all in the Church. His religious anthropology begins with the innate calling of every human being to divine intimacy, but it is a call that must be nurtured by the word of God and worked out in human communion. This is expressed in the Great Asketikon by the inclusion of consecrated men and women, children and the poor in what was conceived of as a single local community in the pattern of the apostolic community of Jerusalem. Here a bracing Gospel rigorism was united with attentive pastoral concern for each member and by the members for each other, and by the promotion of a richly textured yet vigorous conception of authority, mutual correction, and obedience.

We are now in a period not unlike Basil's in some respects. There is much confusion in the life of the Church, which seems not a little lost in the galloping moral and spiritual rootlessness of liberal western society. The air of a prevailing nihilism and a desperate spiritual 'thinness' pervades. Vast is the spiritual need of the twenty-first century, but who or what will capture this ground? Are we destined inevitably for a post-Christian world? For Christians in such a situation, a way forward, a vision that affords a humble but liberating hope is needed. Basil's extensive teachings on how to take *the narrow way* of the life in Christ, bear witness to a great constructive experiment in his own stressful times: the formation of austere, loving and practical Gospel communities of consecrated men and women that show what the doctrine and mission of Christ in this world might really look like, once we have given up the attempt to 'inculturate' ourselves in a secularist culture and allow our hearts and minds to be pierced again by a truly transcendent hope. Perhaps contemplating Basil's achievement and that of his family and friends in the late fourth century can provide something of a *θεραπεία* for our jaded spirits in this age and an invitation for the future.

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The Asketikon of St Basil the Great

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THE LONGER RESPONSES

Prologue (*RBas.* Prologue 12–20)

1. Since we who, by God's grace, have set before ourselves one and the same goal of the life of piety, have gathered in one place in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and since you yourselves are clearly so keen to learn something of what leads to salvation, my duty is to *declare the judgments of God* (cf. Ps. 118: 7, 13; Rom. 1: 32), mindful as I am night and day of the Apostle's words: *For the space of three years I did not cease admonishing each of you night and day with tears* (Acts 20: 31).

The present time is indeed most suitable for us and the place provides tranquillity and complete freedom from outside disturbances. So then, let us pray for one another, that we, for our part, may *give to our fellow servants their portion of food in due time* (Luke 12: 42) and that you, for your part, may receive the word like the good earth and bring forth a mature and manifold fruit in righteousness, as it is written (cf. Matt. 13: 23).

I appeal to you therefore,¹ by the *love of our Lord Jesus Christ who gave himself for our sins* (cf. Gal. 1: 4; Tit. 2: 13–14), let us take thought for our souls! Let us lament the vanity of our former life! Let us, for the sake of the things to come, take up combat for the glory of God and his Christ and of the worshipful and Holy

¹ The Prologue, till now clearly addressed to motivated ascetics, turns suddenly to those who are satisfied with what they think is the minimum necessary. It appears that Basil, while editing in the mid-370s, adapted and grafted into the text an otherwise lost homily, of a type called *protreptic*, aimed at persuading reluctant catechumens to commit to baptism rather than postpone it till approaching death, a common custom of the time. One such text survives in its entirety: *Hom. Exhorting to Holy Baptism*, PG 31. 423–44, tr. T. P. Halton in A. Hamman (ed.), *Baptism: Ancient Liturgies and Patristic Texts* (Staten Island, NY, 1967), 76–87. E. Ferguson dates it to the early 370s, 'Basil's Protreptic to Baptism', in J. Petruccione (ed.), *Nova et Vetera* (Washington, DC, 1998), 71. See also Gregory of Nyssa's homily *To those reluctant to approach Baptism*, GNO x/II. 357–70. A *protreptic* is not to be confused with another type of homily addressed to those already committed and presenting for baptism, e.g. Basil's *On Baptism*, PG 31. 1530–1628 (Wagner 339–430)—valuable for showing that, to Basil, the imperatives of the baptismal life and the Christian ascetic life are effectively coterminous.

Spirit.² Let us not remain stuck fast in this indifference and carelessness,³ ever losing the present opportunity through indifference and putting off a beginning of our labours till tomorrow or some other time. Otherwise we shall be overtaken without any supply of good works by him *who requires our souls* (cf. Luke 12: 20) and be banished from the joy of the bridal chamber (cf. Matt. 22: 11–13). Then shall we weep vain and profitless tears, deploring the time of our life that we spent so wastefully, when there shall be no more scope for repentance.

Now is the acceptable time, says the Apostle, *now is the day of salvation* (2 Cor. 6: 2). This is the season for repentance, that for recompense, this for patient endurance, that for consolation. Now, God is the helper of those who turn from the evil way; then, he will be the dread and inexorable examiner of all human deeds, words, and motives. Now we enjoy his forbearance, then we shall know his justice, when we *shall rise again, some to eternal punishment, others to eternal life* (cf. John 5: 29; Matt. 25: 46) and *each shall receive according to his works* (Matt. 16: 27).⁴

Until what occasion are we going to put off our obedience to Christ, who has called us to his heavenly Kingdom? Whenever are we going to become sober? Whenever are we going to recall ourselves from our habitual life to the strict way of the Gospel? Whenever are we going to set before our eyes *that dread and manifest day of the Lord* (cf. Joel 2: 11; 1 Cor. 3: 13)? On that day, those who by their good works draw near to the Lord's right hand shall be welcomed into the Kingdom of heaven, whereas those who for their barrenness of good works have been placed on his left hand shall be engulfed in the *Gehenna of fire* (Matt. 5: 22) and everlasting *darkness*. *In that*

² εἰς δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ, καὶ τοῦ προσκυνητοῦ καὶ ἁγίου Πνεύματος. The emphasis on the Holy Spirit as co-worshipped with the Father and the Son, indicates composition in the mid- to late 370s, in the wake of the Pneumatomachian heresy. Basil characteristically argues the divine nature of the Holy Spirit from the baptismal formula; see *De Fide* 4, PG 31. 685B–688A (Clarke 96) and *On the Holy Spirit* 24–6 (tr. Anderson (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980), 45–7). The same phrase *the glory of God and his Christ* is found without mention of the Holy Spirit in LR 37, suggesting an earlier date for the text there. It also appears in *On Baptism*, PG 31. 1525C, 1536B. The phrase is obviously formulaic. Its elements are found in Ps. 2: 2 (cf. Acts 4: 26), Rev. 12: 10, and perhaps 2 Cor. 4: 6, but the exact phrase as such does not seem to be attested in the OT or the NT. It was used, however, by Origen in the *Peri Archon* (see *de Principiis*, ed. Koetchau (Leipzig, 1913), 227. 14), a work anthologized by Basil and Gregory Nazianzen in the *Philocalia*.

³ τῇ ῥαθυμίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἐκλύσει. The terms recur near the end of this Prologue.

⁴ Clarke asserts (146 n. 1) 'The phraseology is almost identical with that of B.'s baptismal symbol, 227C', evidently referring to *De Fide*, PG 31. 685B.

place, he says, *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Matt. 25: 30).⁵

2. O yes, we say that we desire the Kingdom of heaven—but give no thought to the means by which it may be gained. Though we undertake no labour on behalf of the Lord's command, we suppose in the vanity of our heart that we shall receive equal honours with those who have *resisted sin even unto death* (cf. Heb. 12: 4). Whoever at the time of sowing stayed at home idle or asleep, yet as soon as the harvest has come, filled his arms⁶ with the sheaves? Whoever garnered the grapes from a vine he did not plant and labour for? No, it is those who have laboured who garner the fruits; honours and crowns are for those who have conquered. Who would ever crown someone who had not even stripped to meet his adversary?

For we have not only to conquer, but also *to contend lawfully*, according to the Apostle (2 Tim. 2: 5); that is, not omit even the least part of what has been enjoined, but do each thing just as we have been charged to do, for it is said: *Blessed is that servant whom the Lord shall find when he comes, not doing anything anyhow, but so doing* (Matt. 24: 46), and, *if you have offered rightly, but did not divide it rightly, you have sinned* (Gen. 4: 7 Sept.).

But here we are, thinking that we have fulfilled perhaps one of the commandments—I would not say that we really had fulfilled it, for according to the sound meaning of the word⁷ the commandments are so interdependent that if one is broken, the others are of necessity broken too—and we do not expect any wrath for those we have transgressed, but go so far as to look for honours for keeping one!

He who from the ten talents entrusted to him retained one or two, while he returned the others, is not recognized as generous because he paid back the greater part, but is shown up as both unjust and grasping because he withheld the smaller part. 'Withheld' do I say? Why, he who was entrusted with one talent and gave back that very one whole and unharmed as he had received it, is nonetheless condemned because he invested nothing in what he was given (Matt. 25: 24–7). One who has honoured his father for ten years but subsequently slays him with a single blow is not honoured as a doer of good, but convicted as a parricide.

Go forth, says the Lord, and make disciples of all the nations,

⁵ On Basil's unambiguous doctrine of the eternity of Hell, see *SR* 267 and note.

⁶ τὸν κόλπον, the fold of his garment, or 'bosom' or 'lap'.

⁷ κατὰ τὸν ὑγιῆ τοῦ λόγου σκοπόν. *Logos* here is interpreted in terms of the scriptural word, since Basil goes on to argue the position from Scripture. Four MSS (Voss. not one of them) have ὑγιῆ τοῦ σκοποῦ λόγον, 'the sound principle/meaning of the goal'. The intrinsic interdependence of all the virtues was also a Stoic teaching.

teaching them, not to observe some things and neglect others, but to observe all that I have commanded you (Matt. 28: 19–20). The Apostle too, writes accordingly: *We give no cause for stumbling in anything, that our ministry may be blameless; instead, we present ourselves in all things as ministers of God* (2 Cor. 6: 3–4). For if they were not all necessary for us to attain the goal of salvation, all the commandments would not have been written down and it would not have been declared necessary that they all be kept. Of what use to me are my other virtues, if through saying to my brother ‘you fool’ I am in danger of Gehenna (Matt. 5: 22)? What is the use of being free of many sins if I am held in bondage by just one?⁸ *For every one who commits sin, it says, is the slave of sin* (John 8: 34). And what benefit is it to be free of many diseases, if the body is wasted by one?

3. In that case, someone will say, is it no use that the great number of Christians who do not keep all the commandments, keep some of them? In this connection it is well to remember the blessed Peter, he of so many good deeds and such great blessings, yet who for a single fault heard: *If I do not wash you, you can have no part with me* (John 13: 8). And I need hardly say that the occasion itself showed no sign of indifference or contempt, but was rather an expression of honour and piety.⁹

Again, someone will say that it is written: *Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved* (Joel 2: 32; Rom. 10: 13) as if merely to call on the name of the Lord is enough to save anyone who so calls. But let him also listen to this saying of the Apostle: *How then, shall they call on him in whom they have not believed* (Rom. 10: 14)? Then if you do believe, listen to the Lord who says: *Not every one who says to me ‘Lord! Lord!’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 7: 21). For indeed, if anyone does the Lord’s will, but carries it out not as God wills, or with a disposition of love for God, his zeal in work is profitless. This accords with the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, who says: *They do this in order to be seen by men. Amen I say to you, they have received their reward* (Matt. 23: 5 + Matt. 6: 5). Hence the Apostle Paul was taught to say: *And if I give away all that I have and if I hand over my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing* (1 Cor. 13: 3).

In all, I observe three different dispositions which lead inevitably to obedience: either we turn aside from evil from the fear of

⁸ On Basil’s doctrine, not so much of the ‘equivalence’ of sins, as of the gravity of so-called ‘little’ sins, see *SR* 4 (*RBas.* 17) and note, *SR* 13, 15, 293 and note.

⁹ On this example of Peter, see the note at *SR* 60 (*RBas.* 184. 6).

punishment and so are in a servile disposition; or, seeking the profits of a wage, we fulfil what is enjoined for the sake of our own profit and are therefore like mercenaries; or else we do so for the good itself and for love of him who gave us the law, rejoicing to be thought worthy of serving so glorious and good a God, in which case we are surely in the disposition of sons.¹⁰

Now even one who carries out the commandments from fear and is constantly apprehensive of the penalty for laziness, will not perform some of his tasks and neglect others. No, he will regard the judgment threatening every disobedience as equally terrible. For this reason he is called *blessed who trembles always* through piety (Prov. 28: 14). And he stands steadfast in the truth, being able to say: *I kept the Lord ever in view before me; since he is at my right hand I shall not be shaken* (Ps. 15: 8), as choosing never to neglect any of his duties. Again: *Blessed is the man who fears the Lord. Why? Because he shall delight greatly in his commandments* (Ps. 111: 1). So it is not the ones who fear who will neglect any of God's orders, or perform them carelessly.

But neither will the hireling choose to transgress any order. For how shall he collect the wages of his labour in the vineyard, if he does not fulfil all that he agreed to do? For if he leaves undone even one necessary task, he renders the vine unprofitable to the one who hired him. And who will pay wages to him who wrought the harm (cf. Matt. 20: 1–16) while the damage remains?

The third service is that done for love. What son, having as his goal to be well-pleasing to his father and to be a joy to him in great things, would choose to grieve him in small matters? Rather, he will be all the more careful, keeping in mind the Apostle's words: *And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed* (Eph. 4: 30).

4. Now in what class do those who transgress most of the commandments wish to be ranked, since they neither serve God as Father, nor believe in him as promising great things, nor submit to him as master? *If I, then, am a father, he says, where is my honour? And if I am a master, where is my fear?* (Mal. 1: 6) *For he who fears the Lord will delight greatly in his commandments* (Ps. 111: 1). *But through your transgression of the law, it says, you dishonour God* (Rom. 2: 23).

How then, if we esteem the life according to pleasure above the

¹⁰ *Hom. on Ps. 161, PG 29. 477B* (Way 346) invites a progress from a servile state to sonship: 'you are a servant of the great King, invited by him to the highest kinship (*οἰκείωσω*—'household', family relationship), having received the Spirit of the promise, so that, being sealed in him, you may be revealed as a son of God'. On *οἰκείωσις* see also *LR 2. 2 (RBas. 2. 32)* and note, *LR 26* and note.

life according to commandment, can we be promising ourselves a life of blessedness, *equal citizenship*¹¹ *with the saints* (cf. Eph. 2: 19) and *joy among the angels* in the presence of Christ (cf. Luke 15: 10)? Truly, these are the fantasies of an infantile mind! For how shall I join Job, if I have not sustained even ordinary affliction with thanksgiving (cf. Job 1: 21–2, 2: 10)? Or how join David, if I have not shown myself forbearing towards my enemy (cf. 1 Sam. 24: 10; 2 Sam. 16: 11, 18: 5, 19: 23)? Or how join Daniel, if I have not sought God with long abstinence and persevering supplication (cf. Dan. 10: 3)? Or how join any of the saints, if I have not walked in the way they trod? Who is so unfair an umpire as to decide that one who never contended is worthy of the same crown as the victor? What general ever invited to an equal share of the spoils with the victorious those who never even showed up for the fight?

God is generous, but he is also just. And it is the part of the just to recompense according to merit, as it is written: *Do good, Lord, to those who are good and to the upright of heart. But those who turn aside to crooked ways, the Lord shall drive them away with the workers of lawlessness* (Ps. 124: 4–5).

He is merciful, but he is also a judge. For it says: *The Lord loves mercy and judgment* (Ps. 32: 5).¹² And therefore it is said: *Of mercy and judgment, I will sing to you O Lord* (Ps. 100: 1). And we have learned who they are on whom he has mercy, for *Blessed, he says, are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy*. You can see how judiciously he uses mercy, neither being merciful without judgment, nor judging without mercy, for *the Lord is both merciful and just* (Ps. 114: 5).

So then, let us not acknowledge God halfheartedly, or take his loving-kindness as an excuse for indifference. For there are thunders for this and lightnings for that, lest his generosity be held in contempt. He who *makes the sun to rise* (Matt. 5: 45), also punishes *with blindness* (2 Kgs. 6: 18). He who *sends the showers of rain* (Zech. 10: 1) also *rains down fire* (Gen. 19: 24). The first show his generosity, the second his severity. Let us then either love him for these, or fear him for those, that it may not be said to us: *Or do you despise the wealth of his kindness and patience and forbearance, not caring that the kindness of God is to lead you to repentance?*¹³ *But through your hardness and your impenitent heart you are laying up wrath for yourself in the Day of wrath* (Rom. 2: 4–5).

¹¹ ἰσοπολιτεῖαν [sic] in place of the συμπολιῆται of the NT text.

¹² On the coordination of divine mercy and judgment, see Basil's comments on this verse in *Hom. on Ps. 32, PG 29. 329–32, Way 232–3*. It is probably a late homily, with its insistence on the divine procession of the Holy Spirit, 'the spirit of his mouth' and his sanctifying power (Ps. 32: 6), *PG 29. 333 (Way 235)*.

¹³ The same text is quoted in *RB Prol. 37*.

Since it is impossible to be saved unless we perform our works in accordance with the commandment of God, and since we disregard none of the commandments without peril—for it is a terrible arrogance to set ourselves up as the critics of our Lawgiver, now approving some of his laws, now dismissing others—let us who are combatants for piety¹⁴ and who esteem the life of tranquillity and freedom from affairs as our collaborator in the keeping of the Gospel decrees, set before ourselves a common mind and purpose: that not so much as a single one of the commandments escape us. For if the *man* of God must be *perfect*—as it is written and as our earlier discourse¹⁵ on these matters has shown—it is entirely necessary that he be *pruned*¹⁶ (cf. John 15: 1) by every one of the commandments *unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ* (Eph. 4: 13); for according to the divine law a beast with a blemish, even though clean, was unacceptable as a sacrifice to God (cf. Lev. 21. 19–20).

12 So then, in whatever way each of you thinks he is lacking (in knowledge), **let him bring it forward for common examination; 13 for if something** is (appears difficult or) **obscure, it is more easily uncovered by the labour of several looking into the matter together,**¹⁷ **since** (without doubt), according to the promise of our Lord Jesus Christ, **God bestows** on us **the finding of what we seek** (Matt. 7: 7) through the *teaching* and *reminding* of the Holy Spirit (John 16: 26).¹⁸

14 Now if necessity is laid upon me (us) and woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel (1 Cor. 9: 16)¹⁹ **so a like judgment hangs over you, if you** (cease from) are sluggish **in your examination** (and inquiry), **or you** show yourselves indifferent and careless in keeping

¹⁴ Οἱ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἀγωνισταί. The audience in view changes back from nominal catechumens to committed ascetics.

¹⁵ καθὼς γεγράφται καὶ ὁ λόγος ἐν τούτοις πρὸ τούτων ἀπέδειξεν. Clearly here καθὼς γεγράφται refers to the scriptural word, and ὁ λόγος to Basil's teaching and discourse. Cf. LR 1. Q and note, LR 7. Q.

¹⁶ καταρισθῆναι, not καταρτισθῆναι (finished off, refined, a synonym of 'perfected').

¹⁷ ἐν τῇ φιλοπόνη τῶν πλείονων διερευνώσει τὸ λαθάνον ἐξευρεθείη [sic]. RBas. Prol. 13: more easily brought to light when a number inquire into it together—facilius enim pluribus simul conferentibus si quid illud difficile vel obtectum videtur, clarescit. On the goal of perfection as a collaborative endeavour see LR 26 and note.

¹⁸ Basil expands his own text with a reference to the Trinity, including a heightened Pneumatology, suggesting a date in the mid-370s.

¹⁹ Clarke (150 n. 5) thinks because Basil applies this text to himself he must be a bishop; not so, because the passage is already found in the Small Asketikon. He is a presbyter.

what is handed down and in fulfilling it in deeds.²⁰ **15 This is why the Lord said, The word I have spoken (to you), this shall judge him (you) on the last day (John 12: 48), 16 and again, the servant who did not know the will of his master yet has done what is worthy of strokes, shall be beaten with few, but whoever knew it and yet did what was contrary to the will of his master, shall be beaten with many (Luke 12: 47–8).**

17 Let us pray (the mercy of the Lord) **therefore,** (that he may both grant) **that I may dispense²¹ the word blamelessly (Acts 6: 4) and that the teaching may bear fruit in you.²² 18 And since we²³ know that the words of the God-inspired Scripture shall rise up before us at the judgment seat of Christ: For I will rebuke you, he says, and expose to your face your sins (Ps. 49: 21), 19 let us attend soberly to what is said and let us hasten zealously to the work of the divine teachings²⁴ (which you have heard), 20 for we do not know the day or the hour when our Lord shall come (Matt. 24. 42).²⁵**

LR I (RBas. I. 1–6)

On the order and sequence of the Lord's commandments.²⁶

²⁰ ἀτόνως ('lacking tension') καὶ ἐκλελυμένως. RBas. Prol. 14: or you show yourselves too indifferent and careless in carrying out those things you have discovered to be right. Basil expects that a certain holy tension, an *anxiety for the things of the Lord* marks the true disciple. See LR 8. 2.

²¹ τὴν οἰκονομίαν τοῦ λόγου. Voss. and Colb. τὴν διακονίαν τοῦ in keeping with the NT text.

²² RBas. Prol. 17: Let us pray (the mercy of the Lord), therefore, (that he may both grant) to us a blameless *ministry of the word* and (award to you) a fruitful outcome of the teaching.

²³ RBas. Prol. 18–19 is in 2nd person plural, as if Basil is challenging his audience.

²⁴ RBas. Prol. 19: apply yourselves to the (noble) work which you have heard.

²⁵ "This is probably more than a preacher's commonplace. The eschatological motive played an important part in Fourth Century asceticism. Cf. Eusebius *Dem. Evang.* I. 9, where celibacy is defended against heathen attacks. "These things [i.e. the prosperity of the human race] are of little importance to us, who believe the world to be perishing and running down and reaching its last end." ' Clarke 151 n. 2. Passages in Basil's letters show that the great stresses of Church and society did lead him to think at times that the world was coming to an end. Nevertheless his eschatology was sufficiently interiorized to see in this Gospel passage a lesson in the brevity of each life and the unavoidable necessity of each meeting the Lord as judge.

²⁶ 'This title and the other similar ones are not found in old books. Nevertheless we found them in the printed editions and therefore preferred to make no change, the more so because they seem to throw some light on things' (Garnier, *PG* 31. 905 n. 43). The questions, e.g. LR 15. Q, are original, being found also in Rufinus. In

Q: Since the word²⁷ has given us authority to ask questions, we want first of all to learn if there is any order and sequence in the commandments of God, such that one would be first, another second, and so on (for the others in their order); or whether they (the commandments) are all interdependent and all of equal value as far as the question of a beginning goes, so that anyone who wanted to is safe in making a beginning anywhere he pleases on the (circumference of) a circle (or crown), as it were.²⁸

R: 1 Your question is an old one. It was proposed long ago in the Gospels, when the lawyer²⁹ came up to the Lord and said, *Master, what is the first commandment in the law?* 2 And the Lord answered, *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind. This is the first and the great commandment.* 3 *And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as your very self* (Matt. 22: 36–9; Mark 12: 28–31).

4 So the Lord himself has imposed an order among his own commandments, having defined³⁰ that *the first and indeed the greatest commandment is to love God with the whole heart and with the whole mind*, 5 while *the second in order* (and sequence) *and like it* (in character)—but rather as fulfilling and depending on the first—is *to love your neighbour (as your very self)*. 6 Thus, from these sayings and from others in the God-inspired³¹ Scriptures, a (certain) order and sequence (of precepts) can be discovered as I myself discern, among all the commandments of the Lord.

some cases, e.g. *LR* 1, 8, there are both the original question and an added surtitle, while in other cases, e.g. *LR* 4, only the added title and no question. These instances are later divisions of Basil's original long discourse preserved integrally in *RBas.* 2.

²⁷ ὁ λόγος, 'the word', meaning either Basil's introductory discourse or the scriptural 'word' of Deut. 32: 7 cited by Basil in *RBas.* Prol. 2 which was later displaced in the Great Asketikon to *SR* Prologue. See relevant note at *LR* 7. Q. With the Greek Small Asketikon before him Rufinus understood and interpreted the ὁ λόγος as 'sermo tuus', i.e. 'your discourse'.

²⁸ *RBas.* 1. Q: so that he could make a beginning anywhere he pleases on the circumference of circle or crown, as it were. The image is used again at the end of *LR* 16.

²⁹ *RBas.* 1. 1: a teacher of the law.

³⁰ *RBas.* 1. 4: saying, . . .

³¹ θεοπνεύστοις Γραφαῖς, God-breathed or divinely inspired Scriptures. *RBas.* 1. 6: and also from other similar passages in the Holy Scriptures (sanctis scripturis) you will find, as I myself discern (ut ego arbitror), that a certain order and sequence of precepts is observed among all the commandments.

LR 2 (RBas. 2. 1–57)

Concerning love for God³² and that the inclination and ability to keep the Lord's commandments are in human beings by nature.

Q: Since you say that the first commandment concerns love for God,³³ **so then speak to us first** (of all) **about** love for God. **We have heard that it is necessary to love;**³⁴ **what we want to learn is how this is to be accomplished.**³⁵

R: 1. You have taken up the very best introduction to the talk and one most fitting to the goal. So, with God's help, let us do as you have said.

Love for God³⁶ is not something taught, just as we did not learn from anyone to rejoice in the light and to seek after life, and no one taught us how to love our parents or nurses. In the same way, therefore, yet much more so, we do not learn the divine yearning³⁷ from without. Rather, as soon as the living creature is constituted—I mean man—there is implanted in us a certain generative word,³⁸ bearing in itself the impulses which tend of their own accord³⁹ towards love. It is germinated in the school of God's commandments, where it is carefully cultivated, skilfully nurtured, and so, with God's grace, brought to maturity.⁴⁰

So we for our part welcome your zeal as necessary for attaining the goal. We shall endeavour, by God's gift and with the support of your

³² Περὶ τῆς πρὸς Θεὸν ἀγάπης.

³³ περὶ τῆς εἰς Θεὸν ἀγάπης. RBas. 2. Q: de caritate Dei. The Greek lacks the ambiguity of the Latin phrase (is it love for God, or God's love?).

³⁴ ἀγαπᾶν (to love). RBas. 2. Q: then first of all speak to us about this: for we have already heard that we ought to love; what we want to learn as well is how this can be carried out. The RBas. passive infinitive diligi (to be loved) is corrected to diligere in H (see Appendix 4 on codices and editions of the RBas.).

³⁵ Grib. 141 notes the agreement between Rufinus and the Syriac against the Greek in the form of the question and the opening of Basil's response. Hence, the RBas. probably retains the original.

³⁶ ἡ πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἀγάπη.

³⁷ τοῦ θείου πόθου. πόθος in this work is translated as 'yearning' or 'longing'.

³⁸ σπερματικός τις λόγος, lit. 'spermatic' or 'seminal' *logos*, generative principle, or seminal 'reason'. It is a well-known Middle Stoic concept. The earliest Christian use of the phrase is found in Justin Martyr, *Apology* II. 13. The idea of the 'seed of the word' had scriptural antecedents, beginning with the agricultural metaphor of Isa. 55: 10–11. Jesus himself, for whom deuterio-Isaiah had the greatest import, used the analogy at length in Luke 8: 5–15 esp. at 11. See also Jas. 1: 21; 1 Pet. 1: 23, etc. Here in LR 2, Basil expands the concept he has already employed in the Small Asketikon. He lays out the infrastructure of religious anthropology on which his entire ascetical teaching is built. See also SR 75, 174, 212, 224.

³⁹ τὰς ἀφόρμους τῆς πρὸς τὸ ἀγαπᾶν οἰκείωσης, the tendency is 'proper', 'inherent', 'native'.

⁴⁰ εἰς τελείωσιν, perfection. On 'perfection' see also SR 224.

prayers and according to the power given us by the Spirit, to stir up the spark of divine yearning hidden within you.⁴¹ **2 One needs to know** (before all else) **that though this** virtue⁴² (appears to be) **is only one, yet in power it effects and comprehends** (in itself) **every commandments, for whoever loves me, says the Lord, will keep my** commandments (cf. John 14: 15). And again, **On these two commandments hang the whole law and the prophets** (Matt. 22: 40). **3 However, we shall not** for the present **attempt to explore the word**⁴³ **minutely—for thus we might miss the principle**⁴⁴ **of the commandments by fastening on**⁴⁵ **details—4 but,** (continuing our inquiry) **as it accords with our goal** (and the present course requires it), we shall remind you of the love that we owe to God.

What we assert above all is that we have already received from God the capacities⁴⁶ **for all the commandments that he has given us. 5 Consequently we may neither be despondent, as if something novel** (or foreign to us) **were being required** (of us)—**6 nor be elated, as if we were offering** (God) **something more than we were given**⁴⁷ in the nature in which he created us.

7 Now if we act uprightly and fittingly in these capacities,⁴⁸ **we**

⁴¹ τὸν ἐγκεκρυμμένον ὑμῖν σπινθήρα τοῦ θείου πόθου . . . It appears that in this paragraph Basil, having just inserted his anthropological text, reused and re-edited the original opening to his response, giving it a somewhat more trinitarian cast—if the ‘divine yearning’ may be considered the yearning of the ‘generative Word’.

⁴² κατόρθωμα, action rightly done, a moral act achieved; the word κατορθόω and its field figure very prominently in Basil’s ascetical vocabulary. His ascetic doctrine is supremely free of every gnostic tendency, indeed, the greatest possible antidote to it, being governed by the Johannine teaching that love for God is in the obediential moral act (John 14: 15): ‘This is knowledge (γνώσις) of God: the keeping of God’s commandments’, *Hom. on the Martyr Mamas*, PG 31. 597A. See also LR 37. 3 and note. *RBas.* 2. 2 has ‘commandment’ instead of κατόρθωμα and reverses the doublet: this commandment embraces and expresses in itself the power of all the commandments (mandatum istud . . . omnium in se mandatorum virtutem).

⁴³ ἐφόδευεῖν τὸν λόγον.

⁴⁴ τὸν λόγον, here evidently meaning the ‘underlying principle’, ‘rationale’, ‘thrust’ or ‘logic’ of the commandments. The two instances of the word *logos* in this sentence illustrate that it can be difficult to decide in translation which of its several nuances is meant.

⁴⁵ *RBas.* 2. 3: we shall not take up the order of the commandments one by one, otherwise we shall appear to introduce the whole work with details.

⁴⁶ τὰς δυνάμεις, powers. *RBas.* 2. 4: virtutes in nobis insitas gerimus, we bear the powers engrafted within our very selves.

⁴⁷ *RBas.* 2. 5–6: This is why there is neither something difficult being demanded of us—as though it were something novel or foreign to us, **6** nor on the other hand do we (appear to be given any cause for) elation over it . . .

⁴⁸ *RBas.* 2. 7: those things which have been implanted in us.

fulfil by piety the life according to virtue, but if we corrupt their activity, we succumb to vice.⁴⁹ **8 Here then, is a definition of vice: to make evil use**—that is, in violation of the Lord’s commandment—of what has been given us by God for good,⁵⁰ **just as a definition of the virtue sought by God is: to use them**⁵¹ (rightly, that is,) **with a good conscience,⁵² in accordance with the Lord’s (God’s) commandment.**

9 This being so, we may say the same also about love. 10 Having received a commandment to love God, we possess the capacity to love implanted at the moment we were first constituted (by God).⁵³ 11 And the proof is not from without, for anyone may discover this (the traces of what we have spoken) from himself and within himself. 12 For we (all) are by nature enamoured of the beautiful,⁵⁴ even if what exactly is the beautiful appears differently from one to another,⁵⁵ 13 and, untaught, we show affection toward

⁴⁹ *RBas.* 2. 7: but if we corrupt the benefits of nature, this is to turn toward vice.

⁵⁰ *RBas.* 2. 8: the movements of the soul which have been implanted in us by God.

⁵¹ *RBas.* 2. 8: the movements implanted in us by God. Rufinus appears to have reused a noun clause from earlier in the sentence.

⁵² *RBas.* 2. 8: et secundum conscientiam animi (the mind’s conscience). For Basil on conscience see *SR* 164 and note.

⁵³ *RBas.* 2. 10: the soul bears the power to live in itself implanted by God when it was first formed. Basil seems to be tributary to Origen here. The natural implanted love of God that needs to be trained and released so it can soar upward to its home in the absolute beauty of God is the theme of Origen’s *Homilies on the Song of Songs*, to which book of Scripture Basil shortly refers. Origen’s doctrine itself has antecedents in Plato. The trapped finite soul impelled by the dynamism of *eros* to regain its ultimate home, once it has been kindled by moral *ascesis*, is told vividly in the analogy of the cave in *Republic* 7, and in the arguments of the *Symposium*. Basil, however, like all the Cappadocians, refuses the pre-existence of the soul and affirms a strict scriptural doctrine of creation.

⁵⁴ τῶν καλῶν, the ‘beautiful’, also comprising the ‘good’, hence the Latin translation.

⁵⁵ εἰ καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα ἄλλω ἄλλο φαίνεται καλόν, *RBas.* 2. 12: Every human being desires all that is good, and by a kind of natural disposition we are impelled towards all we think good. Basil touches on the differing teleological opinions of the philosophers in *Hom. on Ps.* 48, 1, *PG* 29. 432A–B (Way 311): ‘Some, even among the pagans (τῶν ἑξέω) have imagined for themselves what the end of man might be, and have arrived at different conceptions about that end. There are those who declared that the end was knowledge [Platonists], others practical activity [Aristotelians], others an alternative use of life and body [Stoics], whereas the bestial declared that the end is pleasure [Epicureans]. But for us [Christians], the end for the sake of which we do everything and to which we press forward, is the blessed life in the world to come, which will be fulfilled when we have God reigning over us. Till now, no better conception than this has been found in rational nature.’

our friends and (blood) kin, and spontaneously display every goodwill towards our benefactors.⁵⁶

14 Now what is more wonderful than the divine beauty, (indeed, *what other good is there but God alone?* (cf. Luke 18: 19)) **15** what thought more alluring than the splendour of God? **16** What yearning of the soul is so keen and intolerable as that which comes from God upon the soul cleansed of all vice, which, from true affection declares: *I am wounded with love* (S. of S. 2: 5)⁵⁷

18 Wholly ineffable and indescribable, as I at any rate experience it,⁵⁸ are the lightning flashes of the divine beauty; speech cannot express it, hearing cannot take it in. **19** Invoke if you will the rays of the morning star, the brightness of the moon, or the light of the sun (itself);⁵⁹ none of them are worthy of being likened to that glory—indeed, the comparison falls far shorter of the true light

⁵⁶ *RBas.* 2. 13: with our whole affection and good services (omni affectu et officiis) we are joined to those from whom we receive benefits.

⁵⁷ *RBas.* 2. 14–17 is much embellished: **14** But what other good can be had greater than God? (Indeed, *what other good is there but God alone* (cf. Luke 18: 19)?) **15** What loveliness, what splendour, what beauty which we are naturally moved to love is of such a kind as is in God and more claims our confidence? **16** What grace is so great, what flame of love which sets alight the secret and inward places of the soul is there like that love of God which ought to inflame the hidden places of the mind, **17** specially if it be cleansed from all pollution, (if it be a pure soul) which cries with true affection: *I am wounded by love* (S. of S. 2: 5)?

⁵⁸ *RBas.* 2. 18: Ineffabilem prorsus ego sentio amorem Dei et qui sentiri magis quam dici possit, inerrabilis quaedam lux . . . The utterly ineffable love of God—as I at any rate experience it—which is more easily experienced than spoken of, is a certain inexplicable light. Even if speech (should adduce or compare) a lightning flash (or a dazzling brilliance), still, the hearing cannot take it in.

Rufinus preserves a personal note missing in the later version. At the same time, the erotic register of Basil's discourse, so clear in the Greek, is somewhat tempered in the Latin.

The importance of light in Basil's mystical experience foreshadows the doctrine of the uncreated light in 14th-cent. Hesychasm. Another aspect of Hesychast theology, that in our knowledge of God, we can never know or 'grasp' the divine *ousia*, but know only the divine 'energies', also has its root in Basil's trinitarian theology (e.g. Letter 234, Def. III. 370–7). This was developed by Gregory of Nyssa in the direction of apophatic theology. In his *Eulogy* for his brother Gregory describes Basil at prayer in his early ascetic period: 'at night he was illumined while at prayer in his house; an immaterial light lit up the house by divine power, kindled from no material source . . . We know that he often entered the dark cloud where God was', *In Basilium Fratrem*, GNO x/1. 127, lines 7–10; 129, lines 5–6.

⁵⁹ *RBas.* 2. 19 completes: and compare them with that glory—they are all murkier and more offensive by far than an ink-black night and the gloom of a dense fog compared with the (flawlessly clear light) of the noonday sun.

than deep night and the moonless dark compared with (the flawlessly clear light of the) **high noon** (sun).

20 Yet such beauty is not visible to fleshly eyes; it is comprehended⁶⁰ only by the soul and the mind. 21 Whenever it illumined any of the saints it left embedded in them an intolerable sting of yearning,⁶¹ 22 (till at length, as if languishing in the fires of such love and) they, **chafing at this present life, said, *Alas for me, that my sojourning is prolonged!*** (Ps. 119: 5), ***when shall I enter and appear before the face of God?*** (Ps. 41: 3) and this: *To depart and to be with Christ would be far better* (Phil. 1: 23), **23 and again,** (such a one, burning in the flames of his ardour would say) ***My soul has thirsted for God,*** the strong one, ***the living*** (Ps. 26: 4) **and *Now O Lord, let your servant depart*** (Luke 2: 29). Oppressed by this life as in a prison, they found it hard to contain the impulses which the divine yearning had kindled in their souls. **24 Insatiable** (in their desire) **of the vision of the divine beauty, they prayed that their vision of the sweetness of the Lord might extend into eternal life** (cf. Ps. 15: 11, 26: 4).⁶²

So then, human beings are by nature enamoured of (and love) **the beautiful.**⁶³ Now what is truly beautiful and lovable is the good. *But it is God who is good* (cf. Luke 18: 19). Thus, if all things tend to the good,⁶⁴ then all things tend to God.

2. Accordingly, whatever is done rightly of free choice is also

⁶⁰ καταληπτόν. Voss., Colb., and Reg. prim. (Ask. 3): θεωρητόν, 'visible'—probably a late theological correction, in light of the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of the Divine substance, elucidated by Basil in controversy with the Anomoians.

⁶¹ εἶπον τινα περιέλαμψε τῶν ἁγίων, καὶ ἀφόρητον τοῦ πόθου τὸ κέντρον αὐτοῖς ἐγκατέλιπεν. *RBas.* 2. 21–2: if it should happen that this loveliness has bruised the mind and heart of the saints and left embedded in them a most fiery sting of yearning after it (qui decor, si cuius forte sanctorum mentem animumque perstrinxit, flagrantissimum in eis amoris sui stimulum defixit.) 22 till at length, as if languishing in the fires of such love and shuddering in horror at this present life, such as these go on to say *When shall I come and appear before the face of God?* (Ps. 41: 3).

⁶² While the Greek tends to use the plural and alludes to Scripture, the *RBas.* maintains the singular and quotes Scripture directly: Yes, because of his insatiable desire, he would pray *that he might see the delight of the Lord and find shelter in his holy temple* (Ps. 26: 4).

⁶³ Οὕτω μὲν ὄν φυσικῶς ἐπιθυμητικοὶ τῶν καλῶν οἱ ἄνθρωποι. *RBas.* 2. 24: Thus by nature do we long for (and love) the good (naturaliter et concupiscimus quae bona sunt et amamus). Cf *RB* 4. 46 on 'spiritual concupiscence': vitam aeternam omni concupiscentia spiritali desiderare, 'to desire eternal life with all spiritual passion'.

⁶⁴ ἀγαθοῦ δὲ πάντα ἐφίεται. Basil appears to cite the opening sentence of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: τὰγαθὸν ὁδὲ πάντ' ἐφίεται, 'the good is that to which all things aim'.

within us naturally⁶⁵—at least in those who have not perverted their power of thought through evil.

Love for God, therefore, is required of us as something we owe to him, which for the soul that fails to pay, is the most intolerable of all evils. For to be alienated and turned away from God is even more intolerable than the punishments that await us in Gehenna.⁶⁶ For one who experiences it, it is a heavier weight to bear than the privation of light from the eyes—even without any additional pain—or of life from the living creature.⁶⁷

28 If offspring have a natural affection towards their parents—and this is clear both from the behaviour of irrational animals and from the disposition of human beings from their earliest years towards their mothers⁶⁸—29 shall we not be found more irrational⁶⁹ than infants or more savage than wild beasts, if we show ourselves unloving and alien towards our Maker.⁷⁰ 30 Even if we have not learned what he is like⁷¹ from his goodness, still from the mere fact that we come from him, we ought to revere and love him exceedingly (with the affection we have for parents), and cleave to the memory of him unceasingly, as little children towards their mothers.

31 Also notable among those who are loved naturally is the benefactor.⁷² 32 And this passion, I think is characteristic not only of human beings, but also of almost all other animals, the affinity⁷³

⁶⁵ καὶ φυσικῶς ἡμῖν ἐνάρχει.

⁶⁶ Indeed such alienation from God is the essence of Hell. See *SR* 267 and note.

⁶⁷ For this paragraph *RBas.* 2. 25–7 has: **25** If, as we have said, there is no good however exalted to be compared with God, therefore the debt we pay and that which we seek from him is love; **26** which if we deny or pay niggardly we shall certainly be without excuse and render ourselves liable to wrath. **27** And what do I mean by ‘liable to wrath’? What wrath could be greater, what punishment more grievous than this: that it should so befall us as to become alienated from the love of God?

⁶⁸ *RBas.* 2. 28: and this is found not only among human beings but even among dumb animals.

⁶⁹ *RBas.* 2. 29: let us not seem more doltish than cattle or more unnatural than wild beasts . . . For the same example see *SR* 212 (*RBas.* 152).

⁷⁰ *RBas.* 2. 29 continues: are bound by no affection towards the one who gave us life; an instance of a Basilian doublet not found in the *RBas.*

⁷¹ *RBas.* 2. 30: For though we (cannot) know just what he is, or the measure of his greatness—qualis et quantus sit.

⁷² *RBas.* 2. 31: and this all the more generously and promptly inasmuch as we know that the benefits for which we are in debt are immense.

⁷³ ἢ πρὸς τοὺς ἀγαθὸν τι δεδωκότας οἰκείωσις. Basil’s not infrequent use of οἰκείωσις may owe something to the Stoics, who use it to mean the natural attraction to each other of beings of the same kind. S. G. Pembroke discusses the term at length in A. A. Long (ed.), *Problems in Stoicism* (London: Athlone Press, 1971), 114 ff. See also the citation in *LR* Prol. 3 and note, *LR* 26 and note, *LR* 32. Q and note.

for those who endow them with some good.⁷⁴ **33** If you do not believe me, then listen to the prophet who says: *The ox knows its owner and the ass its master's crib*, **34** but far be it that what follows should be said of us: *But Israel has not recognized me, nor has my people understood* (Isa. 1: 3). As for the dog and many similar animals, I need not say what great affection they show towards those who feed them. **35** Now if we naturally incline to good will and affection for our benefactors and undertake every labour to repay what they have already done for us,⁷⁵ **36** what discourse can describe worthily the gifts of God,⁷⁶ which are so many as to be innumerable, and so great and of such a kind that just one of them obliges us to give all thanks to our benefactor (for the whole of our life)? **37** For I leave aside (all) the other benefits—which are in themselves of surpassing greatness and grace—yet are outshone by the greater (and the better) as are stars by the (more resplendent) rays of the sun—**38** For I have not leisure⁷⁷ to leave the more excellent benefits and measure the goodness of the Benefactor by the lesser.⁷⁸

3. 39 So then, let us pass over in silence the (daily) risings of the sun, (and the whole world illumined by the brilliance of a single torch; **40** Let us pass over in silence) the circuits of the moon, the changes (and vicissitudes) of the atmosphere, the alternation of the seasons, water from the clouds and again from the earth,⁷⁹ the (vastness of the) sea itself (in its expanse and depth), **41** the whole earth and what springs from it, those which teem in the sea, those which throng in the air, the myriads of different animals (and those which are established and flourish on the land)—all that is assigned to the service (and use) of our life. **42** Therefore I leave aside all such things and innumerable others.

Yet there is something we cannot pass over even if we wished

⁷⁴ *RBas.* 2. 32: And this I think is common not only to us, but also to the other animals, for if someone bestows some good on them, they remember it.

⁷⁵ *RBas.* 2. 35: And even if, without being taught, we love those benefactors who have favoured us in some way and strive with all zeal to repay our gratitude as far as we can.

⁷⁶ *RBas.* 2. 36: how shall we ever sufficiently repay our gratitude for the gifts of God, which . . .

⁷⁷ Toward the end of his life, Basil did take the time to do so, in his *Hexaemeron*, a series of homilies on Genesis devoted to the sub-human creation. He was perhaps spurred on by the rationalizing treatment of Scripture by Eunomius, which had undermined traditional exegesis. See Fedwick 18 n. 99.

⁷⁸ *RBas.* 2. 38: since we have no time to enlarge on them more fully, even if it were possible for us to enumerate the divine benefits to us in lesser things.

⁷⁹ *RBas.* 2. 40: showers from the clouds, streams and springs from the earth . . .

to,⁸⁰ a grace that it is entirely impossible for any man of sound mind and reasoning power to keep silent about⁸¹—**43 yet to say anything worthy** (and befitting) **it is still more impossible: 44** And this one thing so great of which I speak is **that God made man in his image and likeness** (cf. Gen. 1: 26–7)⁸² and **deemed** (man) **worthy of knowledge of himself and adorned him with reason beyond that of all animals**⁸³ **and provided for his delight the ineffable beauties of paradise**⁸⁴ and appointed him ruler of all things upon the earth.

⁸⁰ Having laid the groundwork of the Christian ascetic life in a religious anthropology based on reason and giving full accord to man's natural mysticism, Basil now proceeds to add deeper layers of soteriology, Christology, and liturgy. His portrayal of man's primordial divine vocation, the fall, and the whole economy of salvation culminating in Christ is full of echoes of the eucharistic liturgy.

⁸¹ *RBas.* 2. 42 There is one thing alone, however, which even if it were possible for someone to leave it aside who wanted to, we cannot pass over in silence.

⁸² The scriptural citation is clearly a later addition, as there is no reason why Rufinus, always eager for a citation, would have omitted it. The same idea and sense of wonder at our creation in God's image appear in *Hom. on Ps 48*, 8, *PG* 29. 448B, *Way* 324.

This passage resonates with liturgical phrases. See also *SR* 172 (*RBas.* 134) and note. Embedded in *LR* 2. 3 (*RBas.* 2. 44–50) are the following verbatim or near verbatim echoes of the Anaphora of St Basil, from the section between the Sanctus and the Institution narrative which tells of the economy of creation and salvation: *God [made] man in his image . . . delight [in the inconceivable beauties] of paradise . . . beguiled by the serpent . . . he did not turn away . . . gave him the Law for a help, set angels over him . . . sent prophets . . . [quoting Phil. 2: 6–7] he did not deem equality with God as something to be grasped, rather he divested himself, accepting the form of a slave.*

These liturgical parallels are, for the most part, already present in the Small Asketikon. Thus during his mission among the ascetics of Pontus in 363–5, Basil was already using an earlier, shorter form of Anaphora in the Liturgy. The fact that in the Great Asketikon the allusion to Gen. 1: 27 is replaced with an express citation of Gen. 1: 26 hints at stages of accretion in the texts of both the Asketikon and the Anaphora in Basil's lifetime. According to GNaz. *Or.* 43. 34, Basil's activities as a *presbyter* under Eusebius in the late 360s included 'formulation of prayers, regulations for good order in the sanctuary'. See A. Holmes, *A Life Pleasing to God* (London, 1999), 82–4 and esp. n. 13, 88. See also L. Bouyer, *Eucharist, Theology and Spirituality of the Eucharistic Prayer* (Notre Dame, 1968), esp. 292–6. Bouyer shows in graphic form three different strata in the Anaphora's composition.

⁸³ *RBas.* 2. 44: made him a rational animal on the earth (rationabile animal fecit). Could it be we have here a slight theological correction by Rufinus, concerned to exclude even a hint of rationality in animals by allowing some comparative scale? Within a year or so of this translation, he was cushioning Origen's statement that instinct in war-horses and hunting dogs is so developed it approaches reason; see Rist, 'The Greek and Latin Texts in *De Principiis*', 105. Cf. the absence in the *RBas.* of Basil's comment about dogs a few paragraphs earlier.

⁸⁴ *RBas.* 2. 44: allowed him to enjoy (the delight) and beauty of ineffable paradise.

45 And when he was beguiled by the serpent⁸⁵ and fell into sin and through sin (moreover, fell headlong) into death and all that attends it, God did not neglect him⁸⁶ **46** but gave him the Law for a help, set angels over him to guard and care for him, sent prophets to rebuke vice and teach virtue, checked the impulses of vice by (the severity of) threats, **47** stirred desires for his benefits by (the most lavish) promises and declared in advance the end of either course by the frequent examples of many persons who served as a warning for others.

48 Yet when we persisted in disobedience, despite all these and other like favours, even then he did not turn away (from us or forsake us). For we were neither repudiated by the goodness of the Master nor did we deflect his love for us, though we had snubbed our benefactor through our indifference to his benefits.⁸⁷ **49** No, we were recalled⁸⁸ from death and restored to life again through our Lord Jesus Christ himself, in whom the manner of the benefit conferred on us is of even greater wonder; for **50** *though he was in the form of God, he did not deem equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave* (Phil. 2: 6–7).

4. 51 *And he took on our infirmities and bore our weaknesses and was wounded for us, that by his bruises we might be healed* (Isa. 53: 4–5), **52** *and he redeemed us from the curse, being himself made a curse for us* (Gal. 3: 13) *and underwent a most shameful death* (Wisd. 2: 20) that he might restore us to the life of glory. **53** Moreover it was not enough to give life to us who were dead, he even bestowed the dignity of his divinity⁸⁹ (cf. 2 Pet. 1: 4) and lavished on us the gift of eternity, **54** and he has prepared eternal rest, exceeding every human conception in the greatness of joy.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ *RBas.* 2. 45: And when he was deceived by the guile of the serpent.

⁸⁶ *RBas.* 2. 45: God (by no means) despised him.

⁸⁷ *RBas.* 2. 48: But when, even after all these things, we persisted in our evil ways (and our incredulities, the generosity of a faithful Lord) did not turn away from us (or forsake us), and notwithstanding our ingratitude for all his benefits, we were unable to turn aside (or exclude) his mercy towards us.

⁸⁸ *RBas.* 2. 49: uses the (dramatic?) present tense. we *are* recalled . . .

⁸⁹ *RBas.* 2. 53: *a participation in his divinity*. Rufinus cites the Scripture more exactly.

⁹⁰ *RBas.* 2. 54: finishes by citing the Scripture exactly: and prepared himself for those who believe and love, beyond all that we could look for or understand *what eye has not seen nor ear has heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man* (1 Cor. 2: 9).

55 *What return, therefore, shall we make to the Lord for all that he has given to us (Ps. 115. 12)? Yet he is so generous (and tender) that he does not seek any recompense but is content simply to be loved in return for all that he has given.* **56** Who then is so incurably ungrateful as not to love his benefactor for benefits so great and of such a kind?

Whenever I call these things to mind—if I may speak openly of my own experience—I am struck with a kind of shuddering and cold terror in case it happens that through carelessness of mind or pre-occupation with vanities I fall from the love of God and become a reproach against Christ (cf. Ps. 68: 6–10; Rom. 15: 3). For the one who now deceives us and eagerly employs every device to induce us to forget our Benefactor through wordly enticements, who leaps on us and tramples us down to the destruction of our souls, will one day fling our contempt as a reproach against the Lord and will boast of our disobedience and apostasy. He neither created us nor died for us, yet he will have won us as his followers in disobedience and neglect of God’s commandments.

This reproach against the Lord and this boasting of the enemy seem to me heavier to bear than the punishments of Gehenna—that we should provide the enemy of Christ with matter for boasting and an occasion for vaunting over him *who died for us and rose again* (2 Cor. 5: 15),⁹¹ to whom, on account of this, we are overwhelmingly debtors, as it is written (cf. Rom. 8: 11–12).

57 *So much then, concerning love for God, for it is not our purpose, as I said before, to say everything—that is impossible—but to implant in your souls under headings,⁹² succinct reminders that shall ever stir up the divine yearning.⁹³*

⁹¹ This personal note of cleaving to Christ in his incarnation, typically appearing in the midst of doctrinal exposition, is as characteristic of Basil’s manner as it is of the other Cappadocians. See *LR* 2. 3–4 (*RBas.* 2. 49–55), *Morals* 80. 22; *Hom. on Humility*, *PG* 31. 525–40, Wagner 483–4; *Hom. on Ps. 1*, *PG* 29. 209–28, Way 155; *Hom. on Ps. 28*, *PG* 29. 280–305, Way 204; *Hom. on Ps. 44*, *PG* 29. 388–413, Way 278–9, 285–7; *Hom. on Ps. 48*, *PG* 29. 432–60, Way 318, 325; *Hom. on Ps. 61*, *PG* 29. 469–84, Way 343–4, 346.

⁹² ἐπὶ κεφαλαίων σύντομον ὑπόμνησις. This expresses Basil’s intention, even in the Small Asketikon, to present his teaching under ‘chapter headings’, or subject headings.

⁹³ *RBas.* 2. 57 completes: but briefly and succinctly call to mind those things which may be able to implant and stir up love for God (amorem Dei) in the soul.

LR 3 (RBas. 2. 58–69)

On love for one's neighbour.

R: 58 The next step would be to pass on to that commandment which as we have said is the second in order and power.⁹⁴

1. 59 We said above that the law is the husbandman and cultivator of those powers which are implanted in us like seeds (by the Creator). 60 Since we are charged to love our neighbour as our very self (Matt. 22: 39), let us see whether there is also in us the capacity (and the power) from God to fulfil this commandment.

61 Now who does not know that man is a domesticated and sociable animal, not a solitary and wild one?⁹⁵ 62 Nothing is more characteristic of our nature that we have fellowship with one another, need one another and love our own kind.⁹⁶ 63 Since the Lord himself gave us the seeds of these things in anticipation, he therefore (there is no doubt) seeks fruit from them, and as the testimony of our love for him, he accepts our love for our neighbours saying: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another* (John 13: 34). Wishing to stir up our souls towards this commandment, he did not require signs and extraordinary wonders as proof that we are his disciples—though he bestowed the working of these too in the Holy Spirit. Instead, what does he say? 64 *By this, he says, shall all know that you are my disciples, if you love one another* (John 13: 35). 65 And he has so joined together these two commandments in every way that the kindness shown our neighbour he refers to himself. *I was hungry, he says, and you gave me to eat* (Matt. 25: 35), 66 and so on, to which he adds:⁹⁷ *insofar as you did it even to the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me* (Matt. 25: 40).

2. 67 Consequently, through the first commandment the second is also accomplished, but again, through the second there is

⁹⁴ This verse is put in the place of the Question in Garnier's edition. Yet it was originally part of the text continuing on from the previous response, the division under separate chapter headings coming later.

⁹⁵ ὅτι ἤμερον καὶ κοινωρικὸν ζῶον ὁ ἄνθρωπος, καὶ οὐχὶ μοναστικόν, οὐδὲ ἄγριον. RBas. 2. 61: quoniam humanum animal et communicabile homo est et non agreste aliquod ac ferum. For Basil's 'monastic' (= 'solitary'), Rufinus has exchanged a synonym for 'wild'. For another use of 'monastic' in this sense, see LR 7. 3 (RBas. 3. 26). Cf. Epictetus 2. 9, 10. Basil in *Hom. spoken in time of famine and drought* (PG 31. 325A) urges his hearers to generosity, reminding them that even the animals are social or 'communal' by nature.

⁹⁶ RBas. 2. 62: that one has need of another, and seeks out the other and loves what he asks for (ac diligere quod requirit).

⁹⁷ RBas. 2. 66: (66) And he says of other things done for our neighbour, that he is the one receiving them, since he says) when you did . . .

(an ascent and a) **return to the first, such that if anyone loves the Lord** (without doubt) it follows that **he also loves his neighbour. 68 For *Whoever loves me, says the Lord, will keep my commandments. But this, he says, is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you* (cf. John 15: 12). 69 Thus, whoever loves his neighbour makes good his love for God, who receives the favour as done to himself.**

Accordingly Moses, the faithful attendant of God, showed such love for his brothers that he preferred to be blotted out of God's book in which he had been inscribed, if the people were not forgiven their sin (Exod. 32: 32). Paul also, wishing in imitation of the Lord to offer himself as an exchange for the salvation of all, dared to pray that he might *be anathema from Christ for the sake of his brothers, his own kin according to the flesh* (Rom. 9: 3). Though he knew at the same time it was impossible for one to be estranged from God who because of *the great commandment* (Matt. 22: 38; Mark 12: 31), forgoes God's favour through love for him, and that for this very reason he would receive back far more than he gave.

What has been said is sufficient proof for the present that the saints did attain to this measure of love for their neighbour.

LR 4 (RBas. 2. 70–73)

On the fear of God.

R: **70 For those, therefore,** (receiving their initiation into the fear of God, and) **just being introduced to piety,⁹⁸ an elementary introduction through fear is more useful. This accords with the counsel of Solomon the most wise who said: *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom* (Prov. 1: 7).**

71 But for you who have passed through your *infancy in Christ* and no longer have need of *milk* (cf. 1 Cor. 3: 1–2), but are able to *be perfected in the inner man* (Eph. 3: 16, 4: 13) through *the solid food* (Heb. 5: 12) (that comes from the firmness) of teachings⁹⁹ **72 there is need of the more specific¹⁰⁰ commandments through**

⁹⁸ RBas. 2. 70: in his qui initia habent ad timorem dei et ad primos aditus religionis accedunt . . .

⁹⁹ δυναμένους τῆ στερεᾶ τῶν δογμάτων τροφῆ . . . RBas. 2. 71: cibos solidos ex dogmatum firmitate perquirite—But you who have already ceased to be little children in Christ, and have no more need of milk, have need of the solid food that comes from the teachings for (the feeding and nourishing) of the interior man . . .

¹⁰⁰ κεφαλαιώτεροις, almost 'topical', i.e. the teaching of the commandments summed up under headings. Thus the programme is announced which is followed throughout the Longer Responses.

which the whole truth of the love which is in Christ is accomplished.¹⁰¹ 73 But, clearly, you must be on your guard in case (the weight of) a more copious grace¹⁰² becomes a cause to you of heavier judgment, if you¹⁰³ are found ungrateful towards (for the gifts of) your benefactor, for, *to whom they have entrusted much*, it says, *from him they will require even more* (Luke 12: 48).

LR 5 (RBas 2. 74–93)

On keeping the mind from wandering.

R: 1. 74 **This much must be understood,**¹⁰⁴ **that we cannot succeed in keeping any commandment at all, neither the one** (that charges us) **concerning love for God itself, nor the one concerning love for one's neighbour, if our minds are wandering off** in this direction and that.¹⁰⁵ 75 **It is impossible to attain discipline in any craft or skill if one is forever starting something new,** or even make progress in one thing, without discovering what is proper to its end, for it is necessary that one's actions be consistent with the goal, since nothing in accord with reason is achieved by inappropriate means. Now it is not in the nature of things to attain the purpose of the smith with the techniques of the potter, or to win athletes' crowns through study of the flute. Rather, each purpose requires its proper and fitting labour. So, for us, the discipline¹⁰⁶ of being well-pleasing to God in accordance with the gospel of Christ, is achieved through withdrawal from the cares of the world and by entire estrangement from distractions.

For this reason, the Apostle, though allowing what pertains to marriage and deeming it worthy of blessing, contrasted its pre-occupations with the cares which are focused on God, as if the two were inconsistent with each other, saying: *he that is unmarried is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord: but he that is married is anxious for the things of the world, how he may please his wife* (1 Cor. 7: 32–3). Thus the Lord also bore witness to his disciples' pure and undistracted disposition when he said: *You are*

¹⁰¹ RBas. 2. 72: through which you may at last attain maturity (perveniat ad perfectum) (cf. Eph. 4: 13) and be confirmed in the whole truth which is in Christ.

¹⁰² ἡ περιουσία τῶν δωρεῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ βαρύτερος [sic] αἰτία ὑμῶν κατακρίσεως. Rufinus infuses Latin elegance here with a play on words between 'pondus' = 'weight' and 'gravioris' = 'heavier'.

¹⁰³ RBas. 2. 73: uses 1st person plural.

¹⁰⁴ RBas. 2. 74: considerandum est, 'needs to be considered/carefully weighed'.

¹⁰⁵ RBas. 2. 74: among varied and scattered occupations.

¹⁰⁶ ἀσκησις—training, practice, discipline, almost 'art'.

not of this world (John 15: 19). And on the opposite side, he bore witness that the world was incapable of receiving knowledge of God, or even of allowing the Holy Spirit entrance. *O righteous Father*, he says, *the world has not known you* (John 17: 25) and, *the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive* (John 14: 17).

2. Accordingly anyone who intends truly to follow God must be loosened from the chains of attachment to this life. Now this is achieved by complete withdrawal from and forgetfulness of one's former habits. Therefore, unless we estrange ourselves from both kinship of the flesh and the worldly life and migrate as it were to another world by our habit of mind,¹⁰⁷ as the Apostle said—*But for us, our citizenship is in heaven* (Phil. 3: 20)—it is impossible that we should succeed in the aim of being well-pleasing to God, for the Lord laid down definitely: *So likewise, every one of you who does not renounce all that is his own, cannot be my disciple* (Luke 14: 33).

76 Having done this, **we ought** (therefore) **to guard our hearts with all watchfulness**¹⁰⁸ **so that we never cast aside the thought of God or defile the memory of his wonders with the phantasms of vanities,** 77 **but bear about the holy thought of God stamped in our souls like an indelible seal though constant and pure memory.**¹⁰⁹ 78 **For in this way love for God ascends within us**¹¹⁰ (if the memory of him continually illumines our mind and dispositions), both **stirring** (and inciting) **to the work of the commandments of God,** 79 **and, in turn being preserved by them constant and unfailing.**¹¹¹

80 **And I think the Lord wants to show this when on one occasion he says: *If you love me, keep my commandments* (John 14: 15), 81 while he says elsewhere: *If you keep my commandments,*¹¹² **you****

¹⁰⁷ *σκέσεως*—state, condition, disposition, habit. Important though the community's practical secession from secular life may be, Basil is above all concerned with the interior attitude. He learned this order of priorities very early on; see Letter 2, Def. 1. 8, 10.

¹⁰⁸ *RBas.* 2. 76: continues with: (in case it happens that evil desires and sordid thoughts cast out and displace from our minds the desire for God).

¹⁰⁹ *RBas.* 2. 77: On the contrary, by the continual recollection and memory of God, let us so deeply fix (his form and figure as it were) in our soul like a seal, that no inquietudes may cause it to be lost . . .

¹¹⁰ *ἡμῶν περιγίνεται ἢ πρὸς Θεὸν ἀγάπης.* *RBas.* 2. 78: desire for the divine love comes upon us . . . (desiderium nobis Divinae caritatis accedit).

¹¹¹ *RBas.* 2. 79: and in turn, by these very works of love the love of God is preserved and increased in us. Basil portrays a wonderful 'circumincession': love for God inspiring our zeal to obey God, and this obedience itself fostering and strengthening the love on the rebound.

¹¹² *RBas.* 2. 80: *do what I say to you* . . .

shall abide in my love, adding still more insistently, *just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love* (John 15: 10).

3. 82 From this he teaches us¹¹³ to keep before us as the goal of any task assigned to us, the will of the one who enjoined it, and to direct our efforts towards it,¹¹⁴ as he also says elsewhere: *I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me* (John 6: 38). **83 Just as the crafts of this life set for¹¹⁵ themselves their proper goals, to which they accordingly attune their particular activities, 84 so also in our works, there is but one rule and one canon imposed (on us):¹¹⁶ to fulfil the commandments in a way that is well-pleasing to God. 85 It is impossible to give accurate form to our work unless¹¹⁷ it is completed in accordance with the will of him who gave the charge. 86 And in our striving to work exactly according to God's will, we shall be joined to God through memory.¹¹⁸**

87 A smith, for example, when making, say, an axe (or a scythe), is constantly mindful of him who gave him the charge¹¹⁹ and keeps him in mind as he plans the shape and size (and kind) and directs the task according to the intention of him who ordered it (88 and, ever intent on that which he recalls in himself was enjoined by the master, he directs the service of his hands to this end so that the form of the work fits the mind and will of him who enjoined it)—89 for, if he forgets, he will (no doubt) make something else or of a different quality to that which was proposed (to him). 90 So also the Christian ought to¹²⁰ direct every effort (and all diligence) whether small or great, to God's intention, 91 at the same time, both accurately completing his action and safeguarding the

¹¹³ *RBas.* 2. 82 completes: that the goal of our work ought to depend on his will, as though we had a kind of mirror to which we continually look back and, by keeping the eye of our heart upon it we direct our work.

¹¹⁴ *πρὸς αὐτό* (the will) with Reg. prim. and other MSS, rather than *πρὸς αὐτόν* (the enjoiner).

¹¹⁵ *RBas.* 2. 83 completes: the mind a certain goal and they work through the ministry of the hand in accordance with this goal engendered in the mind.

¹¹⁶ *RBas.* 2. 84 completes: by which we ought to please God. Let us, therefore, direct the work of the commandments toward this goal.

¹¹⁷ *RBas.* 2. 85 completes: unless we hold him who enjoined it in continual memory . . .

¹¹⁸ *RBas.* 2. 86: so that, by keeping his will and fulfilling it expertly through the labour of work and through diligence, we shall ever be joined to God in memory.

¹¹⁹ *RBas.* 2. 87 completes: and keeps in his heart the size (and type) and shape in which he ordered (the axe) to be made . . .

¹²⁰ *RBas.* 2. 89: apply every effort and every diligence in his activities.

intention of him who gave the order,¹²¹ in this way fulfilling the saying: *I have kept the Lord ever in view before me, since he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken* (Ps. 15: 8), **92 thus giving effect to the charge: Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10: 31). 93 But if anyone** (strays from the standard and) **corrupts the accuracy of the commandment as he performs it, then clearly he is weak in the memory of God.**¹²²

Remembering, therefore, the voice of him who said: *Do I not fill heaven and earth? says the Lord* (Jer. 23: 24) and again: *I am a God near at hand and not a God far off* (Jer. 23: 23)¹²³ and also: *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18: 20), we must carry out every activity as beneath the eyes of the Lord, every intention as observed by him.¹²⁴

In this way continual fear will become instinct in us, a fear that *hates iniquity* (Ps. 118: 163), as it is written, and insolence and vaunting pride and the ways of the wicked; love shall be perfected, fulfilling the Lord's words: *I do not seek my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me* (John 5: 30), since the soul abides in the conviction that good deeds find acceptance with the judge and umpire of our life, while their contraries receive condemnation from the same source.

I think I should also add that not even the commandments of the Lord are to be done for human favour. For no one turns to an inferior if he is assured that his superior is present; rather, if it happens that something is acceptable and well-pleasing to the more illustrious person, but appears ill-advised and blameworthy to the less important, he will set higher value on acceptance by the greater and disregard the criticism of the lesser.

Now if that is how it is with human beings, will any truly sober and healthy soul, in the full assurance of God's presence, ever leave off acting to please God in any matter, and turn instead to the accolades of human beings, or ever cease caring for God's precepts in order to cringe before human customs (cf. Mark 7: 8), or be intimidated by prevailing opinion, or have his head turned by honours? Such was the disposition of him who said: *The lawless spoke idle*

¹²¹ *RBas.* 2. 91: that he may direct his own work according to the will of God who enjoined the work, so that both his own actions are finished well and he is able to fulfil the will of him who gave the command.

¹²² *RBas.* 2. 93 completes a little more forcefully: corrupts his observance of the commandment, by this very fact his forgetfulness of God is demonstrated.

¹²³ The Sept. text which Basil uses emphasizes God's nearness.

¹²⁴ God's contemplation of *us* is an important monastic theme. See *SR* 200 (*RBas.* 86. 2), *RB* 7. 26 and 19. 1.

words to me, but not according to your law, O Lord (Ps. 118: 85) and again: *And I spoke of your testimonies before kings and was not ashamed* (Ps. 118: 46).

LR 6 (RBas. 2. 94–112)

That retirement is necessary.

R: 1. 94 Retirement to a secluded¹²⁵ (and separate) dwelling is of great assistance in keeping the soul from distraction.¹²⁶ **For to lead one's life mingling with those who are fearlessly and disdainfully disposed toward the exact observance of the commandments is (most) harmful, 95 as the word of Solomon shows** when it instructs us: *Do not be the companion of a fierce man, and do not congregate with a wrathful friend, lest you learn his ways and acquire snares for your soul* (Prov. 22: 24–5), **96 and the saying: Come out from their midst and be separated, says the Lord** (2 Cor. 6: 11; Isa. 52: 11; Jer. 51: 45; Rev. 18: 4) also makes the same point.

97 That we may not admit incitements to sin through the eyes or the ears and so, little by little, become habituated to it,¹²⁷ and that forms and impressions of things seen or heard may not burrow into the soul to its corruption and ruin, **and that we might be free for prayer, we ought first of all to seek a retired dwelling. 98 For by so doing we may overcome**¹²⁸ our former habits, when we lived estranged from the commandments of Christ.¹²⁹ **99 And this is no mean struggle, to overcome**¹³⁰ former (bad) habits, because **behaviour strengthened by length of time acquires** (as it were) **the force of nature**—and we shall be able to wear away the stains of sin by assiduous prayer and steadfast meditation on God's will.¹³¹ It is impossible to make progress¹³² in such meditation and prayer among

¹²⁵ *Quietude* (ἡσυχία) is the first step in the soul's purification, Basil to Gregory, Letter 2, Def. 1. 12–13. Yet even in this early letter, Basil acknowledges that a merely outward withdrawal from the ordinary life of society has not worked for him and that the essential withdrawal has to do with the dispositions of the mind.

¹²⁶ RBas. 2. 94: to preserving the memory of God . . .

¹²⁷ RBas. 2. 9: and so, little by little, through long habituation, become settled in a wretched way of life.

¹²⁸ περιγενοίμεθα, RBas. 2. 98 cut out.

¹²⁹ RBas. 2. 98: God.

¹³⁰ περιγενέσθαι, RBas. 2. 99: (re-examine and recall himself from). Since the Greek verb is repeated, Rufinus implements *variatio* in his translation.

¹³¹ τῇ ἐπιμόνω μελέτῃ τῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ θελημάτων. By 'meditation' on the will of God, it is likely Basil is here concerned with the attentive recitation of the texts of Scripture.

¹³² περιγενέσθαι, a theme word in this passage; here: to persevere, to prevail, to 'win out'.

the multiplicities which drag the soul about and keep it entangled in worldly engagements. Who immersed in all this would ever be able to fulfil the saying: *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself?* **100** For it is necessary above all else that we *deny ourselves and carry the cross of Christ, and so follow him* (Matt. 16: 24).

101 But to deny oneself is to forget everything to do with one's former way of life and to withdraw from one's own will¹³³ and thus withdraw not only from people who do not live uprightly, but also from our own disordered and unbridled ways;¹³⁴ **102** otherwise, to emend and correct oneself while continuing in the same habits and former way of life is very difficult, if I do not say entirely impossible¹³⁵ to achieve while living in the midst of prevailing indifference.¹³⁶ **103** Indeed (associating and) mingling in such a life is a great hindrance to¹³⁷ taking up one's cross and following Christ (Matt. 16: 24). **104** For to be ready to die for Christ (cf. Luke 22: 33) and to mortify one's members that are upon the earth (Col. 3: 5) and to staunchly bear every danger that comes upon us for the name of Christ (cf. Rom. 8: 35–7) and to be indifferent to this present life—this is what it is to carry one's cross (Matt. 16: 24). **105** And we see what great obstacles to this are put in our way by the customs of the common life.¹³⁸

2. 106 In addition to many other obstacles, (it even happens that) a soul, by looking around at the many wrongdoers, in the first

¹³³ ἡ τῶν θελημάτων ἀναχώρησις. *RBas.* 2. 101 is cast in 1st person plural: voluntates proprias abnegamus. For the same vocabulary see *RB* Prol. 3 abrenuntians propriis voluntatibus; 5. 7 voluntatem propriam deserentes.

¹³⁴ See *Hom. in time of famine* 8, PG 31. 325C–327B.

¹³⁵ ἵνα μὴ λέγω ὅτι παντελῶς ἀνεπίδεκτον.

¹³⁶ *RBas.* 2. 102: otherwise, to emend and correct oneself while continuing in the same habits and former way of life is very difficult, or, to speak more truly (immo ut verius dicam), entirely impossible (penitus impossibile). If Rufinus preserves the original qualification, it appears that Basil has moderated it in his later revision. Basil, as bishop, certainly had to make his way in the midst of customary indifference. Rufinus may have misconstrued ἀδιαφόρῳ σννηθείᾳ as referring to one's own formerly indifferent habits (already referred to), but it clearly refers to the way of life in the world at large.

¹³⁷ *RBas.* 2. 103: Indeed we observe that (associating and) mixing among those who differ in their way of life (and behaviour) is a great obstacle to this saying, that one should take up one's cross and follow Christ . . .

¹³⁸ τῆς τοῦ κοινοῦ βίου σννηθείας, *RBas.* 2. 105: those who differ in life and behaviour. ὁ κοινὸς βίος, reappearing shortly, is to be distinguished from the term ὁ κοινωνικὸς βίος, which is inserted into *RBas.* 3. 16 at LR 7. 2, i.e. life 'in communion', Christian community life—in monastic terms, the 'cenobitic' way of life.

place finds no occasion to¹³⁹ 107 to discern its own sins, so that through repentance it may be able to purge its own failings (and cut back the occasions of sin by the emendment of vices); 108 then (it even happens that) by comparing itself with those who are worse, it even acquires a certain fantasy of progress.¹⁴⁰

109 Secondly, by reason of (the obstacles and) the tumults and the busy affairs with which the common life (of human beings)¹⁴¹ is usually filled (the soul) is drawn away from the memory of God which is more precious.¹⁴² 110 Then with this memory repulsed and shut out from the soul, it not only suffers the loss of gladness and joy in God and of delight in the Lord 111 and of savouring the sweetness of his words so as to say *I remembered my God and exulted* (Ps. 76: 4) and *Sweeter to my throat are your words, than honey and honeycomb to my mouth* (Ps. 118: 11), 112 but it even becomes accustomed to¹⁴³ complete disdain and forgetfulness of the judgments of God and sinks into habitual contempt, and a greater or more ruinous misfortune than this it is not possible to suffer.

LR 7 (RBas. 3)

That it is necessary to live together with those who have the same goal of pleasing God and that the solitary life is difficult and dangerous.

Q: Since your discourse¹⁴⁴ has convinced¹⁴⁵ us of the danger of living among those who hold the commandments of the Lord (God) in contempt, next we need to learn whether it is better for one who has withdrawn from such society to live privately by himself¹⁴⁶ or to live with brothers of the same mind, that is, who have chosen the same goal of piety?

R: 1. 1 I observe¹⁴⁷ that a life spent in company with those of the

¹³⁹ οὐκ ἄγει καιρὸν ἐπαισθάνεσθαι [sic] . . . RBas. 2. 102 (become preoccupied and hindered from) . . .

¹⁴⁰ RBas. 2. 108: it reckons that it has already made great progress!

¹⁴¹ ὁ κοινὸς βίος, RBas. 2. 109: communis hominum vita.

¹⁴² RBas. 2. 109: the soul is unable to preserve (what is greater and more) precious (than everything else): the memory of God.

¹⁴³ RBas. 2. 112: arrives at.

¹⁴⁴ ἐπληροφόρησεν ὁ λόγος, RBas. 3. Q: sermo tuus.

¹⁴⁵ RBas. 3. Q: shown us . . .

¹⁴⁶ By himself, καθ'ἑαυτὸν, a phrase referring to the 'philosophic' life.

¹⁴⁷ καταμανθάνω—learn, observe, ascertain, discern on examination. RBas.: video, 'I see'. The use of this verb perhaps hints at the maturing of Basil's own thinking on the ascetic life; it took time and discernment, from his early days in an informal type of ascetic life.

same mind (will and purpose)¹⁴⁸ is of greater advantage in many ways.¹⁴⁹

2 First, simply with regard to bodily needs (and livelihood), **not one of us suffices for himself alone, since we have need of each other for the provision of necessities** (of life). **3 For as** (among human beings) **a foot surely has use of its own powers, but is in need of others, and without the help of the other limbs could neither fulfil its own activity nor of itself be sufficient to endure** nor have relief of what is lacking, **4 so also** (this is what happens), it seems to me, **in the solitary life**, (since) **whatever we have is rendered ineffectual and whatever we lack cannot be relieved**, because God the Creator ordained that we have need of each other, as it is written (cf. Gen. 2: 18; Sir. 13: 16; 1 Cor. 12: 25), so that we associate with one another.

5 In addition to this, the very character of Christ's love¹⁵⁰ does not permit an individual to seek his own interests, for Love, says the Apostle, seeks not its own (1 Cor. 13: 4). The life of the individualist,¹⁵¹ however, has one aim, the private service of individual needs. But this is flagrantly at war with the law of love, which the Apostle fulfilled when he *sought not his own advantage but that of the many, that they might be saved* (1 Cor. 10: 33).

6 Furthermore, the individual does not easily recognize his own faults (and vices) in his withdrawal, **for he has no one to reprove him** and set him right with gentleness and compassion. Although rebuke even from an enemy often induces in the well-disposed a desire to be cured, nevertheless, the cure of sin is carried out adeptly by one who has sincerely loved, for *he who loves*, it says, *is diligent in discipline* (Prov. 13: 24). Such a one is difficult to find in solitude, unless one was already united to him in one's earlier way of life¹⁵² **7 and consequently, it can easily happen to him as it is**

¹⁴⁸ τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ τῶν πλείονων διαγωγὴν. *RBas.*: vitam communem ducere cum his qui eiusdem voluntatis sunt ac propositi.

¹⁴⁹ *LR* 7 constitutes one of the strongest arguments for community life over solitary life ever mounted in Christian literature.

¹⁵⁰ καὶ ὁ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ Χριστοῦ λόγος, *RBas.* 3: 5: ratio quidem caritatis.

¹⁵¹ ἀφιδιάστικος βίος. The sense of the prefix ἀπ' is one who goes off alone, or keeps aloof, a separatist. 'Individualist' (Clark) nicely captures a moral register.

¹⁵² μὴ προενωθέντα κατὰ τὸν βίον. *LR* 36 appears to exclude the possibility of leaving the community for a hermit's cell. But is there here a slight hint of concession to the solitary life within certain strict limits? If so, Basil roundly disapproves of going to the solitary life straight from the world. In the context of an ordered Christian community life, armed with long prior training and the indispensable services of an established spiritual supervisor from within the community, the solitary life might just be tolerated. According to *GNaz. Eulogy on S. Basil* 62 and 81,

written: *Woe to one alone, for should he fall there is no one to raise him up* (Eccles. 14: 10).

8 Moreover, the many commandments are more easily fulfilled by many living together, but not at all by one alone, for (it seems a solitary,) in fulfilling one commandment, another is hindered. For example, how do you think that in *visiting the sick he shall also welcome the stranger* (Matt. 25: 35–6)?¹⁵³ And how, in the distribution and sharing of necessities—especially when these services must be carried out at a distance—is zeal in works accomplished? Consequently, from this practice¹⁵⁴ *the greatest commandment* (Mark 12: 31)¹⁵⁵ and that which tends to salvation is bypassed, for neither are the hungry fed nor the naked clothed. Who then would choose such an idle and unfruitful life in preference to the life which is both fruitful and carried out in accordance with the commandment of the Lord?

2. 9 Moreover, if all of us have been gathered up in the one hope to which we were called (Eph. 4: 4), then *we are one body having (of) Christ as head*¹⁵⁶ **and we are each members of the other** (Rom. 12: 5). But if we are not fitted together through our harmony into the solidarity of one body in the Holy Spirit,¹⁵⁷ **10 and each of us chooses the solitary life, not serving the common good in that dispensation which accords with God's good pleasure, but satisfying one's private passion of self-pleasing—11 how could we, thus split off and divided, preserve (and apply to ourselves) that**

Basil found a way of integrating the solitary life within an ordered monastic framework in the Church. The solitary life as something a monk might graduate to from the cenobitic life became a much more accepted prospect in later Greek monasticism (for men). It is also the view of *RB* 1. 3–5, although *RB* 1. 13 goes on to describe cenobites as the 'strongest' kind of monks, a thoroughly Basilian sentiment. *SR* 74 revisits the issue raised here. See Clarke's discussion, 258 n. 1.

¹⁵³ The sense of the Greek seems to be: how can these two commandments be fulfilled simultaneously by one person alone? Rufinus, instead, contrasts the exigencies of solitary living with the imperatives of the social commandments, of which these are two instances: *RBas*, 3. 8: how do you think that one alone shall *visit the sick or welcome the stranger*?

¹⁵⁴ i.e. the life of a solitary.

¹⁵⁵ *Τὴν μεγίστην*, perhaps the reference is to Christ's 'new' commandment: *love one another as I have loved you*, which, Basil argues, can only be fulfilled by life in community, as only the entire community can keep all the commandments. On perfection as collaborative endeavour, see below at *LR* 7. 2, *RBas*. 3. 14 and note, *LR* 26 and note.

¹⁵⁶ *RBas*. 3. 9 cites a little more accurately: *are the one body (of Christ) . . .*

¹⁵⁷ *RBas*. 3. 9–10 reorders the conditional structure: '*. . . members of each other, then we ought to be fitted and joined together through our harmony as in the solidarity of one body in the Holy Spirit. But if each chooses . . .*'

(harmonious) **relation** and service¹⁵⁸ **of the members towards each other**, or the subjection to our head, which is Christ? **12 For in a life thus separated** (and divided from others), **it is impossible either to rejoice with the joyful or weep with those who weep** (cf. Rom. 12: 15) **because each cannot** in all likelihood¹⁵⁹ **ascertain the needs of his neighbour.**

13 Furthermore, no one is sufficient of himself to receive all the spiritual charisms (of the Holy Spirit). **Instead, the supply of the Spirit is given according to the proportion of each one's faith** (cf. Rom. 12: 6), **14** such that, in the communion of life the individual charism becomes the common possession of *fellow-citizens* (cf. Eph. 2: 19).¹⁶⁰ **15 For to one is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge, to another faith, to another prophecy, to another the gift of healings** (1 Cor. 12: 8) and so on. Each of these the recipient has from the Holy Spirit not so much for himself as for others. **16 Therefore** in the community life¹⁶¹ **the activity of the Holy Spirit of God**¹⁶² **in one** passes over to all alike (is brought forth in common). **17 Thus one who lives by himself** (and separated)¹⁶³ **may perhaps have one charism, yet this very charism he renders useless by his idleness, having buried it in himself. 18 The one whose danger this was—and how great a danger!—all you who read the Gospel know** (cf. Matt. 25: 18–25). **19 But** when the many live together, **each enjoys his own gift, even as he multiplies it by**

¹⁵⁸ Here is a Basilian doublet not found in the *RBas.*, unless Rufinus has chosen to translate *σχέσω τε καὶ ὑπηρεσίαν* as an adjective and noun: *integram consonantiam*.

¹⁵⁹ *Κατὰ τὸ εἶκός*. This curious qualification appears only in the Greek.

¹⁶⁰ *Ἐν τῇ τῆς ζωῆς κοινωνίᾳ τὸ ἐκάστον ἴδιον χάρισμα κοινὸν τῶν συμπολιτευομένων γίνεται*. *RBas.* 3. 14: such that what is distributed to each in parts, comes together again and contributes as limbs to the building up of the one body. Clarke 164 aptly comments, 'This very remarkable passage shows that in Basil's view the community as a whole could alone fulfil the Christian ideal. Coenobitism rests in the last resort on this and not on economic or even spiritual advantages accruing to the individual from the presence of companions.' On Basil's teaching that perfection is the combined endeavour of the whole community, see above at the end of *LR* 7. 1 and note, *SR* 26 and note.

¹⁶¹ *τῷ κοινωνικῷ βίῳ*, *RBas.* 3. 16: *Et ideo necesse est uniuscuiusque gratiam quam susceperit ab spiritu dei in commune prodesse*, 'it is necessary that the charism that each receives from the Spirit of God passes over in common'. It is difficult to judge whether Rufinus' 'in commune' translates *τῷ κοινωνικῷ βίῳ* or *εἰς πάντας ὁμοῦ διαβαίνειν*. One or other of the Greek phrases is a later addition; if *τῷ κοινωνικῷ βίῳ*, it reflects a sharper definition of communitarian life.

¹⁶² *RBas.* 3. 16: the charism each one has received from the Spirit of God . . .

¹⁶³ This is Rufinus' rendering of *καθ' ἑαυτὸν ζῶν*.

sharing it (with others), and reaps the fruit of others' gifts, as if they were his own.¹⁶⁴

3. 20 Besides, the common life of a number (of the holy)¹⁶⁵ has many (other) advantages, which are not easily enumerated. 21 For the present, as we said, it is (much) more useful than (our living in) solitude for preserving the good things given us by God,¹⁶⁶ 22 and safer for warding off the insidious attacks of the enemy which come from without, 23 so that one will be more easily woken from sleep by those on watch, should it happen that anyone falls asleep in that slumber which leads to death (cf. Ps. 12: 4), which we have been taught by David to pray may not happen to us, when he said: *Give light to my eyes, lest I fall asleep in death* (Ps. 12: 4). 24 Moreover, it is much easier for the sinner to withdraw from his sin if he fears the condemnation agreed on by the many. In that case there applies to him¹⁶⁷ (in accordance with that saying of the Apostle): *For such a one let the rebuke coming from the many be enough* (2 Cor. 2: 6), while one who acts rightly is greatly reassured when a number approve and together endorse his work. For if *in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall stand* (Matt. 18: 16), then manifestly, he who accomplishes a good work is confirmed much more surely by the testimony of the many.

25 Moreover, in prayer no small gain is engendered by a number praying together with one mind and heart, with the result that from many persons,¹⁶⁸ through the grace which is in us, thanks are rendered to God.

26 But there is a danger for the solitary life in addition to what has been said.¹⁶⁹ **The first and paramount danger** (which lies close at hand and is without doubt) **is that of self-pleasing.**¹⁷⁰ **For such a one, having no one able to test his work, will seem to himself to have arrived at the highest perfection** of the commandment.

27 **The second is this, that by having shut away his character**

¹⁶⁴ *RBas.* 3. 19: . . . and he himself is no less benefited by the charism of others; 'benefited' †proditur† ES *3. 1 this *lectio difficilior*, an impersonal verb following a subject 'ipse', is found in two of the earliest codices. Zelzer asks: 'by mistake for the passive form of "prodesse"?' proficiet CGLW, fruitur HJMTZ Hol., perfruitur P.

¹⁶⁵ *RBas.* 3. 20: communis vita ista sanctorum.

¹⁶⁶ *RBas.* 3. 21: For the present, as we have said, it contributes much more to fostering the gifts of the Holy Spirit than does the spending of our life in solitude.

¹⁶⁷ *RBas.* 3. 24: And his offence is more readily brought home to an offender when it is reprimanded (and marked) by the many.

¹⁶⁸ *RBas.* 3. 20: ut ex plurimorum personis.

¹⁶⁹ τῆ μοναστικῆ ζωῆ, *RBas.* 3. 26: vita solitaria. See above at *LR* 3 (*RBas.* 2. 61) and note.

¹⁷⁰ Πρώτος μὲν καὶ μέγιστος ὁ τῆς ἀνταρσεκείας.

without (any) training¹⁷¹ he will neither recognize his defects (that abound in him, nor how he is lacking in virtue), 28 nor (be able to) ascertain his progress in works,¹⁷² because he is stripped of all material for the accomplishment of the commandments.

4. 29 For in what way shall he put his humility to the proof if he has no one before whom he must show himself humble? In what way shall he show compassion who is cut off from the communion (and society) of the many?¹⁷³ 30 How indeed shall he exercise himself in patience, if there is no one (who seems) to thwart his wishes? 31 But if anyone says that he has enough for the amendment (and betterment) of his ways¹⁷⁴ in the teaching of the divine¹⁷⁵ scriptures (and the apostolic precepts), 32 then he seems to me (to make himself like those who are ever learning the technique of a craft, but never put their craft to work 33 or) is like one who learns how to build but never builds anything, or like one being taught the smith's craft but who will not put the lessons into practice.¹⁷⁶ To such a one the Apostle would say: *It is not the hearers of the law who are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified* (Rom. 2: 13).

34 For behold how the Lord in his exceeding love for men did not deem sufficient the mere teaching of the word, but in order to hand on to us accurately and in very deed an example of humility in the perfection of love, *having girded himself with a linen cloth, washed the feet of his own disciples* (John 13: 5). 35 Whose feet then will you wash? For whom will you perform the duties of care? In comparison with whom shall you be (lower or even) the last, if you live by yourself? 36 Yes, and the saying, *A good and delightful thing it is when brothers dwell in unity*, which the Holy Spirit compares to the high-priestly *anointing flowing down from the head upon the beard* (Ps. 132: 1-2), how shall this be fulfilled through dwelling in solitude?

¹⁷¹ ἀγύμναστον, *RBas.* 3. 27: spending his life without any training (degens sine ullo exercitio).

¹⁷² *RBas.* 3. 28: discern the character of his work.

¹⁷³ τῆς κοινωνίας τῶν πλειόνων, *RBas.* 3. 29 uses a doublet: totius consortii et societatis alienus, 'estranged from all fellowship and society'.

¹⁷⁴ τῶν ἡθῶν, *RBas.* 3. 21: life. What Basil opposes, is not that the Scriptures do not contain sufficient doctrine, but that they should be cosseted in solitude, untested by community.

¹⁷⁵ θείων, 'divine', lacking in Ask. 4.

¹⁷⁶ *RBas.* 3. 32-3: he seems to me to make himself like those who are ever learning the technique of a craft, but never put their craft into practice, 33 or like those, for example, who are always being taught the art of masons, yet never acquit themselves of the work needed for the building of a house.

37 For here is a kind of stadium for the contest, a good course on which to advance, a continual training, and a practising of the Lord's commandments¹⁷⁷—**this is the dwelling together of brothers in unity** (among themselves) (Ps. 132: 1). Its goal is the glory of God according to the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ who said: *Let your light so shine before human beings that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 5: 16), **38 and it preserves the character** (and example) **of what was reported of the saints in the Acts of the Apostles, of whom it is written:**¹⁷⁸ **39 All the believers were of one mind and held all things in common** (Acts 2: 44) and again: *And the multitude of believers were of one heart and soul; and not one of them said that anything he possessed was his own; but they held all things in common* (Acts 4: 32).¹⁷⁹

LR 8 (RBas. 4. 1–17)

On renunciation.

Q: Is it necessary first to renounce everything and then come to (this life or) **the way of life**¹⁸⁰ **according to God?**

R: 1. 1 Since our Lord Jesus Christ, after much demonstration, confirmed by many deeds, **says to all: If anyone comes to me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me** (Matt. 16: 24), **2 and again, Whoever does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be my disciple** (Luke 14: 33), we consider that this summons involves a necessary estrangement from many things. For indeed, before all else we renounce the devil¹⁸¹ and the cravings of the flesh—we who have rejected the hidden things of shame—and bodily relationships and human friendships and any manner of life at war with the strict way of the Gospel of salvation. And, what is still more necessary, one who has *put off the old man with his works*

¹⁷⁷ RBas. 3. 37 structures the phrases differently: in which progress is made through training (in virtue); in which care for the divine commandments (shines out more fully and becomes resplendent).

¹⁷⁸ RBas. 3. 38: maintaining in itself the likeness and example of the saints which the divine Scripture records in the Acts of the Apostles, where it says: . . .

¹⁷⁹ These scriptural texts, together with Acts 4: 35, govern Basil's conception of the Christian life as intrinsically communitarian; see also LR 32. 1, 34. 1, 35. 2, SR 85 (RBas. 29. 1), 93, 131 (RBas. 91. 3), 135 (RBas. 94. 3), 148 (RBas. 111. 2), 183, 187 (RBas. 31. 5), 252 (added after the Small Asketikon).

¹⁸⁰ RBas. 4. Q: hanc vitam vel conversationem—Rufinus' doublet for the Greek: πολιτεία, i.e. the concrete *praxis* of life in community.

¹⁸¹ Καὶ γὰρ τῷ διαβόλῳ πρὸ πάντων ἀποτασσόμεθα, RBas. 4. 4: ab his qui prima confessione initiantur fieri solet; i.e. the culmination of the exorcisms of the catechuminate in the personal abjurations of the devil at baptism.

(Col. 3:9) *which is being corrupted by illusory desires* (Eph. 4:22), renounces his own self. And he also renounces all those *cares of the world* (1 Cor. 7:33) that can hinder the goal of piety.¹⁸²

7 Consequently, such a one will deem as his true parents those who begot him in Christ Jesus through the Gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 4:15) and as his brothers, those who have received the same *spirit of adoption* (Rom. 8:15), but all possessions he will regard as foreign to him, which indeed they are. **8** If I may put it briefly, how could one, to whom for Christ's sake, *the whole world is crucified and he to the world* (cf. Gal. 6:14) have part in the (thoughts and) *the cares of the world* (1 Cor. 7:33),¹⁸³ when the Lord bade that for his sake, he should deny even *his own life* (Luke 14:26)?¹⁸⁴ For our Lord Jesus Christ leads us to the uttermost¹⁸⁵ in hatred of the soul and denial of one's own self when he says: *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross*; at which point he added: *And let him follow me* (Matt. 16:24). Again: *If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple* (Luke

¹⁸² *RBas.* 4. 3–6: **3** whoever comes to the point that he would follow the Lord, let him deny himself indeed and take up his cross; for surely, he has already renounced beforehand the devil and his works. **4** This, after all, is what is normally done, not by those who have made progress in the life—by those, that is, already striving toward perfection—but by those being initiated in their first confession. **5** But at this point let a man renounce, as we said above, even his own self, that is, his former habits and way of life, **6** and let him also renounce his own ways and the delights of this world, yes and even the bodily kinship of blood and those things which can especially hinder his purpose.

The arguments of *LR* 8. 1 and *RBas.* 4. 3–6 are somewhat discordant. *Matt.* 16:24, redundant in *RBas.* 4. 3a, is absent in *LR* 8; most importantly *RBas.* 4. 4 presents Christian renunciation in two distinct stages: baptism and commitment to the ascetic life. The Greek text presents the Christian life in a more integral perspective, in accord with Basil's normal mode of thought. Christian asceticism takes its rise from the renunciation of Satan in baptism. See Gribomont, 'Le Renoncement au monde', 295–6. On this view Rufinus may seem to be adapting his text for the more developed monasticism at the end of the century.

Yet Gribomont (*Histoire*, 244–5) points out that the Syriac translation of these verses also makes more of a distinction between the beginner's 'abc' of the commandments, on the one hand, and perfection, on the other, and concludes that Rufinus' version corresponds more closely to Basil's original thought. In support, see *LR* 4 (*RBas.* 2. 70–3), where Basil makes a distinction between beginners, and those advancing to perfection.

¹⁸³ Reg. sec. and tert.: *δοῦλος εἶναι τῶν μερῶν τοῦ κόσμου*, 'be a slave to the world's concerns'. *RBas.* 4. 8 reflects a *δοῦλος* text: become a slave to the (thoughts and) *the cares of the world*.

¹⁸⁴ It seems that here the Greek text takes up the brief sharp contrast of *RBas.* 4. 8 and elaborates it, bringing in a fuller citation of Scripture already alluded to.

¹⁸⁵ *εἰς ἄκρον προόγοντος*, leads us 'to extremes', as it were.

14: 26). **9 Thus perfect renunciation consists in truly achieving freedom from attachment especially as to this life,**¹⁸⁶ and in *bearing the sentence of death* (2 Cor. 1: 9), so that one puts no trust in oneself. **10 But one begins to do this first by the renunciation of external things, such as possessions and empty glory,** the customary manner of life and attachment to useless things (and other similar things, so that one becomes a stranger to them from the outset).

11 Indeed, this is what the Apostles James and John taught when they left their own father Zebedee and the very boat they were in (cf. Matt. 4: 21–2). **12 And Matthew too (left and) rose up even from the tax office and followed the Lord (cf. Matt. 9: 9). He not only left behind the profit from tax-gathering, but also paid no heed to the danger** **13 which might come on him from the princes of this world for having left his tax-gathering accounts** (unfinished and) **in disarray.** **14** Thus he was led by a longing¹⁸⁷ to follow the Lord, so that he did not retain a concern for anything whatever to do with this life or a thought for himself. And there is Paul also, he *to whom the whole world was crucified and he to the world* (Gal. 6: 14).

2. 15 Thus when anyone is seized by an intense longing to follow Christ¹⁸⁸ **he is no longer able to care for anything to do with this life, or look to the affection of parents or relatives whenever it is opposed to the Lord's precepts—for in such a case the saying applies:**¹⁸⁹ **16 And therefore if anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters and his own life too, he cannot be my disciple (Luke 14: 26)—or look to any other human fear,** if by this he is turned aside from any part of what he ought to do,¹⁹⁰ which saints confirmed when they said: *It is better to obey God rather than men* (Acts 5: 29), or to the ridicule of good works by outsiders, so as to be intimidated by their scorn.

But if anyone wishes to gain a more accurate and clear idea of the

¹⁸⁶ ἐν τῷ τὸ ἀπροσπαθέσ καταρθῶσαι καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ ζῆν, *RBas.* 4. 9: that he should be utterly free of passions while still in the body.

¹⁸⁷ *RBas.* 4. 14: cupiditate. Basil appears to have redeployed this very characteristic sentence (free of any Rufinian doublet) two sentences later.

¹⁸⁸ ὁ σφόδρα τῇ ἐπιθυμίᾳ τοῦ ἀκολουθεῖν Χριστῷ.

¹⁸⁹ *RBas.* 4. 15: Moreover, that no one should look back either to the affection of parents, if they oppose themselves to the Lord's precepts, or to any human delight (if he is hindered thereby from what he has proposed to do), the Lord teaches us, saying . . .

¹⁹⁰ Add *RBas.* 4. 17 (And there is another like this where he says that one *should deny oneself* (Matt. 16: 24).)

tension yoked to desire¹⁹¹ of those who follow the Lord let him recall the words of the Apostle concerning himself, spoken for our instruction: *If any man thinks to put trust in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the race of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law a Pharisee; as to zeal, persecuting the Church; as to the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless. But whatever gains I had, these I have deemed a loss, because of Christ. And indeed, I deem all things a loss but for the exceeding worth of knowing Christ Jesus our Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of everything and deem them all dung, if only I may gain Christ* (Phil. 3: 4–8).

Now let me say something daring but true. If the Apostle likened the privileges given for a season by God in the Law to the excreta of the body which disgust us and which we quickly dispose of; if he thinks of them as hindrances to the knowledge of Christ and that righteousness which is in him and conformation to his death, whatever is one to say about merely human regulations?

Besides, what need have we to make the word more persuasive by our own arguments or even by the examples of the saints, when we can bring to bear the very words of the Lord and by their means put the timorous soul to shame. His testimony is clear and unanswerable in these words: *So therefore, whoever among you does not renounce all that he has, cannot be my disciple* (Luke 14: 33). And elsewhere, after saying: *If you would be perfect*, he adds first: *Go, sell what you have and give to the poor*, and then concludes with: *Come, follow me* (Matt. 19: 21). It is also clear to anyone of good disposition that the parable of the merchant bears the same meaning. *The kingdom of heaven it says, is like to a merchant seeking fine pearls: who when he had found a single pearl of great value, went off and sold all that he had and bought it* (cf. Matt. 13: 45–6). Clearly the precious pearl is used as an example of the heavenly Kingdom, which the Lord's word shows¹⁹² we cannot attain, unless in order to gain it we have first given in exchange for it all our possessions alike¹⁹³—riches, glory, family,¹⁹⁴ and whatever else is so keenly admired by the many.

3. Moreover, the Lord declared that it is impossible to attain one's

¹⁹¹ *τόνον*, physical or mental energy, tension, force, metaphorically the tenor of one's course, was part of the Stoic vocabulary, e.g. Cleanthes 1. 128.

¹⁹² *ὁ τοῦ Κυρίου δείκνυσι λόγος*.

¹⁹³ *πάντα ὁμοῦ τὰ προσόντα ἡμῶν*.

¹⁹⁴ *καὶ πλοῦτον, καὶ δόξαν, καὶ γένος*. Basil is staunchly opposed to the social kudos of wealth, civic glory, and blood, i.e. pride of birth, family, or ethnicity. With him, the Gospel and baptismal life taken seriously in all its dimensions is the seed of a new social order operating 'from within', from personal conversion and communitarian *praxis*.

goal if the mind is divided among various cares, saying; *No man can serve two masters*, and again, *You cannot serve both God and mammon* (Matt. 6: 24). Therefore, we need to choose one treasure only, a heavenly one, that there we may have our heart also. *For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* (Matt. 6: 21). So if we keep in reserve for ourselves some earthly possession or some corruptible superfluity, then the mind is buried, as it were, in the mud, and the soul is of necessity opaque to God¹⁹⁵ and insensible to the desire for the heavenly beauties and the good things laid up for us in the promises. It is impossible for us to attain the possession of these things unless an undistracted and intense yearning leads us to ask for them and lightens the labour for them.

Renunciation then, as the word has shown, is a loosening from the chains of this material and fleeting life, an emancipation from human ties,¹⁹⁶ which renders us better prepared to set out on the road to God. It is an unfettered impetus towards gaining and enjoying something very precious, something *more to be desired than gold and very precious stone* (Ps. 18: 11). In short, it is the migration of the human heart to the citizenship of heaven so that we can say, *But as for us, our citizenship is in heaven* (Phil. 3: 20).

But most important of all, renunciation is the beginning of our becoming like Christ,¹⁹⁷ *Who though he was rich, yet for our sake became poor* (2 Cor. 8: 9). Indeed if we have not accomplished this, it is impossible that we should attain that way of life which is according to the Gospel of Christ. For how can contrition of heart, or a humble disposition, or deliverance from anger, grief, anxieties, and, in brief, all the destructive passions of the soul, be achieved amid the riches and the cares of this life, amid entanglement and habitual preoccupation with other matters?

Finally, what species of logic would permit one who is not allowed to be anxious even about matters of necessity such as food and clothing (cf. Matt. 6: 25), to be retarded by the baleful cares of wealth, as by thorns which prevent the seed sown by the Tiller of our souls from bearing fruit? For our Lord says: *But the seed sown among the thorns, these are they who are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life and their fruit does not mature* (Luke 8: 14).

¹⁹⁵ ἀθέατον Θεοῦ, lit. 'invisible to/unable to be seen by God'; i.e. effectively cut itself off from any divine influence.

¹⁹⁶ ἐλευθερία δὲ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων καθηκόντων.

¹⁹⁷ ἀρχὴ τῆς πρὸς Χριστὸν ὁμοιώσεως.

LR 9 (RBas. 5. 1–9)

Q: **Should one** (who wishes to) **joining himself to those** dedicated to the Lord¹⁹⁸ **relinquish his property to his relatives indifferently,** even to the underserving?¹⁹⁹

R: **1. 1** **Since the Lord says: Sell your possessions and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven, and come follow me (Matt. 19: 21) and again: Sell all that you have and give alms (Luke 18: 22), 2** We (I) **consider that one who** is forsaking his own for such a goal,²⁰⁰ **ought not to take a casual attitude towards** (and relinquish) **his property** (as he pleases). **3** **Rather he should** (as far as possible), try to **keep a** (most) **careful account of everything, since from now on it is consecrated to the Lord, and he should administer it** with all piety (rationally) as far as it can be done, aware that one does not *carry out the work of God carelessly* (Jer. 48: 10) without peril.²⁰¹ Let him do this either personally, if he has the capacity and experience, or through those who have been chosen for the work after extensive testing and have given proof of their capacity for trustworthy and wise administration.

He must realize that it is not without peril either to relinquish it to his relatives or to administer it simply through anyone at all. For if he who was entrusted with the care of the King's possessions was not absolved of blame, though he did not repeatedly filch from the store, but merely lost by neglect the interest he might have added (cf. Matt. 25: 24–8), what condemnation do we suppose they can expect who have been frivolous and careless in the administration of what is already dedicated to the Lord? Are they not liable to the condemnation of the careless, in accord with what is written: *cursed is every one who does the works of the Lord carelessly* (Jer. 48: 10).

2. We must always be on our guard lest under pretext of keeping one commandment, we are found breaking another. For it is not fitting that we should either fight or wrangle with those of ill-will, since *a servant of the Lord should not fight* (2 Tim. 2: 24). **4** **But** one who is coldly treated by **his kin** according to the flesh **should remember what the Lord says:**²⁰² **5** **There is no one who has left**

¹⁹⁸ RBas. 5. Q: join himself to the servants of God.

¹⁹⁹ ἀγνώμοσι, ungrateful, insensitive, incompetent. For Basil on administration of property, see also SR 85, 92, 94, 187, 304, 305, 308, *Morals* 31.

²⁰⁰ RBas. 5. 2: comes to the service of God.

²⁰¹ Basil takes a cue from the simple citation of Jeremiah in the earlier version, inserts comments on negligent administration, before rounding off with the same text.

²⁰² RBas. 5. 4: But if his relatives (or even his parents) should come out against (the faith), in such a case he ought to remember what the Lord says . . .

house or brothers or father or mother or wife or children or fields, and not simply that, but *for my sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold in this present time and in the world to come eternal life* (Mark 10: 29–30 + Luke 18: 29–30). 6 We should certainly warn those of ill-will 7 of the sin of sacrilege,²⁰³ according to the commandment of the Lord who says *If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault and so on* (Matt. 18: 15).

8 But the word of piety²⁰⁴ forbids us to bring these matters to trial before the lawcourts of outsiders,²⁰⁵ concerning which it says: *If any man would go to contend with you at law and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also* (Matt. 5: 40), and (by that saying of the Apostle): *Does any of you, having a grievance against another dare to go to court before the unrighteous instead of before the saints?* (1 Cor. 6: 1) 9 and again:²⁰⁶ *it is already a thorough defeat for you, that you have litigation among yourselves at all* (1 Cor. 6: 7).²⁰⁷

So let it be before the latter²⁰⁸ that we summon them to trial, more with concern for our brother's salvation than for the full amount of our money. For when the Lord said: *If he listens to you*, he added, *you have gained* not your money, but *your brother* (Matt. 18: 15). But sometimes, if the author of the disagreement himself repeatedly challenges us to public arbitration, we agree to the inquest in order to have the truth brought out. We do not take the initiative ourselves, but go along with the summons, not to satisfy a private passion of anger or contentiousness, but to manifest the truth. In this way we shall extricate even our aggressor from evils, unwilling though he be, and shall not break the commandments ourselves, being as ministers of God *free from strife and covetousness* (cf. 1 Tim. 3: 3), firmly insisting on the manifestation of the truth and in no way overstepping the prescribed limits of zeal.

²⁰³ *RBas.* 5. 6–7: 6 But he should certainly take action on behalf of the faith and protest to (and denounce) those who refuse what belongs to him, 7 since they incur a sin of sacrilege, . . .

²⁰⁴ ὁ τῆς θεοσεβείας λόγος, which Garnier translates as 'sermo pietatis'. *RBas.* 5. 8: religionis auctoritas, as if in the sense, 'the principle of piety'.

²⁰⁵ ἐπὶ δικαστηρίων ἕξωτικῶν, *RBas.* 5. 8: apud iudices saeculi, 'before secular judges'.

²⁰⁶ Et rursum quia; almost transparently the characteristic καὶ πάλιν ὅτι.

²⁰⁷ The omission of this second passage from 1 Cor. 6 in the Greek text, bears the mark of Basil's editorial work. Such a text too pointedly discountenanced *all* litigation and he is just about to revise his earlier position and detail the circumstances in which he thinks piety might, in fact, condone involvement in public litigation.

²⁰⁸ i.e. the saints, arbitrators from within the Church, probably clergy. See also *SR* 187.

LR 10 (RBas. 6. 1-11)²⁰⁹

Q: Should we accept all who apply (to us), or only some? And should they be admitted immediately, or only after probation and what kind (of probation ought that to be)?²¹⁰

R: 1. 1 Since our loving God and Saviour Jesus Christ (invites everyone)²¹¹ proclaims and declares: *Come to me all you who labour and are burdened and I will refresh you* (Matt. 11: 28), we do not reject without a risk those coming to (us) the Lord through us and who wish to take on his *easy yoke* and the *burden* of his commandments that *lightens* us up to heaven (cf. Matt. 11: 30).²¹²

2 Yet, unwashed feet (as they say) are not to be permitted to enter upon the holy ground of the teachings (cf. John 13: 8).²¹³ 3 Just as our Lord Jesus Christ questioned the young man who came to him concerning his former life and having learned that it was conducted uprightly, bade him complete what was still lacking to perfection and only then invited him to follow him, 4 so then we also should inquire concerning their foregoing (habits and) manner of life, lest it happen that someone comes to us with a deceiving mind and a false motive.²¹⁴ 5 Thus let it be discerned over time whether he readily carries out every bodily labour enjoined on him and inclines himself assiduously to a more disciplined life 6 or if he is questioned about some shortcoming of his, whether he is not at all put out to declare it and when a remedy for his fault is assigned, whether he gladly accepted it 7 and whether with all humility, without any sense of disgrace he inclines himself to the more menial and lowlier tasks, if reason so requires, and will not allow himself to submit disdainfully. 8 When therefore, it has been shown by each of these proofs that he is of a firm mind and stable purpose and prompt disposition, he ought then to be received.

²⁰⁹ While retaining identifiable links, LR 10 so heavily recasts the text of RBas. 6, that the two texts are placed one after the other.

²¹⁰ On the procedure for receiving candidates, see also LR 15, SR 97, 112; Cassian, *Institutes* 4. 3; RB 58.

²¹¹ loving—*φιλανθρώπου*, RBas. 6. 1: Since the loving-kindness (clementia) of God invites everyone in that proclamation which says . . .

²¹² Is it possible that Rufinus has omitted the Greek word-play on the Scripture just quoted?

²¹³ τῆς σεμνότητος ἐπιβαίνειν τῶν διδαγμάτων, ‘tread the hallowed ground of these precepts’ (Clarke), RBas. 6. 2: introire quempiam in sancta doctrinae, enter upon the holy things of the teaching—in S only, clearly reflecting the Greek text; sancta doctrina CH; sanctae doctrinae T; sanctam doctrinam (the easiest reading, ‘enter upon the sacred doctrine/teaching’) GJLMPWZ Hol. *2. 1.

²¹⁴ RBas. 6. 4: simulata quis mente et fallaci animo accedat ad nos.

9 Yet before he is brought into the body of the community²¹⁵ he ought to have enjoined on him arduous tasks which are regarded by the worldly as disreputable²¹⁶ 10 and it ought to be observed whether he freely and generously and faithfully fulfils them and has no great difficulty in putting up with the unpleasantness of them, 11 and even whether he be found energetic and prompt to carry them out.

To those who have already led an upright life we shall deliver the more perfect teachings; but if they are turning from an evil life or have set out on the strict life of the acknowledgement of God²¹⁷ from a state of indifference, then we must discern their characters, whether they are unstable and easily swayed in their decisions.²¹⁸

2. For we must be wary of the fickleness of such people, who not only fail to benefit themselves but are a source of harm to others as well, by the criticisms and lies and evil slanders they spread about our work.²¹⁹ Nevertheless, since all things are remedied by diligent care, and the fear of God masters all kinds of defects in the soul, we should not immediately despair even of these. We should direct them into suitable forms of discipline and test their resolution through time and strenuous labours, so that if we do discover some steadying effect in them, they may be safely admitted. Otherwise they should be sent away while they are still outside²²⁰ and the test will not have been to the detriment of the community.

We must ascertain whether a man who has previously fallen into sins is willing to confess the hidden things of shame without

²¹⁵ *RBas.* 6. 9: corpori fraternitatis inferatur; cf. *RB* 61. 6: sociari corpori monasterii.

²¹⁶ *RBas.* 6. 9: quae videantur opprobrio. Cf. *RB* 58. 7: si sollicitus est . . . ad opprobria—the context is identical: the testing of applicants; see Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 256, no. 6, and A. de Vogüé, ‘Twenty-five Years of Benedictine Hermeneutics’, *American Benedictine Review* 36 (1985), 410, n. 25.

²¹⁷ τῆς θεογνωσίας.

²¹⁸ πρὸς τὰς κρίσεις ἐκκίνητοι.

²¹⁹ It is possible that Basil’s new emphasis on this point comes from personal experience, e.g. his shock to find that ‘brothers’ sent to his household in the early 370s by Eustathius of Sebasteia, acted rather as spies and slanderers. See Letter 224, Def. III. 297.

²²⁰ Ἐξω ὄντας. Evidently candidates do not live within the community during their probation, but separately in other quarters, coming in through the day to carry out tasks as required, similar to the arrangements for children in *LR* 15. See also *LR* 15. 4, where after profession the new member is brought in ‘to share the same house and way of life with the more perfect’.

shame²²¹ and become his own accuser (cf. Prov. 18: 17), at the same time, both putting to shame and repudiating his collaborators in evil doing, according to the words of the Psalmist, *Depart from me all you who do evil* (Ps. 6: 9) and securing his life in the future from a relapse into passions of that kind. There is a common means of testing all: whether they are disposed to undergo every humiliation without shame, so that they accept even the most menial tasks, if reason judges their performance as useful.²²² After each candidate has been fully examined by those able to skilfully look into such matters and has been approved as *a vessel . . . useful for the Master*, so to speak, *and ready for every good work* (2 Tim. 2: 21), let him be numbered with those who have dedicated themselves to the Lord.

But it is especially necessary when someone of higher social rank aspires to humility in the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ, to prescribe for him some task that is reckoned particularly distasteful to those outside and to observe whether *he presents himself to God* with full assurance *as a worker who has no need to be ashamed* (2 Tim. 2: 15).

LR 11

Concerning slaves.²²³

R: Slaves still under the yoke who take refuge in the communities²²⁴

²²¹ Ἀνεπαισχόντως. There is a word-play here, i.e. without the embarrassment or 'shame' which betray a lack of candour and spiritual honesty; similarly a few lines later. On confession 'without shame' see also *SR* 220 and note. According to Basil, a sure remedy for sins of unchastity referred to here is moral transparency (yet prudently, in the right forum—see *LR* 26). In this way, all scope for the growth of false shame, furtiveness, and secrecy is cut off.

²²² Ἐὰν τὴν ἐκείνων ἐργασίαν χρήσιμον εἶναι ὁ λόγος, confirmed by *RBas.*: si ita ratio poposcerit. Does this mean that the candidate may invoke a criterion of private 'reasonableness' or common sense over orders received? *LR* 41. 1 discounts such an idea. ὁ λόγος refers either to the (scriptural) 'word' or to 'reason'. At any rate, it is quite clear that Basil rules out the use of 'staged' humiliations, i.e. the imposing of tasks nonsensical in themselves, having no relation to the community's welfare.

²²³ On slaves see Gangra, Preamble 6 and Canon 3, *Morals* 75. 1–2, GNaz. Letter 79, Jerome, Letter 82. Council of Chalcedon, Canon 4 forbids the reception of slaves without their master's consent. See *Elm* 85–7 for an excursus on slavery and manumission in the 4th cent. and especially n. 25 for bibliography. *Elm* concludes that in the 4th cent. 'the foundations of slavery as such were never seriously challenged' (87). See now Richard Klein, *Die Haltung der kappadokischen Bischöfe Basilius von Caesarea, Gregor von Nazianz und Gregor von Nyssa zur Sklaverei* (Stuttgart, 2000).

Cf. *RB* 2. 18, 20 where all secular distinctions of rank are to cease on entrance into the community. When Theodore of Canterbury, *Poen.* 8 says: 'Graecorum monachi servos non habent, Romani habent'—the Greek monks do not have slaves, but the Latins do, 'have slaves' means 'accept' slaves as equal members of the monastic community.

²²⁴ ἀδελφότησι.

should be cautioned and restored to their masters in a better state of mind. In so doing we imitate the blessed Paul, who, though he had *begotten* Onesimus (Philem. 10) *through the Gospel* (1 Cor. 4: 15), nevertheless sent him back to Philemon, assuring the slave that the yoke of slavery borne in a manner well pleasing to the Lord would render him worthy of the Kingdom of heaven. Yet he also exhorted the master not only to desist from his threat against Onesimus, remembering what his true Lord said: *If you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses* (Matt. 6: 14), but to adopt kindlier dispositions towards him. Thus he wrote: *For perhaps he was parted from you for a season, that you should have him back for ever, no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother* (Philem. 15–16).

However, if he is a base type of master, giving lawless commands and forcing the slave to transgress the commandment of the true Master, our Lord Jesus Christ, then it is necessary to put up a fight²²⁵ that the name of God may not be blasphemed through that slave's doing anything displeasing to God. This will consist in preparing that slave to endure the sufferings that will be inflicted on him if he *is to obey God rather than man*, as it is written (Acts 5: 29), or in the acceptance by those who have received him of the troubles that may come upon them on his account, as it pleases God.

LR 12

Q: How are the married²²⁶ to be received?

²²⁵ ἀγωνίζεσθαι χροή.

²²⁶ Τοὺς ἐν συζυγίᾳ, i.e. spouses. With Basil, there was no question of condemnation of marriage in principle, as with Encratites and other hyperascetics. Yet the developments in the theology of marriage and family life called forth by the breakdown of marriage and the family during the late 20th cent. were not available to him, though his own theology of communion might have pointed a way. Basil had little concept of a neat distinction between evangelical 'counsels' and 'precepts' (cf. *Morals* 70. 8 and *On Renunciation*, PG 31. 625–48 at 628C, Clarke 61), teaching that there was only 'one way' for all Christians (i.e. the baptized)—see LR 20. 2 and note. Consequently, he considered that texts such as Luke 14. 20, 26 (quoted), and 18: 29 were addressed expressly to all Christians, and assumed in practice that the 'narrow way' of celibacy would at least weigh seriously with anyone beginning to seek Gospel perfection (= adult baptizands).

In *Introductory Sketch of the Ascetic Life*, PG 31. 619–26 at 621B, Basil exhorts: 'Set before you a life without home, city, or possessions. Be free and loosed from all worldly cares, in case desire for a wife enchain you, or the care of a child . . . Seek neither to leave behind children on the earth—but to lead them up to Heaven, not to be joined in bodily unions (γάμοις)—but to strive after spiritual ones instead, to

R: Those under the yoke of marriage²²⁷ who approach such a life need to be questioned whether they are doing this *with mutual consent* (1 Cor. 7: 5)²²⁸ in accordance with the Apostle's command. *Since he does not have power*, he says, *over his own body* (cf. 1 Cor. 7: 4). If such is the case, let the applicant be received before a number of witnesses. For nothing should be preferred to obedience to God.

But if the other party, caring little for pleasing God, holds aloof and puts up a fight,²²⁹ then let the Apostle's words be remembered: *God has called us in peace* (1 Cor. 7: 15) and let that precept of the Lord be fulfilled where he says, *If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and so on, he cannot be my disciple* (Luke 14: 26). For nothing should be preferred to obedience to God.

However, we have known many cases²³⁰ in which through earnest prayer and assiduous fasting the goal of living a life of chastity²³¹ has

have sway over souls and to beget children spiritually. Imitate the heavenly Bridegroom . . .'. There is very similar teaching in *Hom. addressed to the rich* 7, PG 31. 277–304 at 277D where Basil castigates the married who excuse the pursuit of wealth 'for the sake of their children'.

In *On Renunciation* (PG 31. 629A) Basil insists that the call to Gospel perfection applies as much to the baptized who choose marriage as to monks: 'Then do you think the Gospels apply to those with a wife? Look, it has been made clear to you that we shall all have to give an account of our obedience to the Gospel, both monks and those who are married. The only concession (*συγγνώμη*, 1 Cor. 7: 6) to one who has entered into marriage will be the lack of self-control (*ἀκρασία*, 1 Cor. 7: 5) in his desire for and intercourse with the female. But the other commands have been laid down for all alike . . . For when Christ proclaimed the Gospel of the Father's commands, he was addressing those in the world . . . Do not slacken then, you who have chosen communion with a wife (*κοινωνίαν γυναικός*), as if you had some kind of right to embrace the world.'

²²⁷ τοὺς ἐν συζυγίᾳ δὲ γάμου. Since Basil was dealing with communities comprising both men and women, Clarke unwisely over-translated: 'Married men who want to be admitted to such a life as ours must be questioned whether their action is approved by their wives'. In fact, the Greek is plural and generic. It encompasses the case of either a married man or woman—or, preferably both together—applying for acceptance into the community. They may even bring their children with them; all will be housed appropriately (LR 15. 1 and note). In *Introductory Sketch of the Ascetic Life*, PG 31. 625B Basil hints at such an all-inclusive approach when he exhorts both 'the fathers of sons' and the 'mothers of daughters': 'Let us present to the Lord what He has given us, that we may become partakers of the fair fame of our children, bringing and presenting ourselves along with them [my emphasis].'

²²⁸ Ἐκ συμφώνου, following the NT text, which should be read in close conjunction with the argument of this response.

²²⁹ Εἰ δὲ διαστασιάξοι τὸ ἕτερον μέρος, καὶ διαμάχοιτο.

²³⁰ See LR 5. 1.

²³¹ τὸν σκοπὸν τῆς ἐν ἀγγείᾳ ζωῆς περιγερόμενον.

been attained, since as a result of bodily necessity the Lord often leads the obstinate to concur in the right decision.²³²

LR 13

That training in silence²³³ is useful for newcomers.

R: Training in silence is indeed of value to newcomers, because if they control the tongue, they will both give sufficient proof of self-control (cf. Jas. 3: 2–3) and they will learn quietly, eagerly, and without distraction, from those who make use of the word with knowledge (cf. 2 Tim. 2: 15; Heb. 5: 13), how they ought to ask questions and how to answer in each case. For there is a tone of voice and a measured speech and a fittingness to the occasion and a particular vocabulary which are characteristic and distinctive of the pious, which can only be learned by one who has unlearned his former habits. Now silence both induces forgetfulness of the past through an interval of respite and affords the leisure to learn good habits.

Accordingly, unless someone is constrained either by a personal need concerning the care of his own soul, or the unavoidable necessity of the work he has in hand, or by some question that is put to him, he must keep silence—except, of course, for the psalmody.

LR 14 (*RBas.* 7. 14–15)

Concerning those who have dedicated themselves to God and then attempt to annul their profession.

²³² The response as it stands strains to coordinate obedience to 1 Cor. 7: 4–6 and Luke 14: 26; note the strangely duplicated sentence. Has there been some scribal diplography? Garnier (*PG* 31. 949 n. 85) interprets the last words of the response to mean that admittance of a married candidate whose spouse was unwilling was only conditional, dependent on the permission of the other spouse forthcoming before profession, the hope being that in the interval the unwilling spouse might relent and give consent, which Basil says he has seen happen. Clarke, on the other hand, interprets it to mean that reception was unconditional, despite the lack of consent. But this would be tantamount to that break-up of marriage by the unilateral choice of celibacy condemned by the Council of Gangra (Preamble 1, 11 and Canons, 1, 9, 10). In *Morals* 73 Basil says, again, not without a tinge of ambiguity: ‘That a husband must not separate from a wife, nor a wife from a husband, unless one party be taken in adultery or be hindered as regards piety.’ Likewise in *LR* 11, Basil requires runaway slaves to return to their yoke—unless obedience to the commandments is jeopardized, and in *Morals* 76: 1 he bids children honour and obey their parents except where the commandment of God is hindered. Both concur with positions taken at Gangra.

²³³ *Τὸ δὲ διὰ σωπῆς γυμνάσιον.* The discipline of silence is a means to an end: the discernment of the word of God, and the use of the word with knowledge. On silence see also *SR* 208.

R: 14 However, anyone who has been received into the community and (it happens that) then annulled his profession, must surely be regarded as sinning against God,²³⁴ before whom (as witness) and to whom he pledged the profession of his promises.²³⁵ 15 If someone sins against a man, it says, they shall pray for him to God, but if he sins against God, who shall pray for him? (1 Sam. 2: 25). For anyone who dedicated himself to God but then darts off to another kind of life has committed sacrilege, since he has purloined his own self and made off with an offering that is God's.

It is only reasonable that the brothers' door never again be opened to such as these—not even for a brief stay for the sake of shelter as they pass by. For the apostolic rule is plain which bids us *withdraw from everyone disorderly* (2 Thess. 3: 6) *and not associate with him, that he may be put to shame* (2 Thess. 3: 14).

LR 15 (RBas. 7. 1–10)

Q: From what age should we allow them to dedicate themselves to God,²³⁶ and when should the profession of virginity²³⁷ be judged firm (and secure)?

R: 1. 1 Since the Lord says: *Let the little children come to me* (Mark 10: 14) and the Apostle (Paul) praises him *who from infancy had learned the sacred Scriptures* (2 Tim. 3: 15) and again, instructs that *children be brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord* (Eph. 6: 4), 2 we deem that any time, from the earliest age, is suitable for receiving applicants to instruction and the fear of the Lord. 3 The profession of virginity, however, will only be firm

²³⁴ RBas. 7. 14: those who have abandoned (dereliquerint) God. The RBas. uses the plural.

²³⁵ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῶν συνθηκῶν κατέθετο. In this text ἡ συνθήκη begins to acquire its later Greek meaning of 'monastic vow'. ἀετήσαντα ('annul', 'retract', 'set aside') is the exact negation of κατέθετο ('pledge', 'undertake'). RBas. 7. 14: professed the covenant of their confession (confessionis suae pactum professi sunt) . . . Here in the Small Asketikon is evidence that some kind of a vow for monks in community was operative by the mid-360s.

²³⁶ RBas. 7. Q: offer ourselves to God.

²³⁷ τὴν τῆς παρθενίας ὁμολογίαν, RBas. 7. Q: virginitatis professionem. LR 15 is evidence that Basil was the first to institute a formal monastic profession. See also Letter 199. 18, 19 (Def. III. 105–11) where he clearly introduces the idea of an irrevocable public vow for both men and women as something of a new principle, possible only because the Church is 'advancing'. Note his cautious interjections: 'it seems to me', 'I think that', etc. See also Letter 217. 60 (Def. III. 251).

from the time adult age has already begun, or that age which is usually considered appropriate and ripe for marriage.²³⁸

Children bereft of parents we take in of our own accord, thus becoming fathers of orphans²³⁹ after the example of Job's zeal (cf. Job 29: 12). **4 But children** who are under their parents' authority and are **brought by them in person we receive before several witnesses,**²⁴⁰ **so as to give no pretext to those on the look-out for one,** and to stop every unjust mouth uttering blasphemy against us²⁴¹ (cf. Ps. 62: 11; Rom. 3: 19; 2 Cor. 11: 12). **5** Furthermore, the greatest diligence should be exercised in their regard, that they may be credibly grounded in every exercise of virtue, in word as much as in understanding and in deed. **6** For whatever one practises at a young and tender age, he will preserve more firmly and tenaciously afterwards. **7** Therefore the care of little children should be assigned to those who have credibly afforded proofs of their exercise of patience, who are able to apply to them the measure of discipline as the fault and the age of each individual deserves **8** and are able to keep them above all from indolent talk and from angry outbursts and from greedy impulses and from all unseemly and disorderly gestures.

9 But if any is discovered among them who has not gradually acquired diligence as he advanced in age, but instead, with a wandering mind and a casual and inflated attitude continues unfruitful even after the tests of instruction, **10** let such a one be put out, especially since youthful excitability provokes immature age.²⁴²

²³⁸ *RBas.* 7. 3: firma tamen tunc erit professio virginitatis, ex quo adulta iam aetas esse coeperit et ea quae solet nuptiis apta deputari ac perfecta. This is probably the most remarkable of the original passages preserved in the *RBas.* The revised version treats at much greater length the issues briefly adumbrated in the first version.

²³⁹ The insertion of the case of orphans hints at the year of the great famine, 368–9. In the *VSM* (Callahan 172, 183) Makrina is portrayed as succouring starving orphans by the roadside whom she brought up in her community. Other aspects of *LR* 15 suggest Basil was not yet a bishop, supporting a date c.370, for the additions to *RBas.* 7 made in *LR* 15.

²⁴⁰ *RBas.* 7. 4: Oportet tamen infantes voluntate et consensu parentum, immo ab ipsis parentibus oblatos sub testimonio plurimorum suscipi; 'Little children, however, should be received with the free will and consent of their parents, and indeed brought by the parents themselves, to (the testimony) of several witnesses, that every occasion for blame be excluded from those of ill-will'. Cf. *RB* 59. 8: cum oblatione offerant filium suum coram testibus.

²⁴¹ Reg. prim., Voss., and Colb. (*Ask.* 3): but to cut off every blasphemy of those with ill will against us in this matter.

²⁴² *RBas.* 7. 10: et maxime cum iuvenilis fervor rudem lacessit aetatem. Does this refer to an unruly young person stirring up trouble among his companions, or to the pious 'fervour' of his fellows irritating one who ought not remain, or to a young person who cannot control his or her own excitability? See *SR* 82 (referring to girls): 'excitability and brashness and the like are natural in youth'; cf. *RB* 1. 3: novicio fervore, 'with beginner's fervor'.

Therefore they ought to be received in accordance with this principle, but it is not fitting that they be immediately numbered and enrolled with the body of the brothers²⁴³—so that if they fail, no reproaches are brought against the life of piety. They should be brought up in all love²⁴⁴ as the common children of the community.²⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the houses and regimen of both the male children and the female should be kept separate²⁴⁶ so that no familiarity or unfettered freedom towards their elders is encouraged while reverence for their guides²⁴⁷ is maintained due to the scarceness of their meeting. Neither will the encouragement to sin arise that comes from seeing the penalties applied to the more perfect²⁴⁸ for neglect of duties—should they ever be distracted—nor the inflation that often creeps in when they see their seniors²⁴⁹ frequently stumbling in matters where their own conduct is correct. For since there is no difference between one who is a child in age and one who is

²⁴³ τῷ σώματι . . . ἀδελφῶν.

²⁴⁴ ἀγαπῆ, following Voss. and several MSS. Most MSS and Garnier, however, have εὐσεβεία.

²⁴⁵ ὡς κοινὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφότητος. The term for the community of both men and women in the *singular*. See also *LR* 32 for use of the singular term. It is anachronistic and a fundamental misconception to suppose that Basil thought in terms of *two* communities, one for men (a ‘monastery’) and one for women (a ‘convent’). See Stramara 280–6, ‘Organisation’, for a study of the term ἀδελφότης and the ‘inclusivity’ of Basil’s monasteries. He concludes (286): ‘Those children who were accepted and who were not orphans most probably belonged to the parents who had joined the double monastery’ (*LR* 12). For Basil of Caesarea, the ἀδελφότης is a community of men, women and children who consecrated their lives to God, vowing to follow the Gospel precepts. Thus, the Basilian double monastery truly formed, in both a literal and a figurative sense, one monastic family of men and women.’

²⁴⁶ Αφωρίσθαι δὲ καὶ οἶκους καὶ δίαιταν τοῖς τε ἄρρεσι τῶν παίδων καὶ ταῖς θηλείαις. Reg. prim., Colb., and Voss. ‘for the children’, with no mention of male and female. The fully expanded text shows most clearly the complex structure of the one ‘brotherhood’ or community. It comprised at least five or six separate ‘houses’: a house each for men, women, boys, girls, and a ‘hospice’ (see *SR* 155. Q) for the sick, short- or long-term guests, and those candidates described as still ‘outside’ (*LR* 10 and see *SR* 107) who are only brought in to share ‘the same house’ with the brothers or sisters after profession (*LR* 15. 4). Community members and residents of these several houses come together regularly in the liturgy in the one ‘house of prayer’—Letter 207 (*Def.* III. 186–7) and Letter 217 (*Def.* III. 257, Canon 75). Members from different houses will also meet as need requires at work, lessons, or consultation on spiritual or practical matters, subject to authorization (*LR* 33). For the distinct *tagmas* of men and of women that make up the one *syntagma* see the note at *LR* 34. 1.

²⁴⁷ προάγοντας, leaders, guides, models in the way of life.

²⁴⁸ τελειοτέρους. ‘Perfection’ and zeal for progress in perfection is a feature part of Basil’s ascetic discourse. See *SR* 224 and the note to *SR* Prologue (*RBas.* Prol. 4).

²⁴⁹ πρεσβυτέρους.

childish in mind, it is no surprise that the same faults are often found in both. Moreover, the young will not, through familiar mixing with their elders, show a precocious and unfitting zeal for those things which their elders observe fittingly due to their age.

2. In view of these exigencies, therefore, and in view of reverence in other respects, the quarters of the children and of the more perfect must be kept separate. In addition, the house of the ascetics will not be disturbed when the young practise their lessons as they must. But let the prayers prescribed for use through the day be common to both children and elders, for children are usually stirred by the zeal of the more perfect, and their guides too receive no small help in their prayers from the children.

Nevertheless, with regard to sleeping and rising, the time of meals and their quantity and quality, let a particular program and manner of life suitable for children be arranged separately. Let someone of mature years be put in charge of them, one more experienced than the others, who gives evidence of patience. Thus he will be able to correct the sins of the young with fatherly compassion and with the skilful word (cf. 2 Tim. 2: 15; Heb. 5: 13), assigning suitable remedies for each offence, such that the soul receives at the same time both a penalty for the sin and an exercise in calming itself.²⁵⁰ For example: has a child flared up in anger against a comrade? Then let him be constrained to apologize to him and serve him in a manner corresponding to the offence. For the habit of humbling oneself cuts out, so to speak, an excitable spirit from the soul, just as arrogance most often instils it. Has he touched food outside the time for it? Let him go without food for the better part of the day. Has he been caught eating in a greedy or rude fashion? Let him be debarred from food at meal time and be compelled to watch the others eating in the way they know they should, so that he is both chastened by abstinence and taught to behave reverently. Has he uttered idle words, an insult against his neighbour, a lie, or anything else forbidden? Let him learn self-moderation by the stomach and by silence.

3. Their literary study also needs to be in accord with the goal.²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ *Καὶ γυμνάσιον ἀπαθείας*, training/schooling in *apatheia*, the steadying of passion.

²⁵¹ In the *VSM* (Callahan 165, 172) Makrina is described as educating her brother Peter in a curriculum based on the Scriptures, specially the Wisdom literature and the Psalms. In *On Soul and the Resurrection*, however, Gregory portrays her whom he calls 'the Teacher' as competent in Greek philosophical discourse. Basil, in *Hom. 22* and in *To young men: on how they may derive profit from Hellenic literature*, teaches another approach to education for Christian children being brought up in the world.

Thus their teachers will use the names in the Scriptures. Instead of myths they will tell them the histories of wonderful deeds and educate them by maxims from Proverbs and offer rewards for remembering both names and events, so that they attain the goal with delight and recreation, finding neither grief nor vexation. And such as these, if they are rightly led, will easily achieve concentration of the mind and the habit of avoiding distraction, by being regularly queried by their supervisors as to what occupies their mind and where they are turning their thoughts. One who is simple and guileless and unaccustomed to falsehood because of his young age, readily declares the secrets of the soul; in order to escape being caught out frequently thinking about forbidden things, he will avoid foolish thoughts and frequently recall himself from follies, fearing the shame of rebukes.

4. Therefore the soul should be introduced to every good discipline immediately and from the outset, while it is still plastic and soft, pliable as wax and easily moulded by the shapes impressed on it, so that, when reason advances and the power of discernment develops, it may take its course from the elements it has acquired from the beginning and the patterns of piety delivered to it; reason will suggest what is useful, habit will lend facility to right action.

At this point the profession of virginity ought to be allowed to proceed,²⁵² since by now it is valid since it takes place with the person's own intention and judgment, the reason having fully developed. From now on, rewards and punishments are awarded by the righteous Judge to virtuous and to sinners according to the character of their actions. We should bring in those who preside over the churches²⁵³ as witnesses of their intention, so that by their means the

²⁵² In his canonical Letter 199 to Amphilochius: 18 (Def. III. 109), Basil nominates 16 or 17 as the earliest age for profession for a virgin and increases the canonical penalty of forswearing this profession to that of adultery. In the following canon 19, he requires a formal profession from monks, though their penalty for forswearing will only be that of fornication (p. 111). Letter 199 was written in 375.

²⁵³ *Τοὺς προεστῶτας τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν*, i.e. bishops, for the phrase see also Eusebius, *Church History* 7. 5. If this generic description seems unlikely of a Basil who had become a bishop himself, then a setting in the year 369/370 is indicated.

Basil borrows from the tradition of consecrated female virgins by requiring a public, episcopally witnessed and ratified profession for male members of the community. Thus he acts firmly to bring the ascetic impulse within the ambit of the Church. 'This is an important landmark in monasticism. At this point it comes to terms with the official Church' (Clarke 177 n. 2). See also *LR* 36, where the same kind of official ecclesial witness is required if a brother or sister is to withdraw from the community legitimately.

In *Hom. on Ps. 44* (PG 29. 412D) Basil highly commends those who have chosen

consecration of the body may be hallowed as a kind of sacred offering to God and their witness may confirm the event. *For in the mouth of two or three witnesses*, it says, *every word is established* (Deut. 19: 15; Matt. 18: 16). In this way the zeal of the brothers will incur no blasphemy²⁵⁴ and those who profess themselves to God and then try to annul it will be given no loophole for their shamelessness.

But let anyone who does not welcome the life of virginity, since he is unable *to care for the things of the Lord* (1 Cor. 7: 32), be dismissed before the same witnesses. But the one who has made his profession after careful examination and deliberation—which he should be allowed to pursue by himself for a number of days, so that we do not seem to snatch at him in any way—should be received at last and enrolled in the community and so share the same house and way of life with the more perfect.

One thing we forgot to say and had better add while it is still opportune. Given that training in some crafts must be undertaken from childhood, whenever any of the children seem fitted to learn, we do not forbid them to spend their days with the teachers of the craft. But at night we must restore them to their companions, with whom they must also take their meals.

11 Of those who come to the service of God at an already robust age, inquiry ought to be made, as we have said, into the character of their previous life **12** and even this criterion may suffice: if they but seek this earnestly and if they have a true and ardent longing for the work of God.²⁵⁵ **13** But the assessment of such cases should be carried out by those who are capable of most prudently sifting and testing these things.

virginity for the Lord; they gain access to ‘the innermost shrines’—provided they keep to the Church. Implicit in the homily are several reminiscences of Makrina and the ascetic reforms at Annisa. Feminine gender in the following passage accords with that of ‘souls’ and is inclusive of both female and male vowed virgins: ‘But there are some souls (*ψυχαί τινες*) who follow the bride of the Lord (= the Church, 408C, Way 291), since they have not accepted the seeds of alien words (*σπέρματα λόγων [sic] ἀλλοτριῶν*); it is these who shall be led to the King, because they follow the bride. And indeed, let those who have vowed virginity (*αἱ τὴν παρθενίαν ἐπαγγελόμεναι*) to the Lord hear that virgins shall be led to the King, but virgins who are close to the Church, who follow after her and do not wander away from the good order of the Church (*τῆς ἐκκλησιαστικῆς εὐταξίας*).’

²⁵⁴ If the profession is ecclesially witnessed and ratified, the community will be less vulnerable to blame for having privately advanced to profession one who afterwards forswore his or her vow.

²⁵⁵ *RBas.* 7. 12: si satis instanter hoc expetunt et si verum et ardens desiderium est eorum erga opus Dei. See *RB* 58. 7: si revera Deum quaerit, si sollicitus est ad opus Dei; De Vogüé, ‘Twenty-Five Years’, 410 n. 25, cf. *RBas.* 3. 28.

LR 16 (RBas. 8. 1–25)

Q: Is it necessary for one who would give himself to the life of piety (and religion) to practise *self-control* (cf. Gal. 5: 23)?²⁵⁶

R: 1. 1 That (in all things) the principle of *self-control*²⁵⁷ is necessary is clear, firstly from the fact that the Apostle (Paul) counts *self-control* among the *fruits of the (Holy) Spirit* (Gal. 5: 22–3), 2 and secondly, from his saying that it is by this means that *our ministry is preserved without blame* (cf. 2 Cor. 6: 3), where he says *In labours and in vigils, in fasts and in purity* (2 Cor. 6: 5), 3 and (again) in another place, *In labour and fatigue, in many vigils, in hunger and thirst, often in fasts* (2 Cor. 11: 27),²⁵⁸ and again, *Every contestant is self-controlled in all things* (1 Cor. 9: 25). 4 And the *rigorous treatment of the body, and its being brought into subjection* (cf. 1 Cor. 9: 27), is (manifestly) accomplished by nothing else so much as by *self-control*.²⁵⁹ 5 For (only) through *self-control* is the ferment of youth and its difficulty in resisting impulses²⁶⁰ restrained (and checked) as with a bridle, for, according to Solomon (Prov. 19: 10), *soft living is no benefit to the fool*. But what is more foolish than the flesh pampered and youth tossed about in every direction? Therefore, 6 And *do not make provision for the flesh, says the Apostle, in its cravings* (Rom. 13: 14) and again, *she who is given over to pleasures, is dead even while she lives* (1 Tim. 5: 6). 7 And the example of the luxury of the rich man²⁶¹ who lived amidst delicacies shows us that *self-control* is necessary, if we are not also to hear what the rich man heard: *You received your good things during your life* (Luke 16: 25).

²⁵⁶ τὸ ἐγκρατεῦσθαι. RBas. 8. Q *continentiam*; difficult to translate adequately. Garnier: *temperantia* = continence (traditional in translations of Basil), abstinence, self-control (traditional in translations of the NT), self-restraint, self-discipline, self-mastery, an intrinsic element of all the virtues.

²⁵⁷ ὁ τῆς ἐγκρατείας λόγος. *Logos* is a rich and multivalent word, comprehending the primary sense of 'word', not so much as an element of vocabulary (= ῥῆμα) but as 'articulate account', and by extension 'discourse', 'meaning', 'rationale', 'reason', 'principle', 'pregnant saying', 'commandment', etc. It is used very frequently by Basil, in all these senses. *ἐγκρατεία* already had a considerable usage in philosophy and ethics, especially in Stoicism, and in certain hyperascetic tendencies of early Christianity, e.g. the Encratites. Hence Basil is concerned to ground his teaching on 'self-control' wholly in the Scriptures.

²⁵⁸ The citation of 2 Cor. 11: 27 is missing from the Ask. 4 MSS.

²⁵⁹ RBas. 8. 4 cites the Scripture more fully: and further, *I treat my body rigorously and bring it into subjection* (1 Cor. 9: 27), which (manifestly) is not accomplished except by self-control.

²⁶⁰ RBas. 8. 5: the excitability of that age.

²⁶¹ RBas. 8. 7: the man who lived amidst delicacies.

2. 8 The Apostle also shows how fearful a thing is intemperance when he reckons it among the marks of apostasy;²⁶² 9 saying: *In the last day there shall be distressing times, for men will be lovers of self* (2 Tim. 3: 1–2). Then, having listed several kinds of evil, he continues with *slanderers*,²⁶³ *the intemperate* (*savage*) (2 Tim. 3: 3). 10 And Esau too was convicted of intemperance as the greatest of evils,²⁶⁴ when he *sold his birthright* for a single meal (Gen. 25: 33; Heb. 12: 16); and indeed, that first disobedience befell man (in no other way than) through intemperance (cf. Gen. 3: 6).

But all the saints bore witness to self-control. 11 Indeed, the whole life of (all) the saints and the blessed and the example of the Lord himself during his sojourn in the flesh aid us in this.²⁶⁵ 12 Only after long perseverance in fasting and prayer did Moses receive the Law (cf. Deut. 25: 33)²⁶⁶ and hear the words of God, it says, *as one speaks with one's own friend* (Exod. 33: 11). 13 Elijah too, (is said to have been) was counted worthy of the vision of God after spending a like space of time in self-control²⁶⁷ (abstaining from food) (cf. 1 Kgs. 19: 8). 14 And what of Daniel? How did he attain to

²⁶² *RBas.* 8. 8: Moreover, the Apostle teaches what a fearful thing is self-indulgence when he describes it as the mark of those who (whom he says) withdraw from God . . .

²⁶³ *RBas.* has 'commessores', i.e. 'the guilty'. Garnier uses 'criminatoros', exactly translating *διάβολοι*, 'accusers'.

²⁶⁴ *RBas.* 8. 10: Esau too, had intemperance as the tinder (fornitem) of all his woes, who for a single meal sold his birthright. Is Rufinus adding a vivid touch?

²⁶⁵ *RBas.* 8. 11: But the whole life of the saints and of the Lord himself, while he was placed in the flesh here, what else do they put before us than examples of this?

There is an Ask. 2/3 variant from this point down to 'Indeed, John's . . .'. It lacks the series of rhetorical questions that characterize both the Ask. 4 text and the *RBas.* text above: 'This was true of Moses who through the length of his fast and his perseverance towards God attained his ministry; and then there was Elijah who was counted worthy of the vision of God after he had been in a like measure of abstinence from food. Indeed Daniel and the three children who were well pleasing to God brought about the overthrow of all their enemies through self-control.'

Scholion 5, which attempts to give an account for the existence of variant texts, was written in the margin next to this very passage. See Grib. 161–2, 210–17 esp. at 212–14.

²⁶⁶ *RBas.* 8. 12: Moses (is said) to have persevered without slackening in continual fasting and prayer (before God for forty days) and to have merited to hand down to the human race the aid of the Law.

²⁶⁷ *RBas.* 8. 13 is specific: continuing in a like space of time (in abstinence from food). On the other hand, Rufinus may have had a fuller text; cf. the Ask. 2/3 variant above.

the vision of wonders? Was it not after the twentieth day of a fast (Dan. 10: 2–3)? **And the three children, how else did they** (receive merit before God,) quench the force of the fire (and gain the victory over all their enemies and the tyrant himself), **except by self-control?** (Cf. Dan. 1: 6–16, 3: 24–8.) **15 Indeed, John’s entire way of life sprang from self-control** (cf. Matt. 3: 4). **And it was by means of it that the Lord himself inaugurated his manifestation** (Matt. 4: 2).

16 Yet, by self-control we do not at all mean complete abstinence from food—this would indeed be the violent dissolution of life—but abstinence from pleasures²⁶⁸ practised in order to overthrow *the mind of the flesh* (Rom. 8: 6) in view of the goal of piety: **17** but that with which the necessary but not superfluous²⁶⁹ sustenance of life is consistent, when we avoid what is gratifying and fulfil solely what necessity requires for the body.

3. 18 In summary, then: abstinence from all that those who live according to passion crave to enjoy,²⁷⁰ this is the abstinence necessary for those training themselves to piety. **19 Consequently, training in self-control is accomplished not only with regard to the pleasure of food, but also** extends to **abstinence from everything** that harms²⁷¹ us, by which we may be gratified but are also wounded in soul.

20 Accordingly, one who is truly self-controlled²⁷² will not both master his stomach and **be worsted by human ambition**; he will not overcome the craving for what is shameful, and at the same time not also of wealth or of **any other unworthy disposition, whether it be anger or despondency or any of the things by which undisciplined souls are apt to be enslaved.** **21 One might even go so far as to say that what we observe with regard to all the**

²⁶⁸ Reg. prim. and Voss. (Ask. 3) conclude: ‘abstinence from pleasures, while maintaining the goal of satisfying need’. This variant seems to be confirmed by the parallel *RBas.* text.

²⁶⁹ superfluous; cf. *RB* 55. 11, 61. 6 (superfluous) and 36. 4, 61. 2 (superfluitate); see *RBas.* 9. 16 and Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 237, no. 9).

²⁷⁰ Both the Greek and Latin texts are rather tangled: *ὅν αἱ ἀπολαύσεις ἐπιθυμηταὶ τοῖς κατὰ πάθος ζώσι, τούτων ἡμῶν ἢ ἐγκράτεια ἀναγκαία.* *RBas.* 8. 18: omnia quae per passibilem concupiscentiam requiruntur: ab his abstinere virtus est continentia, ‘abstinence from all that is demanded by compulsive craving is the virtue of self-control’.

²⁷¹ Following the *βλάβη* of Ask. 3 MSS, confirmed by the *RBas.* parallel text, rather than the *ἐμποδίζοντος*, ‘that hinders/provides an obstacle’, of the Ask. 4/ Garnier text. There are a number of variants among the recensions in this section.

²⁷² *RBas.* 8. 20 continues: does not hanker after human reputation. At the same time he restrains himself from vices such as anger and despondency and all those obsessions which untaught (and heedless) souls are wont to cling to.

commandments: that they are so interconnected that it is impossible to accomplish one in isolation from another—22 we observe to be especially the case with self-control. Thus the humble person is self-controlled with regard to ambition²⁷³ 23 and he fulfils the Gospel measure of voluntary poverty who is self-controlled with regard to money, has renounced all his possessions, sold all that is his own and distributed them to all (cf. Matt. 19: 21),²⁷⁴ 24 and (surely) the meek is one who has mastered his wrath and (checked his) anger. 25 The strict principle of self-control sets measures for the tongue, boundaries for the eyes and unitchy hearing for the ears; one who does not abide within these bounds is intemperate and unbridled.²⁷⁵ Do you see how around this one commandment all the commandments are linked to each other as in a circular dance?²⁷⁶

LR 17 (RBas. 8. 26–37)

That it is also necessary to keep laughter in check.

R: **1. 26. This too, although lightly regarded by many, merits no small vigilance on the part of ascetics. For to be overcome by unrestrained and unchecked laughter is a sign of intemperance, of a failure to steady the emotions and of a frivolity of the soul unchecked by strict reason.²⁷⁷ For while it is not unfitting to express the overflow of the soul to the extent of a cheerful smile²⁷⁸—if only as far as the Scripture shows: *A glad heart makes a joyful face* (Prov. 15: 13)—27 yet for one who has steadied his soul, or is of proven virtue, or has command of himself it is unseemly to raise one's voice²⁷⁹ in cackling laughter (and a raucous din) and allow the body to shake uncontrollably. Yet when there is intemperance of soul,**

²⁷³ RBas. 8. 22: inasmuch as the humble person is one who (is judged to have) restrained himself from pride.

²⁷⁴ RBas. 8. 23: and one who has renounced all his property *and*, according to the Gospel, *sold all his possessions and distributed them to all* (cf. Matt. 19: 21), is surely one who has restrained himself from the desire of money.

²⁷⁵ RBas. 8. 25: And the wandering looks of the eye, the listening of the ear and the looseness of the tongue—what else but self-control can (subdue and) hold them in check?

²⁷⁶ ἐν χορῶ. For the image see also LR 1. Q.

²⁷⁷ τοῦ μὴ ἀκριβεῖ λόγῳ. RBas. 8. 26 apparently suggests a simpler text in the exemplar: Indeed, self-control also curbs immoderate laughter, just as a sign of intemperance is the kind of laughter that is accompanied by excessive and unseemly gestures.

²⁷⁸ RBas. 8. 9: since the cheerfulness of the mind ought only be shown by smiling (subridendo). The Latin word nicely suggests 'sub-laughing'.

²⁷⁹ ἐγκαγχάζειν δὲ τῆ φωνῆ, καὶ ἀναβράζεσθαι ἀπροαιρέτως τὸ σῶμα. RBas. 8. 27: elevate; elaborate (amplify, extend) S, elevare (be lifted up) C (after correction) GW; crepitanter, 'cackling'.

this will be sure to happen as a matter of habit, even unwillingly. **28 This kind of laughter** Ecclesiastes reproves as especially (softening and) undermining (gravity and) constancy of soul, saying: *Of laughter I have said it is madness* (Eccles. 2:2) and, *as the crackle of thorns under the cooking pot so is the laughter of fools* (Eccles. 7:6), **29** and Solomon, the most wise, confirms the word, saying²⁸⁰ *The fool raises his voice in laughter, but the wise man will scarcely smile quietly* (Sir. 21:20).²⁸¹

30 The Lord, too, revealed that he experienced (in himself) the necessary passions of the flesh and those which tend to evidence of virtue,²⁸² such as weariness on the one hand and compassion for the afflicted on the other.²⁸³ **31** But he is never found to have used laughter, as far as the Gospel narrative (touches on it), and indeed, deems unfortunate those who have succumbed to it (cf. Luke 6:25).²⁸⁴

32 Let not the ambiguity of ‘laughter’ deceive us, for it is often the custom of Scripture to call the joy of the soul and a cheerful response to good fortune ‘laughter’ **33** as in: *Sarah said, God has made laughter for me* (Gen. 21:6) and again, *Blessed are those who weep now for they shall laugh* (cf. Luke 6:21) **34** and there is the saying in Job: *he shall fill a truthful mouth with laughter* (Job 8:21). All these terms are used of exultation of soul rather than merriment.²⁸⁵ **35** This is why he who is superior to every passion

²⁸⁰ *RBas.* 8. 29: and again, . . .

²⁸¹ ‘Whence Solomon . . . smile quietly’ is found in Ask. 4, which Garnier omits, following Ask. 3. The mention of Solomon, however, is confirmed by *RBas.* 8. 28 which mistakenly uses it to introduce all three scriptural passages: ‘This kind of laughter usually softens and undermines gravity and constancy of disposition, whence Solomon says: *Of laughter I have said it is madness* (Eccles. 2:2) . . . etc.’ Basil evidently corrected the ascription of scriptural authors in a later Pontic revision that did not find its way into the Caesarean text. *RB* 7. 59 also quotes Sir. 21: 20 in the context of laughter.

²⁸² On ‘natural motions’, ‘forbidden’ passions, and Basil’s religious anthropology see *SR* 75 (*RBas.* 195), *SR* 224 and note.

²⁸³ *RBas.* 8. 30: passions of the flesh, that is, those which tend to evidence of virtue, such as weariness and tears and grief; . . .

²⁸⁴ *RBas.* 8. 31: We find there instead that those who laugh shall lament even more when he says *Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall weep* (Luke 6:25). Rufinus sharpens the scriptural reference.

²⁸⁵ ἀντὶ ἡλαρότητος, pro hilaritate ob animi gaudium (Garnier): mirth, jollity, high spirits. Rufinus omits this last phrase, with its Greek-specific vocabulary, although elsewhere he does transliterate. ἡλαρός appears in the hymn χαίρε φῶς ἡλαρόν. It was already ancient in Basil’s day and certainly known in his circle, e.g. the passage in *VSM* where Makrina on her death-bed sees the lighting of the evening lamp and prepares for Vespers (*GNO* 398, Callahan 181). Basil refers to it in *On the Holy Spirit* 73.

and does not admit²⁸⁶ any goad of pleasure, but is disposed to be self-controlled and unyielding towards every harmful enjoyment, 36 is (called) perfectly self-controlled—and such a one (thereby) is clearly quit of every (kind of) sin. Moreover, there are times when one should even abstain from things permissible and necessary for life, if such abstinence is ordered to the benefit of our brothers, as the Apostle says: *If food causes my brother to stumble, I will never again eat meat* (1 Cor. 8: 13). And though he had a right to live from the Gospel, he did not use the right, in case there should be any obstacle to the Gospel of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 9: 12).

2. Self-control then is a taking away of sin, a weaning from passions, a *mortifying of the body* (cf. Rom. 8: 13; Col. 3: 5) *with its natural passions and cravings* (Gal. 5: 24); it is the beginning of spiritual life, the sponsor of eternal blessings and extinguishes in itself the sting of pleasure. 37 For pleasure is the great snare²⁸⁷ of (all) evil—by means of it we human beings are (all) especially drawn to sin; by it every soul is dragged to death as with a fish-hook;²⁸⁸ anyone not debilitated or overthrown by it, accomplishes the complete avoidance of sin through self-control.

Yet if such a one has escaped most, but is worsted by one, he is not self-controlled, just as he is not healthy who is troubled by even one

²⁸⁶ *προσιέμενος*, following the Ask. 4 text, cf. the single verb of *RBas.* 8. 35; nihil per incitamenta libidinum gerit, ‘gives effect to nothing through the incitements of pleasure’. The Ask. 3 MSS have a verbal doublet: *πάσχαυ ἢ καὶ προσιέμενος*, ‘does not suffer, or even give expression to . . .’, evidently a later Caesarean amendment. To make sense of this, *καὶ* must be reinterpreted in a concessive rather than an emphatic sense, which is not usual: ‘does not suffer, or at least give expression to . . .’. Basil here describes the empiric state of one who has attained to perfection, not a series of ascetic efforts on the way to it. Though the actual term is avoided, the passage is redolent of Stoic *ἀπαθεία*. The fruit of asceticism is when the soul is at last *naturally* disposed to self-control and virtue, scarcely experiencing even the first inordinate movements. This is ‘perfection’, maturity in holiness, the recovery of original innocence. Cf. St John of the Cross, *Ascent*, bk. 1, ch. 11, n. 2, ch. 13, n. 6; bk. 2, ch. 11, n. 6; bk. 3, ch. 2, n. 9*; *Spiritual Canticle* st. 19 n. 8; st. 27 n. 7* (she does not even suffer the first movements contrary to God’s will); *Letter* 28.

²⁸⁷ *τὸ μέγα . . . δέλεαρ*, *RBas.* 8. 37: rat-trap (muscipula); Rufinus adds a vivid touch.

²⁸⁸ *ὅφ’ ἦς πᾶσα ψυχὴ ὡς ὑπ’ ἀγκίστρου πρὸς τὸν θάνατον ἔλκεται*. Basil adds his own vivid touch. The fish-hook is also found in his *Protreptic to Baptism*, *PG* 31. 436A, tr. T. P. Halton in *Baptism: Ancient Liturgies and Patristic Texts*, 82: ‘Pleasure is the fish-hook of the devil, dragging us to destruction. Pleasure is the mother of sin.’ C. E. Ferguson, in ‘Basil’s Protreptic to Baptism’, 71, dates this homily to the early years of Basil’s episcopacy, between 371 and 373. From the same period would be Basil’s *Hom. on Detachment from Worldly Goods* (*PG* 31. 541D, Wagner 489) where he speaks of the devil’s ‘fish-hook of treachery concealed in the first taste’ of pleasure.

bodily disease and he is not free who is under anyone's domination, no matter whose. The other virtues, practised in secret, are seldom apparent to human beings; but self-control makes known its possessor the moment one meets him. For just as firm flesh and a fresh complexion characterize the athlete, so gauntness of body and that pallor which is the bloom of self-control declare the Christian who is truly an athlete²⁸⁹ of Christ's commandments. For in the weakness of the body he wrestles his enemy to the ground and in the contests of piety he displays his strength, as it is written: *When I am weak, then I am strong* (2 Cor. 12: 10).

How profitable it is merely to see someone who is self-controlled, who uses necessities reluctantly and sparingly, pays nature its dues as a burdensome service, is put out when the time comes to be occupied with them and springs up from table quickly to attend to his work. For I think that no argument can touch the soul of one who is unbridled with regard to the stomach or induce him to make a change so much as his merely meeting one who is self-controlled. This is probably the meaning of *eating and drinking to the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31), such that even at table *our good works shine forth to the glory of our Father who is in heaven* (cf. Matt. 5: 16).

LR 18

That we ought to taste everything that is set before us.²⁹⁰

R: Nevertheless, it needs to be laid down clearly from the outset that, if there is to be that *rigorous treatment* of the body (cf. 1 Cor.

²⁸⁹ The theme of the Christian athlete fills Basil's *Second Homily on Fasting*, PG 31. 185-97, e.g. 'soldiers of Christ' and 'athletes of piety' (185B). It was an image that also inspired Egyptian monasticism; see Athanasius' *Life of Antony* 4 (NPNF, 2nd ser. 4. 196): '(Antony) learned thoroughly where each one surpassed him in zeal and discipline . . . he returned to his own place of asceticism (= training) and from then on would strive to unite the qualities of each and was eager to show in himself the virtues of all.' See also the *Lausiac History* 18. 1 on Macarius of Alexandria (Meyer, ACW 34 (New York: Paulist Press, 1964), 58): 'This was the method of his asceticism. Whenever he heard of any feat, he did the same thing, perfectly.' For the community as the *gymnasium* or athlete's training ground of piety see LR 19. 1.

²⁹⁰ The caption is missing in Reg. prim. and Colb. The issue here seems to be the Manichaean division between certain foods, specially meat, which was categorically forbidden. Insofar as this stems from a dualistic condemnation of matter, Christian doctrine is at stake. The response may be dealing more generally with encratist tendency of hyperascetics to rigorous rules about classes of food. Basil strives to coordinate two principles: the imperative of self-control for Christians and the affirmation of the goodness of creation. He inculcates frugality, but keeps its rationale wholly within the common principles of Christian life, never straying from scriptural teaching. See also SR 258.

9: 27), self-control is indispensable for all contestants for piety, *for every contestant is self-controlled in all things* (1 Cor. 9: 25).

But in order to avoid falling in with the enemies of God who *are seared in their conscience* and thereby refrain from foods *which God created to be partaken of by the faithful with thanksgiving* (1 Tim. 4: 2–3), we should taste each food as the occasion presents itself, to show observers that *to the pure all things are pure* (Tit. 1: 15) and that *everything created by God is good and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is hallowed by the word of God and prayer* (1 Tim. 4: 4).²⁹¹

Even so we must continue to keep self-control as the goal, satisfying our need with the cheaper foods and those necessary for life—while in these too we avoid the harm of satiety and refrain altogether from what fosters pleasure. In this way we shall both cut out the passion of the pleasure-addicts and cure, as far as in us lies, those *seared in their conscience*, and so free ourselves from suspicion on either account. *For why is my liberty judged by another's conscience?* (1 Cor. 10: 29)

Self-control declares one who has *died with Christ* (Col. 2: 20; 2 Tim. 2: 11) and *mortified his members that are upon the earth* (Col. 3: 5). We know that it is the mother of temperance, the sponsor of health, the effective remover of obstacles to bearing fruit *in Christ through good works* (cf. Eph. 2: 10). For indeed, in accordance with the voice of the Lord, *the cares of this world and the pleasures of life and the cravings for other things choke the Word and render it unfruitful* (Matt. 13: 22). Even the demons flee from it, for the Lord himself taught us that *this kind does not depart except through prayer and fasting* (Matt. 17: 21 Byz.; Mark 9: 29 Byz.).

LR 19 (RBas. 9. 1–22)

Q: What is the measure of self-control?

R: 1. 1 Concerning (the vices and) **the passions** of the soul, **there is only one measure** of self-control: **entire estrangement** from all that tends to destructive pleasure with no concessions, ever. **2 Concerning food, however, since different people have different needs, and they vary according to age and occupation and in proportion to bodily condition** (strength and debility), **so too the measure and kind of food should vary.** **3 So it is impossible that all**

²⁹¹ For the same text and disposition, see *SR* 92 and, quoting Gen. 3: 1, the *Hom: that God is not the Author of Evils*, PG 31. 341C.

(the brothers) in the training school of piety²⁹² **should be encompassed under the one** (order or measure or) **rule**. But having laid down the measure for ascetics who are in health, **4** we allow **those in charge of arrangements to make suitable deviations from it to meet individual circumstances.**²⁹³

5 Indeed it is impossible to encompass each individual case in this instruction, but only what applies to the common and general teaching. **6** Whether there are invalids needing to be built up with food, or someone thoroughly fatigued after strenuous toil, or another preparing himself for some labour such as a journey or a difficult task,²⁹⁴ **let those who preside**²⁹⁵ **administer as need and reason require**, in accord with the saying: *Distribution was made to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35).²⁹⁶

7 Since it is impossible to establish the same time for meals for all, or the measure or quality of food, let the common goal be (for all) **not to continue** (eating) **to satiety.**²⁹⁷ **8** For to overfill the stomach and weigh it down with food merits a curse, since the Lord said: *Woe to you who have your fill now* (Luke 6: 25); and in itself it

²⁹² τοὺς ἐν τῇ γυμνασίᾳ τῆς εὐσεβείας. This phrase, which is *not* in the *RBas.*, is nonetheless reminiscent of *RB* Prol. 45: dominici schola servitii—‘the school of the Lord’s service’. See also *LR* 18 and note.

²⁹³ *RBas.* 9. 3–4: While it is impossible for all (the brothers) being trained in piety to observe the one (order or standard and) rule, still all those who are healthy are able to maintain the same measure of abstinence. **4** However, this ought to be adapted in individual cases where there is some cause for variance, by (the prudence and supervision of) those entrusted with the responsibility of this distribution.

Some awkwardness in *RBas.* 9. 3 may reflect either something that Rufinus has missed or insufficiency in the original Greek text. It seems Basil is saying he cannot even begin to set norms for the young and for those in training for piety, but ventures to do so for professed (adult) members in good health. What Basil might consider a norm for the adult ascetic in good health may be inferred from Letter 2 (Def. 1. 23), where he describes a single meal in the day, comprising water, bread, vegetables, and fruit.

²⁹⁴ *RBas.* 9. 6 continues the cases of need this way: those fatigued from the work of self-control (ex opere continentiae), or from whatever other tasks they have carried out in the service of piety.

²⁹⁵ οἱ ἐφ’εστῶτες, *RBas.* 9. 6: hi qui praesunt. This participial form might be translated by the English noun ‘superiors’, but since there is no express title as a noun in the *RBas.* or the Great Asketikon, a periphrastic form is maintained in English.

²⁹⁶ *RB* 34. 1 quotes the same text in the matter of the distribution of food.

²⁹⁷ τὸ μὴ ἀναμένειν τὸν κόρον. Reg. prim., Voss. This text is confirmed by *RBas.* 9. 7 ut non usque ad satietatem persistamus in edendo, ‘that we should not continue eating to satiety’. Cf. *RB* 40. 6: ut non usque ad satietatem bibamus; see Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, no. 13. Garnier: ἡ τῆς χρείας ἐκπλήρωσις, ‘the fulfilment of need’.

renders (even) the body less useful for activities, inclined to sleep, and more susceptible to harm.

9 Thus in no way must pleasure be made the end of eating—but only need that serves life (be sufficient); let intemperance in pleasure be shunned. 10 For to serve pleasures is nothing else than to *make a god of one's own stomach* (Phil. 3: 19). 11 For since our (human) body is constantly being depleted and dehydrated, and needs replenishment (and refreshment), resulting in a natural appetite for food, 12 therefore right reason in the use of food calls for the replenishment of what is depleted to sustain the animal life, whether the need be for solid or liquid nourishment.

2. 13 Accordingly, whatever can relieve our need²⁹⁸ (more quickly and) with least trouble should be employed. 14 And the Lord himself I think showed this, when he received those who *were hungry in the wilderness* (cf. Matt. 14: 13–16), in case they should faint on the way (Matt. 15: 32). Though he could (certainly) have extended the miracle in the desert and prepared (for them) a more lavish repast (he by no means did so), 15 he provided for them a fare so frugal and simple as to consist of *bread*—made of *barley* at that—and besides the bread, a little *fish* (cf. John 6: 9).²⁹⁹

16 Of drink he made no mention at all (from which it may doubtless be inferred that), since *water was by nature available for all and sufficient*³⁰⁰ for their needs, 17 unless such a drink should be harmful to someone because of (bodily) infirmity and thus to be avoided according to (the Apostle) Paul's advice to Timothy (cf. 1 Tim. 5: 23). 18 But all that is manifestly harmful (to the body) should be avoided anyway, for it is (seems) absurd to take food for the sustenance of the body and then again by means of this very food to make war against the body and hinder its service to the commandments. The same example teaches us to accustom our soul to avoid what is harmful, however pleasurable it may be.

²⁹⁸ *RBas.* 9. 13: can fulfil this bodily need.

²⁹⁹ Voss. 'made of barley, according to John . . .'. *RBas.* 9. 15: according to John, *barley loaves and small fish* (John 6: 9). The Greek text, emphasizing the frugality, uses the Scripture allusively; the *RBas.* quotes it directly.

³⁰⁰ ἀρκούντος ταῖς χρείαις. *RBas.* 9. 16: sufficiens esse possit. On sufficiency see *RBas.* 8. 17/LR 16. 2. Gribomont ('The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 237, no. 8), citing vi. 919 of de Vogüé's *The Rule of St Benedict*, says: 'de Vogüé very properly notes that Benedict is influenced by the Basilian tendency to eliminate not only private property but also all superfluity. Monks, he thinks, ought not surpass a certain measure: his favorite word is *sufficit*.' This verb appears variously three times in a single chapter of the *RB*, i.e. 55. 4, 10, 15 and eight times elsewhere in the *RB*. But it occurs even more frequently in the *RBas.*, 28 times in various forms, e.g. *RBas.* 11. 12, 31.

19 We ought to prefer in every way what is obtainable³⁰¹ more easily (and cheaply) so that we are never found running after expensive and extravagant items on a pretext of self-control, 20 in order to season our foods with costly flavours.³⁰² 21 Rather we ought to choose (for our own use) whatever is more easily and cheaply obtained in each locality³⁰³ and available for common use 22 and bring in from a distance only those things which are more necessary for life, such as oil and the like or if something is appropriate for the necessary relief of the sick—yet even this only if it can be obtained without fuss and disturbance and distraction.

LR 20

Q: What is the manner of hospitality with regard to food?

R: 1. Vainglory and courting human favour³⁰⁴ and doing anything for show are wholly forbidden to Christians in every matter. Indeed, one who performs even a commandment so as to be *seen by men* and win their applause, loses the attendant reward (cf. Matt. 6: 16). And those who have embraced every kind of humiliation because of the Lord's commandment (cf. Phil. 2: 3–8) ought to flee utterly every expression of vainglory. But since we observe that those outside³⁰⁵ are ashamed of the humility of poverty and provide plentiful and expensive food whenever they receive a guest, we fear in case the same passion may affect even us without our realizing it and we are caught out being ashamed of that *poverty* pronounced *blessed* by Christ (Matt. 5: 3; Luke 6: 20). For just as it is unseemly for us to furnish ourselves from outside with silver vessels or crimson

³⁰¹ *Χρῆ* [*sic*] *μέντοι ἐκ παντὸς τρόπου τὸ εὐποριστότερον προτιμᾶν*. *RBas.* 9. 19: use—Oportet tamen omni modo illis uti cibis qui et facilius et vilius comparantur, 'to use food which is more easily (and cheaply) obtained'. See also *RBas.* 9. 21 and note.

³⁰² *RBas.* 9. 21: while we strive to enhance our ordinary, natural food with flavoursome seasonings to a lofty and delicate savour. As *LR* 20 shows Basil has observed this practice in the communities.

³⁰³ *τὸ ἐν ἐκάστη χώρᾳ εὐληπτον καὶ εὐτελές τοῖς πολλοῖς εἰς χρῆσιν ἔτοιμον*. *RBas.* 9. 21: sed si quid est quod in unaquaque provincia facilius et vilius comparatur—cf. *RB* 55. 7, 10 in the context of clothing: sed quales inveniri possunt in provincia qua degunt, aut quod vilius comparari possit. Most editors consider this a direct verbal dependence on the *RBas.* See Gribomont, 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 257, nos. 8, 9; J. T. Lienhard, 'St. Basil's "Asceticism Parvum" and the Regula Benedicti', *Studia Monastica* 22 (1980), 236.

³⁰⁴ *ἀνθρωπαρέσκεια*, acting to gain human favour rather than God's, courting popularity or applause. The remedy for this vice, according to Basil, is prayer. See *SR* 277, *Morals* 72. 6.

³⁰⁵ *Τοὺς ἕξωθεν*, i.e. those of 'the world', living outside the community and outside piety.

hangings or soft cushions or diaphanous robes, so also it is unseemly that we give much thought to foods different in any degree from our usual diet.

That we should run around seeking what is not required by the necessity of need, but contrived for miserable pleasure and pernicious vainglory, is not only shameful and out of keeping with the goal set before us, but also does us no little harm, if the gourmands³⁰⁶ who estimate happiness by the pleasures of the stomach also see us waylaid by the same concerns that keep them in a stupefied state. For if luxury is an evil thing and to be avoided, we must never choose it. It is not possible that anything condemned can be useful—temporarily. Those who *live softly* and *anoint themselves with the choicest myrrh and drink fine strained wines* are condemned by the Scripture (cf. Amos 6: 4, 6). And because of *soft living the widow* is said *to be dead, even while she lives* (cf. 1 Tim. 5: 5–6). The rich man was deprived of Paradise because of his luxury here (cf. Luke 16: 25). What then have we to do with costly expenses? Does a stranger come to visit? If he is a brother, sharing the same goal of life, he will recognize the familiar table. For he will find with us what he left at home. But suppose he is worn out from the journey? Then we will set before him just so much as will relieve his weariness.

2. But someone else has come from the life outside? Let him learn from deeds what he never learnt from words and let him receive a pattern and example of sufficiency in eating. Let him take away lasting memories of the table of Christians and of poverty borne without shame for Christ's sake. But what if he pays no attention to these things and laughs at us instead? Then he will not trouble us a second time.

Whenever we see some of the wealthy reckoning the enjoyment of pleasures among the foremost of blessings, we groan much over them because they squander their entire life on vanity by making gods of their pleasures. They do not realize that through their luxury here they are receiving their portion of blessings in this life even as they hurtle to the fire prepared for them and its burning heat. Indeed, whenever the occasion offers we do not hesitate to explain these things to them in person.

But if we too are found with the same dispositions as they, such that when an opportunity comes our way, we both seek out whatever promotes pleasure and make preparations for display, then I fear we shall seem to be building up what we are destroying and shall convict ourselves of what we reproach in others, because we are living our life as a sham, now making ourselves over in this way, now in that—

³⁰⁶ οἱ τρυφῶντες, the 'luxurious'.

even to the extent of changing our clothes in order to meet the distinguished! Yet if this is shameful, it is all the more shameful that our table should be rearranged for the sake of those who live in luxury. The life of the Christian is of only one kind, having but one goal—the glory of God.³⁰⁷ *For whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything to the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31), says Paul speaking in Christ. The life of those outside is of many kinds and very varied,³⁰⁸ ever shifting this way and that in order to please any and everyone they meet.

3. There is also this: if you³⁰⁹ rearrange your table with an abundance of food and a great deal of fuss for the sake of your brother's pleasure, you show him up as a pleasure-addict. With preparations like this you heap reproaches on him for gluttony, since you show him up as one who is pleasure-driven in such things. Have we not often guessed who or what was expected on observing the appearance and manner of the preparations?³¹⁰

The Lord did not praise Martha for being distracted by much serving, but: *You are anxious and troubled about many things, but few things are needed, indeed only one* (Luke 10: 41–2)—‘few’, that is, for the preparations, ‘one’, that is, the end, the fulfilment of need. You are not unaware of the kind of food the Lord himself put before the five thousand (cf. John 6: 9).³¹¹ There is also Jacob's prayer to

³⁰⁷ *Μονότροπος ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστιανοῦ βίος, εἷνα σκοπὸν ἔχων, τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.* Basil cannot conceive that there could be, in principle, two ways of Christian life; to him the basis of the Christian ascetic life is the same ‘narrow way’ of the Gospel undertaken by *all* Christians in baptism. A very similar statement of principle occurs in Letter 150 (Def. II. 365): ‘There is only one way leading (*μίαν εἶναι ὁδόν*) to the Lord and all who travel toward him are companions of one another and travel according to one agreement as to life (*κατὰ μίαν συνθήκην τοῦ βίου*).’ See discussion of the married life in relation to the ascetic life in LR 12 and note. Basil's vocabulary is consistent, e.g. *Hom. on Ps. 114*, PG 29. 492D, Way 357: ‘Therefore, there is no male and female in the Resurrection but there is a single life and it is of one kind’ (*ἀλλὰ μία τίς ἐστι ζωὴ καὶ μονότροπος*). See Karl S. Frank on Basil's *monotropos bios* in ‘Monastische Reform in Altertum’, 35–49, esp. 43–7, ‘Die Einheit der Nachfolge Jesu’.

³⁰⁸ *Πολύτροπος δὲ καὶ ποικίλος [sic] τῶν ἔζωθεν βίος.*

³⁰⁹ The Greek changes from plural to singular 2nd person.

³¹⁰ A similar observation is made even in the Small Asketikon—*RBas.* 9. 19–20 (LR 19. 2). See also *Morals* 38 on frugality in hospitality, with a flourish of supporting scriptural texts. *VSM, GNO* 392, 412 (Wagner 177, 189) shows the generous hospitality of the Annisa community at table. Is it possible that Basil is taking issue (not very successfully in the event) with an accepted practice at Annisa?

³¹¹ This seems to refer back to what was said at greater length about this Gospel text in the LR 19, immediately preceding. Yet LR 19 is largely derived from the Small Asketikon. It was undoubtedly a stock Gospel example for Basil.

God: *If you will but give me*, he said, *bread to eat and a tunic to put on* (Gen. 28: 20), not ‘If you will give me delicacies and costly raiment’. What does Solomon the most wise have to say? *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but provide what is necessary and sufficient, lest I am filled and become false and say, Who sees me? or lest I am poor and steal and profanely use the name of my God* (Prov. 30. 8–9). Thus he defines riches as satiety and poverty as complete want of the necessities of life; and by sufficiency³¹² he means having neither a lack nor an excess of what is necessary. But sufficiency means now one thing, now another, according to the condition of the body and the present need. For one person needs a more abundant and stronger food because of his labour, whereas another needs a lighter and thinner food, wholly adapted to his weakness; but common to all are the cheaper and more easily obtained foods. Indeed, care should always be taken over a well-prepared table, yet never exceeding the bounds of our necessity. Let this be the extent of our hospitality: to meet what is required by the needs of each visitor. *As using this world*, we read, *and not misusing it* (1 Cor. 7: 31 Byz.). Now misuse is expenditure beyond what is needful. We have no money? Then let us make do without. Our barns are not full? Our food comes to us *from day to day* (cf. Matt. 6: 11, 34) and we gain our livelihood from our hands. So why do we waste the food given by God for the hungry on the pleasures of gourmands? In so doing we sin a double sin, multiplying for some the afflictions that come of want and for others the harmful effects of satiety.

LR 21 (RBas. 10. 1–7)

Q: **When the time comes**³¹³ (requires it), **what should we**³¹⁴

³¹² ἀντάρκεια.

³¹³ Reg. prim. adds τῶν ἀρίστων ἢ δείπνων, ‘of lunch or dinner’. Both terms are later additions, for Basil in his response speaks only of τοῖς ἀρίστοις, the midday meal. The second term ἢ δείπνων is especially open to question. RBas. 10. Q has only *tempus*, the ‘time’, the Syriac *the time of dinner*. Basil does not commonly provide for two meals a day. In Letter 2 (Def. 1. 23) he says ‘Let one hour, the same regularly each day, be set aside for food’. In RBas. 97 (SR 136) a brother culpably late for the midday meal (τὸ ἄριστον) is to go without food till the same meal next day. So Basil is unlikely to have mentioned a second meal in the evening though, of course, it may have been readily conceded in the case of children and those in need—see LR 19 for the principle. The noonday meal mentioned in *An Ascetic Discourse* 1. 4, PG 31. 877c (Wagner 213, Clarke 137) shows the practice of a Basilian community soon after Basil’s death.

³¹⁴ RBas. 10. Q: oportet observare nos. While the Greek and AD of the Syriac have 3rd person, RBas. agrees with BC of the Syriac in having 1st person; see Grib. 117.

observe concerning *sitting* and *reclining* (Matt. 23:6, cf. Luke 14:7–8)?

R: 1 Since we have a command from the Lord who in every place accustoms us to **humility**, **2** (by which he declares) **that when we recline at dinner,**³¹⁵ **we should seek the lowest place** (and not take a higher place) (Luke 14:8–10), whoever strives to do all according to the commandment must not overlook this command. Therefore, if there are some outsiders³¹⁶ at table with us **it is fitting that we should be an example to them** in this respect of not putting ourselves forward or seeking the first place. **3** (We should realize that), **when those who all have the same** (purpose and) **goal have come together**, especially among the many or the great, **in order to give proof of their own humility each ought to choose**³¹⁷ **the lower place, in accordance with the command of the Lord.**³¹⁸

4 On the other hand, to jostle each other aside contentiously for this (even though from a lower place), is unacceptable **5 as destructive of good order**³¹⁹ **and a cause of turbulence** (and disquiet). **Indeed, to be unwilling to yield to one another and** (to be stirred) **to fight over it, makes us as bad as those fighting over the first seats.** **6** Therefore if we carefully consider in this matter what is fitting (for each of us) **we ought assuredly leave it to him who has the responsibility** for arranging the order of reclining. **7** (And we should also keep order and comply with him in other matters as well as seating at meals), as the Lord instructed when he said that the ordering of these matters belongs to the *master of the house* (Luke 14:10). For by acting like this we shall *bear with one another in love* (Eph. 4:2), **doing all things decently and in order** (cf. 1 Cor. 14:40)³²⁰ and we shall not show by our stubborn and vehement opposition that we are practising abasement to impress the many or win popular favour. We shall better express humility by our

³¹⁵ τοῖς ἀρίστοις, the ordinary term for the midday meal. *RBas.* 10. 1, convivium, closer in meaning to the Gospel text: *wedding banquet*.

³¹⁶ κοσμικοί, ‘worldly people’.

³¹⁷ *RBas.* 10. 3: desire to be the first.

³¹⁸ The *RBas.* 10. 1–3 expresses the same ideas as the Greek, but rearranges the text considerably, using the 3rd person. Zelzer’s reading in *RBas.* 10. 3 follows the *lectio difficilior* of most manuscripts: ‘dedimus’; however ‘debemus’ the reading from the 9th-cent. MS, M, before correction, is closer to the obligatory sense of the Greek impersonal construction ἐπιβάλλον.

³¹⁹ τῆς ἐνταξίας. This all-important Basilian principle is well in place in the Small Asketikon. For more on good order see *LR* 27 note.

³²⁰ *RBas.* 10. 7 introduces and quotes the Scripture exactly: and there will be fulfilled in us what is said *Let all you do be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14:40). An explicit quotation of the text occurs at the beginning of *LR* 24.

amenability. For contentiousness is a greater sign of pride than taking the first place, if we have accepted it when bidden to do so.

LR 22 (*RBas.* 11. 1–31)³²¹

Q: What is the (worthy and) proper garment³²² for a Christian?³²³

R: 1. 1 The word³²⁴ has already shown the necessity of humility and simplicity and of cheapness and frugality in all things, so that we have as little cause to be distracted by bodily needs as possible.³²⁵ **2**

We must therefore follow the same goals I think in our treatment of dress.

3 If we ought to strive to be the least and the last of all, we should certainly reckon ourselves the last of all in this matter³²⁶ also (cf. Mark 9:35).

For just as the vainglorious seek glory for themselves by their outward covering of clothes, keen as they are to be gazed at and courted for the splendour of their robes, so clearly it is fitting that one who has abased his life to the uttermost in humility should choose the last in this matter also³²⁷ **6** as, on the other hand, one

³²¹ Grib. 251 notes that while Rufinus rightly presents LR 22 and LR 23 as a single unit in *RBas.* 11, the Syriac has only the equivalent of LR 23 and divides even this into two, resulting in a staggering of the numbering system between the Latin and the Syriac versions of the Small Asketikon from this point on.

³²² τὸ πρέπον ἔνδυμα τῷ Χριστιανῷ. Garnier: vestimentum conveniat Christiano. *RBas.* 11. Q: dignus vel decens habitus Christiani. ἔνδυμα was also used for the habit of a consecrated virgin and the garments worn by the newly baptized.

³²³ For Basil one garment is the principle; see also *SR* 70, 90, 168, 210 and note, Letters 2, Def. I. 20–1; 150, Def. I. 366–9; and 223, Def. III. 296–7—this last shows how impressed the young Basil was by the mean clothing of the Eustathians. The *VSM* also notes Makrina's poverty in death: 'What closets? You have everything she possessed in your hands. Look at her dress, look at the covering of her head, her worn sandals. This is her wealth, this is her property. There is nothing beyond what you see . . .' (Wagner 184). Basil's approach to clothing is practical, frugal, and scrupulously scriptural; compare the tendency to sacralize the monastic habit found in Pachomius' monastery at Tabennisi, *Lausiac History* 32 and Cassian, *Institutes* 2. 2–7.

³²⁴ ὁ λόγος, the (scriptural) word, or Basil's exposition of it, in which case 'our discourse'.

³²⁵ *RBas.* 11. 1 is punctuated with Rufinian pleonasm: our discourse above has already shown the necessity of humility (such that whoever wishes to live in religion and piety seeks) simplicity and cheapness in all things (that is, those things which are obtained at small cost, 2 this I think is to be observed) with regard to bodily needs (so that occasions for us) to busy ourselves much about it are reduced to a minimum.

³²⁶ *RBas.* 11. 3: dress.

³²⁷ *RBas.* 11. 5: 4 For if those who seek glory for themselves through the splendour of their dress, go to great lengths to be seen decked in costly and magnificent robes, 5 so it follows that one who strives for the least and the last, that is to acquit

who wishes to look noble and illustrious presents himself in the very best and costliest.

7 Just as the Corinthians at their public feast were reproved because through their extravagance they put to shame those who have nothing (cf. 1 Cor. 11:22)—**8 for clearly in terms of the common and plain dress of all, whatever is consistent with the ordinary style of dress or usage is suitable—so to assume a style beyond that of the many, puts the poor to shame, as it were, by the comparison.** Since the Apostle says: *Do not be haughty-minded, but associate with the lowly* (Rom. 12:16), let each examine himself, whether Christians resemble more fittingly *those who live in palaces and are clad in soft raiment* (cf. Matt. 11:8), or the messenger and herald of the Lord's appearing, *than whom no one greater has arisen among those born of women* (Matt. 11:11)—I mean John, the son of Zacharias, whose *clothing was of camel's hair* (cf. Matt. 3:4). And the saints of old, too, *went about in sheepskins and goatskins* (Heb. 11:37).³²⁸

2. 9 The Apostle also (sufficiently) **proposed the goal** (in this matter) **in a brief phrase, saying: If we have food and clothing, with these we are content** (1 Tim. 6:8), **10 as if** (to show) **we need only covering, not to fall into forbidden vanity of embroidery** (on our garments) **and the** (ornamentation and) **ostentation that comes of it, to say nothing worse. 11 Such things in any case were introduced to our** (human) **life afterward, through the contrivance of vain crafts.**³²⁹ **12 But the original use of clothing is clear when God himself gave it to those in need, for God made for them,**³³⁰ **it says, tunics of skins** (Gen. 3:21). For the use of such skins was sufficient for the covering of their modesty.

13 Yet since another purpose entered in, to give warmth (and protection) **through covering, (it seems) we must coordinate the use of it for both purposes: 14 to cover our modesty and to protect against harm from the weather.**³³¹ **15 However, since in these**

himself of the uttermost humility, should prefer that in which he will appear as the least and *the last of all* (cf. Mark 9:35).

³²⁸ The same text is quoted by Cassian, *Institutes* 1.7 describing the *melotes* (sheepskin) worn by the Egyptian monks. In the *Life of Antony* 91, 92, Antony on his deathbed leaves one *melotes* each to Bishops Athanasius and Serapion. See also Evagrius, *Praktikon*, Prologue; Isidore of Pelusium, *Letter* 1; and Gregory the Great, *Dialogues* 2, 7.

³²⁹ *RBas.* 11. 11: having been contrived by the taste for artificial luxury.

³³⁰ *RBas.* 11. 12: the first human beings.

³³¹ *RBas.* 11. 14 so that nakedness may be seen to be covered and the force of the cold and all harm from the elements be kept at bay.

matters some clothes are more suitable and others less so, it follows that we should prefer whatever serves the most comprehensive use, provided that the principle of voluntary poverty³³² is in no way impeded, 16 so that we do not have one set of clothes prepared for show (going abroad in) and another for use at home, or again, one set for the night and another for the day. 17 We ought therefore have such a covering that is sufficient for all our purposes, that will appear decent in the daytime and supply our necessity at night. 18 Accordingly it is fitting that we share a common style of clothing (and alike and of one form) among ourselves, and that even in his clothing a distinctive character, as it were, identifies the Christian. 19 For all who tend to the same (purpose and) goal are³³³ for the most part consistent with each other.

3. 20 A distinctive dress (and style of clothing) is also useful in giving advance notice of each, bearing witness in advance of his profession of the life (by which he lives) according to God, 21 so that (he knows that his very actions ought to be consistent with himself and that) those who meet us (in our manner of clothing) expect that we will be consistent in our actions.³³⁴ 22 For unfitting and unseemly behaviour is not seen in the same way in those one meets casually and those who make great professions.³³⁵ 23 If one were to see a common fellow or some chance-comer giving or receiving blows in public, or bellowing obscenities, or loitering in taverns or committing other such indecencies, 24 one would not especially pay attention (to or mark such a man), but would regard such behaviour as consistent with the whole orientation of his life. 25 But if someone who has professed strictness³³⁶ neglects what is seemly in even a small way, everyone marks it (and rebukes him) and hurls reproaches to piety against him, fulfilling the saying: *and they will turn on you and tear you* (Matt. 7:6). 26 Thus the profession by means of one's style of clothing³³⁷ is as it were, a kind of pedagogue for the weaker, in that it guards them

³³² τὸν τῆς ἀκτημοσύνης . . . λόγον, referring to Matt. 19: 16–30, Mark 10: 23–31, Luke 18: 18–30? *RBas.* 11. 15: regula voluntariae paupertatis.

³³³ *RBas.* 11. 19: should surely be.

³³⁴ *RBas.* 11. 21: and that to those who see us (in our style of clothing) we should appear to correspond in our actions as well.

³³⁵ *RBas.* 11. 22: If someone behaves dishonourably, it is not equally disgraceful in anyone you meet and in one of those who profess the life of sobriety by their very style of clothing.

³³⁶ *RBas.* 11. 25: religiosam vitam, 'the life of piety'.

³³⁷ *RBas.* 11. 26: Thus a more religious style of clothing . . .

from dishonourable (and unbecoming) deeds, even against their will.

29 Accordingly, as the soldier is marked in some way by his clothing, and the senator by another, and someone else by another again, from which their rank, as a rule, may be inferred, 30 so also it is fitting and consistent that a Christian also should in some way be marked by his clothing, 27 preserving the sobriety handed down by the Apostle, who in one place directs that *the bishop should be orderly* (1 Tim. 3:2) and in another bids the women be *dressed in orderly style of clothing* (1 Tim. 2:9), 28 ‘orderly’, of course, being understood in regard to the distinctive goal of Christianity.³³⁸

31 It is the same principle concerning footwear: whatever is simple, readily obtained, in keeping with our goal, and sufficient for use, should be chosen on every occasion.

LR 23 (RBas. 11. 32–41)³³⁹

Concerning the belt.³⁴⁰

R: 32 The saints who have gone before (us) show the necessity of using a belt. 33 John girded his loins with a leather belt (it is said) (cf. Matt. 3:4; Mark 1:6), as Elijah did before him. For it is written that this (habit) was a distinguishing mark of the man when it says *he was a hairy*³⁴¹ *man, having a leather belt around his loins* (2 Kgs. 1:8). 34 Peter too is shown to have used a belt, which is clear from the words of the angel who spoke to him: *Put on your belt*, (it says), *and fasten your sandals* (Acts 12:8). 35 The blessed Paul is also shown to have used a belt in Agabus’ prophecy (who said) to

³³⁸ RBas. 11. 27–30 inverts the order of verses and adds glosses and changes of nuance: 27 Lastly, the Apostle indicates that the bishop should be orderly (1 Tim. 3:2) which refers more to his outward appearance and says of the women, too, that they should be dressed in orderly style of clothing (1 Tim. 2:9). 28 By a Christian’s ‘orderly style of dress’ is meant that which is appropriate to his purpose (and profession). 29 For just as there is one style of dress proper to a soldier and a senator’s style is of another kind, by which one knows in advance that this one is a senator and that one a soldier, 30 so a Christian too, ought to have something proper by way of the established form of his own clothing.

³³⁹ On the division of the text at this point, see the note prefacing LR 22.

³⁴⁰ On the use of a belt, see also Letter 2 (Def. 1. 21). Cassian, *Institutes* 1. 1 is closely dependent on the Latin transmission of this response, RBas. 11. 32–41.

³⁴¹ δάσους, hirsutus. The Hebrew idiom, ‘lord/master of hair’ is ambiguous—thick with hair, i.e. his own, or wearing a rough shaggy garment? In the wider context, e.g. Zech. 13:4, John the Baptist (cf. Matt. 3:4), and later, the practice of the Egyptian monks and the Sufis, it is likely that the prophet Elijah wore a kind of haircloth or animal-skin garment.

him: *The man whose belt this is*, he said, *they will likewise bind in Jerusalem* (Acts 21: 11); Job too is ordered by the Lord to put on his belt.³⁴² 36 For as the symbol of a certain manliness³⁴³ and of readiness for action,³⁴⁴ *put a belt round your loins*, it says, *like a man* (Job 38: 3; 49: 2). It is clear too that the use of the belt was customary among all the disciples of the Lord, since they were forbidden to keep *any money in their belts* (Mark 6: 8).

37 And it is also especially necessary that one who is to engage in (manual) work himself should be well girded,³⁴⁵ so that he is (in all ways prepared and) unimpeded in his movements (for the service of every good work cf. 1 Tim. 5: 10; 2 Tim. 2: 21, etc.). 38 Hence he needs a belt, so that his tunic may be gathered around his body, and moreover, it will keep keep him warmer since it is caught in all round him and leaves him free in his movements. Even the Lord, when preparing to minister to the disciples, took a towel and girded himself (cf. John 13: 4).

39 Concerning the number of tunics, however, we have no need to say anything, since we have examined this matter sufficiently in our discourse on poverty,³⁴⁶ for if 40 one who has *two tunics* is ordered to share with *one who has none* (Luke 3: 11; cf. Matt. 10: 9, Mark 6: 9), then clearly to possess several for one's own use is forbidden. 41 In the case of those forbidden to possess *two tunics*, is there any need to lay down prescriptions for their use?³⁴⁷

LR 24

Q: Now that you have sufficiently imparted to us these matters,³⁴⁸ we would next like to learn about the manner of our life together.

³⁴² *RBas.* 11. 35: Job too heard from the Lord . . .

³⁴³ *ἀνδρείας*, from *ἀνήρ* (man as male); while this certainly refers to courage, bravery, etc., here the emphasis is on 'manliness'.

³⁴⁴ *RBas.* 11. 35–6 inverts the order: 35 . . . Job heard from the Lord: *put your belt around your loins like a man* (Job 38: 3, 49: 2). 36 For the use of a belt seems to be the sign of a certain virtue (virtus, 'manliness') and an eagerness for work.

³⁴⁵ *ἐδस्ताλή*, 'succinctum', meaning 'having loose clothing caught in by a belt'.

³⁴⁶ *RBas.* 11. 39–40: . . . nothing to say, since it is written out in a manifest definition, where it says, 40 *Whoever has two tunics, let him give to one who has none*, whereby we surely infer . . . The Greek text refers back to the earlier part of *RBas.* 11 (LR 22) immediately preceding. But *RBas.* 11. 39 refers to and expressly cites the relevant Gospel saying.

³⁴⁷ *RBas.* 11. 41: prescriptions about (variety of clothing) . . .

³⁴⁸ *Τούτων ἱκανῶς ἡμῖν παραδομένων*. Note the sense of *paradosis*, tradition, handing on, transmitting.

R: Since the Apostle says: *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14:40), we consider that when believers are joined together³⁴⁹ there will be a decent and well-ordered way of life in which the principle of the *members of the body* is observed (cf. 1 Cor. 12:27). Thus, the one who has the function of the eye, so to speak, is entrusted with the common supervision, both in approving what has been done and in providing for and keeping an eye on what is yet to be done; while another has the function of the ear or hand in hearing or giving effect to what is necessary—and so on for each member. Consider the case of our own members. There is no lack of danger if any limb neglects its own functions, or does not make use of another in the purpose for which that other was created by God. For example, when the hand or foot does not pay heed to the guidance of the eye, the hand will inevitably touch something harmful and hurt the whole body and the foot will hit against something or trip over a bank; or if the eye is closed so that it does not see, it will of necessity be hurt along with the other members and all together suffer the same fate. So also, neither is negligence on the part of the one in charge³⁵⁰ without danger, since he must answer for all, nor is disobedience on the part of a disciple without harm and penalty—and all the graver will be his peril if he causes others to stumble.

Therefore let each show unwearied zeal for God³⁵¹ in his own place, fulfilling the Apostle's command, *never wearying in zeal* (Rom. 12:11) and he will receive the praise for his eagerness; but if he is negligent, he will incur the opposite, that is, wretchedness and woe. For *cursed*, it says, *is anyone who does the works of the Lord negligently* (Jer. 48:10).

LR 25

That there will be a fearful judgment for the one who presides³⁵² if he does not rebuke sinners.

R: **1.** Let one who is entrusted with the care of all³⁵³ conduct himself as one who must give account for each, aware that if one of the brothers falls into sin, not having been told beforehand of the righteous judgment of God, or, once he has fallen into sin continues in it

³⁴⁹ ἐν τῇ συναφείᾳ τῶν πιστῶν.

³⁵⁰ τῷ ἐφροστῶτι.

³⁵¹ τῷ Θεῷ Codex Voss. and two other MSS.

³⁵² τῷ προεστῶτι. This is the first use of this singular term for a superior in the additions of the Great Asketikon, though it has already appeared often in the Small Asketikon. See SR 98 (RBas. 15. Q) and note.

³⁵³ Τὴν κοινὴν φροντίδα.

without being taught the manner of amendment, *his blood will be required at his hands*, as it is written (Ezek. 3: 18). And this is especially true when, not unknowingly, he neglects what pleases God and undermines the strictness of the way of life by tolerating the evil ways of individuals for the sake of favour. *For they who flatter you, it says, lead you astray and confuse the path beneath your feet* (Isa. 3: 12). *But the one who troubles you shall bear his own judgment, whoever he may be* (Gal. 5: 10). That this may not be our experience, let us in all our dealings with our brothers follow the apostolic rule: *For never, he says, were we found using words to win favour, as you all know, or as a pretext for covetousness, as God is my witness; or as seeking glory from men, either from you or from anyone else* (1 Thess. 2: 5–6).

2. Therefore anyone free of these faults should be able to exercise his leadership without going astray, bearing fruit in reward for himself and salvation for his followers. One who practises true love cares nothing for human honours or for avoiding giving offence to sinners by treating them indulgently and pleasantly. He announces the word with freedom, candour,³⁵⁴ and sincerity, choosing not to palliate the truth in any way. In this way the following words will apply to him: *But we became unfeigned in your midst, as when a nurse cherishes her own children; such was our longing for you, we were eager to impart unto you, not only the gospel of God, but our own soul too* (1 Thess. 2: 7–8).

One, however, who does not act like this is a *blind guide*, both hurling himself over the cliff and dragging his followers after him (cf. Luke 6: 39).

From all that has been said it should be clear how great an evil it is to cause one's brother to go astray by not being a guide to him. It is also a sign that the commandment of love is not being fulfilled, for no father looks on calmly when his own child is about to fall into a pit, or if he does fall in, leaves him there. Is there any need to say how much more terrible it is for a soul fallen into an abyss of evils to be left there to perish? Therefore, let the one responsible for the community be vigilant for their souls and concerned for what will lead to each one's salvation, as one who must render an account. He must have so great a care for them as to show a zeal on their behalf even unto death, not only according to the Lord's words about love which apply to all—that *a man lay down his life for his friends* (John 15: 13)—but according to that particular love shown by him who said: *such was our longing for you, we were eager to impart unto you not only the gospel of God, but our own life too* (1 Thess. 2: 8).

³⁵⁴ ἀκαπηλεύτως, lit. 'uncrookedly'.

LR 26

That all things, even the secrets of the heart, are to be uncovered to the one who presides.

R: It is necessary that everyone in a subordinate position who intends to show any progress worthy of the name and be found steadfast in the life according to the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ, not keep any movement of his soul concealed in himself or utter an untested word, but lay bare the secrets of the heart to those entrusted among the brothers³⁵⁵ with the compassionate and sympathetic care of the weak. For in this way what is praiseworthy will be confirmed, the fitting remedy will be applied to what is amiss, and from such collaborative endeavour, through making progress little by little, our perfection shall be attained.³⁵⁶

³⁵⁵ This is scarcely the private sacramental ‘confession of devotion’, a much later development, but the ‘manifestation of thoughts’ practised by monks and serious-minded Christians, the primary purpose of which was medicinal. While the *presbyter* who is superior might be suitably a priest, the community has a subordinate body of ‘presbyters’ or ‘elders’ to whom confession may be made as well as to the superior (despite the later heading of LR 26). They are not themselves necessarily priests, but are attested for their skill in emotional and spiritual ‘remediation’, i.e. soul-doctors or spiritual physicians. They are an echelon of seniors who on occasion may even have to correct the superior (see LR 27 following). Cf. Cassian’s instruction in *Institutes* 4.9, where a similar distinction between the juniors and the ‘senior’ obtains. Basil’s teaching on correction in community is sensitive and complex. For more on private confession see SR 229 and note; on the question of presbyters, priests, and ‘stewards of the mysteries’ and on the various modalities of confession and mutual correction, see SR 110 and note, 288 and note.

³⁵⁶ *Τῆς τοιαύτης συνασκήσεως, διὰ τῆς κατὰ μικρὸν προσθήκης ἢ τελείωσις ἡμῖν προσγενήσεται.* How strikingly unindividualistic is Basil’s conception of ‘perfection’ or ‘maturity’ in Christ; here it is presented as a goal to be strived for by the whole community. On this high cenobitic doctrine see also LR Prol. 3 (*RBas.* Prol. 12), SR 7.2 (*RBas.* 3. 14) and note. This marks an overwhelming difference between Christianity and the Stoic/Neoplatonist tradition: the ‘Word’ of God, the ‘Logos’ is *incarnate*, in a man, Jesus Christ, whose salvation ‘is communicated to us not through membership of the cosmos, but through membership of the Church, a society of men’—A. H. Armstrong in ‘Man in the Cosmos: a Study of Some Differences between Pagan Neoplatonism and Christianity’, in W. Den Boer (ed.), *Romanitas et Christianitas* (Amsterdam, 1973), 7. The link between Church and perfection is a recurring theme of Basil’s homilies; Rousseau 179–80 observes: ‘The Church nurtured people by its teaching, urging each one towards baptism, towards “intimacy with God” [*οἰκειώσις πρὸς Θεὸν*]; but it was the intimacy of those sharing a common household [*Hom. Exhorting to Holy Baptism. 1, PG 31. 425A*]. Closeness to God, dwelling with God, made the Church “the house of God” [*τὸ οἶκος τοῦ Θεοῦ, Hom. on ‘Give heed to yourself’, 3 PG 319. 204C*] . . . One needed the company of others. It was in a sense the Church as a whole that gained a true knowledge of God.’ In *Hom. on Ps. 33 (PG 29. 357B, Way 253)* Basil says: ‘Since one mind and the attention of one man do not suffice even for a brief time for the comprehension

LR 27

That even the one who presides must be reminded by the more eminent members³⁵⁷ in the community, should he err.

R: Now just as the one who presides is responsible for guiding the community in everything, so the others in turn have a duty to remind him if he is ever suspected of some error.³⁵⁸ But that good order³⁵⁹ may not be undermined, such a reminder should be entrusted to those who are more eminent in both years and understanding. Thus if there is anything that deserves amendment, we shall benefit both our brother and ourselves on his account, for we have brought back to the right path one who is, as it were, the rule of our life, who by his own uprightness should be correcting our perversity; and if some are disturbed over him without cause, they are reassured by the light brought on the matter that their suspicions are groundless and shall be freed from their misgivings on his account.

LR 28

Q: What should be our approach towards a disobedient member?

R: 1. To one showing reluctance in obeying the commandments of the Lord, we first of all show sympathy as to a diseased member of the body, while the one who presides should endeavour to cure his ailment through private admonitions.

But if he persists in disobedience and will not accept correction, then he must rebuke him sharply before all the community and apply remedies³⁶⁰ to him with every manner of appeal.

of the splendours of God, he associates all the meek with himself for communion in this activity (*εἰς τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς ἐνεργείας*).’ In *Hom. on Ps. 44* his concerns for progress in the ascetic life and for the life of the Church are indistinguishable (*PG* 29. 409A, *Way* 291): ‘He summons the Church (*τὴν Ἐκκλησίαν*) to hear and observe what has been commanded’; see also *ibid.* 408C, 412A, 412D = *Way* 291, 293, 294. On *οἰκείωσις* see also *LR Prol. 3* and note, *LR 2. 2 (RBas. 2. 32)* and note.

³⁵⁷ *παρὰ τῶν προεχόντων ἐν τῇ ἀδελφότητι.*

³⁵⁸ *πλημμέλημα*, etymologically a ‘false note’, something amiss or out of keeping. On the grounds of true obedience and what to do if the community and/or superior are compromising piety see also *LR 36, 47, RBas. 13 (SR 113), SR 303* and note.

³⁵⁹ *μὴ λυθῆναι τὴν εὐταξίαν. εὐταξία* or ‘good order’ is one of the most characteristic themes of Basil’s cenobitic doctrine. He derives it from the two terms used in 1 Cor. 14: 40: *Let all you do be done decently (εὐσχημόνως) and in order (κατὰ τάξιν)*. In *LR 24* and in *SR 238* Basil cites 1 Cor. 14: 40, immediately invoking *εὐτακτόν* and *εὐταξία* as the correlatives, respectively. For other instances see also *LR 21 (RBas. 10. 4), 43. 2, 45. 1* and *2, 53; SR 100* and *136* (both are in additions to the Small Asketikon text), *173 (RBas. 137. 1), 156* (twice), *173* (twice), *238*, and *303*. While it is already present in the Small Asketikon, *εὐταξία* seems to gain in emphasis in the Great Asketikon.

³⁶⁰ See *SR 44, 122* for penalties.

But if after much warning he remains unmoved and takes no measures to remedy his conduct, he is *like one who destroys his own self*, as the saying puts it (cf. Prov. 18: 9).³⁶¹ Then, with many tears and lamentations, but resolutely nonetheless, we must cut him away from the body as a corrupted and wholly useless member, following the example of doctors, who, whenever they find a limb affected by an incurable disease, remove it by surgery and cauterization, in case the harm spreads further and corrupts the neighbouring parts through contagion. Such is the course we must also adopt in the case of those who hate or oppose the commandments of the Lord, according to the order of the Lord himself Who said: *If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and cast it away from you* (Matt. 5: 29).

To show benevolence in such cases is like the misguided lenience shown by Eli to his sons contrary to what was pleasing to God, which was rebuked (cf. 1 Sam. 3: 13). Such specious kindness toward the wicked is a betrayal of the truth, treachery against the common good, and a collusion with evils regarded with indifference, because that Scripture is no longer observed: *Why did you not mourn instead, so that he who has done this deed be removed from your midst* (1 Cor. 5: 2)? Accordingly, there inevitably comes to pass what follows: *a little leaven corrupts the whole lump* (1 Cor. 5: 6). *As for those who sin*, says the Apostle, *rebuke them in the sight of all*—and immediately he gives the reason—that *the rest too may be in fear* (1 Tim. 5: 20).³⁶²

2. To sum up: whoever refuses the treatment administered by his brother³⁶³ is not being consistent with himself. For if he does not accept subordination but justifies his own will instead, why does he

³⁶¹ ὡς αὐτὸν ἑαυτοῦ λυμεῶνα ὄντα, κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν. Garnier (PG 31. 988 n. 20) inserts the ὄντα from 2 MSS, omitted in previous editions. He says that ‘Scottus’ (presumably John Scotus Eriugena) advises that the saying may be read in ‘Hadr. Junium’ in the form: ‘Sibi ipsi exitus auctor, et suo capiti’—‘he is the author of his own destruction; it is on his own head’. But Basil is surely referring to Prov. 18: 19; cf. LR 46. 2. Basil may also be alluding to a famous phrase from a lost play of Aeschylus, *The Myrmidons*, in which an eagle shot by an arrow, sees the arrow’s feathering and says: ‘so we are taken, not by others, but by our own feathers’. Gregory of Nyssa quotes the saying in his Letter 19, GNO VIII. II, 67. For the fragment see Stefan Radt, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, vol. 3, Aeschylus (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985), fr. 139, 252–6.

³⁶² Cited also in RB 70. 3.

³⁶³ παρὰ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ in 5 MSS and earlier editions; Garnier, however, preferred the τοῦ προσετώτος (‘by the one who presides’) of only one MS, Colb. (Ask. 6 recension), apparently a later emendation in line with contemporary thinking. Yet the superior is also referred to as a ‘brother’ several times within this block of LR 24–55.

stay with him? Why does he claim him as the guardian of his life?³⁶⁴ Once he has accepted enrolment in the body of the community (cf. Ezra 2: 62) and been judged *an instrument fit for service* (cf. Num. 4: 26; 1 Chron. 28: 13; Ezra 7: 19 (2 Tim. 2: 21); Heb. 9: 23), then even if a command seems beyond his strength, let him leave the responsibility to him who gave the excessive order and himself show docility and obedience *even unto death*, mindful of the Lord who *became obedient unto death, even death on a cross* (Phil. 2: 8).³⁶⁵

But rebellion and contradiction argue many evils—faith diseased, hope a prey to doubt, a self-important and inflated character. For no one disobeys a command without first holding the giver of the command in contempt, while no one who trusts in God's promises and keeps his hope firmly fixed on them will ever shrink from what he is charged to do, however arduous it may seem to be. For he knows that *the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed* (Rom. 8: 18). And anyone who is persuaded that *whoever humbles himself shall be exalted* (Matt. 23: 12; Luke 14: 11) will show an even greater eagerness than his preceptor expects, aware that *this present slight affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all proportion* (2 Cor. 4: 17).

LR 29

Concerning one who works with an arrogant or murmuring spirit.

R: The work of anyone who has been murmuring or is detected in arrogance must not be mixed with the work of those who are humble in heart and contrite in spirit (cf. Isa. 66: 2; Ps. 50: 19); it must not be used by the pious at all. *For what is exalted among men is an abomination before God* (Luke 16: 15). And there is another command of the Apostle: *and do not murmur, as some of them murmured and perished by the destroyer* (1 Cor. 10: 10). There is also this. *Not grudgingly or under constraint* (2 Cor. 9: 7).³⁶⁶

The work of such as these, therefore, is unacceptable. It is like a

³⁶⁴ τί και προστάτην (champion, patron, supporter, protector, leader) αὐτον τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ζωῆς ἐπιγράφεται (inscribe, attest, affirm).

³⁶⁵ Basil usually answers 'just how far should we go?' by referring to Phil. 2. 8. That monks are 'cross-bearers' and heirs to the martyrs features strongly in later monastic literature. Clarke 194 n. 5 cites Symeon of Thessalonica, *De Sacr.* 53 (PG 155. 200c): 'The life of the monks . . . which the Saviour himself lived . . . being himself a virgin and poor . . . and praying . . . and obeying the Father even to death on the cross.'

³⁶⁶ The Scripture text is continued in *RB* 5. 16, in a passage also dealing with murmuring.

blemished sacrifice—the kind it was unholy to include with the other offerings. For if those who brought alien fire to the altar experienced so great a wrath (cf. Lev. 10: 1–2) how can it not be perilous to accept work coming from a disposition at war with God, as if doing so could help us to fulfil God’s commandments? *For what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? . . . Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?* (2 Cor. 6: 14–15) Wherefore it says: *The lawless who sacrifices to me a calf, is as one who kills a dog; and one who brings a cereal offering as bringing the blood of swine* (Isa. 66: 3 Sept.).

Consequently, the works of the stubborn and contentious are to be disowned by the community. Those who preside³⁶⁷ must give strict attention to this matter, so that they do not violate the teaching of him who said: *he who walks in a blameless way ministered to me. He who practises deceit did not abide within my house* (Ps. 100: 6–7). Otherwise, when someone mingles sin with his observance of the commandment and either defiles his work by a lazy shrinking from toil, or else is inflated on account of his achievement, they allow him to continue in his depravity in view of what they receive from him, and so hinder him from coming to a perception of his own ills.

Therefore the one who presides must be persuaded that if he conducts himself towards a brother in a way that betrays the word, he brings upon himself a heavy and inexorable wrath. For, as it is written, *his blood shall be required at his hands* (Ezek. 3: 18). And the disciple must be prepared to shrink from no order, not even the most arduous, being fully persuaded that his *reward is great in heaven* (Matt. 5: 12). Therefore let *the hope of glory* (Col. 1: 27) gladden the one who obeys, so that he accomplishes the Lord’s work in all joy and patience.

LR 30

Q: With what disposition must those who preside care for the brothers?

R: Let not the one who presides become inflated with dignity, lest he lose the beatitude promised to humility (cf. Matt. 5: 3) or *indeed being puffed up fall into the condemnation of the devil* (1 Tim. 3: 6).

³⁶⁷ τοὺς προεστῶτας. The plural refers either to superiors of communities in general or to an echelon of seniors within each community; compare the singular in the previous sentence. LR 27 and 35 show that such a body of superiors within the one community existed.

Let him be convinced of this instead: the care of many means the service of many.

Anyone who tends many wounded, wiping away the discharge from each wound and applying remedies according to the special need of each injury as it presents itself, does not regard his service as an occasion of self-importance but rather of humility, anxiety, and struggle. So also, and to a far greater extent, should be the sentiments and anxieties of one entrusted with the task of healing the sicknesses of the community, since he is the servant of all and will have to render account for all. For in this way there will be accomplished in him the goal the Lord intended when he said: *If anyone would be first among you, let him be last of all and servant of all* (Mark 9: 35, 10: 43-4; Matt. 20: 26-7).

LR 31

That it is necessary to accept services from the one who presides.

R: Indeed, the many must even accept bodily services from those who seem to be of advanced standing in the community,³⁶⁸ for the principle of humility both prescribes that the greater serve and show the lesser that to be served is not out of order. For the example of the Lord leads us to this, since he did not consider it unworthy to wash the feet of his own disciples (cf. John 13: 5) and they did not dare withstand him as he did so. Moreover Peter, who did not accept at first from exceeding reverence, at once yielded himself to obedience when he learnt the peril that would come of disobedience (cf. John 13: 9).

Therefore, a subordinate need have no fear of undermining his goal of humility if ever he is ministered to by a greater. For often the service is rendered more to teach him and give him an effective example than for the sake of any urgent need. So let humility be demonstrated by submission and imitation and let him not do the work of arrogance and pretension by putting up opposition on a pretext of humility. For contradiction is a mark of self-will and unruliness, it is the proof of one who is puffed up and contemptuous rather than humbled and obedient in all things. Therefore it is necessary to obey him who said: *bearing with one another in love* (Eph. 4: 2).

³⁶⁸ *παρὰ τῶν προέχειν δοκούντων ἐν τῇ ἀδελφότητι.*

LR 32

Q: How should we behave towards our relatives³⁶⁹ according to the flesh?

R: 1. Those who have been once received into the community must not be allowed by the one who presides to be distracted in any way, whether by leaving the brothers and leading an unwitnessed life on the pretext of visiting friends, or by undertaking the responsibilities of looking after their kin according to the flesh. For the word absolutely rules out the use of ‘mine’ and ‘yours’ in the community. *For all who believed, it says, had one heart and soul; and not one of them said that any of the things he possessed was his own* (Acts 4: 32).

Therefore if one’s parents or siblings according to the flesh live according to God, let them be tended to by all the community, as common fathers and members of the household.³⁷⁰ *For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, says the Lord, that one is my brother and sister and mother* (Matt. 12: 50). We judge that the responsibility for them should devolve on the one who presides over the community.

But if they are caught up in the worldly life³⁷¹ then we who strive for a life well-ordered and attentive to the Lord without distraction (1 Cor. 7: 35) have no principle in common with them. For besides the fact that we are of no particular use to them, we fill our own life with tumults and disturbances and drag in occasions for sins. Accordingly, we ought not welcome those who sneer at the commandments of God and rubbish the work of piety even when they come to visit their former companions; for they do not love the Lord who said: *he who does not love me does not keep my words* (John 14: 24). *But what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?* (2 Cor. 6: 14–15)

³⁶⁹ οἰκεῖους: embracing both ‘family’ and ‘close friends’ not related by blood. One or other shade of meaning comes to the fore in different contexts. To enter the community is to transfer from one’s former οἶκος or household, to the ‘household of God’ (e.g. Eph. 2: 19). Only they can be regarded as οἰκεῖοι, ‘fellow-householders’, who share the same goal of Christian piety. Basil acknowledges that there are dedicated Christians ‘in the world’, usually in devout families, who share essentially the same Christian goal of life as members of the ascetic communities. On the ‘household of God’ and relations with relatives see also *RBas.* 2. 13, 15 (*LR* 2. 1, 2), *RBas.* 5. 1–9 (*LR* 9), *LR* 26 and note, *RBas.* 196 (*SR* 94), *RBas.* 31, 32, 33 (*SR* 187, 188, 189), *SR* 190 and note, *SR* 304.

³⁷⁰ οἱ . . . γονεῖς (i.e. both parents), ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν ἐν τῇ ἀδελφότητι (single community) ὡς κοῖνοι πατέρες ἢ οἰκεῖοι.

³⁷¹ Ἐμπεπλεγμένοι εἰσὶ τῷ κοινῷ βίῳ, i.e. living indifferently the conventional life of society at large.

2. Moreover, special care must be taken to exclude occasions leading to sin for those still being trained in the amendment of their life—and the greatest of these is the memory of their former life. Thus they will not incur the saying: *in their hearts they turned back towards Egypt* (Acts. 7: 39), which is what frequently happens when they are affected by conversation with relatives according to the flesh. So, in general, we must not allow either friend or stranger to talk with the brothers unless we are persuaded that in their conversations they mean to pursue what builds up souls and will help them to make progress.

But if they have some necessity for speaking to those who have been thrown in their lot with us, let them do so with those who have been entrusted with the charism of the word,³⁷² since these have the capacity *to speak* and to listen *with knowledge* (cf. 2 Tim. 2: 15; Heb. 5: 13) in a way that builds up the faith. For the Apostle teaches plainly that not everyone has the capacity of the word, but that this charism belongs only to a few, when he says: *For through the Spirit one is given the word of wisdom, another the word of knowledge* (1 Cor. 12: 8) and elsewhere: *that he may be able to encourage with sound teaching and refute those who contradict* (Tit. 1: 9).

LR 33

Q: What should be the manner of communication with the sisters?³⁷³

R: He who has once renounced marriage will, of course, renounce all the more those concerns which, the Apostle says, distract the married man, namely, *how he may please his wife* (1 Cor. 7: 33). So he will purify himself in every way from any concern for pleasing women,³⁷⁴ fearing the condemnation of Scripture: *God scatters the*

³⁷² For more on this charism, so important for leadership, see LR 13 and 45.

³⁷³ See also SR 109/RBas. 198, SR 154, SR 220/RBas. 174 and note. The setting is that of a single community with segregated sections for women and for men, who are together regularly only in the liturgy, although as this Longer Response lays out, there are face-to-face meetings, with due authorization, as need arises. On the structure of the community see LR 15. 1 and note and 34. 1 and note. It is anachronistic to suppose as Clarke 199, that it is a question of some of the brothers going to visit a 'convent' or sisterhood, to celebrate the Eucharist for them or do heavy field-work.

³⁷⁴ πρὸς ἀρέσκειαν γυναικός.

bones of men-pleasers³⁷⁵ (Ps. 52: 6). Why, he will not even consent to meet a man³⁷⁶ merely to please him.

Yet, as the need requires, he will go to a meeting for the sake of that zealous concern for one's neighbour, which, according to God's command, is owed to all (cf. Luke 10: 27–37 etc.). Such a meeting, however, must not be allowed simply to anyone who wishes it; neither is every time or place suitable for it. But if we intend, according to the charge of the Apostle *to give no offence, whether to Jews or Greeks or to the Church of God* (1 Cor. 10: 32) and *to do all things decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14: 40) *with a view to upbuilding* (Rom. 15: 2), then it is necessary that person, time, purpose, and place be carefully and properly determined. By such means, every shadow of base suspicion will be excluded. But evidence of reverence and modesty shall be manifest in every way by those who are approved to see each other and consult about what pleases God, whether with regard to bodily needs or the care of souls. Let there not be less than two in either party; for a single person is vulnerable to suspicion—if I do not put it more strongly—and will be poorly placed to confirm a conversation, since, after all, Scripture does say: *In the mouth of two or three every word is established* (Deut. 19: 15; Matt. 18: 16). Yet there should not be more than three, in case the zeal for dedicated work that comes of the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ is undermined.

2. If others in the community need to speak or hear something bearing on a private matter, let them not go in themselves for a meeting with each other. Instead, let chosen senior brothers serve their concerns with chosen senior sisters³⁷⁷ and in this way, through their mediation, let the need for discussion be met. And let the same good order be preserved not only in the case of women with men or men with women, but also in relations between those of the same sex.³⁷⁸ Besides practising the piety and reverence that apply in any

³⁷⁵ *ἀνθρωπαρέσκων*. To seek to please women is but one form of courting human favour in general. Thus there is no question of misogyny here, of which the Cappadocian fathers are remarkably free. Since the *Asketikon* deals equally with women disciples as with men, the converse also holds true: the woman disciple frees herself from any concern to please men.

³⁷⁶ *ἀνδρῖ*. The thought here is reprised in *SR* 220.

³⁷⁷ *Οἱ δὲ ἐπιλεγέντες πρεσβύτεροι ταῖς ἐπιλεγείσαις πρεσβυτέραις . . .* This text illustrates a continuing generic meaning of *presbyteros* and *presbyterai*: 'elder', whether male or female and, at least in the latter case, not necessarily a priest. See *LR* 35, *SR* 110 (*RBas.* 199), *SR* 111 (*RBas.* 201), *SR* 288 and note.

³⁷⁸ *ἐν τοῖς ὁμογενέσι πρὸς τοὺς ὁμογενέσις*. This sentence is in *Reg. prim.* (*Ask.* 3) but not in the early editions and in some manuscripts. Perhaps it is a later Caesarean

case, let them be discreet both in their questions and answers and trustworthy and thoughtful in presenting what is to be discussed, fulfilling the words: *he shall dispense his words with judgment* (Ps. 111: 5). In this way, both those who have entrusted their business to them shall have their needs met and a clear understanding shall be reached on the matters discussed.

Concerning material needs, let them be taken care of by certain ones who have been chosen after due examination, of mature years and reverent in their comportment and character, so as not to afflict the conscience of any with base suspicions.³⁷⁹ *For why should my liberty be judged by another's conscience?* (1 Cor. 10: 29)

LR 34

Q: What should be the character of those who administer the necessities of life in the community?

R: 1. Among those who distribute the necessities of life inside let there be some in each order³⁸⁰ who can imitate those in the Acts,

addition. It concerns juniors who wish to speak with seniors of the same sex to whose responsibility they are *not* entrusted. The discussion is to be brokered between the responsible seniors.

For Basil on homosexuality, see Canonical Letters 188, Def. III. 29; 217, Def. III. 251. *On Renunciation*, PG 31. 637CD (Clarke 66), deals with it in the context of community life. Basil, or a disciple, rules out youthful twosomes even if 'under the pretext of spiritual love' or 'of studying the divine oracles', for he has known 'frequent cases of those who have fallen'. See also *An Ascetic Discourse* 1. 5, PG 31. 880C, Clarke 138, Wagner 214.

The management of sexuality in the ascetic community was more broadly based than that of simply monitoring male–female relations. It went to the roots of Christian *ascesis*, concerned as it was to address *ἀκρασία* (want of self-control) in *whatever* form, heterosexual or homosexual.

³⁷⁹ i.e. necessary transactions of a practical nature between the men's quarters and the women's quarters are entrusted to mature age officers beyond reproach.

³⁸⁰ ἐν ἐκάστω τάγματι. In this context, *tagma* appears to refer to each of the constituent 'houses' or sub-groupings within the community: men, women, children, hostel, etc., or more broadly to the two 'orders', one of men and one of women. See LR 15. 1 and note and especially the following question, LR 35. 3. In Letter 199 Basil speaks of τὸ τάγμα τῶν παρθένων—the order of virgins (Def. III. 106–7, Canon 18) and τῶ τάγματι τῶν μοναζόντων—the order of monks (Def. III. 110–11, Canon 19); Letter 170 (Def. II. 442) also speaks of τὸ κοινὸν τάγμα τῶν μοναστῶν. In Letter 207 (Def. III. 186–7) Basil describes the community at Annisa, where he is presently staying. He boasts to the Neocaesareans that 'we have καὶ ἀνδρῶν καὶ γυναικῶν σύνταγμα', i.e. the two *tagmas* brought together in one *syntagma*, an orderly arrangement which, on the analogy of a 'battle-array' might be styled a 'prayer-array', manifested especially when they come together ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τῆς προσευχῆς, 'in the house of prayer'. The Pauline teaching on the one body of Christ

practising what is reported there: *Distribution was made to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35). Let them exercise much forethought in compassion and forbearance towards all and avoid giving the impression of favouritism to this one or partiality towards these others, in accord with the charge of the Apostle who said: *Doing nothing from partiality* (1 Tim. 5: 21) or from contentiousness, which the same Apostle rules out as uncharacteristic of Christians when he says: *But if anyone thinks to be contentious, we have no such practice, neither do the Churches of God* (1 Cor. 11: 16). This is because, if they behave like this, they undersupply the need of those with whom they have a dispute and give more to those for whom they are partial. In the one case there is enmity towards a brother,³⁸¹ in the other particular affection.³⁸² This is especially reprehensible, because the harmony of the community in love³⁸³ is thereby torn asunder and base suspicions, jealousies, bickerings, and the grudging of tasks enter in instead.

2. Therefore, because of what has just been said and for many similar reasons it is essential that those who distribute necessities to the community be utterly free of particular affection and of contentiousness. Indeed they ought to be watchful to preserve such a disposition and show as much zeal—both they and those who perform other works in service of the brothers—as if they were serving not human beings but the Lord himself, who of his great goodness counts the honour and zeal shown to those dedicated to him as done to himself and promises in return an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. For he says: *Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . For insofar as you did it even to the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me* (Matt. 25: 34, 40).

On the other side, we must also recognize the danger of negligence, mindful of the words: *Cursed is anyone who does the work of*

comprising different members and the apostolic community of Jerusalem figure in his great argument for community life in the Small Asketikon at *RBas.* 3 (*LR* 7). In *LR* 35, immediately following, Basil expressly calls for the *tagmas* to unite, invoking the example of the primitive apostolic community in Acts. Likewise in *Hom. in time of famine* 8, *PG* 31. 325A, he exhorts 'let us approach the example of the three thousand, let us be zealous for the first *syntagma* of Christians'. Letter 295, Def. iv. 206–9, also testifies to Basil's concern that ascetics be 'brought together' 'in imitation of the apostolic way of life' to be 'guardians of each other's diligence and witnesses of each other's success'. See also *LR* 35. Q and note.

³⁸¹ τὸ μισαδελφίας.

³⁸² τὸ προσπαθείας.

³⁸³ ἐξ ἀγάπης σύμπνοια τῆς ἀδελφότητος.

the Lord carelessly (Jer. 48: 10). Indeed, such as these are not only cast out of the kingdom, but also wait for that fearful and dread sentence of the Lord to be pronounced against them: *Depart from me, you accursed, into the everlasting fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels* (Matt. 25: 41).

Now, if those who dispense the care and service acquire such a gain from zeal and expect such a judgment from negligence, then those who receive their service should strive all the more to prove themselves worthy of the title: *brothers* of the Lord, since this is what the Lord teaches, saying: *For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, he too is my brother and sister and mother* (Matt. 12: 50).

3. For whoever does not set the will of the Lord in all things as the goal of his life, such that in health he displays the labour of love by zeal for the works of the Lord and in sickness shows all steadfastness and patience with joy—he is in a perilous state. This is because, first and foremost, he has cut himself off and is alienated from the Lord and from a share in his brothers through not doing the will of God; and secondly, because he dares to partake undeservedly in the things prepared for those who deserve them.

In this case too, we ought to remember what the Apostle said: *As his co-worker, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain* (2 Cor. 6: 1) so that those who are called to take their place as *brothers* of the Lord do not insult such a grace from God and do not betray such a dignity by negligence towards the will of God, but rather obey the same Apostle where he says: *I, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling in which you were called* (Eph. 4: 1).

LR 35

Q: Should several communities be established in the same local area?³⁸⁴

R: 1. The example of the limbs with their several functions (cf. Rom. 12: 5) is a useful illustration of the question put before us. For

³⁸⁴ *κόμη*, an unwallled country village or town, or a suburb in a city, i.e. a local ward or 'parish'. Basil would prefer that communities be in the country, but, of course, they continued in the cities as well. Stramara 288–99 argues that Basil's discountenancing of separate communities in LR 35, also covers the case of separate men's and women's communities: 'According to Basil, having totally separate communities for men and for women within one locality would be counterproductive both economically and spiritually—and indeed a denial of what he understood to be the apostolic pattern of Christian community' (299). See LR 34. 1 and note.

our discourse³⁸⁵ has already shown that if the body is to be nobly and appropriately fitted together for every kind of work, it has need of eyes and tongue and other necessary members each serving distinct functions. But a soul capable of being an eye to many is difficult to discover. For if our discipline requires that one who presides over the community should be capable of foresight, well-provided in discourse,³⁸⁶ sober, compassionate, *one who seeks the just judgments of God* (Ps. 118: 145) *with a perfect heart* (1 Chron. 28: 9), how is it possible in the same local area to come across several of such calibre?

But if it should happen that two or three are found—which is no easy thing and we have never known it to happen—it would be much better if they shared the anxiety with one another and lightened the labour.³⁸⁷ Thus, when one is absent or busy or otherwise engaged and as a consequence it happens that the community is deprived of the one who presides over it, there is a second to console them for their loss. Otherwise, let one of them go to another community that needs a guide.

Moreover, much experience of affairs outside can help us with the question that is set before us. Just as in the case of worldly crafts, the masters in each craft become jealous of rivals and—such is the nature of things—little by little disputes spring up, so also it often happens in our kind of life too.³⁸⁸ For we begin by striving after the good, but being eager to outdo one another, whether it be in hospitality or in increasing the number of our fellow ascetics, or in other endeavours of the kind, we gradually fall into bickering. Then again it happens that when brothers on a journey need to stop over, instead of refreshment they meet with much uncertainty and difficulty, since they are perplexed as to which group they should approach. For to show preference causes ill feeling and it is impossible to satisfy both, especially if they are in a hurry.

And they cause much perplexity for those coming to join the

³⁸⁵ ὁ λόγος.

³⁸⁶ ἐν λόγῳ τὸ ἀπταρκες ἔχοντα. That is, he (or she) is possessed internally of clear doctrine, derived from immersion in the scriptural word and has skill in applying it. For Basil, the attested and approved ‘charism of the word’ is indispensable in those called to fulfil the role of superiors in the community and in the Church. See *LR* Prol. 4 (*RBas.* Prol. 17), 32. 2, 33. 2, 35, 45. 2. *SR* Prol. (*RBas.* Prol. 3).

³⁸⁷ Thus, there might be several presiding in the community, without prejudicing the fact that one was in charge of all, as Basil goes on to make clear. Basil expects that only someone demonstrably possessed of the necessary charisms given by the Spirit will be accorded such an office. The possession of authority is not simply an ‘ex officio’ affair. If such a one cannot be found within the community, search should be made further afield.

³⁸⁸ Basil deplors the prospect of communities in rivalry with each other.

common life at the beginning, as to whom they should choose to preside over their life, especially if by choosing some they must rule out others. So, straight away they are led into arrogance and sustain harm from the outset, since they do not pattern themselves on discipleship, but accustom themselves to being judges and assessors of the community instead.

2. Well then, if there is no express benefit in maintaining this separation of households³⁸⁹ and there is so much against it, it is entirely inconsistent that they should continue apart from one another. If some such system is already in place, it should quickly be set right, especially when there is already experience of the harmful effects. To wish to persist in such cross-purposes is clearly contentiousness. *But if anyone thinks to be contentious, we have no such practice, neither do the Churches of God*, as the Apostle says (1 Cor. 11: 16).

What reason can they put forward that prevents them from coming together? The necessities of life? But these are much more easily procured in communion,³⁹⁰ since one lamp and one hearth³⁹¹ and one of all such functions will suffice for all. For it is especially in these matters, if anywhere, that we must aim at good management in every way, so that we can reduce the acquisition of necessary items as far as possible. Furthermore, when there is separation, many are needed to fetch necessities for the community from outside, but when living together only half as many. And how hard it is to find a man who will not bring disgrace on the name of Christ when he goes on journeys, but will meet those outside in a manner worthy of his profession, you know without my having to tell you.

Again, how can those who persist in their separation be a good example to those living in the world,³⁹² or persuade them to live in peace, should this be necessary, or encourage them in the other commandments, when through their lack of unity with each other they fuel dark suspicions against themselves instead? We hear the Apostle addressing these, when he writes to the Philippians: *Complete my joy then, by being of the same mind, having the same love, being of one soul, having one mind, doing nothing through party-spirit or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind deeming others better than your-*

³⁸⁹ ἐν τῇ διαίρεσει τῶν οἰκήσεων.

³⁹⁰ ἐν τῇ κοινωνίᾳ.

³⁹¹ μιᾶς [sic] ἐστίας. Hence it seems that a single hearth supplied the maintenance of fire and served the cooking needs for the constituent houses of the one community. On the kitchen (μαγειρεῖον) see SR 147 (RBas. 107. Q), SR 152 (RBas. 131. Q).

³⁹² ἐν τῷ κοινῷ βίῳ, i.e. the common way of life in society at large.

selves; not looking to your own interests, but each to the interests of others instead (Phil. 2: 2–4).

3. What greater demonstration of humility than that those who preside over the community³⁹³ should be subject to one another! For if they are equal in spiritual charisms, their collaborative endeavour is all the more worthy,³⁹⁴ which the Lord himself showed us when he *sent them out two by two* (cf. Mark 6: 7); and one of the two will choose wholeheartedly and joyfully to be subject to the other, remembering the Lord's words: *Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted* (Luke 14: 11, 18: 14). But if it happens that the one proves less gifted and the other comes to the fore, then it is all the more worthy that the stronger should welcome the help of the weaker.

But if we refuse, how is it not manifest disobedience to the apostolic charge: *each*³⁹⁵ *not looking to their own interests, but each to the interests of others instead* (Phil. 2: 4)? For we consider that it is impossible that this be fulfilled in separation, when each order³⁹⁶ is privately concerned for its fellow members, while thought for others is beyond its horizon. This, as I said, is clearly opposed to the apostolic charge. And the saints in the Acts frequently bear witness to this, of whom it is written, in one place: *The multitude of believers were of but one heart and one soul* (Acts 4: 32) and in another place: *All the believers were together and held all things in common* (Acts 2: 44). So it is obvious that there was no kind of separation for any of them and not one lived under his own authority, but all dwelt under one and the same supervision—even though the whole number was five thousand. With such a number one would think that, in all human likelihood, there were no few obstacles to their joining together.

And where those living in each locality are found so much fewer in number, what possible reason can condone their separation from one another?³⁹⁷ Would that it were possible that not only those in the

³⁹³ τοὺς προεστῶτας τῆς ἀδελφότητος. 'This answer is of great importance and is the key to the understanding of the "superiors" in Basil's monasteries. They were apparently a peculiarity of the Basilian monasteries and arose from the formation of strong centres out of small and scattered communities.' Clarke 203 n. 2.

³⁹⁴ κάλλιον, more beautiful/noble/good.

³⁹⁵ ἕκαστοι appears twice in the present citation of Phil. 2: 3, whereas it appeared once in the last clause, in the earlier citation.

³⁹⁶ ἐκάστων τάγματος. The use of *tagma* suggests that Basil's argument covers the case of separate communities of men and of women. See the note on the use of *tagma* in LR 34. 1. The use of texts from Acts further supports this interpretation, since the apostolic community included both men and women disciples.

³⁹⁷ διεστάναι ἀπ' ἀλλήλων. The same phrase is used in SR 154, which deals specifically with too much separation of brothers and sisters within the one community.

same locality came together as one in this way, but that many more communities established in different places might be built up under the one supervision of those capable of impartially and wisely managing the affairs of all *in the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace* (Eph. 4: 3)!

LR 36

Concerning those who withdraw from the community.

R: It cannot be a matter of indifference whether those who have once professed before each other to live a common life continue to do so or withdraw. The breaking of one's pledges has two causes: either the harm coming from living together, or instability of intention³⁹⁸ in the one who changes his mind.

Let one who withdraws from the brothers on account of the harm suffered not conceal the cause in himself, but rather expose the harm³⁹⁹ in the way given us by the Lord when he said: *If your brother sins, go, show him his fault between you and him alone*, and so on (Matt. 18: 15). And if the correction he is seeking is made, he has both *gained his brothers*, and has not dishonoured their communion.

But if he sees that they persist in evil and do not accept correction, he will disclose the matter to those competent to judge such things⁴⁰⁰ and then, to the testimony of several witnesses, let him withdraw.

³⁹⁸ τὸ ἀστατον τῆς γνώμης. In effect, Basil requires the equivalent of the *stabilitas* promised in *RB* 58. 9, 17. He is as concerned to curb the phenomenon of wandering unattached ascetics as is *RB* 1: 10–11 with regard to gyrovagues. On withdrawal from the community see also *SR* 74, 102.

³⁹⁹ On the 'proper measure' of obedience and the manner of confronting one's community, superiors, or fellow-superiors if necessary, see also *LR* 26, 47, 54, *RBas.* 13 (*SR* 113), *SR* 95 and note, *SR* 303 and note, *Morals* 72. 1. As can be seen, this was already an issue in the Small Asketikon, but was subsequently much tested. With Basil, the necessary practice of mutual correction in community had no simple authoritarian solution but was a complex, sensitive issue, testing the genuineness of each one's allegiance to Christ. The nuances he brings to bear probably reflect in part the history of his own ambivalent relations with those in power, whether civil or ecclesiastical.

⁴⁰⁰ i.e. the local bishop or bishops before whom he made profession in community. See *LR* 15. 4. Implied here is that the bishop will take up the matter with the community, but if they will not accept correction even from him, then the brother's departure—to the same kind of ecclesiastical witness he had at his profession—honours the Lord. *RB* 64. 3–6 deals with a similar case: what to do when a whole community colludes with an unworthy abbot in order to maintain their degenerate ways. Intervention by 'the bishop of the diocese or the abbots or Christians in the area' is called for. If Basil's choice of terms here suggests he is not a bishop, this section may be dated to the period 369–70.

But in that case, he will no longer be withdrawing from brothers but from strangers, for the Lord compares one who persists in evil to a Gentile and a tax-collector. *Let such a one be to you, he says, as a Gentile and a tax-collector* (Matt. 18: 17).

But if through his own fickleness he darts off from the society of the brothers, let him submit his own infirmity to treatment. If he will not accept this, then let him not be received among other communities.

On the other hand, if one is directed to this place or that through the commandment of the Lord, those in this case are not withdrawing themselves but fulfilling the common good.⁴⁰¹

No other reason for withdrawal from the brothers is admissible. This is because, in the first place, it dishonours the name of our Lord Jesus Christ who gathered us together; and secondly because the disposition of each towards the other cannot remain whole-hearted⁴⁰² and they will become suspicious of each other instead. But this is clearly opposed to the commandment of the Lord who said: *If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go, first be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift* (Matt. 5: 23–4).

LR 37

Q: Should we neglect work on a pretext of the prayers and the psalmody; and what times are suitable for prayer—but first, is it necessary to work?

R: I. Our Lord Jesus Christ says: *Worthy of his food* is not just any and every one, but *the labourer* (Matt. 10: 10) and the Apostle commands us to *labour and do honourable work with our hands that we*⁴⁰³ *may have something to give to those in need* (Eph. 4: 28). So it is clear from this that one must work, and work diligently.

For we must not reckon the goal of piety an excuse for idleness or a means of avoiding toil, but as a prospect of training, of even greater toils and of patience in tribulations, that we too may be able to say: *In toil and hardship, in vigils beyond number, in hunger and*

⁴⁰¹ οἰκονομίαν πληροῦσιν, i.e. they will be fulfilling the common good, whose horizons extend beyond the discrete local community to communities further afield. In the preceding LR 35, Basil urges that those who have outstanding charisms fitting them for leadership supply the need in other communities if possible.

⁴⁰² Lit. 'pure': simple, unaffected, unfeigned. The basis for mutual trust will be undermined.

⁴⁰³ ἵνα ἔχωμεν. Reg. tert. and earlier editions have ἔχητε; ἔχη in the NT.

thirst (2 Cor. 11: 27). For this way of life is good for us not only because of the rigorous treatment of the body, but also because of love for our neighbour, so that through us God may provide sufficiently for the weak among the brothers, after the example given us in the Acts by the Apostle when it says. *In all things I gave you an example, how by toiling in this way you ought to support the weak* (Acts 20: 35) and again: *That you may have something to give to one in need* (Eph. 4: 28). Thus we may be counted worthy to hear the words: *Come, you blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink* (Matt. 25: 34–5).

2. What need is there to say how great an evil is idleness, since the Apostle declares plainly *he who does not work, let him not eat* (2 Thess. 3: 10). So then, since daily food is necessary for each person, so work is also necessary, in accordance with one's capacity. It was not for nothing that Solomon wrote in praise: *She did not eat the bread of idleness* (Prov. 31: 27). And again the Apostle speaks of himself: *And we did not eat anyone's bread without paying, but worked in toil and hardship, night and day* (2 Thess. 3: 8) though he had the right, since he was proclaiming the Gospel, *to live from the Gospel* (1 Cor. 9: 14). Moreover, the Lord himself associates slothfulness with evil living, saying: *You evil and slothful servant* (Matt. 25: 26). And the wise Solomon not only praises the worker in the words just recalled, but also rebukes one who is slothful by comparing him with the smallest of creatures, saying: *Go to the ant, sluggard* (Prov. 6: 6). So we should fear lest this is brought against us in the day of judgment, when he who gave us the capacity for work requires from us work commensurate with our capacity. For, *to whom they entrusted much*, he says, *of him they will require the more* (Luke 12: 48).

Now when some beg off work on a pretext of the prayers and the psalmody, you must know that for all the other tasks there is a particular time for each, as Ecclesiastes says: *There is a season for everything* (Eccles. 3: 1). But for prayer and psalmody, as with many other things, every time is suitable; so that if it is possible, or rather if it contributes to the upbuilding of the faith, we praise God with the tongue, as it is written, *in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* (Col. 3: 16) while we employ our hands at work,⁴⁰⁴ but if not, then in the heart. In this way we fulfil prayer even in the midst of work, giving thanks to him who gave both strength of hand to work and cleverness of mind to acquire the skill and also bestowed the material with which to work, both in the tools we use and in what is requisite for

⁴⁰⁴ i.e. Basil recommends vocalized *meditatio* during work if possible. Cf. LR 13.

the crafts we practise, whatever they happen to be. And we pray that the works of our hands may be directed to the goal of being well pleasing to God.

3. Thus we maintain our soul undistracted, if in every undertaking we ask God to prosper our work and we return thanks to him who gave the capacity for work. In this way we keep the goal of being well pleasing to him, as was said earlier. For unless we take these as our means, how can these sayings of the Apostle be harmonized with each other, both this: *Pray without ceasing* (1 Thess. 5: 17), and this: *working night and day* (2 Thess. 3: 8)?⁴⁰⁵

Nevertheless, because thanksgiving at all times is laid down in the law (cf. Ps. 33: 1; Phil. 4: 6; 1 Thess. 5: 18) and has been shown to be necessary to our life both by nature and reason, we must by no means overlook the established times of the prayers in the communities, times which we have necessarily chosen⁴⁰⁶ because each has its own special reminder of benefits received from God:

There is Orthros,⁴⁰⁷ that the first movements of the soul and mind may be dedicated to God and nothing else enter our consideration before we take delight in the thought of God, as it is written: *I remembered my God and I delighted* (Ps. 76: 3); and that we do not stir the body to work before doing as it is said: *To you will I pray, O Lord. In the morning you will listen to my voice; in the morning I shall stand before you and watch* (Ps. 5: 4–5).

⁴⁰⁵ As Basil stressed the interdependence of sound doctrine and ascetic endeavour (see *SR Prologue/RBas*. Prol. 5 and note) and that knowledge of God is shown in obedience to the commandments (*LR 2/RBas*. 2. 2 and note), he maintains that prayer is necessarily manifest in moral life; the very choices we make in daily life are a form of wordless plea to God: 'We should express our petition not merely in words . . . but the power of prayer should be fulfilled more in the moral disposition of our soul (*προαιρέσει ψυχῆς*) and in the virtuous actions that extend throughout our life . . . This is how you *pray unceasingly*, not by offering prayer in words, but by joining yourself to God through the whole conduct of your life, till your life itself becomes one continuous and unceasing prayer.' *Hom. on the Martyr Julitta* 3, 4, *PG* 31. 244A, 244D–245A. Sound doctrine, prayer, and moral endeavour convalidate each other; they go forward in a common front.

⁴⁰⁶ οὕς ἀναγκαίως ἐξελέξαμεθα. Thus Basil himself had a major role in organizing the classic sequence of the Liturgy of the Hours in the Church both east and west.

⁴⁰⁷ τὸν μὲν ὄρθρον, or 'dawn' prayer. Orthros = Matutinum, or Lauds. Subsequently Basil speaks both of a midnight vigil and, at the end, (another?) pre-dawn prayer. Clarke (207 n. 3), however, thinks *Orthros* refers to Prime instead and that Cassian is mistaken when he says in *Institutes* 3. 4 that Prime was first introduced during his time at Bethlehem to prevent the monks from sleeping too long after the Night Office. On Basil's role in the development of the monastic *Synaxis*, or Divine Office, see Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours, East and West* (Collegeville, 1986), 84–9.

Again at the third hour we must rise up for prayer and gather the community together, if they happen to be scattered at their various tasks. Remembering the gift of the Spirit given to the apostles at the third hour,⁴⁰⁸ we must all do homage *with one accord* (Acts 1: 14)⁴⁰⁹ that we too may become worthy to receive his hallowing and seek guidance and teaching from him in what is fitting, as he did who said: *Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence and do not deprive me of your Holy Spirit. Give me again the joy of your salvation, and with a spirit of guidance strengthen me* (Ps. 50: 12–14), and elsewhere: *Your good spirit shall guide me on a straight path* (Ps. 142: 10). Then we take up our tasks again.

4. If some are absent at too great a distance due to the nature of the work or the locality, they must of necessity fulfil in that place all that is prescribed in common and not be troubled about it, for *whenever two or three are gathered together in my name*, says the Lord, *there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18: 20).

That prayer at the sixth hour is necessary we infer from the pattern of the saints who said: *At evening, dawn and noon I will announce and proclaim and he shall hear my voice* (Ps. 54: 18) and the ninetieth psalm is also recited at the same time,⁴¹⁰ that we may be delivered from assault and from the noonday demon (cf. Ps. 90: 6).

The ninth hour is handed down to us as necessary for prayer by the apostles themselves in the Acts, where it is told how *Peter and John went up to the temple at the ninth hour of prayer* (Acts 3: 1).

As the day draws to a close, let us give thanks for what has been given us during the day and for what we have done well, and let us confess what we have left undone, whether voluntary or involuntary, or an inadvertent fault in word or deed or in the heart itself, making atonement for all things through prayer. For the review of past deeds is a great help against falling into the like again. This is why it

⁴⁰⁸ There was already a long tradition associating prayer at the third hour with the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost; see Cyprrian, *De Orat. Dom.* 34 and Cassian, *Institutes* 3.3. Hippolytus, Canon 27, associates it with the hour of Christ's crucifixion.

⁴⁰⁹ προσκυνῆσαι πάντας ὁμοθυμῶδόν. *Proskynesis* is, in its literal sense, deep obeisance, prostration forehead to the ground. Since at the Pentecostal third hour all the disciples were praying together with Mary the mother of Jesus, the common worship of the men and women of the community is implicit here.

⁴¹⁰ Cassian links Sext to the hour of the Crucifixion (*Institutes* 3.3). Showing that some state of flux existed, the *Ascetical Discourse* 1 (PG 31.877C, Clarke 137, Wagner 213) divides Sext into two parts, before and after the midday meal and knows nothing of an office between the midnight vigil and the dawn prayer.

says: *What you say in your hearts, feel compunction for on your beds* (Ps. 4: 4 Sept.).⁴¹¹

5. Again, as the night begins, we ask that our rest may be without offence and free from fantasies, and of necessity we recite again at this hour the ninetieth psalm.⁴¹²

The duty of prayer at midnight⁴¹³ Paul and Silas have handed down to us, as the history of the Acts recounts it, saying: *But at midnight Paul and Silas were singing praises to God* (Acts 16: 25); and the Psalmist also says, *At midnight I will rise up to give you thanks, because of the judgments of your justice* (Ps. 118: 62).

And again we must anticipate the dawn and arise for prayer,⁴¹⁴ so that the day does not overtake us asleep in bed, in keeping with him who said *My eyes anticipated the dawn, that I might ponder on your utterances* (118: 148).

None of these hours should be overlooked by those who have freely chosen to live in watchfulness to the glory of God and his Christ. But we consider it a help when there is diversity and variety in the prayers and psalms at the assigned hours, because somehow, when there is monotony, the soul wearies more readily and becomes a prey to distraction; but when there is change and variety in the psalms and reading at each hour, its desire is refreshed and its vigilance restored.

⁴¹¹ On Vespers see also *On the Holy Spirit* 73, where Basil uses the ancient hymn $\Phi\omega\varsigma$ $\acute{\iota}\lambda\alpha\rho\acute{\omicron}\nu$ as a testimony to the divine nature of the Holy Spirit.

⁴¹² *RB* 18. 19 also prescribes Ps. 90 for Compline.

⁴¹³ $\mu\epsilon\sigma\omicron\nu\nu\kappa\tau\iota\omicron\nu$, Nocturns or Vigils. For references to night vigils, see *SR* 43 and 44 and Letters 2 (Def. I. 12–13, 24–5) and 207 (Def. III. 186–7), where an all-night vigil is described; *Hom. on Ps. 114*, *PG* 29. 484–93, *Way* 351, shows the devout faithful who have kept vigil at a sanctuary of the martyrs from midnight to midday; In *Hom. on the Martyr Julitta* 3–4, *PG* 31. 244C Basil praises eloquently the practice of vigils: ‘Let night also afford other promptings to prayer. Whenever you look up to the heaven and behold the beauty of the stars, pray to the great Lord of all things visible, the great Artist of the universe, who *in his wisdom made them all*. And whenever you see all nature sunk in sleep, again pay homage to him who even against our will releases us from the stress of our toils and by a short respite restores us once again to the vigour of our strength. Therefore do not let the night be altogether claimed by sleep. Do not let half your life be wasted in the torpor of slumber, but divide the time of night between sleep and prayer.’ On Basil’s own practice of vigils, see *GNaz. Or.* 43 (On Basil), 61 and *GNyssa, Eulogy on Basil, GNO* x/1. 127: ‘at night he was illumined while at prayer in his house’.

⁴¹⁴ $\text{Καὶ πάλιν χρῆ} [sic] \text{προφθάσαντας τὸν ὄρθρον εἰς τὴν προσευχὴν διανίστασθαι}$. It is unlikely that we have another pre-dawn prayer before the dawn prayer. Basil concludes by returning to Orthros itself with which the list of offices began, so Καὶ πάλιν means, ‘and now we come back again to where we began, rising for the dawn prayer’.

LR 38

Q: Now that your discourse has shown us clearly both that prayer is not to be omitted and that work is necessary; we next want to be taught what kind of crafts are suitable for our profession.⁴¹⁵

R: It is no easy matter to define what crafts in particular, since there are different requirements for different crafts depending on the particular character of the localities and the suitability of business opportunities in each district. As a general rule, however, one might prescribe the choice of those crafts which safeguard the peaceful and untroubled nature of our life, needing neither much fuss to obtain the required material, nor much anxiety to sell what has been produced, nor involving us in unsuitable or harmful meetings with men or women.

But in everything we must keep in mind that our special aim is frugality and inexpense. So we must avoid pandering to the foolish and harmful cravings of human beings by labouring to satisfy the requirements for them. In weaving⁴¹⁶ we should accept what is adapted to the ordinary use of life, not what is devised by the licentious to beguile and ensnare the young. Likewise in leatherwork, let us serve through our craft those who require genuine necessities.⁴¹⁷

Concerning building, carpentry, copper-work, and agriculture—these are in themselves necessary for life and provide much that is useful and ought not be rejected for any intrinsic reason. Only when they cause us disturbances, or disrupt the unity of the life of the brothers, then of course, let us avoid them, preferring those crafts which preserve for us the life of *undivided and continual waiting on the Lord* (1 Cor. 7: 35), crafts which do not draw aside those who cleave to the practice of piety from the time of psalmody or prayer or from the rest of their ordered life. But if nothing in them is a real harm to the life we have undertaken, then they are preferable to many. Of these agriculture is the best, since of its nature it provides the necessities of life and it preserves farmers from much wandering

⁴¹⁵ 'Basil recommends nothing that he had not undergone himself. See Greg. Naz, *Ep.* vi, recalling his toils with Basil. They had worked in the garden, carted manure, drawn a wagon with their own necks and hands; and (*Ep.* vi) gathered wood and cut stone' (Clarke 210 n. 7).

⁴¹⁶ The women of the community are implicitly addressed, since textile work was commonly the province of the sisters. See *SR* 153/*RBas.* 132.

⁴¹⁷ Basil is laying down a strict principle here: in seeking a means of livelihood, the ascetic community must not capitalize on the luxuries or indulgences of the worldly but supply honest needs.

about or running hither and thither—but only if, according to the condition we laid down, it brings on us no troubles and disturbances from neighbours or from those we live with.

LR 39

Q: How should we manage the sale of the products of our work and the necessary journeys?

R: We must strive to ensure that the products of our work are not disposed of at a distance and that we do not go about hawking them in public. It is much more fitting that we stay in one place and of greater benefit both to our mutual upbuilding and the strict observance of our daily life. Consequently, we will prefer to retreat somewhat from the price⁴¹⁸ than go beyond our vicinity for the sake of some small gain. But if experience has shown this is impossible, then we must choose localities and cities inhabited by men of piety,⁴¹⁹ so that our journey abroad might not be fruitless. Let a number of brothers, each carrying the products of their own work⁴²⁰ go together to the designated fairs.⁴²¹ Let them journey in common that they may spend their time on the road in psalms and prayers and mutual encouragement. When they have come to the place let them choose the same lodgings both for the sake of keeping watch over each another and so that no time of prayer, by day or by night, may escape us and so that each, being in company, may emerge less scathed from meeting with the hard-dealing and the grasping than if he were by himself. For even the most rapacious avoid having several witnesses of their ill-doing.

⁴¹⁸ Similarly, *RB* 57. 7 enjoins monks to avoid avarice and sell their goods ‘always somewhat cheaper (*semper aliquantulum vilius*) than those in the world’. Very much reflecting Basil’s concerns, Gregory of Cyprus (4th cent.) forbids monks to make sordid bargains in buying and selling (see *Expositor*, Apr. 1915), Clarke 211 n. 2.

⁴¹⁹ ἀνδρῶν εὐλαβῶν, marketing was carried out by the brothers of the community.

⁴²⁰ τὰ ἐκ τῆς οἰκείας ἐργασίας. If this means the same as the τὰ ἐκ τῶν ἐργαστῶν at the beginning of the response, it includes not only the products of the individual brothers going to market, but of the rest of the community, e.g. textiles produced by the women.

⁴²¹ πανηγύρεσι, ‘festivals’ with attendant markets, or trading-fairs, but not those attending Christian festivals, as Basil warns in the following response.

LR 40

Concerning the business transacted at assemblies.⁴²²

⁴²² *Περὶ τῶν ἐν συνόδοις πραγματειῶν*. This was originally a continuation of the previous Q/A. For background see Gangra, Preamble 13 and Canon 20. Unlike the ‘Eustathians’, Basil as bishop encouraged the religious celebrations at the martyrs’ tombs as a common expression of Christian *esprit de corps*. See his homilies at the *martyria* of local saints outside Caesarea: St Gordius: *Hom.* 18 (PG 31. 489–508), St Mamas: *Hom.* 23 (PG 31. 589–618). In Letters 100 (Def. II. 182–7), 142 (Def. II. 344–5), 176 (Def. II. 458–61), and 252 (Def. IV. 18–21) he invites other bishops to the annual Caesarean *σύνοδος* for the *μνήμη* (commemoration) of Sts Euppsychius and Damas. In Letter 142 Basil had hoped that the *synod* would have been an opportunity for him to present his *chorepiscopi* to the accountant of the imperial prefects to gain for them a tax concession.

Yet Basil as Father of ascetics has misgivings about the presence of monks at these assemblies, not because of the liturgical commemoration—far from it—but because of the attendant commercialization. He attests that the religious character of these assemblies has deteriorated in his own lifetime, i.e. since the 330s–340s. Since he implies here a stricter standard for members of ascetic communities (‘Christians’), than for the Christians and pagans of secular society, he may be continuing in a more discreet form the disfavour shown these festivals by the Eustathians, from the strictly religious point of view.

For there was not only commerce, but revelry at these celebrations. Perhaps Basil does not mention this here, because it had not yet become for him a pastoral issue. Once he is bishop, the references to incidents multiply. Thus LR 40 probably predates his election in mid-370. Basil’s Letter 286, Def. IV. 177, mentions incidents of ‘evil deeds and stealing’. In *Hom.* 14, *In ebriosos*, PG 31. 445D, Basil censures women who have taken to drunken dancing in the *martyria* outside the city. Brown says (*Body and Society*, 271): ‘Very often, the local martyr’s shrine was the place where virgins found shelter and a center for their daily devotions’ and in n. 63 other examples are noted: GNaz. Letter 223, PG 37. 364C and Theodoret, *Historia Religiosa* 30. 1, PG 82. 1492D = *A History of the Monks of Syria* tr. Richard Price (Kalamazoo, Mich: Cistercian Publications, 1985), 186. See also GNaz. Letters 58, 122, 124, 197 and Sozomen 5. 2. In *Hom. addressed to the rich* 80–1, PG 31. 281C, Basil remarks in passing that church festivals were like market-places, where anyone could take delight in a good bargain.

In Letters 169–71 (Def. II. 438–45—not by Basil), GNaz. addresses the renegade deacon Glycerius who had led a band of dancing young men and virgins to the *σύνοδος* (440) at Venasa where there was a great crowd. Gregory accuses him of ‘putting to shame the entire order of monks’—*αἰσχύνεις δὲ τὸ κοινὸν τάγμα τῶν μοναστῶν* (442). The incident took place in the early 370s—seemingly after LR 40. W. M. Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire before A.D. 170*, 2nd edn. (London, 1893), 443–64 connected the Venasa *synodos* with an earlier pagan festival. Clarke 212 n. 4 comments: ‘In pagan times there was a great *synodos* of Zeus at Venasa, the priest of which place ranked next in Cappadocia to the priest of Komana. Putting Ramsay’s evidence and the present answer together, we conclude that the *synodos* was a pagan festival to which a fair was attached. In the 4th century a church festival at a martyr’s tomb was grafted on to the old observance. Basil tried in vain to suppress the commercial element, vested interests being too strong.’ Mitchell, *Anatolia* II. 69, says: ‘The dispersal of these shrines is clear testimony to the

R: But the word shows us that the buying and selling conducted at martyrs' sanctuaries⁴²³ is not for us. For Christians ought to be seen at the tombs of martyrs or in their vicinity for no other reason than that of prayer and of calling to mind how the saints contended even to death for the sake of piety, that they might be drawn to a like zeal. For they are mindful of that most fearful wrath of the Lord, who, though always and everywhere *meek and lowly of heart*, as it is written (Matt. 11: 29), nevertheless wielded the whip against those—and those only—who were buying and selling in the temple (cf. John 2: 15), because their trafficking *turned the house of prayer into a den of thieves* (cf. Matt. 21: 13).

It may be that others have now corrupted the custom established at the sanctuaries of the saints.⁴²⁴ Instead of praying for one another, doing homage, and mourning before God together with others, making atonement to him for their sins, giving thanks for his benefits, and building up each other with the word of consolation—all of which we have known observed within our own memory, instead of this, many make use of the time and place as a market and a fair and a common emporium.

Whatever about that, it is not fitting that we also should succumb at last to their example and confirm this unseemly conduct by joining in their business. Instead, we should imitate the assemblies spoken of in the Gospels of our Lord Jesus Christ and fulfil what the Apostle laid down as contributive to such a pattern, when he writes: *When you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation; but let all be done with a view to upbuilding* (1 Cor. 14: 26).

LR 41

Concerning authority and obedience.

R: 1. Yet even among the crafts which are permitted, no one should be permitted the craft he has or wants to learn, but that for which he is approved as suitable. For anyone who has *denied himself*

strength of rural Christianity and the gatherings which assembled around them provided the most important meeting places for a scattered population, offering alternative arenas for economic activity and social intercourse to the towns and cities . . . even for Basil this mingling of secular with sacred business was inevitable.' See Mitchell's *Anatolia*, ii, ch. 17: 'From Pagan to Christian: Social and Civic Transformations in the Fourth Century', especially 64–7 on the cult of the martyrs and the custom of *synods*.

⁴²³ ἐν τοῖς μαρτυρίοις.

⁴²⁴ τὴν κερρατηκυῖαν ἐπὶ τῶν ἁγίων συνήθειαν.

(cf. Matt. 16: 24) and set aside all his own wishes does not do what he wants, but what he is instructed to do. In no way does the word allow anyone to choose for himself what is convenient once he has turned over the management of himself to others. It is they who will assign him that work for which they in the Lord's name consider he is suited.

For anyone who chooses a work according to his own desire brings about his own condemnation, first of all for self-pleasing, secondly for attaching himself to the task for the sake of worldly reputation or for hope of gain or some such reason or for preferring the lighter task because of laziness or indolence. Anyone caught up in these ways shows that he is not yet freed from base passions. One who wishes to fulfil his own impulses has neither *denied himself* nor put away the affairs of the world, since, after all, he is still lured by prospects of gain and reputation. Neither has he *mortified his members that are upon the earth* (cf. Col. 3: 5) who does not sustain toil in his work, but rather betrays in himself the evidence of wilfulness when he thinks his own judgment more accurate than the approval of the many.

On the other hand, when someone has a craft to which the community shows no objection, he ought not simply abandon it; for it is the mark of an unstable intention and an irresolute purpose to disdain what is already at hand. If one does not have a craft, let him not take one for himself, but accept what is approved by his superiors, that in everything amenability may be preserved. For just as granting oneself permission was shown to be unfitting, so not to accept what has been decided on by others is censurable. On the other hand, if anyone's continuance in a craft should displease the community, let him promptly leave it aside, thereby showing that he is attached to nothing in this world. Because to *fulfil the desires of one's mind* (cf. Eph. 2: 3) is the mark of *one who has no hope* (cf. Eph. 2: 12), according to the word of the Apostle, whereas to be amenable in everything is praiseworthy, as were they whom the same Apostle praises, because *they first gave themselves to the Lord and then also to us by the will of God* (2 Cor. 8: 5).

2. But each should attend to his own work and take wholehearted responsibility for it and, because God is looking on, carry it out blamelessly with untiring zeal and diligent care, being always able to recite with confidence: *Behold, as the eyes of servants on the hands of their masters, so our eyes are upon the Lord our God* (cf. Ps. 122: 2-3). Thus they do not move restlessly from one thing to another. For we are not capable by nature of carrying out many pursuits successfully all at the same time. To diligently pursue one

thing through to the end is more useful than dabbling in many and finishing none. For to scatter one's attention over many tasks and change about from one thing to another, besides the fact that no work is completed, reveals a fickleness of character already established, or else fosters it if not yet present.

If some need arises, it is consistent that one who has the ability should go to the help of the other crafts—yet not even this on his own initiative, but only when summoned to do so, for this is not something we do by preference but only in an emergency. It is the same with the limbs of the body: if the foot stumbles we steady ourselves with the hand. And again, just as it is not fitting to rush into a craft on one's own initiative, so also not to accept what is assigned deserves condemnation. Otherwise, the passion of wilfulness is nurtured and the rule of obedience and amenability is broken down.

The care of tools is certainly the concern of the worker in each occupation. Should it ever happen that such an item is neglected, then, because it is the common possession of all, let it be deemed worthy of appropriate attention by those who are the first to notice it. For even though tools are employed on an individual basis, the benefits that come from them are common to all. To pay no attention to the affairs of another craft shows that one dismisses them as the affairs of strangers.

Yet it is in no way fitting that craftworkers claim a proprietorship over the tools, so as to forbid the one who presides over the community to use them for whatever he wishes, or so as to permit themselves to sell or barter them, or part with them in any other way, or acquire others in addition to them. For when one has resolved not to be master even of one's own hands, but has entrusted the management of their activity to others, what consistency is there in behaving like this—exercising all power over the tools of one's craft and claiming a proprietorship over them?

LR 42

Q: With what goal and in what disposition should workers carry out their tasks?

R: **1.** It must always be borne in mind that the worker's purpose is not to minister to his own needs by his own labours, but to fulfil the commandment of the Lord who said: *I was hungry and you gave me food*, etc. (Matt. 25: 35). For to be anxious for oneself is in every way forbidden by the Lord when he says: *Do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat, or for your body, what you shall put on*, and he

added: *For the Gentiles seek after all these things* (Matt. 6: 25, 32). Now, let him not set his own need as the goal of his work, but the service of those in want. In this way he will escape the charge of self-love and receive the blessing bestowed on the love of one's brothers by the Lord who says: *insofar as you did it even to the least of these my brothers, you did it to me* (Matt. 25: 40).

Now let no one think that the words of the Apostle contradict ours—that *working they eat their own bread* (2 Thess. 3: 12). This is addressed to the disorderly and the idle, implying that it is better that each at least minister to himself and not be a burden on others, rather than live in idleness. *For we hear that there are some, he says, who walk among you disorderly, who do no work at all, but are meddlers. Now we charge and exhort such as these that they do their work in quietness and eat their own bread* (2 Thess. 3: 11–12). And *working night and day, that we might not burden any one* (2 Thess. 3: 8) bears the same meaning, since for the sake of brotherly love the Apostle submits himself to labours beyond what were appointed him, so as to exclude the disorderly. But one who is zealous for perfection will *work night and day, that he might have something to give to one in need* (Eph. 4: 28).

2. Anyone who puts his hope in himself or even in the one entrusted with the dispensing of needs, and considers his own work or that of his companion a sufficient claim for his livelihood, is, in so far as he has set his hope on man, in danger of falling under the curse which says: *Cursed is the man who puts his hope in man and flexes the flesh of his arm, whose soul turns aside from the Lord* (Jer. 17: 5). By *who puts his hope in man*, it forbids putting trust in another, and by *flexes the flesh of his arm* it forbids putting confidence in oneself. It calls both of these apostasy from the Lord, adding what is the end of both: *he shall be like the heath in the wilderness and shall not see when blessings shall come* (Jer. 17: 6), showing by this, that to put hope in oneself or any other is to apostatize from the Lord.

LR 43

Q: You have explained sufficiently to us the manner in which tasks should be carried out—unless further experience should prompt us to return to the inquiry. But we beg you to discuss more fully what should be the character of those who preside over the community⁴²⁵ and how they should deal with their companions.

⁴²⁵ *Τοὺς δὲ προσεῳάτας τῆς ἀδελφότητος.* Since the questioner is probably a superior of a community himself, he has a vital interest in the issue.

R: 1. This is a subject we have already touched on in summary fashion, but you do well to wish it treated at greater depth, because as the leader and ruler is, so for the most part the ruled usually become. Consequently it is necessary that we do not pass over it lightly.

The one who presides, then, should be mindful of the Apostle's injunction, *Be a pattern for the believers* (1 Tim. 4: 12) and show in his own life a shining example of every commandment of the Lord. In this way he leaves those being taught no leeway for supposing that the commandment of the Lord is impossible or that it may be disregarded.

First of all then, and this truly is first, he must give such evidence of humility in the love of Christ, that even in his silence the example of his deeds will serve to teach others more strongly than any word. Now if the definition of Christianity is this: the imitation of Christ in the measure of his Incarnation according to the duty of each one's calling, then those who are entrusted with the guidance of the many should through their own mediation spur on those who are still weaker to becoming like Christ, as the blessed Paul says: *Be imitators of me, even as I am of Christ* (1 Cor. 11: 1).

2. Therefore they should first become like an accurate copy by realizing that measure of humility handed down by our Lord Jesus Christ. *Learn from me*, he says, *for I am meek and lowly in heart* (Matt. 11: 29). Therefore let meekness of manner and lowliness of heart mark the one who is in charge. For if the Lord was not ashamed of ministering to his own servants, but was willing to wait on the earth and clay that he had made and fashioned into man—*for here I am in the midst of you*, he says,⁴²⁶ *as one who serves* (Luke 22: 27)—how ought we to act towards those of equal honour with us, that we may consider ourselves to have attained to the imitation of him? This then, is the one thing most necessary in anyone who presides.

Secondly, he must be compassionate, showing himself forbearing to those who through inexperience in some way fall short of what is fitting. He does not pass over sins in silence but, meekly bearing with the immature,⁴²⁷ applies to them healing remedies with all

⁴²⁶ Basil interposes *φῆσίν* in such a way as to subtly counterpoint the divine connotation of the phrase *ἐγὼ εἰμί* with the expression of humility that follows.

⁴²⁷ *τῶν νηπιαζόντων*, Reg. prim. and tert. with Colb., i.e. 'those behaving childishly'. *τῶν ἀφηνιαζόντων*, Reg. tert. and editions, i.e. 'the stubborn', 'rebellious'. *πράως*, 'meekly' here, not opposed to firmness, but meaning 'unaroused', 'unaffected', by the railings of those who resist his corrections, not taking them personally, so that he quietly presses on regardless.

compassion and in just proportion. He must be competent to discern the appropriate method of treatment for each condition, not rebuking with arrogant contempt,⁴²⁸ but admonishing and *correcting with meekness*, as it is written (cf. 2 Tim. 2:25), vigilant over present affairs, foresighted as to the future,⁴²⁹ capable of striving with the strong and bearing with the infirmities of the weak, able himself to do and say whatever will lead to the perfecting of his companions.

He does not take for himself the post of leader, but is chosen by the eminent in the other communities,⁴³⁰ having given in his life till then sufficient proof of his character. For it says: *Let these too be examined first.*⁴³¹ *Then, if they are blameless, let them minister* (1 Tim. 3:10). So let one like this be entrusted with the leadership⁴³² and let him settle the good order⁴³³ of the community, assigning work in accordance with what is suitable for each.

LR 44

Q: To whom should journeys be permitted? And how are they to be questioned on their return?

R: 1. Let the journey be permitted only to one who is able to accomplish it without injury to his own soul and with benefit to those whom he meets. Thus if there is no one suitable and there is a lack of necessities, it is better to endure all affliction and distress, *even unto death* (cf. Phil. 2:8), than to lightly regard clear danger to the soul for the sake of bodily comfort. For *it were better for me to die*, says the Apostle *than that anyone should deprive me of my boast* (1 Cor. 9:15). If this was true for things to which there was entitlement, how much more does it apply to matters of commandment?

Yet even in such a case, the law of love does not leave us comfortless. For if it happens that one community has no one suitable for sending forth, the neighbours will *fill up what is lacking* (cf. 1 Cor. 16:17). They will not stay aloof from one another, but undertake journeys in common, so that by means of such communion those

⁴²⁸ ἀθραδείας ἐπιτιμώντα.

⁴²⁹ See LR, 35, 44.

⁴³⁰ Ἐγκριθέντα τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις ἀδελφότησι προεχόντων. Choosing a superior involved consultation between heads of other communities, in the same way that bishops were elected by fellow bishops in each province. Cf. LR 35 and 54. Cf. RB 64.3–5, where electors outside the local community itself are still proposed as an option: ‘the bishop of the diocese or the abbots or Christians of the area’.

⁴³¹ See also SR 303.

⁴³² Τὴν προστασίαν.

⁴³³ On ‘good order’ see LR 27 and note.

who are weak in soul or feeble in body are protected by the stronger. The one entrusted shall have made this arrangement in advance, so that relief is not found lacking at the sudden onset of distress.⁴³⁴

On his return let the traveller be queried as to what he did and what sort of men he chanced to meet; what words he used with them; what were the thoughts of his soul; whether he continued to live every day and night in the fear of God or whether he strayed and violated any precept, either by being overcome by external circumstances or by failing through his own negligence.

2. Let what has been rightly done be confirmed, but let a lapse be remedied by diligent and skilful teaching. In this way travellers will be more vigilant in exercising care because of the account they must render and we shall not seem to have given up care of their life during the period of separation. The history of the Acts shows that this was the custom of the saints, when it teaches us that after Peter returned to Jerusalem he gave them an account of his dealings with the Gentiles (cf. Acts 11:4–18) and that when Paul and Barnabas arrived, they called together the Church and told what God had done with them (cf. Acts 15:4) and again, that all the assembly kept silent and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told what God had done (cf. Acts 15:12). Let us, however, be sure of this: detours and business canvassing and the profiteering of merchants are to be shunned by the communities in every way.

LR 45

That after the one who presides there must be someone able to undertake the care of the brothers when he is absent or engaged.

R: 1. Since it often happens that, either through bodily infirmity or the necessity of a journey or some other circumstance, the community is deprived of the one who presides over it, let someone else be chosen⁴³⁵ for this purpose after full consideration by the one who presides and others competent to make assessment, so that in his absence he may take over the care of the brothers and those who are at home may have one from whom to receive the consolations of the word. This will ensure that when the one who presides is away on a journey the

⁴³⁴ i.e. if no one within the community can be reasonably trusted with such a journey alone, a suitable companion may be sought for him from another community. The 'one entrusted' is presumably the superior, who must also be provident in making these arrangements.

⁴³⁵ Cf. Aphthonius, ὁ δευτερεύων, the 'second-in-command' in Pachomius' monastery at Tabennisi, Palladius, *Lausiac History* 32. 8.

community does not take on a democratic aspect,⁴³⁶ to the overthrow of the rule and the good order that has been handed down,⁴³⁷ and that the approved regulations are kept, to the glory of God.

Moreover, when strangers visit, there will be someone to answer wisely, with the result that those who seek the word are edified in a manner worthy of the subject, and the common name of the community⁴³⁸ is not put to shame. For if they all leap in with the word at the same time, it is a cause of turbulence and a mark of disorder. Indeed, the Apostle did not allow even those deemed worthy of receiving the charism of teaching to speak all at once. He says of them: *But if a revelation is made to another, let the first keep silent* (1 Cor. 14: 30), and again he rebukes the absurdity of such disorder when he says: *If therefore the whole Church is assembled together and all speak with tongues and there enter some who are uninstructed or do not believe, will they not say that you are mad?* (1 Cor. 14: 23)

2. If through ignorance a stranger addresses his questions to another, then even if the one personally questioned is able to answer fully, all the same, let him keep silent for the sake of good order⁴³⁹ and indicate the one entrusted with this duty, as the Apostles did in the presence of the Lord (cf. John 12: 22), so that speech may be used in an orderly and becoming manner.

For if, in the case of bodily healing, it is not the duty of everyone to use the knife on the sick, but only of one who, through experience and practical work and the teaching of experts, has acquired the skill over a long period of time, what principle would allow anyone to leap in with a cure through the word?⁴⁴⁰ For in such a case, the slightest error can have the gravest consequences. Why, even the distribution of bread is not entrusted simply to anyone, but is a ministry assigned to one entrusted with it after full consideration. How then is it not far more necessary in the case of such as these,

⁴³⁶ *δημοκρατικόν τι σχῆμα μεταλαμβάνειν*. This suspicion of democracy has its roots in later stages of the Peloponnesian War (late 5th cent. BC), when Athenian democracy descended into ochlocracy and demagoguery, according to Plato (e.g. *Republic*, I, 339a), Xenophon, Thucydides, and other contemporaries. See *SR* 303 and note.

⁴³⁷ *τοῦ κανόνος καὶ τῆς παραδεδομένης εὐταξίας*. On 'good order' see *LR* 27 and note.

⁴³⁸ *τὸ κοινὸν τῆς ἀδελφότητος*.

⁴³⁹ See above in 45. 1, and the note on 'good order' at *LR* 27.

⁴⁴⁰ Reg. prim. and Voss. present here a shorter Caesarean (Ask. 3) variant: 'But if such is the good order with regard to the needs of the body that no one might choose to attempt the practice of medicine who is unskilled in it; and likewise, someone who is asked for bread or some such thing by someone else, would not be ashamed to send the requester to the one entrusted with dispensing it, then how great an arrogance when someone is asked concerning the judgment of God . . .

that spiritual food be judiciously and carefully dispensed to those who ask for it by one of those best qualified?

Consequently, it shows no little arrogance that when someone is asked concerning the judgment of God he should be so lacking in fear and so blasé as to dare to answer rather than indicate the one entrusted with the dispensing of the word,⁴⁴¹ who, because he is a wholly *faithful and wise steward*, has been chosen to *distribute the spiritual food in due season* (cf. Luke 12: 42) and to *dispense his words with judgment*, as it is written (Ps. 111: 5). Further, if something escapes the one whose duty is to answer while another thinks of it, let not the latter immediately rush in to put him right, but suggest privately what has occurred to him. For this gives rise to inflation in inferiors towards those in higher position, so that even if someone gives an answer which is useful but out of place, he deserves the penalties for unruliness.

LR 46

On not concealing one's sins from one's brother or from oneself.

R: According to the Lord's command (Matt. 18: 15–17) every sin must be brought before the one who presides, either by the sinner himself or by those who have become aware of the sin, if they are unable to cure it themselves.

For wrong-doing passed over in silence⁴⁴² is a festering disease in the soul. Just as we would not call a benefactor anyone who makes light of morbid conditions in the body but rather one who brings it to light through pain and palpation in order to cast out the harm by an emetic, or at least one who discloses the disease so that the mode of cure can be clearly discerned; in the same way, obviously, to ignore sin is to collaborate with the invalid in bringing about his own death. For *the sting of death is sin* (1 Cor. 15: 56) and also: *Candid rebukes are better than furtive friendships* (Prov. 27: 5).

So then, let us not hide our sins, either from one another—in case we become the slayers of our brothers rather than their friends—or from ourselves, *for whoever does not cure himself in his own works is brother to him who destroys himself* (Prov. 18: 9 Sept.).

⁴⁴¹ τὸν ἐγκειρισμένον τὴν τοῦ λόγου οἰκονομίαν. Reg. prim., Voss., and Colb. complete the sentence with a shorter variant: 'dispensing of the words of the Lord in judgment to heal and to perfect the soul of each'. On Basil's rich doctrine on the ministry of the word in community see LR Prol. 4 (RBas. Prol. 17), 32. 2, 33. 2, 35; SR Prol. (RBas. Prol. 3).

⁴⁴² Reg. prim., Voss., and Colb. complete with a variant: 'becomes an incurable disease'.

LR 47

Concerning those who do not accept the arrangements of the one who presides.

R: Anyone who does not accept the decisions of the one who presides must oppose him openly or, if he has a strong principle in accord with the intention of the Scriptures, privately.⁴⁴³ Otherwise, let him keep silence and fulfil what is enjoined.

But if he is too timid, let him use others as intermediaries for this purpose, so that if the command is contrary to Scripture he may deliver both himself and his brothers from harm; but if it is shown to be in accord with the word that fits the case then he may free himself from vain and perilous doubts—for *one who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not act from faith* (Rom. 14: 23)—and the simpler brothers shall not fall into the snare of disobedience. *For it would be better, says the Lord, if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones* (cf. Matt. 18: 6; Luke 17: 2).

But if some persist in disobedience, finding fault secretly and not bringing their discontent into the open, then, because they are a source of doubt in the community, shaking the resolve to fulfil the commandments and fomenting disobedience and disaffection, let them be expelled from the community: for *cast out*, it says, *the scoffer from the assembly and strife will also depart with him* (Prov. 22: 10), and again: *Put away the evil one from among yourselves, for a little leaven corrupts the whole lump* (1 Cor. 5: 13, 6).

LR 48

That we ought not to concern ourselves with the arrangements of the one who presides but attend to our own work.

R: But so that no one falls easily into this passion of doubt,⁴⁴⁴ to his own harm and that of the others, this should be the general principle observed in the community, that no one concern himself with the arrangements made by the one who presides or trouble himself about the things that happen, except for those nearer in rank and understanding to the one who presides.⁴⁴⁵ These he will necessarily call on for counsel and deliberation on the common welfare, obeying

⁴⁴³ On the manner of confronting one's superior or community if necessary, see also LR 27, 36, 47, *RBas.* 13. 8–13 (*SR* 113), *SR* 303 and note.

⁴⁴⁴ τῷ τοιούτῳ πάθει τῆς διακρίσεως: hesitancy, wavering, being in two minds.

⁴⁴⁵ Cf. *RB* 3. 3, in which the abbot is to seek counsel of all together, for 'the Lord often reveals what is better to the younger'.

the exhortation of him who said: *Do everything with counsel* (cf. Sir. 32: 19).⁴⁴⁶

For if we have entrusted the management of our souls to him as to one who shall give account to God, it is wholly unreasonable that we should be mistrustful in matters of trivia and be filled with absurd suspicions against our brother and give occasion to the others for the same. So that this might not happen, *let each abide in that wherein he was called* (1 Cor. 7: 24). Let him give himself wholly to that responsibility which is entrusted to him and not concern himself with other arrangements, imitating the Lord's holy disciples, of whom, it says, that though the matter of the Samaritan woman might have aroused suspicion, yet *no one asked, What are you seeking? or Why are you speaking with her?* (John 4: 27)

LR 49

Concerning disputes in the community.

R: Concerning disputes in the community: whenever there are some who come to loggerheads over a certain matter, they must not strive against each another contentiously, but put the resolution in the hands of those more capable than they. But to prevent the overthrow of order that comes of all asking questions at once and to give no occasion for light and foolish babble, let there be one approved and capable of either bringing particular disputes before the community for common consideration, or referring them to the one in charge.⁴⁴⁷ In such a way the investigation of doubtful points will be carried out more consistently and skilfully. For if there is need of knowledge and experience in every matter, there is far greater need in matters like these. Just as no one would entrust the use of tools to the inexperienced, so it is all the more necessary to put the management of speech in the hands of those who are competent, who will be able to determine accurately the place, time, and manner of what is being investigated, who by responding calmly and prudently and by listening wisely, will secure solutions of the disputed points, to the upbuilding of the common good.

LR 50

Q: How should the one who presides rebuke?

R: Yes indeed, the one who presides must not administer rebukes

⁴⁴⁶ Quoted also in *RB* 3. 13, as Sir. 32: 24 in the Vulgate.

⁴⁴⁷ τῷ προεχόντι. There appears to be a standing office of arbitrator apart from the superior.

to sinners in a fit of passion. For to rebuke one's brother in wrath and anger does not liberate him from sin but only entangles oneself in blunders. With regard to this it says: *In meekness correcting opponents* (2 Tim. 2: 25). In cases when he himself is slighted there must be no vehemence, but only in cases when he sees another being despised. Let him show kindness towards the sinner, while reserving his displeasure⁴⁴⁸ for the evil done. By thus making a distinction between himself and the other he shall avoid the suspicion of self-love and demonstrate that he does not hate the sinner but is repelled by the sin.

But if the difference in his display of anger is not as I have said but the other way round,⁴⁴⁹ then clearly, he is angered not on God's account or because of the danger to the sinner, but because of his own love of reputation and rule. For he must both show zeal on behalf of the glory of God who is dishonoured by the transgression of the commandment and show the compassion that comes of brotherly love towards a brother who by his sin is endangering his salvation—since *the soul that sins, the same shall die* (Ezek. 18: 4). Thus he will be roused against every instance of sin precisely as sin and show the fervour of his disposition by the way he insists on its remedy.

LR 51

Q: What should be the manner of correcting a sinner's fault?

R: Let the one who presides apply remedies to those trapped in passions⁴⁵⁰ in the manner of a doctor, not being angry at the infirm but doing battle with the disease. Let him set up a counter-irritant to the passions and heal the soul's debility by means of a more drastic regimen if necessary, as, for example, countering vainglory by means of practices of humility, idle speech by silence, excessive sleep by vigils with prayers, idleness of the body by hard work, unseemly eating by privation of food, murmuring by separation such that

⁴⁴⁸ Ἀλλὰ καὶ μᾶλλον δυσχεραίνειν. This difficult passage seems to mean that there is a place for asperity in administering rebuke, but it must always be directed to the sin and not the sinner. However, when the offence concerns insult shown to the superior himself, he should make an exception and forbear or modify even this legitimate and necessary display of sternness. All in all, Basil requires consummate management of his own emotions on the part of anyone called on to administer rebuke. See LR 24.

⁴⁴⁹ i.e. he is more roused by slights to himself than by slights to others.

⁴⁵⁰ Τοῖς ἐμπαθέσι. τὸ πάθος, a medical term, refers to diseased conditions of the body; psycho-spiritually, it refers to the compulsions that drive unfree human behaviour.

none of the brothers will choose to work with him and his work is not mixed with that of the others, as we said above—unless by unreserved repentance he shows himself quit of his passion.⁴⁵¹ Then the work done in a spirit of murmuring may be accepted, but even so it should not be used to serve the purposes of the brothers, but be assigned to some other use. The principle governing these matters has been sufficiently explained above.⁴⁵²

LR 52

Q: With what kind of disposition should we accept penalties?

R: Just as we said that the one who presides must apply treatments to the infirm without passion, so too, those undergoing treatment must not mistake the penalties as a mark of hostility or consider the care expended through compassion in order to save his soul, as a tyranny. For it is disgraceful if those who are sick in body should trust doctors to such an extent that whether they operate or cauterize or brace with bitter drugs they are regarded as benefactors, while we do not show the same disposition to the physicians of our souls who accomplish our salvation through the labour of their guidance. Yet the Apostle says: *And who is it that makes me glad but the one whom I have grieved?* (2 Cor. 2: 2) and again: *For behold, what earnest care this very grieving according to God has accomplished in you!* (2 Cor. 7: 11). Accordingly, if we keep the end in view, it is fitting that the one who instils in us this grief according to God be judged our benefactor.

LR 53

Q: How shall the craft-teachers correct the children when they err?

R: When pupils make a mistake in the craftwork itself, the craft-teachers themselves should show the fault and correct their mistakes.

But if there are offences that argue moral aberration, such as disobedience and answering back, indolence at work, idle talk, lying, or whatever else of the kind unacceptable among the pious, they must deal with these by taking them to the supervisor of common good order,⁴⁵³ so that the measure and manner of the healing of their offences may be determined by him.

For if rebuke is a doctoring of the soul,⁴⁵⁴ it is not for everyone to

⁴⁵¹ ἀπαλλαγείς τοῦ πάθους, also to be understood as ‘sick condition’.

⁴⁵² See LR 29.

⁴⁵³ ἐπὶ τὸν ἐφόρον τῆς κοινῆς εὐταξίας.

⁴⁵⁴ ἰατρεία [sic] ψυχῆς ἐστὼν ἢ ἐπιτίμησης.

rebuke, any more than it is to practise as a doctor, but only the duty of him to whom the one who presides has entrusted it after thorough examination.

LR 54

How it is necessary that those who preside over the community⁴⁵⁵ refer their concerns to one another.

R: It is indeed advantageous that at certain fixed times and places a meeting is held of those in charge of the communities⁴⁵⁶ where they report to each other any matters that have arisen opposed to the word⁴⁵⁷ and the most difficult problems of behaviour and how they have settled each case. In this way if anyone has fallen into error⁴⁵⁸ he may with confidence lay it bare to the judgment of the many and what is rightly done may be confirmed by a number of witnesses.

LR 55

Whether the use of medical remedies accords with the goal of piety.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁵ *τοῦς προεστῶτας τῆς ἀδελφότητος.* Though the later caption suggests the seniors belonging to *one* community, the response deals with superiors of the *communities*. Basil recommends a forum of mutual correction and encouragement among the superiors themselves, modelled on the twice-yearly synods of bishops in each ecclesiastical province. Cf. *LR* 35, 43.

⁴⁵⁶ *τῶν ἐπιτεταγμένων ταῖς ἀδελφότησι.*

⁴⁵⁷ *τά τε παρὰ λόγον ἀπαντήσαντα πράγματα,* interpreted as matters opposed to obedience to the word of the Lord in Scripture, the commandments.

⁴⁵⁸ i.e. if any superior has made a mistaken judgment or taken an ill-advised course of action, his (or her?) fellow-superiors will point it out. Superiors, too, need to have their actions ‘witnessed’; no false shame or subterfuge, but evangelical candour, which is the truth in love, should reign at these meetings. See also *SR* 227 and note.

⁴⁵⁹ *LR* 28, 51, 52, *SR* 28 (*RBas.* 45), 99 (*RBas.* 23), 102, 158 (*RBas.* 24), 229 (*RBas.* 200), 301 show that medicine was one of Basil’s most enduring analogies for the care of the soul. He refined his thinking on the use of bodily medicine over the years. A shorter version of the present Q/A, edited in Grib. 180–3 as *SR* 314, was included in an intermediate version of the Great Asketikon. *LR* 55 is Basil’s final revision and restatement of his position.

Basil himself had studied medicine in Athens. ‘Medicine, the result of philosophy and laboriousness, was rendered necessary for him by his physical delicacy and his care of the sick. From these beginnings he attained to a mastery of the art, not only in its empirical and practical branches, but also in its theory and principles’, *GNaz. Or.* 43. 23, *NPNF*, 2nd ser. 7. 403. Letter 189, Def. III. 48–69, *to Eustathius, Chief Physician* (not by Basil, but by GNyssa), attests ‘he who should place your science above all the pursuits of life would hit upon the proper judgment and not fall short of what is fitting’ (48–9).

R: 1. Each of the arts is bestowed on us by God to supply for the infirmity of nature. We have, for example, agriculture, because what sprouts of itself from the earth is not sufficient to relieve our needs;⁴⁶⁰ and weaving, because we have urgent need of covering, both with regard to decency and the harm that comes from the weather; and the same with building. And so it is with the medical art too.

Since our body is susceptible to conditions⁴⁶¹ and vulnerable to various kinds of harm, some attacking it from without and some arising from within from foods, and it is distressed either by excess or deficiency, the medical art is permitted us by God who orders our whole life, as a pattern for the healing of the soul, that we may be advised to remove what is in excess or to make up what is lacking.

In the same way that, if we were still in the paradise of delight, we would have no need of the cares and toils of agriculture, so too, if we had the immunity from disease⁴⁶² bestowed at our creation before the Fall⁴⁶³ we would have no need of the medical art for our relief.

But after we were exiled to this place and we heard the words: *You shall eat your bread in the sweat of your brow* (Gen. 3: 19), through long experience and painful toil upon the earth we devised the art of agriculture to relieve the ills which came of the curse, God himself having bestowed the understanding and apprehension of this art. So too, when we were ordained to *return again to the earth from which we had been taken* (cf. Gen. 3: 19) and were yoked to the painful flesh, destined to corruption because of sin, and for the same reason subjected to these diseases, we were also provided the help that is given the sick—in some measure at least—by the medical art.

2. The herbs which are specific for each disease did not sprout from the ground of their own accord, but, it is clear, were brought

VSM (GNO 405, Wagner 185) concretely illustrates the issue discussed in *LR* 55. Makrina was afflicted by an aggressive tumour, when her mother, Emmelia, 'begged her to accept the doctor's care and implored her many times saying that the art of medicine was given by God to man for his preservation'. But after Makrina besought God all night in the sanctuary she was able to dispense with seeing a doctor. If this incident took place in the mid- to late 360s, it is possible that Basil's present discourse is an arbitration between the differing views represented by the two women. A very similar incident of healing through prayer is reported of Gregory Nazianzen's sister, Gorgonia, in *Or.* 8. 18 (McCauley 113).

⁴⁶⁰ Celsus uses exactly the same analogy in his introduction to *De Medicina*, 3 vols., in Greek and English, tr. W. G. Spencer (London: Heinemann, 1948).

⁴⁶¹ *Τὸ ἐμπαθὲς ἡμῶν σῶμα*, lit. 'subject to passion', in a neutral, almost clinical sense.

⁴⁶² *εἰ ἐν ἀπαθείᾳ ἤμεν*. Again, the broad medical and psycho-spiritual connotations of *τὸ πάθος* and its verbal field serve Basil's purpose very well.

⁴⁶³ *πρὸ τοῦ παραπτώματος*.

forth by the will of the Creator with a view to our benefit. So the nature that is in roots, flowers, leaves, fruits, or juices, or whatever is found in metals or in the sea that has properties beneficial to the body, is like the nature found in what we eat and drink.

Yet whatever requires contrivance and fuss and involves much commotion and, as it were, turns our whole life into one long *provision for the flesh* (Rom. 13: 14), should be avoided by Christians. Rather, care should be taken to use the art, if there is need, in such a way that we do not invest in it the whole cause of our health or sickness, but admit the use of its remedies as ordered to the glory of God and as a pattern for the care of souls.

And when we are deprived of medical assistance, let us not put all hope of relief from our distresses in this art, but instead, know that *he will not allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear* (1 Cor. 10: 13). For just as in those days the Lord on one occasion made clay and anointed and gave orders to wash in Siloam (cf. John 9: 6–7) and on another was content with a simple command, saying, *I will, be clean* (Matt. 8: 3), while he left still others to struggle in their afflictions, that they might be better proved by their trials, so it is now with us. At one time he touches us hiddenly and secretly when he knows this is beneficial for our souls; at another time he thinks fit to use material help for our diseases, in this way instilling a more enduring remembrance of his grace by the length of the cure, or, as I said, providing us with a pattern for the care of the soul. For just as with the flesh it is necessary both to eliminate what is foreign and make up what is lacking, so it is with our soul: it is fitting to exclude what is foreign to it and to admit what is in accordance with its nature, because *God made man upright* (Eccles. 7: 29) *and created us for good works . . . that we should walk in them* (cf. Eph. 2: 10).

3. Just as in the one case we endure cuttings and cauterizations and the taking of bitter drugs for the cure of the body, so also in this case we must accept the cutting effects of the word that exposes⁴⁶⁴ and the bitter drugs of penalties for the cure of the soul. This is what the prophetic word says in censure of those who will not be taught: *Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why has the health of the daughter of my people not been restored?* (Jer. 8: 22)

Indeed, when we have chronic diseases, such that we seek healing over a long period of time and use remedies both painful and varied, this shows us that we ought to amend the sins of the soul by sustained prayer and prolonged repentance and a more laborious

⁴⁶⁴ τὰ τμητικά τοῦ ἐλεγκτικοῦ λόγου.

struggle than reason would suggest to us is sufficient for our healing.⁴⁶⁵

Now if there are some who misuse the medical art, it is no reason why we should shun all benefit to be derived from it. For when undisciplined seekers of pleasure abuse the arts of cooking or baking or weaving by fostering luxury through exceeding the bounds of what is necessary, we should not on that account avoid all these arts indiscriminately. On the contrary, it is by using them rightly that we show up their corrupt use of them. So also in the case of medicine: no blessing attaches to slandering God's gift on account of its misuse! Yet to put all hope of one's health in the hands of doctors is worthy of cattle—which we see happening in the case of some wretches who do not shrink from calling them 'saviours'!⁴⁶⁶

Nevertheless to entirely avoid the benefit of medicine manifests a contentious spirit. Just as Hezekiah did not think the cake of figs the primary cause of his recovery or reckon it the cause of his body's healing (2 Kgs. 20: 7) yet, in addition to praising God, he gave thanks for the creation of the figs, likewise when we receive blows from God who so kindly and wisely orders our life, we first ask of him that we may understand the reason why he imposes the stripes, then we ask either release from the pain or endurance, such *that with the trial he may also give us a way out, that we may be able to bear it* (1 Cor. 10: 13).

4. But we receive with thanksgiving the grace of healing that is given us, whether it be by oil and wine as in the case of the one who fell among robbers (cf. Luke 10: 34), or by figs, as in the case of Hezekiah. And it will make no difference to us whether the cure

⁴⁶⁵ On other aspects of negative experience in the Christian life see *LR* 16 and note.

⁴⁶⁶ *σωτήρας*. Basil's use of the term *Σωτήρ*, 'saviour', is determined by the Jewish and Christian monotheistic tradition. The very name of Jesus means 'Saviour' or 'the-Lord-saves' (cf. Luke 1: 31, 2: 11). In the Hellenistic period, 'saviour' was an epithet accorded rulers and others who had performed notable services of rescue or deliverance. It was given to gods, as in *Ζεὺς Σωτήρ*. Most pertinently, it was given to the god of medicine and healing, *Ἀσκληπιός*, 'Asklepios', who was held in such high regard as 'saviour' that 'in the final stage of paganism, of all the genuinely Greek gods, Asclepius was judged the foremost antagonist of Christ', E. J. Edelstein, *Asclepius, a Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1945), vii.

Christ, on the other hand, was considered the true physician: 'Those physicians were many, but my Lord and Saviour is the high-physician (*archiatros*)', Origen, *Hom. on the Book of Kings*, *PG* 12. 1021. For other examples see 'Doctors in the Graeco-Roman World', in G. H. R. Horsley (ed.), *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* (Macquarie University, 1982), 10–25, esp. 17–18.

from God comes to us invisibly or through some bodily means, which often leads us to a keener perception of the Lord's grace. Often, when we have contracted illnesses for our instruction, we are sentenced to undergo a cure by painful means as part of the instruction. And so right reason teaches us not to shrink from cuttings or cauterizations or the pains caused by bitter and burdensome drugs or privation of food or a strict regimen or abstinence from harmful things, since—I say it again—the object of benefiting the soul is being assured, for it is being taught by way of example how to take care of itself.

Yet there is no small danger that the mind will fall into the distraction of expecting medical remedies for every disease. For not all illnesses come about naturally, or come from faults of lifestyle or from any other bodily origin, for which indeed we observe that the medical art is sometimes a benefit. But often illnesses are scourges for sins, sent for our conversion. *For whom the Lord loves, it says, he chastises* (Prov. 3: 12) and: *For this cause many among you are weak and sickly and some have fallen asleep. For if we discerned ourselves, we would not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned along with the world* (1 Cor. 11: 30–2). Therefore, if such is our case, once we have acknowledged our transgressions we ought to take it quietly and do without medical attentions and endure whatever comes our way, as did the one who said: *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, for I have sinned against him* (Mic. 7: 9); and we ought to show our amendment by *bringing forth fruits worthy of repentance* (cf. Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8) and by remembering what the Lord said: *Behold, you are made whole; sin no more, lest something worse befall you* (John 5: 14).

Illness also sometimes comes about at the petition of the evil one. It is as though the Master, the lover of man, allows him a great antagonist with whom to contend in the struggle, so that by the utmost patience of his servants, he might cut down his boast. This we have learned was the case with Job (cf. Job 2: 6).

Or again, in those who are able to bear their sufferings *even unto death* (Phil. 2: 8) God provides an example to others who will not endure any hardship at all. Such was Lazarus, who, though oppressed by so many wounds, is nowhere recorded to have asked anything of the rich man or to have complained of his plight. On this account he attained to rest in the bosom of Abraham, as one who during his life had accepted his misfortunes (cf. Luke 16: 20–5).

We find yet another cause of illnesses happening to the saints, as in the case of the Apostle. In order that he might not seem to exceed the bounds of human nature and that no one should think that he

was possessed of something exceptional in his human nature—which the Lycaonians thought, when they brought him garlands and oxen (cf. Acts 14: 12)—illness was his lot continually, in order to make plain his own human nature (cf. 2 Cor. 12: 7).

5. What therefore might be the gain to such as these from the medical art? Would it not be a greater peril for them to be led astray from right reason into a craze for bodily health? To be sure, those who have brought illness on themselves from a disordered lifestyle ought to use the cure of the body as a kind of pattern and copy for the treatment of the soul, as I said earlier. For abstinence from harmful things in accordance with the principles of medicine is to our benefit, as is also the choice of what is useful and the observance of doctors' orders. And let the very transformation of the flesh from illness to health encourage us not to despair of the soul, as though it were incapable of returning again through repentance from sins to its proper integrity.

Therefore it follows that we must neither avoid the art completely nor place all our hopes in it. Just as we practise agriculture, but also ask the fruits from God, and as we entrust the rudder to the pilot, yet pray to God that we may be saved from the sea, so by bringing in a doctor when reason permits, we do not leave off our hope in God. All the same, it seems to me, the art contributes in no small measure towards self-control, for I see that it cuts out luxury and condemns satiety and banishes as unsuitable a rich diet and superfluous preparations of condiments. For the most part, it calls want the mother of health, so that in this respect, too, its counsels are not without use to us.

So whether we use the precepts of the medical art or decline them in accordance with one of the principles set out above, let us preserve the goal of being well pleasing to God and arrange all things for the soul's benefit, fulfilling the commandment of the Apostle who said: *Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31).

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THE SHORTER RESPONSES

Prologue (*RBas.* Prologue 1–11)

1 God the lover of man¹ *who teaches man knowledge* (Ps. 93. 10), through the Apostle commands those whom he has entrusted with the charism of teaching to *persevere in teaching* (1 Tim. 4: 16; Rom. 12: 7). **2** Through Moses he also exhorts those who are in need of being built up by the divine instructions, saying *Ask your father and he will declare it to you, your elders² and they will tell you* (Deut. 32: 7).

3 Accordingly, we who have been entrusted with *the ministry of the word* (Acts 6: 4)³ must at all times be (ready and) eager for the (instruction⁴ and) training of souls,⁵ **4** now bearing witness in the common hearing of the Church to all concerning the commandments of the Lord,⁶ now⁷ making ourselves available in

¹ Ὁ φιλόανθρωπος Θεός, *RBas.* Prol. 1: Humanum genus diligens Deus—God who loves the human race.

² πρεσβυτέρους σου, *RBas.* Prol. 1: presbyteros tuos.

³ The idea of the ‘charism of the word’, tested and approved, i.e. empirically verifiable, is pivotal to Basil’s conception of leadership in the community. See also *LR* Prol. 4 (*RBas.* Prol. 17), 32. 2, 33. 2, 35, 45. 2. From his use of the scriptural reference here, it may be inferred that Basil is ordained to the presbyterate.

⁴ Προοίμιον τῶν κατ’ ἐπιτομὴν ὄρων. In *Ask.* 2 and 3, the Shorter Responses immediately follow the Longer Responses with no advertence to a twofold division.

⁵ πρὸς τὸν κατάρτισμον τῶν ψυχῶν, *RBas.* Prol. 2: ad instructionem perfectionemque animarum.

⁶ ‘concerning . . . Lord’ appears only in *Colb.* (*Ask.* 6) and *RBas.* Prol. 4.

⁷ *RBas.* Prol. 4–5 continues: discoursing in private with anyone of the more perfect (perfectioribus quibusque) who wish to (enquire and) question . . .

Rufinus has either taken *προσιόντων* for some form of ‘the advanced’, or has inserted ‘perfectioribus’ here as a gloss to specify the class of Basil’s addressees, i.e. the more zealous Christians and ascetics. Gribomont (‘Obéissance et Évangile’, n. 21) considers that Rufinus has interpreted to the more evolved mentality of his own time. Yet the concept of being more or less ‘perfect’ in the Christian life was far from alien to Basil’s thought. His ascetic and anthropological vocabulary is studded with the words *τελέω*, *τέλειος*, i.e. ‘perfection’ and its field. For him ‘perfection in Christ’ involves growth towards maturity, *LR* 4 (*R Bas.* 2. 72); it is fostered by instruction and diligence and able to be skilfully monitored e.g. *LR* 2. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 7–10), *LR* 3. 1 (*RBas.* 2. 59); it implies assiduous effort towards the goal of piety, imitation of a pattern or correspondence to a template, e.g. *LR* 5 (*RBas.* 2. 82–93).

private 5 to the best of our ability for anyone who cares to question us concerning the soundness of faith and the truth of the (perfect) way of life according to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ,⁸ 6 for it is through both of these that the *man of God* is assuredly made *perfect* (and complete)⁹ (2 Tim. 3. 17).

7 You for your part must not allow anything to pass by fruitlessly, without profit for yourselves,¹⁰ but beyond what you learn in the common hearing (of the Church) you will also inquire in private concerning what is helpful¹¹ 8 and dispose the whole study of your life towards what is useful (and searching out what is of greater advantage).¹²

9 Since God has brought us here together and we have great

In fact, Basil himself uses the term ‘the more perfect’ e.g. *τελειοτέροις* in *LR* 10. 1, 15. 1 (and note), 15. 2 (three times).

Basil’s teaching on perfection is nowhere clearer than in *Hom. on Ps. 44* (*PG* 29. 388) where he describes its attainment as a gradual process. ‘This psalm seems to be one adapted to the perfecting (*τελειωτικός τις ὤν*) of human nature, one that lends help towards gaining the end (*τῶλος*) set before those who have chosen to live according to virtue. For there is need of the teaching this psalm provides, if those making progress (*προκόπτουσι*) are to reach perfection (*τελειωθῆναι*).’

⁸ τὰ τε πρὸς ὑγιάν τῆς πίστεως καὶ ἀλήθειαν τῆς κατὰ τὸ Εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτείας. *RBas.* Prol. 5: de fide et veritate evangelii domini nostri Iesu Christi et de conversatione perfecta—concerning the faith and the truth of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the perfect way of life. Rufinus may have refashioned the order of the original; even so, there is a new stress in the Greek text on ‘soundness’ of faith. A similar re-editing of the intent occurs a few lines later in *LR* Prologue (*RBas.* Prol. 14). In either the Latin or Greek version the indirect interrogative clause comes down to two elements: doctrine and way of life, or faith and works. The intimate connection of sound doctrine and moral endeavour is also argued in *SR* 20. In Letter 294 (Def. iv. 206–9) from the late 370s, after the rupture with Eustathius, Basil appears to be addressing a community formerly under Eustathian influence seeking reform along his lines: ‘neither a strict way of life by itself is of benefit, except it be illumined by faith in God, nor can an orthodox confession, bereft of good works, commend you to the Lord, but both of these must go together, that *the man of God may be perfect*’. On Letter 294, see Elm 214–15. Basil likewise stresses the complete interdependence of prayer and a practical moral life; see *LR* 37. 3 and note.

⁹ βεβαίως τελειοῦται, *RBas.* Prol. 6: perfectus . . . et consummatus.

¹⁰ Whereas the Greek text uses a doublet, Rufinus has only a single term. *RBas.* Prol. 7, allow any time to pass by wasted.

¹¹ περὶ τῶν συμφερόντων—‘expedient, helpful, fitting’ things. *RBas.* Prol. 7: concerning the (higher and more perfect things)—de eminentioribus et perfectioribus. Rufinus alters the tonality.

¹² πᾶσαν [*sic*] σχολὴν τοῦ βίου πρὸς τὸ χρήσιμον διαπίθεσθαι (correcting *διαπίθεσθαι*). *RBas.* Prol. 8: that you may spend the whole span of your life inquiring into what is better (and searching out what is of greater advantage).

tranquillity (and quiet)¹³ **from outside disturbances, so let us not be diverted by any other task or yield our bodies again to sleep** (and the repose of the body),¹⁴ **11 but spend what is left of the night¹⁵ in concern for and examination of what is necessary,**¹⁶ **fulfilling what was said by the blessed David, he shall meditate on the law of the Lord¹⁷ day and night (Ps. 1. 2).**

SR 1 (RBas. 12)

Q: Is it permissible or fitting for a person to allow himself to do or say (from his own feeling)¹⁸ **whatever he thinks good, without the testimonies of the God-inspired Scriptures?**¹⁹

R: 1 For one thing, our Lord Jesus Christ says of the Holy Spirit: he shall not speak from himself, but will speak whatever he hears (John 16: 13) and for another, he says of himself: the Son can do nothing of himself (John 5: 19), 2 and again, I have not spoken

¹³ ἡσυχία πολλή ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξῶθεν θορυβῶν ἐστὶ. RBas. Prol. 9: paululum quid a molestiis turbarum silentii et quietis, 'we enjoy some small silence (and quiet) from the disturbances of the crowds'. Since with Basil ἐξῶθεν usually denotes the 'secular' life, or the life of those indifferent to Christian piety, Rufinus' translation does not miss the mark.

¹⁴ RBas. Prol. 10, give our mind (animum demus) to any other task, or devote the remaining time to sleeping again and the repose of the body.

¹⁵ This reveals something of the original setting of the Small Asketikon: Basil has attended, if not presided at, a vigil in common with other Christians, for the Sunday liturgy maybe, or for one of the 'synods' or local festivals (cf. LR 40 and note), or for a gathering of superiors of communities that Basil advises in LR 54. When the service is over, a smaller group of the devout gather round Basil to question him and hear his teaching till dawn. The location is certainly in Pontus. Basil describes such occasions in Letter 223, Def. III. 302-5 (addressing Eustathius) and specifies that he was visiting ascetic communities: 'Were not your tachygraphers present with me as I dictated matters against the heresy? Were not the most earnest of your disciples in my presence the whole time? While visiting the communities and spending whole nights with them in the prayers, always speaking and listening on matters concerning God without contention, did I not furnish you with precise proofs of my own mind?' This *modus operandi* continued in Cappadocia. In *Hom. on Ps. 114*, PG 29. 484-93, Way 351-9, dating from the 370s when Basil was bishop, his addressees have kept vigil at a sanctuary of the martyrs from midnight to midday waiting for him to arrive. The lack of the usual commotion that Basil so deplores at these 'synods' (LR 40), his hearers' piety, and their affection for him all suggest that they are the devout faithful and ascetics.

¹⁶ RBas. Prol. 11: meliorum, the better things.

¹⁷ RBas. Prol. 11, his law.

¹⁸ ex proprio sensu; see RBas. 203. 2 (SR 274).

¹⁹ Reg. prim. and Voss. (Ask. 3) omit 'God-inspired', along with RBas. On Basil's commitment to Scripture, see also *Contra Eunomium* II. 27; PG 29. 663B; *Moralia* 26. 1, 70. 22.

from myself; rather, the one who sent me, the Father himself has given me commandment what I should speak and what I should say and I know that in his commandment is eternal life. I do not say anything, except as the Father has told me, thus do I speak (John 12: 49).

3 Who then can have attained such a pitch of madness as to dare to conceive of himself so much as a thought²⁰ **4** when he needs rather the Holy and good Spirit as guide for the journey²¹ (cf. Ps. 142: 10) that he might be directed into the way of truth (John 16: 13) in thought and words and deeds. **5** For he is blind and dwells in darkness (cf. John 12: 35), who is without the Sun of Righteousness (cf. Mal. 4: 2), that is our Lord Jesus Christ, who illumines us with his commandments as with rays?²² **6** For the commandment of the Lord, it says, is bright, illumining the eyes (Ps. 18: 9).

7 Some of the actions or sayings which are common among us are specified by the commandment of God in the Holy²³ Scriptures, while others are passed over in silence.²⁴ **8** Therefore when it concerns what is actually written down, no authority whatever is given anyone to perform what is forbidden or to leave undone what is prescribed. **9** For the Lord (himself) declared once and for all, saying: *And you shall keep this word which I command you this day, neither shall you add to it nor shall you subtract from it* (Deut. 4: 2). **10** Otherwise, there is a fearful prospect of judgment and a fury of fire which shall consume those who dare to (oppose themselves and)²⁵ do such a thing (Heb. 10: 27).

11 Now as for those matters passed over in silence, the Apostle has laid down a (manifest) rule for us: (*All things may be permissible*

²⁰ τὶς ἂν εἰς τοσαύτην ἐξέελθῆ μανίαν, ὥστε ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τολμήσαι τι καὶ ἐννοίας λαβεῖν. *RBas.* 12. 3: Who then can have gone so far in effrontery as to dare to (speak or) think anything as from himself?

²¹ *RBas.* 12. 4 is cast in the 1st person plural: (No, we must acknowledge in truth that all of us) have need of the Holy Spirit as guide for the journey.

²² *RBas.* 12. 5 restructures the sentence and uses the passive voice, thus coming closer to the actual text of Scripture: By his commandments we are illumined (cf. Ps. 33: 6), as it were, with rays.

²³ *RBas.* 12. 7: *divinis scripturis*—this is an inversion of the usual practice whereby *RBas.* commonly translates the Greek 'God-inspired' Scriptures as the 'Holy' Scriptures.

²⁴ *RBas.* 12. 7 reorders the sentence: Now the Holy Scriptures specify some of the actions or sayings which are common among us through the commandment of God, while other matters they pass over in silence.

²⁵ *RBas.* 12. 9: *adversarios*, reflecting the ὑπεναντίους of the NT text. Rufinus' citation is more accurate.

but not all things are helpful), **all things may be permissible for me but not all things are upbuilding; let no one seek his own advantage, but rather that of another's** (1 Cor. 10: 22). (12 Thus in every way we are to do, not what is permitted us, but what builds up our neighbours and to please not ourselves but our neighbours for their upbuilding.) Thus it is necessary in every way either to be subject to God according to his commandment, or to others because of his commandment, **13 for it is written: subjecting yourselves to one another out of reverence for Christ** (Eph. 5: 21), and again the Lord says: **Whoever wants to be great(er) among you, let him become the last of all and the servant of all** (cf. Matt. 20: 26–7; Mark 9: 35, 10: 43–4; Luke 22: 26), **14** that is, estranged from his own wishes, **in imitation of the Lord himself who says: 15 I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me** (John 6: 38)²⁶ (and again the Lord prescribes: **16 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two** (Matt. 5: 41).²⁷

SR 2

Q: What kind of profession²⁸ ought we who wish to live together according to God expect from one another?

R: That which the Lord sets before every one who comes to him, where he says: *If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me* (Matt. 16: 24).²⁹ But as to what force each of these phrases has, we spoke about this in the question that dealt with it.³⁰

²⁶ *RBas.* 12. 14–15 recasts, beginning with a new sentence: Whoever wants to fulfil this, without doubt cuts off his own will, in imitation . . . (Quod utique qui implere vult sine dubio proprias sibi voluntates secundum imitationem Domini dicentis: *Descendi de caelo non ut faciam voluntatem meam sed voluntatem eius qui me misit Patris*). Cf. *RB* 7. 31–2: secundus humilitatis gradus est si propriam quis non amans voluntatem, desideria sua non delectetur implere, sed vocem illam Domini factis imitetur dicentis: *Non veni facere voluntatem meam, sed eius qui me misit*.

²⁷ The Scripture cited in *RBas.* 12. 16 leads directly to *RBas.* 13. Q, the original form of which is *SR* 114. Q. The quotation may have been mistakenly placed at the end of *RBas.* 12, if Rufinus worked from dictation, or a very early copyist missed the division between question and answers.

²⁸ ὁμολογίαν, conscious purpose; the sense here is not quite that of 'confession'.

²⁹ Clarke 231 suggests this alludes to the profession ceremony, 'Perhaps quoted from the formula in use'.

³⁰ i.e. *LR* 8.

SR 3 (RBas. 16)

Q: How shall we (correct or) convert the sinner, or, if he is not converted, how should we deal with him?

R: 1 As we were enjoined by the Lord who said: *If your brother sins against you, go and confront him, between you and him alone. If he heeds you, you have gained your brother. 2 But if he does not heed you, then take with you one or two others, for 'in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established' (Deut. 19: 15). 3 But if he does not heed them, tell it to the Church; if he does not heed even the Church, then let him be to you as the pagan and the tax-collector (Matt. 18: 15–17).* If this is what is done, *sufficient for such a one is this rebuke from the many (2 Cor. 2: 6)*³¹ (for his salvation). 4 Then as the Apostle said: *confront, rebuke, appeal with all patience and teaching (2 Tim. 4: 2)*³² 5 and again, *If anyone does not obey our word through this letter, mark such a one and do not associate with him that he may be ashamed (2 Thess. 3: 14)* (that is, doubtless, at table).³³

SR 4 (RBas. 17)

Q: If someone taxes the brothers even for small sins saying 'You should repent (for each of them)!' does not such a one (seem to) lack compassion and destroy love?³⁴

R: 1 Since the Lord affirmed that *not one iota, not one little stroke shall pass from the Law till all is accomplished (Matt. 5: 18)* and (again) he declared that *For every idle word that men utter, they shall render account for it on the day of judgment (Matt. 12: 36), 2 nothing ought to be despised as small,*³⁵ *for whoever*

³¹ RBas. 16. 3 completes: it may be this rebuke from the many may turn out (eveniat) for his salvation.

³² Cited at RB 2. 23: abbas apostolicam debet illam semper formam servare in qua dicit: Argue, obsecra, increpa.

³³ ἵνα ἐντραπή, RBas. 16. 5 that you may not be shamed with him (that is at table). Curiously Rufinus' gloss can be retranslated into Greek as ἵνα ἐν τραπέζῃ.

³⁴ On the dispositions necessary in administering correction see RBas. 46. 4–5 (SR 29) and RBas. 78 (SR 165).

³⁵ Here in the Small Asketikon Basil teaches the so-called 'equivalence' of all sins, i.e. no sin whatever may be regarded as 'small' or treated lightly. See also RBas. 12. 8 (SR 1), LR Prol. 2 and note, SR 293 and note. Cf. the discussion on the *De Iudicio* by Clarke 15 and 55–6 and by Fedwick 14 n. 81. Fedwick, in asserting that the doctrine of the equivalence of sins is not found in the *Asceticum Parvum* appears not to have noticed the present text. Since he uses this assertion to argue for a late dating of the *De Iudicio* that also must be considered questionable.

*despises a matter, will be despised by it (little by little) (Prov. 13: 13; cf. Sir. 19: 1).*³⁶

3 Besides, what sin shall anyone dare call (slight or) small when the Apostle has declared that *through your transgression of the law, you dishonour God (Rom. 2: 23)?* 4 And if (it is said) *the sting of death is sin, it is not this or that (sin),*³⁷ but clearly, inasmuch as it is undefined, *every sin (1 Cor. 15: 56).* 5 So one who keeps quiet (and does nothing)³⁸ is (far more) lacking in compassion than one who rebukes, as is one who leaves the venom (to fester) in someone bitten by a snake than one who draws it out (and removes it). 6 Indeed, such a one is destroyer of love, for, as it is written: *He who spares the rod, hates his son; but he who loves, is diligent in discipline*³⁹ (Prov. 13: 24).

SR 5 (RBas. 18)⁴⁰

Q: How ought one to repent for each sin and what are the *fruits worthy of repentance* (Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8) that one ought to show?

R: 1 By assuming (in oneself) the disposition of him who said: *Iniquity I hated and abhorred (Ps. 118: 163)* and also by doing what is (written) in the sixth psalm (Ps. 6) and in many other places and what the Apostle said to those who were grieving according to God for another who had sinned: 2 *What earnestness*

³⁶ The Greek uses the text from Prov. 13: 13, which turns on the verb *καταφρονῶ*, just used by Basil: *Ὁ καταφρονῶν πράγματος καταφρονηθήσεται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ.* RBas. 17. 2, however, uses a text from Sir. 19: 1, similar in meaning but different in vocabulary, which turns on the theme of 'small' instead: *qui enim spernit (ὁ ἐξουθενῶν) minima paulatim defluit (κατὰ μικρὸν πεσεῖται)*—he who spurns little things will fail little by little.

³⁷ RBas. 17. 4: he did not refer to this (sin) or that, but every sin. 'But . . . every sin' is lacking in Voss. and Reg. prim. (Ask. 3), which is curious, since part of it is in RBas. An early editor, Combefi, in opting for the omission of the clause, censured it for Stoic severity. There is no doubt, however, that the thought is authentically Basil's.

³⁸ *ὁ ἐρησυχάζων [sic].* Garnier translates 'qui silet', who keeps quiet, as if translating *ὁ ἡσυχάζων.* RBas. 17. 5: *qui intermittit et neglegit.*

³⁹ Rufinus turns the Latin nicely: *qui autem diligit, diligenter corripit.*

⁴⁰ The second half of the question, about the fruits of repentance, does not appear in RBas. 18, but constitutes the question that follows it, RBas. 19 (SR 287), where it receives an answer. Thus, it appears twice in the Great Asketikon, at SR 5 and SR 287. There seems little in the context to suggest diplography on the part of an early copyist. It may be possibly due to inadvertence at the time of Basil's editing, when he separated and displaced two topics originally brought up at the same time by the same questioner. The duplication vanished in the RBas., perhaps because Rufinus noticed it, so soon to come before his eyes, and corrected it. If so, the Greek would preserve an older reading than the RBas.

it worked in you, what giving account of yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing,⁴¹ what putting of things right, what zeal! In all ways you have shown yourselves pure in the affair (2 Cor. 7: 11).

3 In addition, by multiplying the opposite right action (to the things in which one has failed), as did Zaccheus (cf. Luke 19: 8).

SR 6 (RBas. 20)

Q: One who professes in word that he repents but does not amend his sin—what is he?

R: **1** Concerning such a one I consider it is written: *If your enemy entreats you in a loud voice, do not be persuaded by him, for there are seven wickednesses in his soul (Prov. 26: 24–5).* And elsewhere: *As a dog returning to his vomit becomes repugnant, so is a man who through his own baseness returns to his sin (Prov. 26: 11 Sept.).*

SR 7 (RBas. 26)

Q: What (ought to be) is the judgment of those who justify sinners?⁴²

R: **1** A heavier judgment, it seems to me, than his of whom it was said⁴³ *It would be better for him if a millstone were hung round his neck and he were cast into the sea than that he should scandalize one of these little ones (Matt. 18: 6; Luke 17: 2), 2* for the sinner no longer receives a rebuke leading to correction but a justification leading to confirmation in (his) sin and he encourages others in the same passions.⁴⁴

3 So if one who justifies (sinners) does not *show forth⁴⁵ fruits worthy of repentance (cf. Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8)* there applies to him what was spoken by the Lord: *If your right eye causes you to*

⁴¹ RBas. 18: 2: what outdoing of each other, . . . *What alarm . . . zeal* are added from Voss. (Ask. 3) and 3 other MSS.

⁴² Cf. RB 69: 3: 'That no one should presume to defend another in the monastery, 'whence can spring the most serious incidence of scandals'; see Gribomont, 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 260.

⁴³ *περὶ οὗ ἐῖρηται*, RBas. 26: 1: than that (the Lord) pronounced . . .

⁴⁴ RBas. 26: 2: provokes others to a similar evil (malum).

⁴⁵ *ἐπιδείξεται*, rather than the *ποιήσατε* of the scriptural text. RBas. 26: 3 recasts slightly and both amplifies and conflates the scriptural reference: **3** so that there applies to one who defends sinners what was said: if you do not *show forth the fruits worthy of repentance . . . you shall be cut off and cast into the fire (cf. Matt. 3: 8 + 3: 10), 4* and again what was said by the Lord, *if your right eye . . .*

stumble, pluck it out and cast it from you, 5 for it is better for you that one of your members should perish, than that your whole body be cast into Gehenna (Matt. 5: 29, cf. 18: 9).

SR 8 (RBas. 27)

Q: How should we receive back one who genuinely repents (from the heart)?

R: 1 As the Lord taught⁴⁶ when he said: *he called his friends and neighbours together saying: Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost (Luke 15: 6).*⁴⁷

SR 9 (RBas. 28)

Q: What should be our approach toward one who continues in sin unrepentant?

R: 1 As the Lord enjoined saying: *If he does not heed even the Church, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax-collector (Matt. 18: 17)* and as the Apostle taught saying: *Withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which they received from us (2 Thess. 3: 6).*⁴⁸

SR 10 (RBas. 117)

Q: With what fear and what tears ought a soul that has lived wretchedly in many sins⁴⁹ withdraw from its sins and with what hope and disposition ought it draw near to God?⁵⁰

R: 1 In the first place, it ought to hate its deplorable former way of life and shudder and be repelled at the very memory of it; 2 for it is written: *Iniquity I hated and abhorred, but your law I have loved (Ps. 118: 163).*

3 Secondly, let it take the threat of eternal judgment and punishment as a teacher of fear, and acknowledge a season of tears

⁴⁶ RBas. 27. 1: ostendit, showed.

⁴⁷ RBas. 27. 1: quam perdideram, which I had lost.

⁴⁸ RBas. 28. 1: *which we delivered to you.* The RBas. translation could well reflect a minority reading of the Greek NT originally used by Basil, as it does not appear in any of the old Latin versions. Nevertheless, except for 'two ancient books' which have *ἦν παρελάβετε*, the Greek now has: *ἦν παρέλαβον παρ' ἡμῶν*, as here translated.

⁴⁹ RBas. 117. Q: after many sins and many miseries of life . . .

⁵⁰ RBas. 117. Q: draw near to the Lord. This is unusual. Rufinus frequently uses 'God' where the Greek text has 'the Lord'.

as a season of repentance,⁵¹ 4 as David taught in the sixth psalm (Ps. 6: 7–9), being fully persuaded that (in the abundance of tears) its sins might be washed away through the blood of Christ by the greatness⁵² of the mercy and the plenitude of the compassions of God, 5 who said: *If your sins be as scarlet, I will make them white as snow; and if they are as crimson, I will make them white as wool* (Isa. 1: 18).

6 After it has received the power (and the capacity) to be well pleasing to God, it says: *Weeping may tarry in the evening but joy comes in the morning.*⁵³ *You have changed my beating of the breast into joy for me, you have torn away my sackcloth and girded me with gladness, that my glory may sing to you* (Ps. 29: 12–13). 7 In this way, it draws near to the Lord singing psalms, saying: *I will extol you Lord, since you have sustained me and have not let my enemies exult over me* (Ps. 29: 2).

SR 11 (RBas. 149)

Q: How (can) does one achieve *hatred for sins?* (cf. Ps. 118: 163)

R: 1 **Hatred** always arises (in people) from unpleasant and grievous events⁵⁴ towards those who are the causes of such⁵⁵ (turmoil). 2 **Therefore, if one is fully persuaded how many and how great are the evils of which sins are the cause, then spontaneously** (and without any encouragement), and from inner disposition one experiences **hatred towards them**⁵⁶ 3 as he showed who said: *Iniquity I hated and abhorred* (Ps. 118: 163).⁵⁷

SR 12

Q: How may the soul be fully persuaded that God has forgiven its sins?

R: When it observes in itself the disposition of him who said: *Iniquity I hated and abhorred* (Ps. 118: 163). When he sent down his

⁵¹ RBas. 117. 3: let it use the fear of eternal fire and unending punishment as a teacher, that it may learn a livelier fear and recognize a season of tears through repentance (per paenitentiam).

⁵² *μεγέθει*, RBas. 117. 4: per potentiam, power.

⁵³ 'Weeping . . . morning' appears only in Voss. and Reg. prim. (Ask. 3).

⁵⁴ RBas. 149. 1: grief and misfortune.

⁵⁵ RBas. 149. 1: those who are the causes of such trouble.

⁵⁶ RBas. 149. 2: there is hatred born in him towards them.

⁵⁷ Followed, in the Small Asketikon, by SR 174 (RBas. 150), also concerned with dispositions.

only-begotten Son for the forgiveness of our sins God already forgive sins so far as his part is concerned. But since holy David *sings of mercy and judgment* (cf. Ps. 100: 1) and testifies that *God is merciful and just* (Ps. 114: 5), it is necessary that there should come about in us what the prophets and apostles say in the passages that concern repentance, that *the judgments of God's justice* (Ps. 118:62) are demonstrated and his mercy made perfect in the forgiveness of sins.

SR 13

Q: Should one who has sinned⁵⁸ after baptism and is caught in a thicket of evils, despair of his salvation,⁵⁹ or, up to what measure of sins should one continue to hope in God's love for man through repentance?

R: If it is possible to count the multitude of God's compassions⁶⁰ or weigh the greatness of God's mercy in a balance with the number and greatness of sins, then let there be despair. But if, as is reasonable, these latter are subject to measure and can be counted, whereas it is impossible to measure God's mercy or count his compassions, never is there a season for despair, but only for acknowledging mercy and condemning sins, the forgiveness of which is set forth⁶¹ in the blood of Christ, as it is written (cf. Matt. 26: 28).

But there are many places and many ways in which we are taught that we must not despair. Consider especially the parable of our Lord Jesus Christ concerning the son who took his father's wealth and squandered it on sins. From the Lord's own words we learn of what kind and how great a feast his repentance was counted worthy (cf. Luke 15: 22-4).

Moreover, God says through Isaiah: *If your sins are as scarlet I will make them white as snow; and if they are as crimson I will make them white as wool* (Isa. 1: 18). But we should know that this will only be true if the manner of our repentance is worthy, if it comes from a

⁵⁸ *ἐξαμαρτήσαντα*. The *ἐξ* prefix has an intensifying nuance. The word reappears in SR 18, suggesting some serious sin meriting long, perhaps public and canonical penance.

⁵⁹ Clarke 235: 'The answer to this question is obvious today, but up to c.250 the view was generally held that for certain sins no restoration was possible in this life. They must be left to God's mercy at the Last Day. See Watkins, *A History of Penance*, pp. 143-259 passim.'

⁶⁰ *οἰκτιρισμῶν*, 'movements of pity or compassion'. On Basil's 'theology of compassion' see SR 296 and note.

⁶¹ *πρόκειται*, i.e. not as having automatic effect, but proposed to us, if only we avail ourselves of the offer and carry out all that the Gospel teaches about repentance.

disposition of abhorrence for sin, as it is written in both the Old and New Testaments and if there is worthy fruit, as was said in the question concerning this.⁶²

SR 14

Q: What are the fruits by which true repentance may be tested?

R: The manner of those who repent⁶³ and the disposition of those who withdraw from sin and their striving after *the fruits worthy of repentance* (Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8) have been spoken of in their proper place.⁶⁴

SR 15

Q: What is the meaning of: *How often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him?* (Matt. 18: 21). And what kind of sin have I to forgive?

R: The authority to forgive sins has not been given unconditionally but depends on the obedience of the penitent and his accord⁶⁵ with the one entrusted with the care of his soul. For it is written concerning such: *If two of you shall agree on earth about anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 18: 19).

But as to what kind of sin, this question may not be even asked, since the New Testament shows us no distinction and promises forgiveness of every sin to those who repent worthily—and especially since the Lord promised it in his own person for every matter.

SR 16 (RBas. 123)

Q: **Why is it that sometimes a (kind of) sorrowing (of heart) and compunction (of the fear of God) falls upon the soul, without much effort, spontaneously as it were, but at other times (there is in the soul) so great a listlessness (or negligence)⁶⁶ that even if it (a man) forces itself, it cannot feel any (sorrow or) compunction (of heart)?**

R: **1 Such a compunction is a gift from God in order to stir up desire, so that the soul, having tasted the sweetness of such**

⁶² See SR 5.

⁶³ 'of those who repent' is lacking in the Ask. 4 text.

⁶⁴ See SR 5, 10.

⁶⁵ συμφωνία.

⁶⁶ ἄπνονος, RBas. 123. Q: securitas et neglegentia, lit. free of labour, at ease, lazy.

(compunction or) **sorrow might be stirred up** (and drawn) **to foster** it (such a grace), **2** or as proof that the soul is able through more zealous application to be always in such compunction.⁶⁷ **3 Accordingly, those who lose this** (grace) **through indolence have no excuse.**

4 But that (sometimes) **we force ourselves and yet are unable to obtain it**, is both proof of our negligence **at other times**—**5 for it is impossible** to succeed in a task immediately one comes to it, without much careful and assiduous training with others⁶⁸—**6 and shows that the soul is** under the sway of⁶⁹ **other** (vices and) **passions which do not allow it the freedom to pursue what it would**, **7 according to the doctrine pronounced by the Apostle, who said: I am carnal, sold under sin; for what I will, this I do not practise, but what I hate, this is what I do** (Rom. 7: 14–15) **8 and again, But now, it is no longer I who am doing this, but rather sin dwelling in me** (Rom. 7: 17).

9 God has allowed this very thing to happen to us for a good purpose, so that through the very things the soul suffers unwillingly, it may⁷⁰ come to perceive what holds sway over it and that, having recognized the ways in which it is *enslaved to sin* unwillingly (cf. Rom. 6: 20), it may reawaken⁷¹ from *the snare of the devil* (cf. 1 Tim. 3: 7, 6: 9; 2 Tim. 2: 26), even as it discovers that the mercy of God is prompt to sustain those who truly repent.⁷²

⁶⁷ *RBas.* 23. 2 For it shows that (if it is given even to those who have not much stirred themselves, how much more shall it) be given to those who (desire and who) labour constantly in the compunction (of the fear of God).

⁶⁸ *συγγυμνασίας*. This note of collaboration disappears in Rufinus' recasting of the sentence. *RBas.* 123. 5: For it is impossible that one who has not continually exercised himself (in either meditations or in the divine ordinances), should suddenly (turn to prayer and immediately) obtain (what he asks for).

⁶⁹ *RBas.* 123. 6: oppressed (*praegravari*) by other (vices and) passions, whose dominance does not allow it . . .

⁷⁰ *RBas.* 123. 9–12 continues with a series of Rufinian pleonasms: . . . in time be corrected and converted to him who will lighten it of its burdens (cf. Ezek. 18: 23, 33: 11) **10** and at length come to know itself and recover its senses and understand that it has been seized (and held down) in *the snares of the devil* (cf. 1 Tim. 3: 7, 6: 9; 2 Tim. 2: 26), **11** into which it has fallen of its own accord, so that as a captive, *what it does not want it practises and what it hates it does* (cf. Rom. 7: 15). **12** But if it turns to the Lord who will *liberate it from the body of this death* (Rom. 7: 24), immediately it shall discover mercy, provided it repents wholly (and from the heart).

⁷¹ *ἀνανήψην*—recover sobriety, regain vigilance, watchfulness, 're-vigilize'.

⁷² For other comments on the spiritual failure of the pious see *SR* 81 (conclusion) and 140; on the failure of good thoughts, *SR* 80 and note; on unanswered prayer, *SR* 261; on being thwarted by Satan, *SR* 275 (*RBas.* 202); on physical sickness and disease, *LR* 55, *SR* 314.

SR 17 (*RBas.* 128)

Q: If someone thinks in his mind⁷³ about *eating*, then condemns (and reprimands) himself, is he to be judged for being *anxious* (cf. *Matt. 6: 25*) over such things?

R: 1 If the thought arose before the proper time when we are naturally urged (to seek food) by hunger, then it clearly reveals distraction of (mind and) soul which exposes it for attachment to present things⁷⁴ and for (listlessness and) indolence about pleasing God.⁷⁵

2 Even so, the mercy of God is at hand. For inasmuch as he has condemned (and reprimanded) himself (for this),⁷⁶ by reason of his repentance he is freed from the offence—if he only keeps himself from a lapse (of his thoughts) in future, 3 mindful of the Lord who said: *Behold you are made whole; do not sin again, lest something worse befall you* (*John 5: 14*).

4 But if being constrained by nature and under the sway of hunger, perception stirs the memory, yet reasoning conquers it through zeal and devotion to what is better,⁷⁷ then it is not the thought (of eating) that deserves blame, but its vanquishing that deserves praise.

SR 18

Q: Should he who has once sinned⁷⁸ be entrusted with some responsibility in the community after long training,⁷⁹ and if so, what kind of responsibility?

R: Mindful of the Apostle's words: *Give no occasion of stumbling either to Jews or to Greeks, or to the Church of God; but just as I myself please all in all things, not seeking my own advantage, but that of the many, that they may be saved* (*1 Cor. 10: 32 Byz.*), we ought to take great care that we provide no obstacle to the gospel of Christ and that we do not become a stumbling-block to the weak or an encouragement to some in bad ways. Therefore it is necessary with

⁷³ *κατὰ νοῦν μνημονεύσει*, *RBas.* 128. Q: in corde cogitet.

⁷⁴ *RBas.* 128. 1: it is clear that it is an indictment of a wandering mind and of a soul attached to present things.

⁷⁵ *RBas.* 128. 1: the will of God

⁷⁶ *RBas.* 128. 2 completes: the sting of the offence is drawn.

⁷⁷ *RBas.* 128. 4 up to this point: But if it occurred at the proper time in which we are put in mind naturally by the appetite for food, but the mind, in its devotion to what is better (spurns the lesser and disdains it) . . .

⁷⁸ *τῷ ἐξαμαρτήσαντι.*

⁷⁹ *μετά πολλήν ἄσκεισιν*, askesis.

such as these to consider and decide what will serve the building up of the faith and the progress of every virtue in Christ.

SR 19

Q: If someone is suspected of sin but does not openly commit it, ought we watch him in order to verify our suspicions?

R: *Base suspicions* springing from a bad will are condemned by the Apostle (1 Tim. 6: 4). Yet the one appointed to the care of all should watch over all in the love of Christ and be keen to cure anything suspicious⁸⁰ in order that the saying of the Apostle may come about: *so we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus* (Col. 1: 28 Byz.).

SR 20

Q: Should he who was once mired in sins⁸¹ flee communion with the heterodox and avoid those of evil life?

R: Since the Apostle says: *Withdraw yourselves from every brother who walks disorderly and not after the tradition which they received from us* (2 Thess. 3: 6), generally, any communion with anything forbidden, whether in thought, word, or deed, is harmful and dangerous for everyone.

But those who were once mired in sins should be watched even more closely. This is first of all because the soul that is accustomed to sin is for the most part more likely to fall into it again. Then again, just as the cure of those who are weak in body requires closer observation, such that often they must avoid even what is beneficial to the healthy, so also there is a much greater need of watchfulness and care with those who are handicapped in soul.

How great is the harm that comes of communion with sinners is presented by the Apostle himself in this description, where he says: *A little leaven corrupts the whole lump* (1 Cor. 5: 6). Now if the harm that comes on those who fall into moral aberrations is so great, what are we to say of those who hold base notions about God, whose base thinking does not allow them to be sound in other matters and who are, consequently, handed over once and for all to dishonourable

⁸⁰ τοῦ ὑποπτευόμενου—or this might refer to the person suspected. At the critical juncture between addressing needed correction and listening to detraction the love of Christ will be a safeguard and guide. Cf. SR 25 (RBas. 42) on slander or detraction.

⁸¹ ἐν ἁμαρτίαις ἐξετασθέντα . . . i.e. someone now living in Christ who was once deeply mired in a sinful lifestyle.

passions?⁸² This is shown in many places but especially by what is said in the Letter to the Romans about some as follows: *And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God delivered them to a reprobate mind and to unseemly behaviour, so that they are filled with every injustice: fornication, malice, greed, baseness, filled with envy, murder, strife, deceit, malevolence; they are tale-bearers, slanderers, hostile to God, insolent, inflated, boasters, inventive of evils, disobedient to parents, senseless, faithless, without affection, implacable, merciless, who, though knowing that those who do such things are worthy of death, not only do them, but also cheer on others who practise them* (Rom. 1: 28–32 Byz.).

SR 21 (RBas. 34)

Q: Where do distraction (of mind) and (all kinds of) reasonings (in the heart) come from?⁸³ **And how shall we remedy them?**

R: 1 Distraction comes from the idleness of the mind not occupied⁸⁴ in (the care of) necessities. Rather, the mind is idle and careless because it does not believe that God *who tries hearts and inmost parts* (Ps. 7: 10) is present. **2** For if it believed this, it would in every way do what was said (above): *I kept the Lord ever in view always; since he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken* (Ps. 15: 8). **3** Whoever fulfils this and other sayings like it will never dare⁸⁵ and will never have the leisure (to indulge in vain reasonings or) to reason about anything that does not serve the upbuilding of faith even if it seems to be good,⁸⁶ **4** to say nothing of what is forbidden or displeasing to God.⁸⁷

⁸² On the necessary interdependence of sound doctrine and moral endeavour see SR Prologue/RBas. Prol. 5 and note.

⁸³ Πόθεν ὁ μετεωρισμός καὶ οἱ διαλογισμοί· καὶ πῶς αὐτοὺς διορθωσόμεθα, RBas. 34. Q: Unde vagatur mens nostra et cogitationes diversae ascendunt in corde, et quomodo hoc possumus emendare? Here, Rufinus expresses ὁ μετεωρισμός periphrastically (yet accurately) as ‘wandering (of the mind)’. When in the first sentence of the reply Basil introduces idleness of the mind, Rufinus has to leave it simply as ‘idleness’. Similarly he paraphrases οἱ διαλογισμοί as ‘all kinds of thoughts (in the heart)’.

⁸⁴ RBas. 34. 1: vagatur quidem mens interdum etiam otio—the mind wanders during a time of idleness when it is not occupied . . .

⁸⁵ RBas. 34. 3: vacabit—be free.

⁸⁶ RBas. 34. 3: and promise some benefit for the soul. It seems Rufinus does not read *κἂν ἀγαθὸν εἶναι δοκῆ* as a conditional clause.

⁸⁷ RBas. 34. 4: what is opposed to God or displeasing to him.

SR 22 (RBas. 35)

Q: Why do the unseemly (and shameful) fantasies of the night come (upon us)?

R: 1 They come (especially) from the discordant⁸⁸ movements of the soul through the day (and from unworthy and discordant actions). 2 But if the soul (devotes itself to the judgments of God and) is purified through occupying itself with the judgments of God (and study of the word of God), continually (seeking and) practising⁸⁹ what is good and pleasing to God, then it shall have dreams of a similar kind.⁹⁰

SR 23 (RBas. 40)

Q: Against what words is the judgment for idle words pronounced?⁹¹ (cf. Matt. 12: 36)

R: 1 Generally, any word that does not contribute to the need proposed to us in the Lord⁹² is idle. So great is the peril of such a word that 2 even though what is said may (seem to) be good, but it does not serve the upbuilding of faith, 3 the speaker shall not escape peril for the excellence of his words; instead, since his discourse does not serve this upbuilding, he grieves the Holy Spirit of God. 4 The Apostle taught this clearly when he said: *Let no corrupt speech proceed from your mouth, but only what is good for the upbuilding of faith, that it might give grace to the hearers* (Eph. 4: 29), 5 and he adds this: *Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God in whom you were sealed (unto the day of redemption)* (Eph. 4: 30); And how great an evil it is to grieve the Holy Spirit of God, what need is there to say?⁹³

⁸⁸ ἀλλοκότων κινήματων. It seems Rufinus interprets the adjective as a doublet and transfers it to a phrase he adds. RBas. 35. 1: ex diurnis animae motibus et actibus indignis et incongruis. See *Hom. on the Martyr Julitta*, PG 31. 243D: ‘The fantasies which come in sleep are for the most part echoes of the day’s concerns.’

⁸⁹ Or perhaps ‘meditating’ what is good . . . μελέτη γένηται. RBas. 35. 3: semper requirens et scrutans, ‘always seeking and searching out . . .’.

⁹⁰ RBas. 35. 2 is heavily glossed: But if the soul (devotes itself to the judgments of God and) is purified through meditation on the divine law (and study of the word of God) and exercises continual care, ever seeking and testing what may be pleasing to God, then it shall have corresponding dreams.

⁹¹ Ἔως ποίων ῥημάτων ἢ ἀργολογία κρίνεται.

⁹² τὸ μὴ συντελοῦν πρὸς τὴν προκειμένην ἐν Κυρίῳ χρείαν. RBas. 40. 1: does not benefit in some way the grace of faith in Christ. This seems to reflect the Ephesians text quoted later in the response. Perhaps Rufinus had in the Greek text before him or heard in dictation χάριν instead of χρείαν?

⁹³ RBas. 40. 5: and a greater evil than this there cannot be. The heightened Pneumatology in the Greek text suggests the mid-370s, unless Rufinus deleted the second mention of the Holy Spirit as redundant.

SR 24 (RBas. 41)

Q: What is *reviling*?⁹⁴ (cf. 1 Cor. 5: 11)

R: Any word uttered with the intention⁹⁵ of defaming (or disparaging) (someone), even if the word in itself does not seem to be insulting, is *reviling*. 2 And this is clear from (that saying of) the Gospel where it says concerning the Jews: *They reviled him saying: You be his disciple!* (John 9: 28)

SR 25 (RBas. 42)

Q: What is *slander* (or *detraction*)? (cf. Rom. 1: 30; 2 Cor. 12: 20; 1 Pet. 2: 1)

R: 1 I consider there are two occasions when it is permissible to say something bad about someone:⁹⁶ 2 when it is necessary to take counsel with others approved⁹⁷ for this purpose, concerning how one who has sinned (or done something wrong) should be corrected, 3 or again, whenever there is need to put those on a surer footing who often through ignorance associate with wrong as if it were good.⁹⁸ 4 For the Apostle says: *Do not associate with such* (2 Thess. 3: 14) (and Solomon: *Do not remain with a wrathful man, lest one acquires a snare for one's soul* (Prov. 22: 24)).⁹⁹ 5 And we find that this is what the Apostle himself did when he wrote to Timothy saying: *Alexander the coppersmith has done me much harm . . . Be on your guard against him, for he greatly opposed our words* (2 Tim. 4: 14).

6 But apart from necessary occasions like these, whoever says anything against another in order to attack or traduce him, that one is a slanderer, even if what he says (appears to be) is true.

⁹⁴ Though the response seems to answer the question *what* is 'reviling', RBas. 41 asks *who* is a 'reviler' and then adduces the transliterated form of the word in the 1 Cor. 5: 11: Quis est maledicus, id est λοιδωρος.

⁹⁵ ἐκ διαθέσεως—from the disposition/motive of . . . RBas. has 'ob hoc'—for this (purpose).

⁹⁶ RBas. 42. 1: to speak (or discuss another's) evils against someone. See also SR 19 and note.

⁹⁷ RBas. 42. 2: who appear to be trustworthy in this matter.

⁹⁸ wrong . . . good is a prose-rhyme: τῶ κακῶ ὡς καλῶ. RB 42. 3: that someone be headed off and warned, in case they incur evil by associating with someone whom they think all the while is good.

⁹⁹ Basil's amazing memory of Scripture appears to have mistakenly conflated two distinct passages. Rufinus sorts them out and amplifies the second. RBas. 42. 4: *in case you acquire a snare for your soul*.

SR 26 (RBas. 43)

Q: What does he deserve *who slanders a brother* or listens to a slanderer at his slandering and tolerates it? (cf. Jas. 4: 11)

R: 1 Both deserve separation.¹⁰⁰ For *the one who slanders his neighbour in secret*, it says, *against him I took vengeance* (Ps. 100: 5) and elsewhere it is said: *Do not listen benignly to a slanderer; in case* (perhaps) *you are cut off* (Prov. 20: 19 Sept.).

SR 27 (RBas. 44)

Q: But what of someone who slanders the one who presides?¹⁰¹ What shall be our approach towards him?

R: The judgment against such is manifest in the wrath of God that came upon Miriam when she slandered Moses. God did not leave her sin unavenged, even though Moses himself entreated (cf. Num. 12: 13-14).

SR 28 (RBas. 45)

Q: If someone answers another with an over-sharp¹⁰² voice and insolent words, but when reminded says that (in his heart) he meant no harm, ought we believe him?

R: 1 Not all the diseases¹⁰³ of the soul are manifest to everyone, not even to those suffering them, any more than are those of the body. 2 Just as with (the motions of) the body skilled (physicians) have certain (obscure and hidden) signs of hidden diseases which escape the awareness of the sufferers¹⁰⁴ 3 so it is with the soul. Even if the sinner is not aware of his own sin, he ought to believe the Lord¹⁰⁵ who has assured both him and those like him, saying: *the evil man, from the evil store of his heart brings forth evil things* (Matt. 12: 35; Luke 6: 45). 4 And therefore it cannot be that either

¹⁰⁰ ἀφορισμοῦ, RBas. 43. 1: excommunicari, i.e. the penalty of a temporary excommunication *within* the community, not a definitive departure *from* the community. See SR 44 (RBas. 76) and note.

¹⁰¹ τοῦ προεστῶτος καταλαλήσει, RBas. 45. 1: de eo qui praest detraherit.

¹⁰² RBas. inverts the order: language or words (sermone) and voice (voce).

¹⁰³ πάθη, passions, here as elsewhere with the connotation of 'morbid condition'.

¹⁰⁴ the skilled—οἱ ἐπιστήμονες, hidden diseases—κεκρυμμένων παθῶν. Rufinus glosses liberally. RBas. 45. 1: Just as from (the motions of) bodies there are certain (obscure and hidden) signs given to the more skilled (physicians), which (evade and) elude the awareness of the sufferers.

¹⁰⁵ RBas. 45. 3: so also there may be in the soul (certain vices), even though the one who sins may not be aware of them. But he should believe the Lord.

an evil person bring forth good discourse from an evil heart, or that a good person bring forth an evil word from a good heart,¹⁰⁶ **for even if someone bad often puts on a front of good words or deeds, yet it is impossible for someone good to put on a front of bad,**¹⁰⁷ **5 for**¹⁰⁸ **we take thought for what is good, it says, not only before the Lord,**¹⁰⁹ **but also before men** (2 Cor. 8: 21; cf. Rom. 12: 17).

SR 29 (RBas. 46)

Q: How can one avoid giving way to anger?¹¹⁰

R: 1 If one always considers that God who oversees all and the Lord who is present are looking on¹¹¹**—for indeed, whenever did a subject dare before the eyes of his own ruler do anything to displease him?**¹¹² **2 If instead of expecting others to be subject to oneself, one prepares oneself for obedience to others, this is to consider all as better than oneself** (Phil. 2: 3).¹¹³

¹⁰⁶ This simplicity does not appear in the Greek, which may reflect the experience of a sadder but wiser Basil. Cf. Letter 223, Def. III. 294–5 for his youthful attitude to Eustathius: ‘I considered the things that were seen as indications of things that were invisible . . .’. He had to struggle with a tremendous disillusionment.

¹⁰⁷ Ὁ μὲν γὰρ κακὸς ἀγαθὸν σχηματίζεται· τὸν δὲ ἀγαθὸν σχηματίζασθαι τι κακὸν ἀμήχανον.

¹⁰⁸ RBas. introduces the text: for the Apostle says . . .

¹⁰⁹ RBas. 45. 5: *God*. The Greek has ‘the Lord’ of 2 Cor. 8: 21.

¹¹⁰ The questioner was probably a superior, and the case seems particularly to concern superiors who have difficulty keeping their temper. The topic of anger—and its counterpart virtue of meekness—often recurs in Basil’s works, e.g. RBas. 157, 158, 159 (SR 243, 244, 55) etc., *Hom. on Ps. 29*, 4, PG 29. 313BC, Way 218, and esp. *Hom. Against Those Prone to Anger*, PG 31. 353–72, Wagner 447–61, where Basil, like the master diagnostician he is probes the pathologies of anger, not without humour used with a pedagogic purpose.

¹¹¹ Ἐὰν Θεὸν ἐπόπτῃν, καὶ τὸν Κύριον παρόντα ἐνοπτρίζεσται (*sic*, but here read as an infinitive, ἐνοπτρίζεσθαι) ἡγγήται αἰεί. RBas. 46. 1: Si Deum omnia credat inspicere et Dominum praesentem semper intuetur. On the God who oversees all, cf. LR 6 and *Hom. on Ps. 32*, PG 324–49, Way 232 (‘Do you not see the divine eye, that not the least trifle escapes its glance?’), 242 (‘Consider the lofty spectator; consider him who is bending down over the affairs of mankind. Wherever you may go, whatever you may do, whether in the darkness or in the daytime, you have the eye of God watching’), 244. See also RB 7. 26 and esp. RB 19. 1: Ubique credimus divinam esse praesentiam, et oculos Domini in omni loco speculari . . .

¹¹² ἄρχοντας, ruler, RBas. 46. 1: did anyone liable to judgment, dare before the eyes of his judge show any indignation? Rufinus sharpens the focus by shifting the analogy from the throneroom to the courtroom, so to speak. He does the same at RBas. 108. 1 (SR 201).

¹¹³ On obedience not only to one’s superiors, but to one another in community, see RB 71. 1; Cassian, *Institutes* 4. 30, 12. 31, Augustine, *City of God* 13. 20.

3 If he requires compliance with regard to his own need (and advantage),¹¹⁴ let him know that the word of the Lord teaches each of us (to yield to and) to serve others (cf. Matt. 20: 26–7; Mark 9: 35; Luke 22: 26–7).

4 But if he would set right a transgression of the Lord's commandments, what is needed is not anger,¹¹⁵ but pity and compassion, according to him who said: 5 *Who is made weak and I am not weak?* (2 Cor. 11: 29)

SR 30 (RBas. 49)

Q: How shall we cut out the passion of base desire?¹¹⁶

R: 1 By a burning desire for the will of God, such as he showed who said¹¹⁷ 2 *the judgments of the Lord are all of them true, more desirable than gold and very precious stone, yes, sweeter are they than honey and honeycomb* (Ps. 18: 9–10). 3 For if the desire of better things in its power and capacity to enjoy what is desired¹¹⁸ compels us always to despise and spurn the lesser, as all the saints have taught, 4 then how much more things that are foul and shameful.

¹¹⁴ RBas. 46. 3: If he requires those who obey to be obedient to himself for his own need (and advantage).

¹¹⁵ RBas. 46. 4: Yet even if he sees someone transgressing a commandment of the Lord, let him not be moved toward him by anger, but by pity . . .

¹¹⁶ Πῶς ἐκκόψομεν τὸ πάθος τῆς ἐπιθυμίας τῆς κακῆς. A passion for what is base is remedied by another passion i.e. a passion for what is better than all else: obedience to God—a highly ‘Augustinian’ thought: desire is quenched by a greater desire.

¹¹⁷ Ἐπιθυμία διαπύρω τῶν θελημάτων τοῦ Θεοῦ. See SR 30 (RBas. 60). RBas. 49. 1: desiderio meliore, si magis ignimur et accendimur ad amorem Dei. By a (better) desire for the will of God! (That is, if we are all the more set alight and ablaze for the love of God as was he who said: *The word of the Lord has set him alight* (Ps. 104: 19), 2 and *The judgments . . .* Rufinus’ improvements are in evidence here. He crafts a phrase of beautiful assonance and rhythm, expanding the image of being set alight suggested by ‘blazing’ and adds a pertinent Scripture text. A similar passage using the same imagery and vocabulary of being set alight occurs in RBas. 2. 16 which is likewise absent in the parallel Greek text at LR 2. 1.

¹¹⁸ Ἀεὶ γὰρ ἡ τῶν κρειπτόνων ἐπιθυμία ἐν ἐξουσίᾳ καὶ δυνάμει ἔχουσα τὴν ἀπόλαυσιν τῶν ἐπιθυμουμένων . . . RBas. 49. 3 has an obscure passage here which Zelzer brackets between cruces: si in opere sit et in re et possideat totos animos nostros atque eorum quae desideramus perfrui contendamus. This passage is missing from four major MSS. Zelzer says that what the RBas. text is saying cannot be understood except from the Greek text.

SR 31 (RBas. 53)

Q: Is *laughter* altogether disallowed?¹¹⁹ (cf. Luke 6: 25)

R: 1 Since the Lord condemns those *who laugh now* (Luke 6: 25) it is clear that for the faithful (soul) there is never a time for laughter, 2 especially since there are so many who *by transgressing the law, dishonour God* (cf. Rom. 2: 23) and are *dying in their sin(s)* (cf. John 8: 24), over whom one should mourn and groan (unceasingly).

SR 32 (RBas. 55)

Q: Why does *untimely* and immoderate *sleep* come (on us) and how can we thrust it off?

R: 1 *Untimely sleep* comes about when the soul slackens in the thought¹²⁰ of God and we despise the judgments of God.¹²¹ 2 We (can) thrust it off whenever we resume thoughts that are sincere and worthy of the majesty of God¹²² and (stretch out) the desire¹²³ for his will as did he who said: 3 *I shall give no sleep to my eyes, or slumber to my eyelids, till I find a place for the Lord, a tabernacle for the God of Jacob* (Ps. 131: 4–5).

SR 33 (RBas. 59)

Q: How is the *courter of human favour* detected?¹²⁴ (Gal. 1: 10)

R: 1 He shows zeal in the presence of those who give praise, but in the presence of those who admonish, he is tardy,¹²⁵ 2 for if he wanted to please the Lord he would always and everywhere be (and do) the same,¹²⁶ fulfilling the saying:¹²⁷ 3 *With the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, whether in glory or dishonour, in bad report or good, taken as deceivers though we are truthful* (2 Cor. 6: 7–8).

¹¹⁹ See LR 17 and cf. RB 6. 8.

¹²⁰ ἐννοίας, RBas. 55. 1: memory.

¹²¹ RBas. 55. 1: and when forgetfulness of his judgments overcomes it.

¹²² γνησίαν καὶ ἀξιόλογον—a Basilian doublet not appearing in the RBas.

¹²³ RBas. 55. 2 and stretch out (extendimus) our desires towards the will of God.

¹²⁴ RBas. 59. Q: How shall one who wants to court human favour be manifest?

¹²⁵ RBas. 59. 1 is strewn with Rufinian pleonasms: 1 He is one who does (good work to some extent) when there are present those who (can) offer him praise; but (when there is no one like that present and especially) when there are those at hand (able) to censure him, he is tardy (and sluggish) in his tasks.

¹²⁶ Basil speaks very similarly in *Hom. on the Beginning of Proverbs*, PG 31. 420A—a very early homily, possibly from 363, according to Fedwick 10 n. 10.

¹²⁷ RBas. 59. 2: fulfilling what is written . . .

SR 34 (RBas. 60)

Q: How does one escape the passion of *courting human favour* (Gal. 1: 10), or seeking the praises of human beings?¹²⁸

R: 1 By being fully convinced of the presence of God and by an undistracted concern (cf. 1 Cor. 7: 35) for being well pleasing to God and by (being possessed of) a burning¹²⁹ desire for the blessings promised by the Lord. 2 For surely no one is distracted in the presence of his master by pleasing (ought to be pleasing) a fellow-servant, to the dishonour of his master and his own condemnation (by looking not to his Master, but to the nods of fellow-servants).

SR 35 (RBas. 61)

Q: How is the *proud* recognized and how is he cured? (cf. Ps. 88: 10; Luke 1: 51; Rom. 1: 30; 1 Tim. 6: 4; 2 Tim. 3: 2 *et al.*)

R: 1 He is recognized by his constant seeking of pre-eminence; he will be cured when he believes the judgment of him who said: *God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble* (Jas. 4: 6; 1 Pet. 5: 5).

2 Yet it should be understood that however much one might fear the judgment for pride, this passion cannot be cured unless one withdraws (and cuts oneself off) from every occasion of inflation. 3 Similarly, it is impossible to unlearn a (language or) dialect or whatever craft, unless one withdraws oneself (utterly from everything to do with it), 4 not only from doing and speaking and behaving, but also from hearing those who speak or seeing them practise (what one wishes to forget). 5 And this needs to be observed with respect to every vice.

SR 36 (RBas. 63)

Q: Is it right to seek honour? (cf. Rom. 2: 7)

R: 1 Though we are taught to *give honour to whom honour is due* (cf. Rom. 13: 7) we are forbidden to seek honour, since the Lord says: 2 *How can you believe, you who seek your glory from one another, while the glory which is from the only God you do not seek?* (John 5: 44) 3 Therefore to seek glory and honour from

¹²⁸ RBas. 60. Q: the *vice* of courting human favour, or of courting/fishing for (captandi) the praises . . .

¹²⁹ διαπόρω ἐπιθυμία. See SR 30 (RBas. 49). RBas. 60. 1: et multo desiderio teneatur earum beatitudinum . . . 'a great desire'.

human beings betrays a lack of faith and an alienation from piety towards God, (especially) since the Apostle says: *If I were still pleasing men, I would not be a servant of Christ* (Gal. 1: 10). 4 If those who accept the glory offered them by human beings are thus condemned, those who seek for what has not been given incur untold judgment.¹³⁰

SR 37 (RBas. 66)

Q: How can one who has become slothful towards the commandment recover his zeal (and vigilance)?

R: 1 By being fully persuaded of the presence of the Lord God who watches over all things (everywhere) and of (by keeping before his eyes)¹³¹ the threat to the slothful and of the hope of great recompense from God, 2 who through the Apostle Paul promises (saying) that *each shall receive his own reward according to his own labour* (1 Cor. 3: 8) 3 and similar passages which encourage the individual zeal or patience of each, to the glory of God.¹³²

SR 38 (RBas. 70)¹³³

Q: What if a brother is commanded and refuses, but *afterwards* of his own accord *goes off* and performs it? What is he? (cf. Matt. 21: 29)

R: 1 By his refusal, he is adjudged¹³⁴ a contradictor¹³⁵ and a provoker of others to the same (kind of evils). 2 Let him be recognized¹³⁶ as subject to this judgment: *A contradictor stirs up every evil, but the Lord sends against him an angel of unmercy* (Prov.

¹³⁰ RBas. 63. 4 recasts the conclusion more forcefully as a question: what sentence do they deserve who seek a glory not even offered them?

¹³¹ RBas. 66. 1: Si certus sit praesentiam Domini Dei ubique esse et omnia intueri; cf. RB 19. 1: Ubique credimus divinam esse praesentiam, et *oculos Domini in omni loco speculari bonos et malos* (Prov. 15: 3).

¹³² RBas. 66. 3: and if there are similar passages found in the Holy Scriptures, which refer to (the labour of) patience and zeal in tasks to the glory of God.

¹³³ In the Small Asketikon RBas. 70 (SR 38) and the previous question RBas. 69 (SR 119), are 'clearly connected' (de Vogüé, 'Twenty-Five Years', 445), yet in the Great Asketikon they are widely displaced.

¹³⁴ κρίνεται in Voss. and another MS, RBas. 70. 1: iudicandus est, he ought to be judged.

¹³⁵ RBas. 70. 1: obtemperans, 'who disobeys'. Rufinus qualifies the contradiction as disobedience.

¹³⁶ RBas. 70. 2 has the active voice: let him know that he is subject . . .

17: 11). 3 Further, let him be convinced¹³⁷ that it is not man¹³⁸ he contradicts or obeys, but the Lord who said: *whoever listens to you listens to me and whoever rejects you rejects me* (Luke 10: 16).¹³⁹

4 But if (through remembrance of the commandment) he shows compunction, let him first apologize and then, if he is permitted, perform the task.

SR 39 (RBas. 71)

Q: What of one who obeys but murmurs as he does so?

R: 1 Since the Apostle says *Do all things without murmurings or questionings* (Phil. 2. 14), a murmurer is alienated from the unity of the brothers and his work may not be used by them.¹⁴⁰ 2 For such a one is manifestly diseased from a lack of faith and uncertainty¹⁴¹ as to (future) hope.

SR 40 (RBas. 72)

Q: If one brother grieves another, how ought he to be corrected?

R: 1 If he grieved him according to the saying of the Apostle: *But you were grieved according to God so that you suffered no loss from us* (2 Cor. 7: 9), then it is not the one who caused the grief who needs correction, but the one who was grieved who ought to show the signs of that grief which is *according to God*.

2 But if he caused grief over an indifferent matter, that is, not

¹³⁷ RBas. 70. 3: But when he has become convinced . . .

¹³⁸ ἀνθρώπων, RBas. 70. 3: homini; note that the singular in Latin matches the singular in Greek, despite the reference in the Greek of the previous chapter to ‘superiors’. De Vogüé (‘Twenty-Five Years’, 446) asks ‘Who is “the man” whom the brother has refused to obey? This short text does not say, but the reader of the Little Asketikon who has just read question 69, irresistibly thinks of the “superior” of whom Rufinus was speaking.’ But, strictly, the Greek does not speak of “the man”, or even of “a man”, but simply ἀνθρώπων without article, i.e. a generically human reference whether one or several superiors were envisaged, the contrast being between obedience considered from a merely human or from a divine perspective. This may be more exactly conveyed using the standard English inclusive meaning of ‘man’ without article, as here.

¹³⁹ The first part of this text is quoted at RB 5. 15, cf. de Vogüé, ‘Twenty-Five Years’. It is noteworthy that this saying of the Lord which refers to the Apostles is applied to obedience in the ascetic community.

¹⁴⁰ See LR 29, where the works of the disobedient are not to be mingled with those of the obedient.

¹⁴¹ τὴν ἀμφιβολίαν, RBas. 71. 2: certum futurae spei fiduciam non gerit.

according to God, then let him who caused the grief be mindful of the Apostle who said: 3 If your brother is grieved on account of food, you are no longer walking according to love (Rom. 14: 15). 4 And when he has acknowledged (that) such a sin (is his), let him fulfil what was said by the Lord: 5 If you are offering your gift at the altar and you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go, first be reconciled with your brother and then come and offer your gift (Matt. 18: 17).

SR 41 (RBas. 73)

Q: What if the one who has grieved another cannot bring himself to apologize?

R: 1 (In his case) we ought to fulfil what was said by the Lord concerning the sinner who does not repent (when he said): *If he will not listen to the Church, let him be to you as the pagan and the tax-collector (Matt. 18: 17).*

SR 42 (RBas. 74)

Q: What if the one who caused the grief apologizes, but the one who was grieved does not wish to be reconciled?

R: 1 The judgment of the Lord in such a case is clear (as told) in the parable of the servant who, though he was entreated (by a fellow-servant),¹⁴² would not show forbearance: *And hearing this, it says, his fellow-servants told their master (Matt. 18: 31). 2 At this the Master was wrathful and revoked the favour he had bestowed on the debtor and handed him over to the torturers till he should repay all his debt (Matt. 18: 34).*

SR 43 (RBas. 75)

Q: How should we regard him who wakens (the brothers) for prayer?

R: 1 If one realizes the loss that comes of sleep, when the soul has no awareness of itself and if one understands how great is the profit in keeping vigil¹⁴³ and especially the exceeding glory when

¹⁴² RBas. 74. 1: the parable of the servant with his fellow-servant, who, when appealed to . . .

¹⁴³ RBas. 75. 1 uses plural: vigils.

one is brought before God in prayer,¹⁴⁴ **2 the one who summons us to this and wakens the sleeper should be heeded as one¹⁴⁵ who bestows great gifts exceeding all desire, 3 whether he wakens us for prayer or for any other commandment.**¹⁴⁶

SR 44 (RBas. 76)

Q: If someone is annoyed or even irate when woken from sleep, what does he deserve?

R: 1 To be separated¹⁴⁷ and to be without food for a time, that he might perhaps experience compunction and come to realize how great and many are the benefits of which he has stupidly defrauded himself, and so be converted and be gladdened¹⁴⁸ with the grace that he had who said: *I remembered my God and exulted* (Ps. 76: 4).

2 But if he continues in his stupor (not understanding the grace), let him be cut off¹⁴⁹ from the body as a rotting member, 3 for it is written *It is better that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into Gehenna* (Matt. 5: 29–30).

SR 45 (RBas. 119)

Q: If someone has heard that saying of the Lord: *The servant who knew the will of his master but did not do* or¹⁵⁰ *make ready for his will,*¹⁵¹ *shall be beaten severely; the servant, however, who did not know it, but did things worthy of strokes shall be beaten with*

¹⁴⁴ τὴν ὑπερέχουσαν δόξαν, ὅτε προσάγεται τις τῷ Θεῷ εἰς προσευχήν. RBas. 75. 1; when one keeps vigil for the glory of God (ad glorificandum Deum) in the prayers.

¹⁴⁵ RBas. 75. 2 completes: through whom divine benefits and heavenly gifts are obtained . . .

¹⁴⁶ RBas. 75. 3: or for anything else to which the commandment of God invites and summons.

¹⁴⁷ ἀφορισμοῦ, RBas. 76. 1: excommunicari. This does not mean ‘excommunication’ in the sense of definitively put out of the community, but temporary exclusion from common exercises. Cf. RB 25, where those at serious fault are suspended from meals, prayers, and speech with the brothers.

¹⁴⁸ εὐφρανθῆ, RBas. 76. 1: recipiat—may receive back/recover . . . Might Rufinus have read something like εὑρεθῆ, be found?

¹⁴⁹ ἀποκοπτέσθω, RBas. 76. 2: abscidatur. This is definitive ‘excommunication’. On the use of ‘amputation’ as a last resort see also RB 28. 6: tunc iam utatur abbas ferro abscisionis; cf. Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 260.

¹⁵⁰ ποιήσας μηδέ, does not appear in the NT text.

¹⁵¹ RBas. 119. Q: do according to his will.

fewer (Luke 12: 47–8 Byz.), but is unconcerned to know¹⁵² the will of the Lord—does he have any excuse?

R: 1 Manifestly, such a one is affecting ignorance and shall not escape the judgment of his sin. 2 For *If I had not come, says the Lord, and spoken to them, they would not be in sin; but now, they have no excuse for their sin* (John 15: 22). 3 Thus Holy Scripture everywhere proclaims the will of God to all. Therefore such a one is not judged lightly among the ignorant, 4 but (rather) is condemned¹⁵³ more severely with those of whom it is written: *as an adder that is deaf and stops up its ears lest it hear the voice of the charmers and be cured with a medicine (compounded) by the wise* (Ps. 57: 4–5 Sept.).¹⁵⁴

5 But if he who is assigned to dispense the word (of God) neglects to declare it, he (shall be) is judged a murderer (of souls), as it is written (cf. Ezek. 33: 8).¹⁵⁵

SR 46 (*RBas.* 121)

Q: If someone forbears¹⁵⁶ another who sins, is he himself guilty of that sin?

R: 1 The condemnation for this is clear in the words which the Lord spoke to Pilate, when he said: *The one who handed me over to you has the greater sin* (John 19: 11). 2 From this it is clear that Pilate, in forbearing those who handed over the Lord, sinned, although less than they did.

3 This is also shown clearly when Adam forbore (and consented to) Eve, just as Eve had forborne the serpent (cf. Gen. 3: 6). 4 Not one of them was judged innocent or escaped with impunity. Indeed, the very indignation of God displayed against them, when carefully considered, shows this. 5 For when Adam

¹⁵² *RBas.* 119. Q: ignores it (and affects not to know) the will of the Lord.

¹⁵³ There is a word-rhyme in Greek: κρίνεται (judged) . . . κατακρίνεται (condemned).

¹⁵⁴ *φαρμακοῦ τε φαρμακευομένη παρὰ σοφοῦ*. The word *φάρμακον* and its field comprehends both curative drugs and medical treatment, poisons and sorcery. The nuance has often to be assessed from the context. Here, clearly, Basil and Rufinus both understand it in a medical sense. *RBas.* casts the passage in the plural.

¹⁵⁵ *RBas.* 119. 5: if he who (presides and) exercises the ministry of the word (of God) neglects to announce it to each and make it known in every case (et intimare de singulis). It seems ‘de singulis’ refers to ‘offence’ or ‘sin’ as in Ezekiel, and Clarke even inserts it in a gloss, but it is not actually expressed in either the Greek or the Latin text.

¹⁵⁶ *ἀνεχόμενος* tolerates, acquiesces, goes along with; *RBas.* 121. Q is stronger: consentit, ‘consents’, which is repeated in *RBas.* 121. 3 in a doublet.

objected as an excuse: *It was the woman you gave me. She gave it to me and so I ate* (Gen. 3: 12), God answered: *6 Because you heeded your wife, (said God), and ate from the tree from which alone I forbid you to eat, cursed be the earth in all your works, and so for the rest* (Gen. 3: 17).

SR 47 (RBas. 122)

Q: Should we remain silent (and quiet) towards (brothers) who sin?

R: 1 That we should not is clear from those commands of the Lord in the Old Testament where he says: *You shall surely rebuke*¹⁵⁷ *your neighbour and in this way not contract sin on his account* (Lev. 19: 17). 2 Further, it says in the Gospel: *If your brother sins against you, go and confront him, between you and him alone. 3 If he listens to you, you have gained your brother; if he does not listen, then take with you one or two others, since 'in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established'* (Deut. 19: 15). 4 *But if he refuses to listen to these, tell it to the Church; but if he refuses to listen even to the Church, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax-collector* (Matt. 18: 15–17).

5 But how great is the condemnation of this sin can be learned first of all from that general pronouncement of the Lord where he says: *Whoever does not obey the Son, shall not have eternal life, but the wrath of God stays over him* (John 3: 36), 6 and, secondly, from stories related in both the Old and New Scriptures. 7 Consider Achan for example (cf. Josh. 7: 20–6). When he had stolen the wedge of gold and the mantle, the wrath of God came down on the whole people—even though the people were ignorant¹⁵⁸ of both the sinner and the sin till the aforesaid was brought to light—and he with all his house suffered that fearful (and most famous) destruction.

8 There is also Eli the priest (cf. 1 Sam. 2: 22–4: 18).¹⁵⁹ Though he did not pass over in silence the sins of his own sons—who were

¹⁵⁷ Ἐλεγμῶ ἐλέγξεις. ἐλέγγω implies not merely 'rebuke', but a reasoned demonstration, a 'showing up' or exposure of what is amiss, a refutation, a reproof. The Hebrew intensive adverbial idiom is retained in the Sept. and in Basil, but Rufinus simply translates: Argues proximum tuum.

¹⁵⁸ RBas. 122. 7 completes: of the sin committed till it was brought to light.

¹⁵⁹ For Basil, Eli's failure to effectively correct his sons was a great cautionary tale, highlighting the grave responsibility to confront and to remedy sins. See LR 28 and the extended treatment in *De Iudicio* 5–6 (PG 31. 664D–665B, Clarke 83), where he combats the idea that there are 'small' sins that can be treated lightly and is vitally concerned to inculcate the practice of evangelical correction.

baneful sons indeed—but warned them frequently and chastised them saying: **9** *No, my sons, the things I hear about you are not good* (1 Sam. 2: 24) and so on, and pointed out in lengthy speech the horror of the sin and its unavoidable judgment,¹⁶⁰ **10** yet because he did not wholly put things right, or show fitting zeal (for God) against them, he provoked such wrath from God **11** that the (whole) people itself, together with his sons were destroyed and the Ark (of the Covenant) was snatched by alien hands, while he himself, when he heard the news, died in a pitiful end.¹⁶¹

12 Now if so great a wrath from God blazed out against those who did not know who the sinner was, and against those who tried to stop the sin and bore witness against it,¹⁶² **13** whatever shall one say of those who do know (of the sins of others) and remain silent (and apply no remedy at all)? **14** If they do not observe¹⁶³ what the Apostle said to the Corinthians: *Why did you not rather mourn so that the one who did this might be removed from your midst?* (1 Cor. 5: 2) and so on, **15** and also what follows: *Behold, through this very thing which caused grief according to God, what great earnestness it accomplished in you!* (What anxiety,) *what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what emulation, what putting things right! In everything you proved yourselves to be pure in the matter* (2 Cor. 7: 11), **16** they are all in great danger as things stand of incurring the same destruction, or even worse, because one who sets aside the Lord is worse than one who sets aside the Law of Moses (cf. Heb. 10: 28–9), as is anyone who dares the same sin that has already been committed and condemned, **17** for *Cain was avenged sevenfold, but Lamech seventy-sevenfold* (Gen. 4: 24).¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ *RBas.* 122. 9 completes: reproved the sin and warned of the judgment (of God) . . .

¹⁶¹ *RBas.* 122. 11: (overwhelmed by all these disasters), fell backwards in a wretched death. Rufinus refers more expressly to the manner of Eli's death.

¹⁶² *RBas.* 122. 12 completes: a people ignorant of the sin of one man and against a father who warned and corrected his sons for their sin, **13** what hope have they who know of the . . .

¹⁶³ *RBas.* 122. 14: It befits them above all to observe . . .

¹⁶⁴ *RBas.* 122. 16–17 recasts pleonastically, inserts an explanatory gloss, a sharper adjective, and relocates a more succinctly re-expressed clause: **16** (This is why they ought to fear in case) even now they incur a similar destruction as did those of old who were neglectful in the same way, or rather incur something even graver, inasmuch as to spurn the (Law of Christ) is more ruinous than to spurn the Law of Moses (cf. Heb. 10: 28–9) . . . **17** (Concerning this it is well to apply what was said) *Cain was avenged sevenfold, but Lamech* (who sinned in like manner), *seventy-sevenfold* (Gen. 4: 24).

SR 48 (RBas. 141)

Q: By what measure is *avarice* judged? (cf. Luke 12: 15)

R: 1 When someone exceeds the limits of (laid down by) the law. According to the Old Testament this is shown if one takes more thought for oneself than for a neighbour,¹⁶⁵ 2 for it is written: *love your neighbour as yourself* (Lev. 19: 18; Matt. 22: 39) 3 and according to the Gospel, when one is concerned for necessities on one's own account, for longer than the present day, as was he who heard:¹⁶⁶ 4 *You fool! This very night they shall come looking for your soul and these things you have prepared, whose shall they be?* To this the Lord adds in general terms, (saying): *So shall he be who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich before God* (Luke 12: 20-1).

SR 49 (RBas. 142)

Q: What is it to *vaunt oneself*?¹⁶⁷ (cf. 1 Cor. 13: 4)

R: 1 Anything taken up¹⁶⁸ not on account of necessity, but for show (or any kind of display) incurs the charge of *vaunting oneself*.¹⁶⁹

SR 50 (RBas. 144)

Q: If someone refuses the more expensive clothing and chooses what is cheap, whether cloak or footwear, to suit himself, does he sin or is he diseased with some passion?¹⁷⁰

R: 1 Whoever wants what suits himself, with a view to *courting human favour* (cf. Gal. 1: 10; Eph. 6: 6), is manifestly diseased with *courting human favour* and is distracted from God, since

¹⁶⁵ RBas. 141. 2: in that one loves oneself more, when more anxious for oneself than for a neighbour (whether in a matter of money or necessities) . . .

¹⁶⁶ RBas. 141. 3: if one is concerned for more than the present day, on account, that is, of oneself (or the body), such a one shall doubtless hear, *You fool* . . .

¹⁶⁷ *περπερεύεσθαι*, NT hapax. Clarke 248 notes: 'Cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogue*, 3. 1, *περπερεία γὰρ ὁ καλλωπισμὸς περιπτότητος καὶ ἀχρειότητος ἔχων ἔμφασιν*. Basil's answer is quoted in canon 16 of the 2nd Council of Nicaea.'

¹⁶⁸ RBas. 142. 1: done.

¹⁶⁹ RBas. 142. 1: this is to *vaunt oneself*.

¹⁷⁰ RBas. 144. Q slightly qualifies the argument: If someone rejects the more expensive clothing, yet even with the cheaper sort, whether tunic or footwear, wants what (he thinks) suits himself (so as to attract the attention of others), does he sin or (is he to be reckoned) as acting with some passion? See RBas. 155. 2, SR 175. There is a corrective here of the hyperascetics' tendency to exaggerated clothing censured by the Council of Gangra, Preamble 4, Canons 12 and 13.

even in his cheaper clothing he fulfils the passion of *vaunting oneself* (1 Cor. 13:4).¹⁷¹

SR 51 (RBas. 145)

Q: What is *raca* (Matt. 5:22)?

R: 1 It is a vernacular word of that nation,¹⁷² of lighter insult (commonly) spoken among one's familiars.¹⁷³

SR 52 (RBas. 146)

Q: Since the Apostle says in one place: *Let us not be vainglorious* (Gal. 5:26) and in another: *Not in eye-service as courters of human favour* (Eph. 6:6), who is *vainglorious* and who a *courter of human favour*?

R: 1 I consider that he is *vainglorious* who does or says anything merely for worldly glory (that is), before those who see or hear (something from) him (that they can applaud or marvel at). 2 But he is a *courter of human favour* (Eph. 6:6; Gal. 1:10) who does (or says) anything according to the wish of another so as to please him, even if what is done¹⁷⁴ is dishonourable (and harmful).

SR 53 (RBas. 147)

Q: What is *pollution of the flesh* and *pollution of the spirit* and how shall we cleanse ourselves from them, and what is *sanctification* and how do we obtain it? (cf. 2 Cor. 7:1)

R: 1 *Pollution of the flesh* would be¹⁷⁵ association with those who practise forbidden (and unspeakable) things, but *pollution of*

¹⁷¹ RBas. 144. 1: Whoever wishes through the outward form of his clothing to court human favour, manifestly labours under (the ailment of this very passion, that is, of) courting human favour (cf. Gal. 1:10; Eph. 6:6). His mind has (certainly) wandered far from God (since he uses clothing and footwear not by reason of use but for outward adornment) and in this very cheapness is indulging in the passion of *vaunting oneself* (1 Cor. 13:4).

¹⁷² Ἐπιχώριον ῥήμα, RBas. 145. 1: Provincialis id est gentis illius sermo est . . .

¹⁷³ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκειοτέρους, a term covering both relatives and friends, which is exactly how RBas. 145. 1 glosses it: those of the same household or those with whom one is on familiar terms. See LR 26 and note, 32. Q and note, SR 190 and note.

¹⁷⁴ RBas. 146. 2: what he does.

¹⁷⁵ RBas. 147. 1: est, 'is'.

the spirit is indifference towards those who think or do such things.¹⁷⁶

2 One¹⁷⁷ cleanses oneself (from these things) through observing what the Apostle says: *Do not even eat with such a one* (1 Cor. 5: 11) and other such precepts, 3 or when one suffers (in our heart) what David says: *Grief has seized me because of sinners who forsake your law* (Ps. 118: 53), 4 or when we manifest a sorrow like that of the Corinthians when they were accused (by Paul) of behaving with indifference towards one who had sinned, though, (he said), they had *in all ways shown themselves pure in this matter*¹⁷⁸ (2 Cor. 7: 11).

5 Sanctification is to cleave wholly to the holy God without (any) ceasing (at all times), being anxious and zealous to please him, 6 for indeed nothing polluted¹⁷⁹ is acceptable among the gifts dedicated (to God) and it is impious and intolerable to return what has once been dedicated to God to common and human usage (cf. Lev. 27: 28).

SR 54 (RBas. 154)

Q: What is self-love and how does the lover of self (cf. 2 Tim. 3: 2) make himself known?¹⁸⁰

R: 1 Many sayings use the sense more fully,¹⁸¹ such as: *Whoever loves his life shall lose it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it unto life eternal* (John 12: 25). 2 The lover of self,¹⁸² therefore, is one who loves himself; he makes himself known¹⁸³ if

¹⁷⁶ τὸ ἀδιαφορεῖν πρὸς τοὺς φρονούντας ἢ ποιούντας τὰ τοιαῦτα. RBas. 147. 1: when we associate indifferently with those who have impious beliefs concerning the faith (qui de fide impie sentiunt). Rufinus seems to have changed the nuance of the argument here. For Basil, pollution of the spirit stems from indifference, i.e. not confronting those who think or behave according to pollution of the flesh.

¹⁷⁷ RBas. 147. 2 uses 1st person plural: we.

¹⁷⁸ RBas. 147. 4 cites the Scripture more explicitly: when he says: *In all ways you have shown yourselves pure in this matter*.

¹⁷⁹ RBas. 147. 6 completes: can be among the gifts offered to God and sanctified, 7 and again, nothing which has been once dedicated to God and sanctified can be assigned to ordinary human use; otherwise it would be sacrilege and impiety.

¹⁸⁰ RBas. 154. Q: recognize his vice/passion.

¹⁸¹ Πολλά καταχρηστικῶς λέγεται . . . For the interpretation of the adverb here, see Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), καταχράσμαι 1, and καταχρήσις 1. Both Garnier and Rufinus interpret it in the sense of 'misuse', which in the context does not make any sense. RBas. 154. 1: Multa abusive dicuntur . . . 'many sayings are misused'.

¹⁸² RBas. 154. 2 transliterates at this point: *Philautos* ergo graece dicitur, qui se ipsum diligit.

¹⁸³ RBas. 154. 2: someone like this can be recognized . . .

whenever he does something, he does it for himself, even though what is done (appears to be) is according to the commandment (of God).

3 For if, for the sake of one's own ease, one leaves undone anything needed for (the service of) a brother in soul or in body, 4 it is clear even to others that one has the vice of self-love,¹⁸⁴ the end of which (vice) is destruction.¹⁸⁵

SR 55 (RBas. 159)

Q: What is the difference between *bitterness* and *wrath* and *anger* (and *shouting out*) and *paroxysm*?¹⁸⁶ (Eph. 4: 31; Ps. 57: 5)

R: 1 The difference between wrath and anger lies I think¹⁸⁷ in the disposition and the motive, since (the passion of) one who is stirred to anger extends only to the disposition, as he makes clear who says: *Be angry but do not sin* (Ps. 4: 5; Eph. 4: 26). 2 But one who is wrathful has already gone further (in emotion); *their wrath, it says, is like a serpent* (Ps. 57: 5) and, *Herod was wrathful against those of Tyre and Sidon* (Acts 12: 20). 3 An even more vehement movement of wrath is called paroxysm, whereas bitterness manifests a more fearful premeditated (and deliberate) *malice* (in the heart) (cf. Eph. 4: 31).¹⁸⁸

SR 56 (RBas. 164)

Q: Since the Lord says *Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled* (Luke 14: 11, 18: 14) and the Apostle enjoins: *Do not be haughty-minded* (Rom. 12: 16) and elsewhere says, *Arrogant, proud, inflated* (2 Tim. 3: 2) and again, *Love is not puffed up* (1 Cor. 13: 5), who is haughty and who boastful and who arrogant and who (proud and) inflated and who swollen?¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁴ τῆς φιλαυτίας τὴν κακίαν. RBas. 154. 4 (manifestly) betrays one as *philautos* (that is, a lover of self) . . .

¹⁸⁵ The enquiry continues in SR 175 (RBas. 155), which immediately follows in the Small Asketikon.

¹⁸⁶ The Greek text names four qualities, the Latin five. They appear to line up as follows: bitterness *πικρίας amaritudinis*; rage *θυμοῦ furoris*; anger *ὀργῆς irae*; shouting out (no parallel in the Greek) *clamoris*; paroxysm *παροξυσμοῦ irritations*. GLW omit 'et irritationis'.

¹⁸⁷ τάχα, 'perhaps/presumably', RBas. 159. 1: puto, 'I think'.

¹⁸⁸ RBas. 159. 3 Hol. (no codex is recorded as its source) adds: 'and shouting out is when one is moved by anger and rage to indignant cries, or to blasphemy or is carried away into cursing'.

¹⁸⁹ Haughty *ὕψηλόφρων* elatus; boastful *ἀλαζών* iactans; arrogant *ὑπερήφανος* arrogans; proud (no Greek parallel) *superbus*; inflated *τετυφωμένος* inflatus; swollen

R: 1 The haughty-minded would be one who exalts himself, who magnifies and extols himself for his own righteous deeds¹⁹⁰ like the pharisee and who does not associate with the lowly. The same can also be called inflated 2 according to the charge made against the Corinthians:¹⁹¹ *You yourselves are inflated (1 Cor. 5: 2)!*

3 But the boastful (and arrogant) does not observe the ordinances (of the Fathers for the common good), 4 or fulfil the command to observe the same rule and be of the same mind (cf. Phil. 2: 2),¹⁹² but invents his own way of righteousness and piety.¹⁹³

5 The haughty is one who is puffed up over what is his own and contrives to appear to be more than he is.¹⁹⁴ 6 Like him or very nearly so is (one who is called) the inflated (or swollen), according to this saying of the Apostle: *he is inflated, yet he knows nothing* (cf. 1 Tim. 6: 4).

SR 57 (RBas. 175)

Q: If someone has an uncorrected fault and, though he is constantly reprovved, continues in a harmful state, is it better to leave him alone?¹⁹⁵

R: 1 This has already been answered elsewhere,¹⁹⁶ that we ought to convert sinners patiently in the manner (which we have shown above was) shown by the Lord. 2 But if the condemnation and *the rebuke coming from the many is not enough* for his conversion, as it was for the Corinthian (2 Cor. 2:6), then he should be regarded as *the Gentile (and the tax-collector)* (Matt. 18: 17). 3 For to spare him who is condemned by the Lord is no way a safe

πεφυσωμένος (Garnier: *ρεφυσ-*) tumens. There are six adjectives in the *RBas.*, five in the Greek; Rufinus has possibly glossed a term, e.g. arrogant and . . . proud, in order to complete a set of three doublets.

¹⁹⁰ *RBas.* 164. 1: puts himself forward for the upright and successful things he may have done and who thereby seems to himself to be great and lofty.

¹⁹¹ *RBas.* 164. 2: like the Corinthians he rebuked to whom he said . . .

¹⁹² *RBas.* 164. 4 makes the Scripture reference more explicit: or by the words of the Apostle who says: *That you may be of the same mind and of one accord.*

¹⁹³ *RBas.* 164. 4, holiness—sanctitatis. Cf. the description of the sarabaite in *RB* 1. 6–9.

¹⁹⁴ *RBas.* 164. 5: The proud is one who (though he have in himself nothing of virtue or of righteous deeds), is haughty-minded (and puffed up) and wants to appear to be more than he is. See *RB* 4. 61 for the same idea.

¹⁹⁵ *ἐπαφίεναι αὐτῷ*, to allow to/to discharge him, though the dative is odd; *RBas.* 175. Q: intermitti; Rufinus has interpreted according to the first meaning. Garnier, *PG* 31. 1121, queries the phrase.

¹⁹⁶ See *RBas.* 16 (*SR* 3). *RBas.* uses 1st person plural.

course for anyone, (especially) since the Lord says: *4 it is better for someone to lose an eye or a hand or a foot and so enter into the kingdom, than that he should spare one of his members and his whole body be cast into the Gehenna of fire, where there is weeping and grinding of teeth* (Matt. 5: 30, 22; 13: 42). 5 And the Apostle, too, testifies when he says that *a little leaven corrupts the whole lump* (1 Cor. 5: 6).

SR 58 (RBas. 182)

Q: Is only the deliberate liar¹⁹⁷ judged, or also one who utters something quite contrary to the truth, but in ignorance?

R: 1 That the judgment of the Lord¹⁹⁸ is also against those who sin in ignorance is clear when he says: *Whoever did not know, yet did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with fewer* (Luke 12: 48).¹⁹⁹ 2 But as always, repentance worthily carried out brings a sure hope of forgiveness (cf. Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8).

SR 59 (RBas. 183)

Q: If someone only thought to do something, but did not do it, is he also to be judged a *liar* (cf. 1 Tim. 1: 10)?

R: 1 If what he thought to do was according to the commandment, he is condemned by the Lord not only as a liar but as disobedient.²⁰⁰ *For God tests the hearts and inmost parts* (Ps. 7. 10).

SR 60 (RBas. 184)

Q: If someone has decided beforehand to do something displeasing to God, (but is prevented,) should he rather reverse what was wickedly decided, or complete the sin for fear of lying?²⁰¹

R: 1 Since the Apostle says: *Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to reckon anything as from ourselves* (2 Cor. 3: 5) and the Lord himself confesses (no less): *I can do nothing from myself* (John 5: 30), 2 and again: *The words I speak to you I do not speak from myself* (John 14: 10), and also in another place: *I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of the*

¹⁹⁷ RBas. 182. Q: sins.

¹⁹⁸ RBas. 182. 1: God, instead of the Lord.

¹⁹⁹ *Morals* 9. 5 also uses the same text and the same teaching.

²⁰⁰ RBas. 183. 1: contemptor—despiser or scorner.

²⁰¹ RBas. 184. Q completes: that the hindrance recall him from what had been wickedly determined, or for fear of being a liar, he complete the sin?

Father who sent me (John 6: 38 Byz.), 3 such a one ought to repent, first, because he has (in this way) dared to decide of himself to do something, whatever it might be (that was determined), 4 for he ought not even to do good on his own authority (and determination), and secondly—what is even more urgent—because he did not fear to decide contrary to what pleases God.

5 But that he must reverse whatever he (presumptuously) decided beforehand contrary to the commandment of the Lord (and leave it undone)²⁰² is clearly shown in the case of the Apostle Peter 6 who, having (presumptuously) decided beforehand (and announced) that: *You shall never wash my feet!* (John 13: 8), 7 on hearing the sentence pronounced by the Lord: *If I do not wash you, you shall have no part in me*, immediately changed (what he had determined) and said: *Lord, not only my feet, but my hands and head too* (John 13: 9)!²⁰³

SR 61

Q: If someone is neither able to work nor wishes to learn the psalms, what are we to do with him?²⁰⁴

R: Since the Lord said in the parable of the barren fig tree, *cut it down, why should it use up the ground?* (Luke 13: 7) it is necessary to apply every treatment to him. But if he shrugs it off, then we must observe in his case what is prescribed for one who persists in sin. For anyone who is idle of good work is judged *with the devil and his angels* (cf. Matt. 25. 41).

SR 62 (RBas. 188)

Q: **Whatever does one do to be condemned for *hiding one's talent* (cf. Matt. 25: 25)?²⁰⁵**

²⁰² RBas. 184. 5: for (if) he ought not even to be doing good on his own authority (and determination, how much less is it permissible to determine things displeasing to God!).

²⁰³ This example of Peter made the strongest impression on Basil, who comes back to it repeatedly; see LR Prol. 3, LR 31, SR 83, 161 (RBas. 184. 6), 233, and 301 and the extended treatment in *De Iudicio*, PG 31. 672A, 673A, Clarke 87, 88, and *Morals* 12. 1, *That all contradicting, even if arising from an affectionate and reverent disposition, estranges the one contradicting from the Lord, whereas every word from the Lord should be embraced with full conviction*, followed by reference to John 13: 5–8.

²⁰⁴ See also SR 235, 281.

²⁰⁵ RBas. 188. Q puts the accent on *who*: Who is the one said to *hide his talent* and on that account is condemned?

R: 1 Whoever keeps back any grace from God (arrogating it) for his own enjoyment, not benefiting others (such a one) is condemned for (the offence of) *hiding his talent*.

SR 63

Q: Whatever does one do to be condemned with those who *murmured* against the latecomers (cf. Matt. 20: 11–12)?

R: Each is condemned for his own sin—and so the murmurers for murmuring. But often, different people murmur for different reasons. Some do so because they lack the means of satisfying themselves, as for example the gluttonous and those who make a god of the stomach; others, because they receive equal honour with the latecomers, giving proof of envy, the yoke-fellow of murder; still others again for other reasons.

SR 64

Q: Since our Lord Jesus Christ says: *It would be better for him if a millstone were hung round his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he should scandalize one of these little ones* (Matt. 18: 6 + Luke 17: 2), what is it to *scandalize*,²⁰⁶ and how are we to watch ourselves that so fearful a condemnation does not come upon us?

R: He scandalizes who transgresses in word or in deed and leads another into transgression, as the serpent did with Eve, and Eve with Adam; or when he hinders another from doing the will of God, as Peter did the Lord, saying: *Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you!* (Matt. 16: 22) and was told: *Get behind me, Satan! You are a scandal to me: for you do not think the thoughts of God, but those of men* (Matt. 16: 23), or when he encourages the mind of the weak to do something forbidden, as it is written by the Apostle: *For if someone sees you who have knowledge sitting at table in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food sacrificed to idols?* (1 Cor. 8: 10), to which he adds: *Therefore, if food scandalizes my brother, I will never eat flesh again, that I may not scandalize my brother* (1 Cor. 8: 13).

Yet the scandal may come from several causes. The scandal may come from the one scandalizing, or being scandalized may arise because of the one who is scandalized. And among these there is

²⁰⁶ τὸ σκανδαλίσαι. Basil addresses the same issue in *Concerning Baptism* bk. 2, Q 10, PG 31. 1617–22, Wagner 422–5; see also *Morals* 33, PG 31. 749–54, Wagner 111–14.

another distinction, concerning the inexperience sometimes of one party, sometimes of the other. Sometimes when we *rightly divide the word* (2 Tim. 2: 15) the base character of those who are scandalized becomes all the more exposed; and this is very like what happens. For the one scandalized takes scandal when another performs the commandment of God or uses without anxiety what lies within his right. Thus if human beings take offence at something done in accord with the commandment and are scandalized over it—as were some in the Gospel at things the Lord said or did according to the will of the Father—then we must remember the Lord’s answer concerning such as these when the disciples came to him and said: *Do you know that the Pharisees were scandalized when they heard this word?* He replied to them: *Any plant which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be uprooted. Leave them alone: they are blind leading the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit* (Matt. 15: 12–14). There are many such instances one could find both in the Gospels and the Apostle.

Now if someone takes offence or is scandalized at things which lie within our right, then we must remember the Lord’s words to Peter: *Well then, the sons are free. Yet so as not to scandalize them, go to the sea and cast a fish-hook and haul in the first fish that comes up; and when you have opened its mouth, you shall discover a shekel; take it and give it to them for me and for you* (Matt. 17: 26–7). There are also the writings of the Apostle to the Corinthians, where he says: *I will not eat flesh ever again, that I may not scandalize my brother* (1 Cor. 8: 13). *It is good not to eat flesh, or to drink wine, or to do anything which causes your brother to take offence, or be scandalized, or weakened* (Rom. 14: 21 Byz.).

But how fearful a thing it is to lightly regard a brother who is scandalized in matters that seem to lie within one’s right, the command of the Lord shows. He absolutely forbids every form of scandal, saying: *See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I declare to you that their angels behold always the face of my Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 18: 10). The Apostle also testifies, saying in one place: *But resolve instead that no one puts a stumbling-block or an obstacle in his brother’s way* (Rom. 14: 13); and in another vehemently forbids the harm that may come of an overweening confidence,²⁰⁷ concerning which he says: *For if someone sees you who have knowledge sitting at table in an idol’s temple, will he not be encouraged, if his*

²⁰⁷ περισσοτέρως κατασκευῆς . . . τὸ ἄτοπον, i.e. however good an argument one has for proceeding with a course of action, there may yet be attendant scandal to consider.

conscience is weak, to eat food sacrificed to idols? And thus, through your knowledge, a weak brother will perish, one for whom Christ died (1 Cor. 8. 10 Byz.)? To this he adds: *And thus, by sinning against the brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Accordingly, if food scandalizes my brother, I will never eat flesh again, that I may not scandalize my brother* (1 Cor. 8: 12–13) and elsewhere, after saying: *Or is it only myself and Barnabas who have no right not to work?* he immediately adds: *Nevertheless we did not use this right; but we bear all things, that we may provide no stumbling-block to the Gospel of Christ* (1 Cor. 9: 6).

Now if scandalizing a brother in matters which lie within one's right has been shown to be so fearful a thing, what is one to say of those who give scandal by doing or saying what is forbidden? This is especially the case when the one giving scandal appears to have a better knowledge or is ranked in the priestly order²⁰⁸—one, that is, who ought to be set before others as a rule and pattern. If he disregards even a small part of what is written, or does what is forbidden, or omits what is enjoined, or if he merely keeps silent towards one such as this, for this cause alone he incurs a like condemnation, because *the blood of sinners, it says, shall be required at his hands* (Ezek. 3: 18).

SR 65

Q: How does one *suppress the truth through unrighteousness* (Rom. 1: 18)?

R: Through misusing for one's own ends the good things given by God. This is what the Apostle renounced when he said: *For we are not as many are, peddlars of the word of God* (2 Cor. 2: 17) and again: *For never were we found using words to win favour, as you all know, or as a pretext for covetousness, as God is my witness; or as seeking glory from men, either from you or from anyone else* (1 Thess. 2: 5–6).

²⁰⁸ ἐν βαθμῶ ἐξετάζεται ἱερατικῶ. On priests in the community see also SR 231, 265 and notes; on their relation to the *presbyters* of the community see SR 288 and note for references. In *On Renunciation*, PG 31, 648B, Clarke 71, Basil or one of his circle says: 'Let not the clerical rank make you proud, but rather let it humble you. For the progress of the soul is progress in humility . . . Humble yourself in exact proportion to the stage of your advancement to the higher position of priestly dignity, fearing the example of the sons of Aaron.'

SR 66

Q: What is the difference between *rivalry* and *faction* (Gal. 5: 20)?²⁰⁹

R: Rivalry occurs when someone is anxious to do something so as not to appear worsted by another; faction is when one does something ostentatiously and vaingloriously to provoke and stir up others to do the same. For the Apostle in one place mentions faction and immediately joins vainglory to it, saying: *Doing nothing through faction or vainglory* (Phil. 2: 3), while in another place he puts vainglory first and along with it forbids faction under another name, saying: *Let us not be vainglorious, provoking one another* (Gal. 5: 26).

SR 67 (RBas. 189)

Q: What is *uncleanness* and what is *sensuality*?²¹⁰ (2 Cor. 12: 21)

R: 1 The law has shown what *uncleanness* is, for it used this term for what happens without our unwilling it, through the necessity of nature (when human beings undergo what is normal for them to undergo).²¹¹

2 But it seems to me that *sensuality* is (when one wantonly and shamelessly fosters and provokes a natural impulse of pleasure) indicated²¹² by Solomon most wise, in what he calls *pleasurable and free of pain*²¹³ (Prov. 14: 23 Sept.). Thus sensuality is the disposition of a soul that does not or cannot bear the athlete's pain; just as *lack of self-control*²¹⁴ (1 Cor. 7: 5) is when it has no power over the pleasures that bear down on it.

SR 68 (RBas. 190)

Q: What is proper to wrath²¹⁵ and what is proper to justifiable

²⁰⁹ ἔρις . . . ἐριθεία; one might also translate the latter as factiousness, intrigue, party-spirit. Clarke 255: 'According to Milligan-Moulton (Vocabulary of G.N.T. s.v.) selfish rather than factious ambition best suits the N.T. occurrences. Basil wrongly connects it with ἐρεθίζειν.'

²¹⁰ ἀκαθαρσία . . . ἀσέλγεια—unchastity, wantonness, sexual licence. Basil associates it shortly with ἀκρασία, or lack of self-control. See LR 12. Q and note, SR 309 and note, RBas. 189. 1: ea quae homines pati consueverunt.

²¹¹ RBas. 189. 1: ea quae homines pati consueverunt.

²¹² After deleting his original observation, Basil grafts all that follows onto the beginning of the sentence: But sensuality seems to me to be indicated by Solomon most wise . . .

²¹³ ἡδὸν καὶ ἀνάληγον.

²¹⁴ ἀκρασία.

²¹⁵ θυμῶν, RBas. 190. Q: furoris, perhaps also to be translated as 'rage'.

indignation²¹⁶ and how is it that at times we begin with indignation and find ourselves (slipping into) wrathfulness?

R: 1 Wrath is properly an impulse of the soul which intends ill against one who has (stirred and) aggravated it. 2 But what is proper to (justifiable) indignation with knowledge²¹⁷ is the (disposition or) aim of correcting the sinner, from a motive of displeasure at what has been done.²¹⁸

3 But there is nothing to marvel at in a soul beginning with good and succumbing to evil, for one²¹⁹ could find many such instances; this is why we must be mindful of the God-inspired Scripture which says: 4 *They have placed stumbling-blocks in my path* (Ps. 139:6) and again, *And even if one contends he is not crowned unless he contends lawfully* (2 Tim. 2:5). 5 Accordingly, immoderation and untimeliness and turbulence should everywhere be guarded against, since because in each of these that we have mentioned²²⁰ what seems to be good frequently turns to evil.

SR 69

Q: How are we to deal with someone who neither eats less than the others, nor has anything particularly wrong with the body, nor has any recognizable condition, yet complains of inability to work?

R: Every pretext for idleness is a pretext for sin; for we ought to show our zeal *even unto death* (Phil. 2:8), and likewise our *endurance* (cf. Matt. 10:22; Luke 21:19). But it is clear from the words of the Lord: *You evil and slothful servant* (Matt. 25:26) that slothfulness combined with evil condemns the slothful.

SR 70

Q: How are we to deal with one who misuses his clothes and footwear, but when accused, suspects pettiness and fault-finding in his accuser? And if he persists in this way after the due second and third appeal, what ought we to do with him?

²¹⁶ ἀγανακτήσεως ἐυλόγου, *RBas.* 190. Q: indignationis iustae.

²¹⁷ ἀγανακτήσεως ἐπιστήμονος, *RBas.* 190. 2: indignationis iustae.

²¹⁸ *RBas.* 190. 2: whereby we feel an aversion to sins and displeasure at what has not been done uprightly.

²¹⁹ *RBas.* 190. 3: you could find (invenies).

²²⁰ *RBas.* 190. 5 recasts the sentence from negative to positive: due measure and the right time and order should everywhere be observed, since without each of these, it may happen that what seems . . .

R: The Apostle rules out such misuse when he says: *As using this world and not misusing it* (1 Cor. 7: 31 Byz.). For the measure of use is the unavoidable exigency of need. Consequently, use beyond what is needed has about it the diseases of avarice, love of pleasure,²²¹ or vainglory. And anyone who persists in sin incurs the judgment of one who does not repent (cf. Matt. 18: 15–17).

SR 71

Q: There are some who seek taste rather than quantity in food; others much prefer quantity for the sake of satiety rather than taste. How shall we exercise persuasion in either case?

R: Both are diseased, the one with love of pleasure, the other with greed. Neither the lovers of pleasure nor the greedy in any way avoid condemnation.²²² So, compassionate treatment must be exercised in either case in order to cure their passion. But if they are not cured of their sickness, then the judgment of those who do not repent is clear (cf. Matt. 18: 15–17).

SR 72

Q: If someone at mealtimes in the community conducts himself without reverence, eating or drinking greedily, ought he to be confronted?

R: Someone like this does not observe the Apostle's charge where he said, *Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31) and again: *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14: 40). He does indeed need correction, unless he was constrained by some necessity of toil or haste. But even then he must take care to guard against unseemliness.

SR 73 (RBas. 193)

Q: **If someone confronts an offender not from a desire to correct his brothers but from a passion of self-justification,²²³ how ought such a one be corrected if, despite many appeals, he persists in the same passion?**

R: **1 Let such be recognized as a lover of self and a lover of**

²²¹ *φιληδονίας*, hedonism.

²²² Following Garnier's translation of an obscure *κατακοίσεως*.

²²³ *ἐν πάθει τῆς ἐκδικήσεως*, RBas. 193. Q: for the sake of fulfilling of his own vice/passion—*sui vitii explendi gratia*.

domination.²²⁴ Let him be shown the way to correct himself through the practice of piety.²²⁵ 2 If he persists in this vice, it is clear his judgment is with those who do not repent (of their offence).

SR 74

Q: We seek to learn from the Scripture whether we should allow those who wish to lead a solitary life or follow the same ideal of piety with a few others, to go out²²⁶ from the community?

R: The Lord said again and again: *The Son does nothing of himself* (John 5: 19), and *I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me* (John 6: 38 Byz.). The Apostle also testifies: *The desire of the flesh is against that of the spirit and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to each other, so that what we do not want, that we do* (Gal. 5: 17 Byz.). Therefore to choose anything according to one's own will is alien to the pious.

But on this subject we have answered more fully in the Longer Questions.²²⁷

SR 75 (RBas. 195)

Q: Is it fitting to say that Satan is the author of every sin, in thought, word, and deed?

R: 1 On the whole, I think that Satan himself cannot, of himself, be a cause of sin in anyone, but that (to satisfy his own malice) 2 he takes advantage of what is in us, at one time the natural motions, at another, forbidden passions,²²⁸ and tries by their means to lead

²²⁴ *φίλαντος καὶ φίλαρχος*—'power-hungry' as it were.

²²⁵ *κατ' ἐπιστήμην τῆς θεοσεβείας*, RBas. 193. 1: through the practices of the disciplined life.

²²⁶ *ἀφορίζειν*. Cf. SR 44, where *ἀφορισμός* means a temporary absence from the common life while remaining a community member and *ἀποκόπτειν* refers to exclusion from membership of the community, excommunication *per se*. This superior's question testifies that despite Basil's very strong teaching on the Gospel imperative of community life in RBas. 2 and 3 (LR 2 and 7) the eremitical or sarabaitic life could be a continuing lure in the communities.

²²⁷ i.e. LR 7 and note. Basil himself refers to a distinct set of 'Longer' Questions, as he does also in SR 103 and 220. Clarke 258 n. 1 discusses at length the issue of whether Basil condoned any form of eremitic life. See also LR 36, on legitimate reasons for leaving the community; the pursuit of the eremitical or sarabaitic life is not one of them.

²²⁸ *ποτὲ μὲν φυσικοῖς κινήμασι ποτὲ δὲ καὶ ἀπηγορευμένοις πάθει συγχρώμενος*. RBas. 195. 2: *motibus animae nostrae sive naturalibus etiam ex vitio conceptis abutitur . . . abuses the motions (of our soul), whether stemming from nature or*

astray those who are not vigilant into what accords with the passions. **3** He takes advantage of the natural motions just as he attempted to do with the Lord, when he perceived that he was hungry and said: *If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread* (Matt. 4: 3), **4** and he takes advantage of the forbidden passions²²⁹ just as he did with Judas. Once he had perceived that he was (covetous and) sick with avarice, he took advantage of this passion (of his) and dragged down the avaricious man to the crime²³⁰ of betrayal for (a profit of) thirty pieces of silver (cf. Luke 22: 3; Matt. 26: 14–15).

5 But the Lord also shows clearly that there are evils which spring from ourselves, for *from the heart*, he says, *proceed evil thoughts* (and so on) (Matt. 15: 19). **6** This is what happens to those who through their carelessness let the natural seeds of good²³¹ lie uncultivated (within them and going to waste), **7** as it is said in Proverbs:²³² *Like a field is a foolish man and like a vineyard the man lacking prudence; if you leave him be, he shall become overgrown and run to weeds and become derelict* (Prov. 24: 30–1).²³³ **8** For it follows that in a soul which through such carelessness becomes overgrown and derelict thorns and thistles inevitably spring up (cf. Gen. 3: 18)²³⁴ **9** and there becomes of it what is written: *I expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded thorns* (Isa. 5: 2).²³⁵ Of this soul it had been predicted: *I planted it a sorech vine* (Isa. 5: 4), which means a ‘choice’ vine. **10** One can also find something very like this in Jeremiah, who says in the person of

passion, into doing his malicious will, and from what is our own tries to drag us, if we are not vigilant, into what pleases him, that is, into sin. For ‘natural motions’ see also SR 224 and note. The adjective ‘forbidden’ is added in the later Greek in view of what was already acknowledged in the Small Asketikon, that there are certain allowable ‘natural passions’ experienced by Jesus himself. See LR 17 (RBas. 8. 30), SR 267 and note.

²²⁹ RBas. 195. 4: He abuses the motions (= passions) co-opted by vice (ex vitio).

²³⁰ RBas. 195. 4: dragged him down to the ruin—pertraxit ruinam; a Vergilian echo (*Aeneid* 2. 465–6)? The image is that of dragging him with the ‘hook’ of the proffered money.

²³¹ τὰ φυσικὰ τῶν ἀγαθῶν σπέρματα. RBas. 195. 6: seeds of natural good. See LR 2. 1 and note.

²³² RBas. 195. 7: as Solomon says . . .

²³³ RBas. 195. 7: he will become deserted and thorns shall spring up in it and it shall be derelict.

²³⁴ RBas. 195. 8: bears that (judgment) which says: *Thorns and thistles shall arise in you* (Gen. 3. 18) . . .

²³⁵ ἀκάνθας, as in the Sept., not the ‘wild grapes’ of the Hebrew text.

God:²³⁶ *I planted you a fruitful vine, all true. How then are you changed into bitterness, an alien vine? (Jer. 2: 21)*

SR 76

Q: Is there some special dispensation²³⁷ whereby it is right to lie for a supposed advantage?

R: This is not condoned by the decree of the Lord, who said once and for all that lying is *from the devil* (cf. John 8: 44) making no distinctions between lies. There is also that testimony of the Apostle where he writes: *And one who contends in the games is not crowned unless he contends lawfully* (2 Tim. 2: 5).

SR 77

Q: What is the difference between *deceit* and *malevolence*?²³⁸ (Rom. 1: 29)

R: Malevolence, in my reckoning, is a primal, hidden baseness of character. Deceit, on the other hand, concerns the contrivance of a plot, whereby someone puts on a show of good and parades it before another as a snare and so succeeds in achieving his plot.

SR 78

Q: Who are the *inventors of evils* (Rom. 1: 30)?

R: Those who apply their minds to discovering new evils, beyond the many to which they are already accustomed and know well.

SR 79

Q: If someone repeatedly accuses himself²³⁹ of treating a brother overbearingly, how shall he be corrected?

R: This kind of thing arises, as I gather from a study of it, either from a cast of mind that imagines its own superiority, or from grief at the failures of those who ought to be upright. For when we meet

²³⁶ *RBas.* 195. 10: And then it deserves to hear said to it by God what was predicted through Jeremiah . . .

²³⁷ *οἰκονομία*, a 'special arrangement', concession or exception.

²³⁸ *δόλος* . . . *κακοήθεια*, bad disposition, malignity, malice, treachery, etc.

²³⁹ *συνεχῶς ἑαυτοῦ ἐπιλαμβάνεται*, 'consistently catches himself at . . .'. The question may concern a superior or elder himself in the position of receiving confession or giving direction.

with something else contrary and distressing instead of some good we were expecting, it somehow affects the soul with greater force.

There is need of exceeding care here. If it is the first kind we curb the passion of arrogance and if it is the second, rather than use indignation, we show compassion with appeal and warning.

But if this method of treatment appears to be ineffectual due to the baseness of the underlying passion, only then should we use forceful indignation with sympathy—opportunately and with reason—in order to benefit and correct the sinner.

SR 80

Q: Why does it happen that good thoughts and cares pleasing to God fail the mind, so to speak, and how can we avoid this experience?

R: Since David says: *My soul slumbered from heaviness* (Ps. 118: 28), it is clear that this comes about from the soul's slumbering and dullness of perception. Cares that are pleasing to God and good thoughts do not fail a soul that is wakeful and sober. It regards itself as failing them instead. For if the eye of the body is adequate to the vision of only a few of God's works and is not filled by seeing something once only, but even though it continually sees the same sight yet it does not cease to look, how much more is the eye of the soul, even when awake and sober, inadequate to the vision of the wonders and the judgments of God?²⁴⁰ *For your judgments*, it says, *are a great deep* (Ps. 35: 6); and elsewhere: *Your knowledge is too wonderful for me: it is firmly established, I am not equal to it* (Ps. 138: 6); and many similar things.

But if good thoughts fail the soul, then, obviously, illumination still fails it; not, however, from any failure in that which illumines, but from the slumber of that which ought to be illumined.

SR 81

Q: Should we rebuke in the same way the pious and the indifferent, if both are found in the same sin?

²⁴⁰ Basil and his questioner broach a watershed between moral and mystical theology. It is true that thoughts worthy of God may fail due to lack of mindfulness, and backsliding, about which something can be done. But even in optimum spiritual conditions the best thoughts and desires will sooner or later be revealed as 'failing' God, who is ever incomprehensible in his substance. Mystical theologians, beginning with Gregory of Nyssa, will endeavour to show that this type of spiritual 'failure', a painful apparent 'unknowing' of God, may in fact be a sign of progress, not regress, towards union with God. See also *LR* 16 and note.

R: If we look to the disposition of the sinner and the manner of his sin, we shall then know the manner of rebuke. For though the sin of the indifferent and of the pious may appear to be the same, yet there is a great difference between them. For on the one hand there is the pious, who, because he is pious and struggles and is anxious to be well pleasing to God, stumbles and falls by mischance—almost unwillingly as it were. But the indifferent, on the other hand, takes no account either of himself or of God and makes no difference between sinning and behaving uprightly, as his very name indicates. He is sick with primary and grave ills, either contempt of God, or disbelief in God's existence. For there are two causes of sin that arise in the soul, as the Scripture testifies when it says in one place: *the lawless converses with sin within himself, there is no fear of God before his eyes* (Ps. 35: 1); and in another place: *The fool said in his heart, There is no God. They have become corrupt and abominable in their pursuits* (Ps. 13: 1). So he either despises God and so sins, or he denies the very existence of God and so is corrupted in his pursuits, though he appears to profess. *For they profess to know God, it says, but by their works they deny him* (Tit. 1: 16). This being how things are, I consider that the manner of rebuke should differ according to the two cases. One who is pious only has need of local help, as it were. He ought to receive a rebuke concerning the actual deed into which he fell. On the other hand, one who is indifferent has corrupted the whole beauty of his soul and is sick with more extensive ills, either as a despiser, as I said, or as an unbeliever. He ought to be mourned and warned and rebuked till he can be persuaded, either that God is a righteous judge and fear; or else that God really does exist and be terrified.

But one ought also to know this, that by a divine dispensation, the lapses of the pious often prove to be beneficial. Sometimes God allows them to fall in order to cure a prior inflation; such, for example, are the words spoken by Peter and what befell him afterward (cf. Matt. 26: 33–5).²⁴¹

SR 82

Q: Since it says, *the older women as mothers* (1 Tim. 5: 2),²⁴² if it happens that the older woman sins in the same way as the younger, is she liable to the same penalty?

²⁴¹ On other aspects of negative experience in the Christian life, see LR 16 and note.

²⁴² *πρεσβυτέρας ὡς μητέρας*. Here perhaps a female superior is asking the question.

R: When the Apostle taught us to *honour the older women as mothers*, it was not for doing something deserving rebuke! But if it happens that the older woman sins in the same way as the younger, we must note first the natural faults of each age, if I may so express it, and then determine the right measure of penalty for each age. Sloth, for example, is almost natural in old age, but not so in youth. Conversely, wandering thoughts and excitability and brashness and the like are natural in youth but not so in old age. They seem to be fostered by the natural heat of youth. So the same sin, sloth, for example, deserves a heavier censure in the younger woman, since her age in no way excuses it. And the same sin, wandering thoughts, brashness, or excitability, renders the older woman deserving of a heavier condemnation, since she is aided by her very age to be meek and quiet.

In addition, we must examine the manner of the sin for each person and thus apply the fitting method of treatment through the appropriate penalty.

SR 83

Q: If someone does many things rightly but stumbles in a single one, how are we to deal with him?

R: As the Lord did Peter (cf. John 13: 8).²⁴³

SR 84

Q: If someone is censured for a turbulent and excitable manner, but says that God made some good and some bad, is he right to speak thus?²⁴⁴

R: Such a mentality was condemned long ago as heretical,²⁴⁵ for it is both blasphemous and impious and renders the soul prone to sin. So let him either be corrected or be expelled from your midst, lest it happen that *a little leaven corrupt the whole lump* (1 Cor. 5: 6).

²⁴³ The question reappears and is answered more fully in *SR 233*. See also *SR 60* (*RBas.* 184. 6) and note.

²⁴⁴ *τοὺς μὲν καλοὺς τοὺς δὲ κακοὺς . . .* Might there be not only a moral but also a social register here, as between the ‘noble’—gentlemen or ladies—and the ‘base’, lower-class, common folk? Basil insists: the life in Christ, truly lived, necessarily breeds courtesy and self-control in everyone, whatever one’s background or social class.

²⁴⁵ See *Hom.: that God is not the Author of Evils*, *PG 31. 329–53*.

SR 85 (RBas. 29)

Q: Should one have anything of one's own in community?²⁴⁶

R: **1** This is contrary to the testimony in the Acts (of the Apostles) concerning the (first) believers, where it is written:²⁴⁷ **2** *Not one of them said that any of his possessions was his own, but all things were common to all* (Acts 4:32).²⁴⁸ **3** So if someone says that anything is his own, without doubt he estranges himself from the Church of God²⁴⁹ and from the love of the Lord who taught in both word and (fulfilled) in deed²⁵⁰ to lay down one's life for one's friends (cf. John 15:13), to say nothing of external possessions. (**4** Now if he himself gave his life for his friends, what claim have we on our possessions, which are, after all, external to our life²⁵¹?)

SR 86 (RBas. 30)

Q: If someone says, 'I neither take anything from the community nor do I give anything, but am content with my own', what should we observe in his regard?²⁵²

²⁴⁶ *Εἰ χρὴ ἔχειν τι ἴδιον ἐν ἀδελφότητι.* RBas. 29. Q: who are among brothers—Si debet habere aliquid proprium qui inter fratres est? Cf. RB 33 title: Si quid debeant monachi proprium habere. Most scholars consider that the RB borrows verbally here from the RBas.—see Lienhard, 'St. Basil's "Asceticon Parvum"', 235; Grimbomont, 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 255 who says that the substitution in the RB of 'monachi' for 'qui inter fratres est' is 'well-adapted to the sixth century . . . the monastic institution has superseded the spontaneous groups of Basilian ascetics.' Cf deVogüé, 'Twenty-Five Years', 448.

²⁴⁷ RBas. 29. 1–2: that testimony written in the Acts of the Apostles concerning those who first believed. **2** It speaks there in this way: *Not one . . .*

²⁴⁸ The same text is cited in RB 33. 6, the title of which, as noted above, borrows from the present question.

²⁴⁹ *τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ Ἐκκλησίας,* RBas. 29. 3: electis Dei, the elect of God.

²⁵⁰ RBas. 29. 3 connects the quotation with a conjunction: *et qui animam suam, and who gave his life . . .*

²⁵¹ RBas. 29. 4: *animam.* The play is on the one word *anima* (= soul or life). Rufinus has clearly rhetoricized the conclusion, expanding the reference to *external* possessions. 'This is a convenient place to summarise Basil's teaching about private property. Possessions are good in themselves (SR 92), but distract the soul. They must be consecrated to God and disposed of with great care (LR 9). But Basil himself enjoyed some income after his renunciation (Letter 37). Relations are to give the monk his income in full (SR 187; cf. 94, LR 9); a monk by contributing to the expenses of the coenobium is not thereby in a privileged position (SR 308). Basil asks that monks may be exempted from taxation (Letter 284). See also SR 107, 304, 305. The rule of renunciation was clearly interpreted with some freedom' (Clarke 262).

²⁵² This 'idiiorhythmic' arrangement is so much at odds with Basil's teaching, that perhaps the superior asking the question is dealing with a newcomer with

R: 1 If he will not uphold that teaching of the Lord who said *Love one another even as I have loved you* (John 13: 34), then let us uphold²⁵³ the Apostle who said *Cast out the evil from among yourselves* (1 Cor. 5: 13), lest it happen that *a little leaven corrupt the whole lump* (1 Cor. 5: 6).

SR 87 (RBas. 99)

Q: Is anyone allowed to give away his old *tunic* or footwear wherever he wishes (for mercy's sake) in order to keep the commandment (cf. Luke 3: 11; Matt. 10: 10; Mark 6: 9)?

R: 1 To give or receive anything even if according to the commandment (for mercy's sake) is not for everyone, but²⁵⁴ for him who, after testing, has been entrusted with the stewardship. He is the one who shall give and receive everything, whether old or new, according to the need of each case.

SR 88 (RBas. 54)

Q: What is a *care of this life*? (cf. Matt. 13: 22)

R: 1 Every care (of the mind), even though it seems to involve nothing forbidden, if it is not conducive to piety (and virtue), is of this life.

SR 89 (RBas. 118)

Q: Since it is written *The ransom of a man's life is his riches* (Prov. 13: 8), what shall we do if we have not distributed it (for our soul's ransom)?²⁵⁵

R: 1 If we really wanted to but were not able, let us remember the Lord's answer to Peter, 2 who, being troubled about this

wrong-headed ideas, or perhaps an aggregation of 'sarabaites' is endeavouring to upgrade itself in accordance with Basil's teaching. Since it is found in the Small Asketikon, the latter is preferable.

²⁵³ ἀνασχώμεθα, RBas. 30. 1: acquiescat, i.e. 3rd person singular.

²⁵⁴ RBas. 99. 1-2 completes somewhat more fulsomely: . . . but those to whom this office is entrusted. 2 Therefore it is the one with the responsibility for distribution who shall give it to whomever he ought to give it, whether the clothing is new or old and himself shall receive it from whomever he ought to receive it.

The reference is to one or more in the community charged with dispensation of the community's goods, the οἰκονόμος or the *cellarius* of RB 31. Medieval monasteries developed the office of *almoner* for dispensing help outside the community. In SR 91 Basil restates the point made here even more strongly. Cf. RB 33. 2.

²⁵⁵ RBas. 118. Q: if we have not distributed our riches for our soul's ransom?

matter, said: *Behold, we have given up all things and followed you, what therefore shall there be for us?* (Matt. 19: 27) The Lord answered him: **3 Everyone who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands on my account and that of the Gospel shall receive a hundredfold and obtain eternal life** (Matt. 19: 29 Byz + Luke 18: 29).

4 But if it was through carelessness that we did not attend to the matter (of his wealth) **then let us now show our** (greater) **zeal**²⁵⁶ (so that, bestowing freely, he may through the work of his hands restore the neglected estate). **5 But if we no longer have left the time or strength** (for such service), **the Apostle consoles us saying** *I seek not what is yours but you* (2 Cor. 12: 14).

SR 90 (*RBas.* 129)

Q: Is it permissible to have a (separate) **night tunic, whether of hair-cloth or anything else?**

R: **1 The use of a hair-cloth has its proper time;**²⁵⁷ **for such** (a garment) **is not used for bodily need, but for the affliction and humbling of the soul.**

2 But since (the divine word forbids) **having two tunics** (Matt. 10: 10; cf. Mark 6: 9) **is forbidden, let each consider for himself whether this practice can be adopted apart from those uses of which we have spoken above.**²⁵⁸

SR 91 (*RBas.* 186)

Q: **What of a brother who, not having anything of his own, is asked by another even for what he is wearing? What is he to do, especially if the petitioner is naked?**

R: **1 Whether naked or wicked, that is, whether he asks in true need or in avarice,**²⁵⁹ **we have said once and for all that to give or to receive does not belong to everyone but only to the one to whom such stewardship is entrusted after testing.** **2** (He, at any

²⁵⁶ *RBas.* 118. 4 uses 3rd person singular throughout this section.

²⁵⁷ See Cassian, *Institutes* 1. 2 (*NPNF*, 2nd ser. 11. 202): '(The fathers) utterly disapproved of a robe of sackcloth as being visible to all and conspicuous and from this very fact will not only confer no benefit on the soul but rather minister to vanity and pride and as being inconvenient and unsuitable for the performance of necessary work.'

²⁵⁸ *RBas.* 129. 2 ends as a question: how can this be supported except for those uses of which we have spoken above?

²⁵⁹ *RBas.* 186. 1 continues: whether he who asks suffers in true need or deceives or whatever else . . . On this topic see also *SR* 89 and note.

rate, ought to fulfil this kind of stewardship with all foresight and caution, so) Let it be observed, *that each one abides in that wherein he was called* (1 Cor. 7: 20, 24).

SR 92

Q: Since the Lord charged us to *sell* our *possessions* (Luke 12: 33), on what understanding should we do this—because possessions themselves are inherently harmful, or because it happens that through them the soul is distracted?

R: The first thing to say to this is that no possession, were it bad in itself, would have been created by God.²⁶⁰ *For everything created by God, it says, is good and nothing is to be rejected* (1 Tim. 4: 4).

Secondly, the Lord's commandment did not instruct us to throw away possessions as evil and flee them, but to administer them. And indeed if someone is condemned, it is not simply because he has possessions but because of his base thinking concerning them, or because he has made an ignoble use of them.

For to be dispassionately and soundly disposed towards them²⁶¹ and to administer them according to the commandment, can be a help to us in many and most necessary ways—now in the cleansing of our sins, as it is written: *But give as alms those things which are within; and behold all things are pure for you* (Luke 11: 41)—now towards inheriting the Kingdom of heaven and gaining an unfailling treasure, according to what is written in another place: *Fear not, little flock, for it is your heavenly Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give alms. Make for yourselves purses which do not wear out, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail* (Luke 12: 32–3).

SR 93

Q: If someone has dispossessed himself once and for all and promised to have nothing of his own,²⁶² what ought to be his attitude towards the necessities of life such as clothing and food?

R: He needs to be mindful that, as it is written, it is God who *gives food to all flesh* (Ps. 135: 25). Moreover, he needs to ponder much that

²⁶⁰ See SR 85 and note; LR 18, *Hom.: that God is not the Author of Evils*, PG 31, 329–53.

²⁶¹ Ἡ γὰρ ἀπροσπαθής καὶ ὑγιής περὶ αὐτὰ διάθεσις . . .

²⁶² ἴδιον μηδὲν ἔχειν ἐπαγγειλάμενον. This indicates, if not a vow, at least a well-understood obligation to dispossession and personal poverty on joining the community.

as a worker of God he is worthy of his food (Matt. 10: 10; cf. 1 Cor. 3: 9), though this does not lie in his own authority but is dispensed by the one charged with this responsibility at the right time and measure, as it is written: *And distribution was made to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35).

SR 94 (RBas. 196)

Q: If someone enters the community leaving behind tax debts and his relatives²⁶³ are hard pressed by demands on his account, does this not lay some concern or blame²⁶⁴ either on him or on those who received him?²⁶⁵

R: 1 Our Lord Jesus Christ said to those who asked him whether *it was permissible to pay tribute to Caesar or not, 'Show me a denarius; whose image and inscription has it?'* **2** And when they had said 'Caesar's', he replied: '*Render to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God the things that are God's*' (Matt. 22: 17, 19–21; Luke 20: 22–5).

3 From this²⁶⁶ it is clear that they are proved liable to Caesar's exactions who are found with the things of Caesar.²⁶⁷ **4** If he brought with him into the community any of the things that are

²⁶³ οἰκεῖοι, family or relatives. RBas. 196. Q: parentes.

²⁶⁴ RBas. 196. Q: culpam aliquam, Greek: διακρισιω και βλάβην, scruple or harm (loss).

²⁶⁵ RBas. 196. Q: or on the one who thus brought it about? Clarke 265 n. 5: 'One of the motives for renouncing the world in the fourth century was the intolerable pressure of taxes. A landed proprietor who sold his land and retired to a monastery, either distributing the proceeds to the poor himself or inviting the superior to do so for him, would cause serious loss to the Exchequer. This question and answer suggest that there was a good deal of friction, which Basil as bishop tried to prevent.' Pace Clarke, Basil was not bishop at the time of this response, since the text is found in the Small Asketikon.

On monks and taxation, see also Letters 284, Def. iv. 172–5, and 285, Def. iv. 174–5. Deferrari observes iv. 173 n. 1: 'at this period the burdensome tax system inaugurated by Diocletian is still operative throughout the Roman Empire and . . . monks, unlike the clergy proper are laymen and are not therefore eligible to the immunities granted the clergy'. In Letter 285 it is clear that the practice of handing over property to the Church to administer, as Makrina did, was becoming a burden to Basil as bishop: 'such is the property of the poor [Deferrari translates 'monks'] that we are always seeking someone to take it over, for the Church spends more on it than any profit it gains from these possessions'. In Letter 285 he seems to plead for a Christian property-owner who had been relieving Basil of some of this administrative burden.

²⁶⁶ RBas. 196. 3: We clearly learn . . .

²⁶⁷ RBas. 196. 3 sharpens the scriptural reference: they on whom are found Caesar's census mark and image are liable for the tribute to Caesar.

Caesar's,²⁶⁸ then he is liable for the (payment of) the tax debts, but if when he departed he left all things in the hands of his relatives, then let neither himself nor those who received him²⁶⁹ have any concern about it.

SR 95

Q: Is it fitting that those who have just entered should without delay begin to learn the Scriptures by heart?

R: This question, also, has been sufficiently dealt with in what has already been said.²⁷⁰ For it is consistent and necessary that each should learn by heart from the God-inspired Scripture according to need, so that he can fulfil piety and not become accustomed to human traditions (cf. Mark 7: 8).²⁷¹

SR 96 (RBas. 81)

Q: Ought everyone who wishes to learn letters or devote himself to reading be permitted?

R: 1 Since the Apostle says *That you may not do the things you wish* (Gal. 5: 17), it is harmful in any matter to permit anyone a private choice according to his own will—rather, he should undertake all that is decided by those who preside,²⁷² 2 though²⁷³ it be against his wishes (in accordance with the example of the Lord who says: *Father, not my will but yours be done*) (Luke 22: 42).

Such a one deserves the charge of lack of faith, for the Lord says: *Be prepared, for the Son of man is coming at an hour that you do*

²⁶⁸ RBas. 196. 4: If therefore the one coming to the brothers brought such with him . . .

²⁶⁹ RBas. 196. 4: the brothers.

²⁷⁰ ὑπὸ τῶν προειρημένων κατευθυνέσθω. If Basil is referring to SR 235, 236, then the subsequent reordering of the Shorter Responses is obvious. Basil himself gives every impression of having well-nigh memorized all the Scriptures. Cf. Palladius, *Lausiac History* 32. 12 for the memorization of Scripture at Tabennisi.

²⁷¹ μὴ προσεπισθῆναι ἀνθρωπίναις παραδόσεσιν. Members must not allow themselves to slip into a mere second-hand compliance with custom, even the custom of the monastic community since the communion of the members goes hand in hand with each one's direct, personal allegiance to God. This is what keeps the community from spiritual staleness and atrophy. If such a conscientiousness and personal disposition is maintained, one will not be lulled by custom into ignoring a weakened commitment to the commandments on the part of the community, and even on the part of a superior, should it happen, but will face the issue with due evangelical process. See LR 27 and note, LR 36 and note, SR 303 and note.

²⁷² ὑπὸ τῶν προστώτων.

²⁷³ RBas. 81. 2: though it is contrary to the will of the one receiving the order.

not expect (Luke 12:40). For he is clearly one who prescribes for himself the times of life.

SR 97 (RBas. 87)

Q: If someone says ‘I wish to be benefited by a short time with you’ ought he be welcomed?

R: 1 The Lord said *Whoever comes to me I will not cast out* (John 6: 37), 2 and the Apostle says no less: *Moreover on account of false brothers brought in surreptitiously who slipped in to spy out the freedom we have in Christ Jesus in order to enslave us—to them we did not yield submission, even for a moment, that the truth of the Gospel might continue with you* (Gal. 2: 4–5). 3 Therefore it is consistent to allow him entrance because it is unclear what the end of it will be.

4 For often, being benefited by the interval, he will be well pleased with the (holiness of) life once and for all,²⁷⁴ which, as we know, has frequently happened. On the other hand, to one²⁷⁵ who has perhaps suspected otherwise of us (the truth of²⁷⁶) our accurate observance will be manifest. 5 Around such a one, however, we must guard our accurate observance more carefully (and diligently),²⁷⁷ in order that both the truth may be manifest and suspicion of any negligence be averted. 6 Thus shall we be well pleasing to God and such a one will either be benefited, or (if he is a dissimulator), refuted.

SR 98 (RBas. 15)²⁷⁸

Q: What mind²⁷⁹ (within himself) ought one who presides²⁸⁰ have towards those he orders or directs?

²⁷⁴ RBas. 87. 4: Meanwhile (it can happen that with time) he finds profit and delight in the (holiness) of life (and may continue with what he began).

²⁷⁵ RBas. 87. 4: human beings—homines.

²⁷⁶ RBas. 87. 4: the truth of our institutions (veritas institutionum nostrarum).

²⁷⁷ RBas. 87. 5 completes: so that if he *continues in the truth* he may profit, or if he is *spying out the liberty* (Gal. 2: 4–5) of our institutions, we shall be found equal to the test and blameless.

²⁷⁸ See SR 184, where there seems to be partial duplication, at least of Scripture texts.

²⁷⁹ Ποταπὸν φρόνημα ὀφείλει ἔχειν ὁ προεστῶς, RBas. 15. Q: Quod sentire de se debet is qui praeest.

²⁸⁰ ὁ προεστῶς, RBas 15. Q: qui praeest. This is the earliest occurrence of the singular term for the superior, and it appears in the Small Asketikon. The participial form is maintained in translation. Suitably the office receives here its

R: 1 Towards God he should be as a minister of Christ and steward of the mysteries of God (1 Cor. 4:1), fearing to say or prescribe anything apart from the will of God (or apart from what is clearly)²⁸¹ attested in the Scriptures 2 and be found bearing false witness to God (1 Cor. 15:15) or sacrilegious, whether by introducing anything foreign to the Lord's teaching, or by allowing to pass (or by overlooking) anything pleasing to God.²⁸²

3 But towards the brothers (he should be) as a nurse cherishing her children (1 Thess. 2:7), willing to share with each, so as to please God and benefit all in common, not only the Gospel of God but also his own life (cf. 1 Thess. 2:8),²⁸³ 4 according to the²⁸⁴ commandment of our Lord and God (John 20:28) Jesus

scriptural characterization. Other occurrences of the singular term in the Small Asketikon (excluding interpolations by Rufinus): *SR 27 (RBas. 44. Q)*, *SR 108 (RBas. 197. Q)*, where also in feminine form, *SR 109 (RBas. 198. Q)*, where also in feminine form, *SR 120 (RBas. 80. Q)*, *SR 134 (RBas. 96. 1)*, *SR 146 (RBas. 106. Q)*. These instances prove that such an office—or two, one male, one female—existed even at the earliest stage of the cenobitic community as envisaged by Basil. Plural terms sometimes denote a body of elders within the community, sometimes a body of subordinate officials; see *SR 19 (RBas. 9. 6)*, *SR 145 (RBas. 105. 1)* and note, *SR 160 (RBas. 36. 3)*, *SR 119 (RBas. 69. 6)*, *SR 96 (RBas. 81. 1)*, *SR 106 (RBas. 94)*, *SR 123 (RBas. 176. 1)*, *SR 135, 142, 145*.

²⁸¹ *τι παρὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ ἐν ταῖς Γραφαῖς ὁμολογούμενον. RBas. 15. 1:* *timens ne praeter voluntatem Dei vel praeter quod in sanctis scripturis evidentiter praecipitur; cf. RB 2. 4: abbas nihil extra praeceptum Domini quod sit debet aut docere aut constituere vel iubere. SR 98 has no parallel for the bracketed words. Gribomont ('The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 249) recognizes the Greek text as the more authentic version and implies that Rufinus has inserted *vel praeter quod* saying 'The translator Rufinus is no longer capable of understanding the unity of these ideas.' As far as Basil's attitude to the scriptures in the *RBas.*, Gribomont is probably right. But with Basil's thinking at an earlier stage, in Letter 2, a *vel praeter quod* would be quite compatible: 'A most important path to the discovery of duty is also the study (*καὶ ἡ μελέτη*) of the divinely inspired Scriptures' (Def. 1. 14–15). Pertinently, this *καὶ* has dropped out of two MSS of Basil's letters and one may wonder if this may have happened in the text of the Great Asketikon, with the consequence that Rufinus has preserved an older reading, rather than 'interpreting' his text. On the other hand, one may ask whether the 'vel' functions as it does in many of his doublets, when he adduces a synonym, so that it means 'or alternatively' or 'that is to say . . .', so that the sense of his translation is: '. . . anything apart from the will of God, that is to say: apart from what is clearly borne witness to in the Scriptures'.*

²⁸² Cf. *RB 2. 4:* 'Therefore, the abbot must never teach or arrange or command anything apart from the precept of the Lord.'

²⁸³ *RBas. 15. 3* coordinates the subordinate clauses somewhat differently: being prepared according to the will of the Lord and according to what is to the benefit of each, *to share with them not only the Gospel of God, but even his own life*. See *Morals 80. 18* for use of the same verse and same teaching.

²⁸⁴ *RBas. 15. 4:* being mindful of.

Christ²⁸⁵ who said: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you (John 13: 34) . . . Greater love no man has than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15: 13).*

SR 99 (RBas. 23)

Q: With what kind of disposition (or cast of mind) should he rebuke who administers a rebuke?²⁸⁶

R: 1 Towards God he should be of such mind as was shown by blessed David when he said: *I beheld the foolish and I grew faint because they did not keep your words (Ps. 118: 158).*

2 Towards those whom he rebukes, let him adopt the disposition of a father and physician who treats his own (ailing) son with sympathy and compassion skillfully and especially so when there is accompanying grief and the manner of treatment is drastic.²⁸⁷

SR 100 (RBas. 98)

Q: How are we to send on their way those (the poor) who come begging (to the door) from outside?²⁸⁸ Ought anyone who wishes provide them with bread or whatever, or should it only be the task of the one to whom²⁸⁹ it is assigned?

R: 1 When the Lord said *It is not good to take the children's bread and give it to the house-dogs, he willingly accepted that house-dogs too eat the morsels that fall from the children's table (Matt. 15. 26–7).* Therefore, let the one charged with the distribution prudently perform this task. 2 But if anyone else (presumes to) does so without his approval, let him be rebuked as (restless

²⁸⁵ The Nicene Christology already attested in the Small Asketikon, is made slightly more explicit in the Great Asketikon.

²⁸⁶ Ποταπή διαθέσει χργή ἐπιτιμιῶν τόν επιτιμιῶντα. RBas. 23. Q: Quali affectu vel quali sensu oportet increpare eum qui increpat?

²⁸⁷ RBas. 23. 2: he ought to observe the disposition that a father or physician observes towards his ailing son—especially when the manner of the treatment (appears) more (distressing and) grievous. See RBas. 24 (SR 158) on the superior as father and soul-doctor.

²⁸⁸ ἔξωθεν, Basil's usual term for those from 'the world' or society outside. RBas. 98. Q: the poor who come to the door (Pauperes venientes ad ostium).

²⁸⁹ RBas. 98. Q completes with: . . . the one presiding (qui praest) has entrusted it?

and undisciplined), a destroyer of good order,²⁹⁰ **until he learns to keep in** (the order of) **his place, 3 as the Apostle said: Brothers, let each keep to that wherein he was called** (1 Cor. 7: 20).

SR 101 (RBas. 185)

Q: Must the one entrusted with the stewardship of the goods dedicated to the Lord fulfil that commandment which says: *Give to everyone who asks and from him who would borrow from you, do not turn away?* (Matt. 5: 42; Luke 6: 30)

R: 1 This saying: *Give to everyone who asks and from him who would borrow from you, do not turn away* (Matt. 5: 42; Luke 6: 30) refers to a kind of trial, as is indicated by what follows. 2 It ought to be carried out for the wicked not of set purpose but according to circumstance.²⁹¹ 3 For what the Lord's commands of set purpose is: *Sell your possessions and give to the poor*, and again: *Sell your possessions and give alms* (Matt. 19: 21; Luke 18: 22). 4 What is set apart (and assigned) for some may not be reassigned to others without peril,²⁹² since the Lord says *I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel*, 5 *It is not right to take the children's bread and give it to the house-dogs* (Matt. 15: 24, 26), *why indeed does not each judge for himself what is just?*²⁹³ (Luke 12: 57)

SR 102

Q: Should one who is departing the community for whatever reason be restrained by appeal²⁹⁴ or not? And if so, by what kind?

²⁹⁰ ὡς διαφθορεὺς τῆς εὐταξίας. See the note on 'good order' at LR 27. RBas. 98. 2: tamquam inquietus et indisciplinatus. RB 2. 25 seems to show a verbal borrowing: indisciplinatos et inquietos debet durius arguere (RM); see Gribomont, 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 250.

²⁹¹ RBas. 185. 2: for it is not principally commanded for the wicked, but ought to be carried out in necessity as it were.

²⁹² In Letter 150, Def. III. 368–9, Heracleidas reports of Basil: 'He said that experience was needed in order to distinguish between one who is genuinely needy and one begging from avarice. For whereas he who gives to the afflicted gives to the Lord and from the Lord shall receive his reward, on the other hand, he who gives to every vagabond casts to a dog, which is troublesome indeed from his shamelessness, but deserving no pity on the ground of need.'

²⁹³ Luke 12: 57 has 3rd person plural, here converted to 3rd person singular. RBas. 185. 5 puts it in 2nd person singular: but you ought to judge for yourself what is just.

²⁹⁴ παρακλήσει—a mix of comfort, appeal, and exhortation.

R: The Lord said: *him who comes to me I will in no way cast out* (John 6: 37) and again: *It is not the healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick* (Matt. 9: 12)²⁹⁵ and elsewhere: *Which of you having a hundred sheep, if one of them goes astray, does not leave the ninety-nine . . . and go and seek the stray, until he finds it?* (Matt. 18: 12 + Luke 15: 4). So we must in every way attend the sick man and strive to set the dislocated member, so to speak. But if he persists in his malady, whatever it might be, then let him depart as a stranger. For it is written: *Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted shall be rooted up. Leave them alone: they are blind* (Matt. 15: 13–14).

SR 103

Q: We have already been taught that we must be subject to our elders *even unto death* (Phil. 2: 8), but if it happens that the elder himself falls in some way, we ask to be taught whether he should be confronted and, if so, how and by whom? And if he will not accept it, what should be done?

R: A clear answer has already been given on these points in the Longer Responses.²⁹⁶

SR 104

Q: How should responsibilities²⁹⁷ be entrusted to the brothers? Shall the one who presides make the decision alone, or shall the brothers vote on it? And likewise among the sisters.

R: If each is taught to reveal his thoughts before others²⁹⁸ (cf. Jas. 5: 16), how much more should such things be done by the discernment of those who are fitted for this? The administration of God's concerns ought to be entrusted for God's sake to those who have already given proof of being able to administer this trust in a way well pleasing to the Lord. Yet the one who presides must in every way remember what the Holy Scripture says: *Do everything with counsel* (Sir. 32: 19).²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ Also quoted in *RB* 27. 1.

²⁹⁶ See *LR* 27. Basil also refers to a distinct set of 'Longer' Responses at *SR* 74 and 220. The terms used in the question are *τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις . . . τὸν πρεσβύτερον* = 'presbyter/s', here translated as 'elder/s'.

²⁹⁷ *τὰς φροντίδας*. Allusion to this word continues in the response with *φρονεῖ*.

²⁹⁸ *περὶ ὧν φρονεῖ ἕκαστος*. An exact scriptural parallel for this statement is hard to find, but for echoes of the sense see Acts 19: 18, Rom. 12: 3, Jas. 5: 16.

²⁹⁹ Quoted also in *LR* 48 and in *RB* 3. 13.

SR 105 (RBas. 192)

Q: Ought those entering the community begin to learn crafts immediately?³⁰⁰

R: 1 Let those who preside make the decision.³⁰¹

SR 106 (RBas. 194)

Q: What penalties should be used in community³⁰² for the amendment of those who sin?

R: 1 Let this be left to the judgment of those who preside, both as to the time and the type (of penalty) required, taking into account bodily age, the condition of the soul, and the particular character of the sin (since both age and understanding make a great difference as to punishment).³⁰³

³⁰⁰ RBas. 192. Q has 'ad fratres' for εἰς ἀδελφότητα and 'discere' (learn), not the διδάσκειν (teach) of the Greek.

³⁰¹ οἱ προεστῶτες δοκιμάσουσιν, RBas. 192. 1: Qui praesunt probent. That is the sum of the response, both in the Latin and the Greek. Zelzer supplies in a note the continuance of the text in Holste's edition, without adducing M (a chief source of Hol.) or any other codex in support (see the list of Zelzer's manuscripts in Appendix 4): '[assess] whether they are to educate in various crafts one whom they want to associate with the body of the community, to the measure and in the kind suitable for their age and condition—for example: if he is found less fitted for the spiritual things that must be meditated and carried out, let him be accommodated with occupations of another sort, lest, grown sluggish with idleness and unoccupied, he may be exposed in a way to Satan's darts, who may then take up residence. For the Apostle says: *Whoever does not work, let him not eat* (2 Thess. 3: 10). And Solomon: *Idleness is the enemy of the soul.*'

Grib. 106 briefly notes the use of the singular: *qui praees* in printed editions (Bivar and Venise) following W and a short addition in L. He concludes: 'En revanche, Holste ajoute neuf lignes, qui cherchent d'ailleurs à imiter la manière de Basile.'

Curiously there appear to be two verbal parallels in the *RB* to the Holste text, 'sociari voluerint corpori congregationis', namely *RB* 61.7 'sociari corpori monasterii' and *RB* 61.8 'suscipiatur congregatio sociandus'.

The concluding text cited as if from Solomon does not appear in Scripture. Yet it is also found at *RB* 48. 1. *RB* 80, ed. T. Fry *et al.* (Collegeville, Minn., 1980) indicates in the apparatus on p. 248 that *RB* is borrowing from *RBas.*—evidently relying on Holste's edition. At the same place are several cross-references to Cyprian, who was certainly a source for the *RB*: to *Quirinus* (Testimoniorum 3, 1, 3), *On the Lord's Prayer* 7, to *Fortunatus*, par. 1, *On Zeal and Envy* 16, *Letter* 38. 2. Cf. Lienhard, 'St. Basil's "Asceticon Parvum"', 236 and de Vogüé, 'Twenty-Five Years', 413 n. 37.

³⁰² ἐν ἀδελφότητι, RBas. 194. Q: among the brothers—inter fratres.

³⁰³ RBas. 194. 1: et aetas et eruditio multam habere facit differentiam poenae; cf. *RB* 30, which asks how boys should be corrected (qualiter corripiantur). *RB* 30. 1: Omnis aetas vel intellectus proprias habere mensuras . . . and *RB* 23. 4: si intellegit qualis poena sit . . .

SR 107

Q: If someone says he desires to join the community but, because he must care for his relatives according to the flesh or even pay taxes, is constantly hindered from giving himself once and for all to this way of life, should we allow him access among the brothers?³⁰⁴

R: To cut off eagerness for the good is not without a risk. Nevertheless, it is not safe to give the entrant an opportunity of discussing external matters foreign to the life according to God.³⁰⁵ But there is a better hope if the entrant commits himself to the life inside, bringing in with him no concerns from outside.³⁰⁶

SR 108 (RBas. 197)

Q: Should he who presides³⁰⁷ discuss matters concerning the upbuilding of the faith with any sister,³⁰⁸ apart from her who presides (over the sisters)?³⁰⁹

R: 1 In that case, how shall he observe that precept of the

³⁰⁴ εἰ χροῖ συγχωρεῖν αὐτῷ τὴν πρὸς ἀδελφοὺς εἴσοδον. Thus the communities were able to accommodate short- and long-term visitors and candidates, yet without bringing them into the community. The beginnings of the tradition of monastic enclosure are here. See also LR 15. 1 and note.

³⁰⁵ See RB 67. 5.

³⁰⁶ An interesting example of just such a partial or intermittent membership is a disciple of Makrina called Vetiana (*VSM*, Callahan 185), a senatorial widow who seems to have combined maintaining certain responsibilities of her rank, with frequent stays in community: ‘She made Makrina the guardian and director of her widowhood and spending much of her time with the women she learned from them the life of virtue.’

³⁰⁷ τὸν προεστῶτα, *RBas.* 197. Q: eum qui praest.

³⁰⁸ ἀδελφῆ, *RBas.* 197. Q: virginibus, ‘with the virgins’. Note that (1) ‘sisters’ and ‘virgins’ are equivalent—an example, no doubt, of Rufinian *variatio*; (2) the Greek speaks of sister in the singular rather than in the plural.

³⁰⁹ τῆς προεστῶσης, *RBas.* 108. Q: eam quae sororibus praest. Colb. (Ask. 6) adds the phrase ἀδελφαίς, possibly from a copy of the *RBas.* There are signs that in the early stages a female *proestosa* might sometimes preside over the whole community, both men and women. In the 370s Makrina presided at Annisa, with a deaconess Lampadium in charge of the women, while her brother Peter was both in charge of the men and served the whole community as priest, a rare situation not easily replicated. See *VSM* (Callahan 174, 183). The Theodora Basil addresses in Letter 173, Def. II. 448–53 belonged to a community of both men and women, and may well have been their overall superior; Egeria’s friend, the deaconess Marthana, governed a community of both men and women at St Thecla’s, in Seleucia of Isauria, *Diary of a Pilgrimage* 22. Of course, devout aristocratic widows presided over their own households, including both men and women, of which Emmelia, Makrina’s mother, is a pre-eminent example; cf. also Magna of Ancyra (Palladius, *Lausiac History* 67). See SR 220 and note.

Apostle who says: *Let all you do be done decently and in order?* (1 Cor. 14: 40)

SR 109 (RBas. 198)

Q: Is it suitable for him who presides³¹⁰ to converse frequently with her who presides (over the sisters) and particularly if some of the brothers take offence at this?

R: 1 Though³¹¹ the Apostle says *why should my liberty be judged by another's conscience?* (1 Cor. 10: 29) it is well to remember³¹² him who says: *I did not use this right, that I might not provide the least hindrance to the Gospel of Christ* (1 Cor. 9: 12), 2 and, as far as possible, keep such meetings (and their consultations) rare and quickly broken off.

SR 110 (RBas. 199)

Q: When a sister confesses to the *presbyter* should the *presbytera* be present too?³¹³

R: 1. It seems to me that confession to the *presbyter*, who is able to prescribe with knowledge the manner of repentance and amendment, will take place with more seemliness and piety if the *presbytera* is present.³¹⁴

³¹⁰ τὸν προσεστώτα, RBas. 198. Q: eum qui praest.

³¹¹ While Basil has nothing in principle against frequent consultation between the two superiors, he clearly advises economic restraint for the sake of others. Clarke's 'Yes, since the apostle said . . .' (270) remarkably over-interprets a genitive absolute, on which it was unwise for Elm to rely (p. 75). Rufinus had the advantage of maintaining the Greek genitive absolute as Latin ablative absolute.

³¹² Reg. prim. and Voss. (Ask. 3) μιμεῖσθαι, imitate; likewise RBas. 198. 1: imitari.

³¹³ Εἰ χρῆ, ἐξομολογουμένης ἀδελφῆς τῷ πρεσβυτέρῳ, καὶ τὴν πρεσβυτέραν παρεῖναι. RBas. 199. Q: Si oportet cum soror aliqua confitetur quodcumque delictum suum presbytero etiam matrem monasterii adesse? Rufinus has paraphrased *presbytera* as *matrem monasterii*, 'mother of the monastery'.

³¹⁴ Rufinus' text is too differently arranged to collate with the Greek. RBas. 199. 1: It seems to me to be more honourable and more pious that the *presbyter* (if it seems to him indicated), prescribe through the senior mother (per seniorem matrem) the measure and kind of penance for her emendment (who desires to have her sin corrected).

Why would a sister be confessing to a *presbyter* and not a *presbytera*? She is not confessing sacramentally to a *presbyter* as a *priest*, an anachronistic conception, since at this period the sacrament of penance was only administered according to the Church's public discipline and was only concerned with grave sins. Though it is difficult to recover the background with assurance, the solution may be that the sister's confession to a male *presbyter* is a private 'medicinal' confession before one who can be and increasingly *is* also a priest; but it is not the much later *sacramental* 'confession of devotion'. See also SR 288 and note, SR 229 and note.

SR 111 (RBas. 201)

Q: If the presbyter has ordered something to be done among the sisters without the knowledge of the *presbytera*, is the *presbytera* right to be indignant?³¹⁵

R: Most certainly!³¹⁶

SR 112

Q: If someone comes to the life according to God, is it fitting that the one who presides should receive such a one without the approval of the brothers? Or should he first refer the matter to them?

R: The Lord teaches that when someone repents, *the friends and neighbours are called together* (cf. Luke 15: 6). So it is altogether most necessary that the newcomer be received with the knowledge of all the brothers³¹⁷ so that they may rejoice with one another and pray together.

SR 113

Q: How can one entrusted with the responsibility of souls observe the saying, *Except you change and become as little children* (Matt. 18: 3), since he has to deal with so many different persons?

R: Since Solomon the most wise said: *There is a season for everything* (Eccles. 3: 1), we must know that humility, authority, rebuke, appeal, lenience,³¹⁸ candour,³¹⁹ kindness, severity—in a word, *everything*, has its proper season. Accordingly, at one time we show the marks of humility and imitate children in their humility, especially when there is occasion to honour and oblige one another and to minister and attend to the body, as the Lord taught (cf. John 13: 4–5); while at another time we use authority, which the Lord has given for building up and not for casting down, when the need requires candour. And at the right time for appeal we show kindness, at the right time for severity, we display zeal and so on, on each occasion.

³¹⁵ RBas. 201. Q transliterates *presbyter*, but for *presbytera* uses ‘senior mater’. It may be noted that in the Great Asketikon the theme of the present response follows the preceding more consistently than does the sequence of the *RBas*.

³¹⁶ καὶ σφόδρα, RBas. 201. 1: et valde.

³¹⁷ i.e. all the brothers and sisters, who will ‘pray together’ in the ‘house of God’ at the reception of a newcomer. In the *VSM* Gregory of Nyssa describes his reception by both the brothers and sisters. See Stramara 285 and 304 for a reading of SR 112.

³¹⁸ φειδοῦς, sparing, forbearing, showing mercy.

³¹⁹ παρρησίας, liberty of speech, speaking out daringly or frankly.

SR 114 (RBas. 13)

Q: The Lord commands, *If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two* (Matt. 5: 41) and the Apostle teaches us to be *subject to one another out of reverence for Christ* (Eph. 5: 21). Therefore **do we owe obedience to everyone and anyone** who gives us orders?³²⁰

R: **1 A difference** (or diversity) **in those who give the order should not prejudice the obedience of those who receive the order.** Moses for example **did not refuse to hear**³²¹ **his father-in-law Jethro, when he gave good** (and just) **counsel** (cf. Exod. 18: 19).

2 But there is (certainly) **no small diversity in the things commanded, for some are** (appear to be) **contrary to the commandments of the Lord (God), 3 others** (appear to) **corrupt it or** in various ways **adulterate it** by an admixture of what is forbidden, **while others**³²² agree with the commandment. Still others, while not manifestly agreeing with it, yet contribute and, as it were, **help the commandment.** **4 It is necessary then to remember the** (precept of) **the Apostle who said: Do not despise prophesyings, but test all things, hold fast to the good, abstain from every semblance of evil** (1 Thess. 5: 20–1), **5 and again: (Purging**³²³ or) **casting down arguments and every high thing exalted against the knowledge of the Lord, taking every thought captive for obedience to Christ** (2 Cor. 10: 5).³²⁴ **6 So if we are ordered to do something which agrees with the commandment of the Lord or contributes to fulfilling it** (and is a help to the soul), **7 then we ought to receive it zealously and attentively**³²⁵ **as the will of God, fulfilling what is written: bearing with one another in the love of Christ** (Eph. 4: 2).

8 But if we are ordered to do something opposed to the commandment(s) of the Lord³²⁶ **or something that** (appears to) **corrupt or adulterate it, it is time then to say: We ought to obey God rather than men** (Acts 5: 29), **9 and to be mindful of the Lord who says, They do not follow (the voice of) a stranger, but flee from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers** (John

³²⁰ Similar ground is covered in the much later *SR* 303. The Latin text is somewhat disarrayed, since the Matt. 5: 41 text is cited at *RBas.* 12. 16 immediately preceding.

³²¹ *παρήκουσε*, *RBas.* 13. 1: neque Moyses intemperans existit . . .

³²² *RBas.* 13. 3: help to fulfil and build it up.

³²³ *RBas.* 13. 5: purgantes, a good synonym for *καθαροῦντες*.

³²⁴ This verse is used in *De Iudicio*, *PG* 31. 669A at an important juncture of Basil's argument that *all* disobedience is liable to judgment, that no sin may be regarded as small.

³²⁵ *RBas.* 13. 7: prompte et libenter, promptly and willingly.

³²⁶ *RBas.* 13. 8: God.

10: 5). 10 And we ought to be mindful of the Apostle, who, for our reassurance, dared to hold to account³²⁷ even the angels when he said: 11 *Though we ourselves or an angel from heaven should proclaim a gospel to you other than the one we have already proclaimed to you, let him be anathema* (Gal. 1: 8).

12 From these sayings we are taught that even if someone is very dear to us, maybe even of exalted status (and held in admiration), 13 yet who hinders us from doing what the Lord has prescribed, or who orders us to do what (the Lord) has forbidden, such a one ought to be shunned and execrated by all who love the Lord.³²⁸

SR 115 (RBas. 64)

Q: How must we obey *one another*?³²⁹ (cf. Eph. 5: 21; Phil. 2: 3; 1 Pet. 5: 5)

R: 1 As servants do their masters, just as the Lord prescribed: *Whoever wants to be great among you, let him be the last of all and the servant of all* (cf. Matt. 20: 26–7; Mark 9: 35, 10: 43–4). 2 So as to persuade (us) the more (to humility) he added: *Just as the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve* (Matt. 20: 28; cf. Mark 10: 45) and there is that saying of the Apostle: *serve one another in the love of the Spirit* (Gal. 5: 13).

³²⁷ RBas. 13. 10: ausus est ne angelis quidem parcere, dared even not to spare . . . Here Rufinus slightly tones down the Greek term: *κατάψασθαι*, upbraid, attack, lay hold of.

³²⁸ That there may be occasions when it is necessary to confront one's community or even one's superior for dereliction of obedience to the Lord, see LR 36 and note, SR 303 and note and *Morals* 28: 'That we must not be easily and uncritically carried along by those having a semblance of the truth, but must recognize each one by the criterion given us by Scripture'; also *Morals* 19. 1 and 40. Basil's own life bears witness to his painful estrangements with superiors who prevaricated with the truth, beginning with Bishop Dianius who had baptized him and temporized with imperial Arian formulas, and culminating in his calamitous rupture with Eustathius of Sebasteia when his Homoiousianism took an Arianizing turn, to say nothing of Basil's steadfastness towards civil rulers, including high imperial officials and the Emperor himself along the way.

³²⁹ RBas. 64. Q: Quomodo invicem oboedire debemus? For the same theme and vocabulary of mutual obedience cf. RB 71 title and RB. 71. 1: ut oboedientes sibi sint invicem; cf. de Vogüć, 'Twenty-Five Years', 412.

SR 116 (RBas. 65)

Q: What ought to be the measure of obedience³³⁰ (of one who desires to fulfil) in the rule of being well pleasing to God?

R: 1 The Apostle shows (us) when he sets before us the obedience of the Lord, *who was made he says, obedient unto death, even death on a cross* (Phil. 2:8), having prefaced it with: *have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus* (Phil. 2:5).

SR 117 (RBas. 67)

Q: If someone is discontented with what he is enjoined to do daily in view of the commandment (of God) set before him³³¹ but wants to learn a craft instead, from what kind of passion is he ailing and should he be forborn?

R: 1 Such a one is presumptuous and a self-pleaser and without faith, since³³² he does not fear that judgment of the Lord who says *Be prepared, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect!* (Luke 12:40) 2 For if someone expects the Lord daily and hourly, he is (careful and) anxious that the present day does not pass by idly and he busies himself with nothing else.

3 But if he has been ordered to learn a craft, let him in his obedience cleave to the prize of being well pleasing to God and not incur the judgment for delay.³³³

SR 118 (RBas. 68)

Q: What if someone is zealous for (and prompt to fulfil) the commandment(s), but does what he wants rather than what is ordered, what is his reward?

³³⁰ RBas. 65. Q: Usque ad quem modum oboedire oportet. Cf. RB 7. 34 (the third degree of humility) for the same citation and the same doctrine: ut quis pro Dei amore omni oboedientia se subdat maiori, imitans Dominum, de quo dicit Apostolus: *Factus oboediens usque ad mortem.*

³³¹ RBas. 67. Q is obscure: sibi aliquid iniungi de his quae pro mandato Dei incidunt: with whatever is enjoined on him of those things which come about in view of the commandment of God. There are many variations of wording in the codices.

³³² RBas. 67. 1: qui, who.

³³³ ἐν τῇ ὑποκοῇ ἐχέτω τὸ κέρδος τῆς πρὸς Θεὸν ἐναρεστήσεως καὶ μὴ ἐν τῇ ὑπερθέσει τὸ κρῖμα. RBas. 67. 3: oboedientiae suae habeat lucrum et in hoc placeat et non in eo quod sibi placet assumat iudicium, 'let him hold fast the benefit of obedience and in this please God and in this way not incur judgment for pleasing himself'. Rufinus rearranges the argument somewhat and at the end reassigns the 'judgment'. This Rufinian paraphrase of Basil seems to be the source of the Benedictine 'boon of obedience' (RB 71. 1) Oboedientiae bonum . . . exhibendum est.

R: 1 (His reward is the same) **as for self-pleasing.**³³⁴ Since the Apostle says *Let each one please his neighbour for his benefit, with a view to his upbuilding* (Rom. 15. 2), **2** and (that he might the more persuade and constrain his hearers) **adds** with still greater importunity **that even Christ did not please himself** (Phil. 2:8 Byz.), the self-pleaser **ought to recognize his own peril. Such a one is also exposed as insubordinate.**³³⁵

SR 119 (RBas. 69)

Q: Is it permissible for anyone to beg off the work entrusted to him and seek something else?

R: 1 Since (it is laid down that) **the measure of obedience, as we have said before, is even unto death** (Phil. 2:8), **anyone who begs off what he is entrusted to do and seeks something else, first of all corrupts obedience,**³³⁶ **since he manifestly** (shows that he) **does not deny himself** (Matt. 16:24).

2 Secondly, he becomes the cause of many more ills both for himself and for the others. For he both opens the door of contradiction³³⁷ to many and accustoms himself to it (contradiction). **3** Because indeed not everyone is able to test what is better (and to choose it), he frequently chooses a task that is harmful to himself.³³⁸

4 Thirdly, he fosters evil suspicions among the brothers that he has some prior attachment³³⁹ to the work he seeks, or (even) to those with whom he would have to work.

5 Thus, not to obey is in every way the (cause and) root of many evils.

6 But if he considers that he has some reason why he might (rightly) beg off that task,³⁴⁰ let him reveal it to those who preside

³³⁴ ἀνταρρεσκίας.

³³⁵ RBas. 68. 2: each ought to know that his danger consists in this: that he wants to please himself and, moreover, he is found to be disobedient.

³³⁶ ὑπακοῆν διαφθείρει. RBas. 69. 1: is, first of all, guilty (reus) of disobedience and manifestly (shows that he) has not (yet) denied himself.

³³⁷ ἀντιλογίας, contradictionis.

³³⁸ RBas. 69. 3: it can happen that (with so much licence) someone will choose what is worse.

³³⁹ The adverb προπεπόνθως (from προπάσχω) is here interpreted according to RBas. 69. 4: moved by some passion for . . .

³⁴⁰ RBas. 69. 6: But if there is some reason whereby (it seems to him) he might (rightly) decline that task (which he declines) . . .

and leave it to their judgment³⁴¹ (that he may evaluate whether the plea he submits has merit).

SR 120 (RBas. 80)

Q: Ought one go anywhere without mentioning it to the one who presides?³⁴²

R: 1 Since the Lord says, *I have not come of myself, but it was he who sent me* (John 7:28; cf. 5:30, 6:38),³⁴³ how much less ought each of us to give himself permission! **2** For whoever gives himself permission³⁴⁴ is manifestly diseased with pride³⁴⁵ and liable to that judgment of the Lord which says: *That which is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God* (Luke 16:15). **3** So, this giving oneself permission is entirely blameworthy.³⁴⁶

SR 121 (RBas. 82)

Q: Is it permissible (for anyone) **to beg off work that** (seems to be) **heavier?**

R: 1 He who is (faithful and) **genuine in his love for God** and secure in his **assurance of recompense from the Lord**,³⁴⁷ **2 is not satisfied with present tasks**,³⁴⁸ **but is always seeking to add to them and** (desiring and) **reaching for something more** (than what is commanded). **Even if he seems to be working beyond his strength,**

³⁴¹ τοῖς προεστῶσι καὶ καταλιμπανέτω τῇ ἐκείνων δοκιμασίᾳ. RBas. 69. 6: to the one who presides (huic qui praeest et relinquat eius iudicio) . . . Rufinus apparently changes the Greek plural to singular. Cf. the same phrase for ‘superior’ in RB 68. 2: si omnino virium suarum mensuram viderit pondus oneris excedere, impossibilitatis suae causas ei qui sibi praeest patienter et opportune suggerat non superbiendo aut resistendo vel contradicendo. According to de Vogüé (‘Twenty-Five Years’, 445 cf. also 443, 446), RBas. 69 ‘inspired RB 68’.

³⁴² τοῦ προεστῶτος, RBas. 80. Q: eo qui praest.

³⁴³ There is great variety in the scriptural texts here. Rufinus appears to have distinguished and expanded texts. C codex (RBas.) continues with John 5:30, *the will of him who sent me*. Zelzer follows S and the Greek text.

³⁴⁴ ἑαυτῷ ἐπιτρεπεῖν. RBas. 80. 2: does anything on his own authority.

³⁴⁵ δῆλός ἐστιν ὑψηλοφροσύνην νοσῶν, RBas. 80. 2: in the grip of the disease of pride.

³⁴⁶ RBas. 80. 3: So, doing anything at all on one’s own impulse or authority is blameworthy.

³⁴⁷ RBas. 82. 1: He who faithfully and purely loves God and is assured of recompense from the Lord.

³⁴⁸ τοῖς γινομένοις ἀρκέται, RBas. 82. 2 expresses it: is not satisfied to think of what is commanded.

3 he is never free of care as if having fulfilled his measure—but is ever (careful and) anxious lest he is fall short of what is worthy,³⁴⁹ 4 hearkening to the Lord who charges:³⁵⁰ *When you shall have done all that I have commanded you, then say ‘We are unprofitable servants, we have only done what it was our duty to do’* (Luke 17: 10), 5 and (shall also imitate) to the Apostle to whom *the world had been crucified and himself to the world* (cf. Gal. 6: 14), who was not ashamed to say: 6 *I do not consider myself to have taken possession. There is but one thing: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal, to the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus* (Phil. 3: 13–14). 7 This is he who, though he had the right as a preacher of the Gospel, to live from the Gospel (cf. 1 Cor. 9: 14), in (greater) toil and fatigue, he said, *working night and day* (have I lived), 8 *not as if I did not have the right, but that we might give you a pattern that you might imitate us* (2 Thess. 3: 8–9).

9 Who then would be so insensible or lacking in faith as ever to think present tasks enough, or to beg off any task as too onerous or too much work³⁵¹ (when this man begs for a measure he is not yet able to fulfil)?

SR 122 (RBas. 133)

Q: If someone is punished by not receiving a blessing³⁵² and says; ‘If I am not to receive a blessing, I will not eat’, ought we to bear³⁵³ with him?

R: 1 Whether the fault for which he is punished is enough to merit his exclusion from meals, is entirely for the one assigning the penalty³⁵⁴ to decide. 2 But if someone is judged unworthy only of the blessing, while being allowed to eat and yet does not bear it, then for this he must be judged as disobedient and *contentious* (cf. 1 Cor. 11: 16). At the same time let him consider himself and realize

³⁴⁹ τοῦ πρὸς ἀξίαν. RBas. 82. 3: the precepts of the Gospel.

³⁵⁰ RBas. 82. 4: mindful of those words of the Lord where He says *When you . . .*

³⁵¹ RBas. 82. 9: Since that is how things are, who is so stupid and lacking in faith, as to suppose he is weighed down with burdens too heavy or toilsome . . . ?

³⁵² εὐλογία, RBas. 133. Q: eulogiam. A mild disciplinary measure is meant; it cannot be exclusion from Holy Communion, which would pertain to the Church’s public penance. Cf. SR 44 for the penalties of ἀσιτία (deprivation of food) and ἀφορισμός (exclusion from prayer) and Palladius, *Lausiac History* 25. 3.

³⁵³ RBas. 133. Q: hear (pay heed to?)—audire.

³⁵⁴ RBas. 133. 1: the one who presides—qui praeest.

that by seeking this he is not curing himself, but adding sin to sin.³⁵⁵

SR 123 (RBas. 176)

Q: If someone grieves because he is not permitted to do what he cannot do fittingly (and correctly), should we bear with³⁵⁶ him?

R: 1 Concerning this it³⁵⁷ has (already) been said in many places that to use one's own will in any way, or to permit it, is contrary to sound reason so that not to submit to the decision of the many (or of those who preside)³⁵⁸ incurs the peril of disobedience and contradiction.³⁵⁹

SR 124

Q: If it somehow happens that one finds oneself among heretics or Greeks,³⁶⁰ should one eat with them or greet them?

R: The Lord did not in any way forbid an ordinary greeting of this kind, for he said: *If you greet only your friends what more do you do than others? Do not even the Gentiles do as much?* (Matt. 5:47 Byz.) But as for eating with them, we have a precept from the Apostle, showing in what circumstances we must avoid it. *I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with the licentious; but not altogether to exclude the licentious of this world, or the covetous or extortioners, or idol-worshippers; for then you would have to take leave of the world; but rather, what I wrote to you was that you do not associate with anyone bearing the name of a brother³⁶¹ who is licentious, or covetous, or an*

³⁵⁵ RBas. 133. 2: But if someone is kept only from the blessing, while food is allowed him, yet though already censured, disobeys as well, then he ought also to receive the blame for *contentiousness* and realize that through this he is not curing his fault but multiplying his offence.

³⁵⁶ RBas. 176. Q: *permittere*.

³⁵⁷ Greek uses a 3rd person passive: *εἴρηται*. RBas. 176. 1: we have (already) said—*diximus*.

³⁵⁸ RBas. 176. 1: . . . *vel multorum vel eorum qui praesunt*. This second part of the phrase not found in the Greek is evidently a gloss by Rufinus explaining who 'the many' are. In LR 45 Basil himself warns against 'democracy'.

³⁵⁹ RBas. 176. 1–2: it ought not be permitted anyone at all to do anything according to his own will, but according to the judgment (and approval) of the many (or of those who preside). 2 Whoever does not submit to this, let him incur the judgment of presumption and contradiction.

³⁶⁰ *Ἐλλήνων*, a common Christian term for 'pagans' or those of no Jewish or Christian allegiance. Reg. prim. and Colb. add *ἢ Ἰουδαίων*, 'or with Jews'.

³⁶¹ i.e. a Christian, which in the *Asketikon* means a member of the ascetic community.

idol-worshipper, or a mocker, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such a one do not even eat (1 Cor. 5: 9–11 Byz.).

SR 125

Q: If a work has been entrusted to someone who then does something apart from the instruction or beyond what was commanded or not in accordance with what was commanded,³⁶² ought he retain the work?

R: To arrogate any task to oneself is wholly displeasing to God. It neither befits nor benefits those who desire to *keep the bond of peace* (cf. Eph. 4: 3). But if someone persists in such presumption it is better that the work be taken from him. For he does not keep the command of him who said: *Brothers, let each abide in that wherein he was called* (1 Cor. 7: 24)³⁶³ and in even more compelling words: *Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think in a way that leads to wisdom, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned him* (Rom. 12: 3).

SR 126 (RBas. 48)

Q: **How is one not to be conquered by the (delight and) pleasure of food?**

R: **By always keeping the criterion of what is suitable as the guide and teacher of what should be taken for use—whether the foods are pleasing or not.**³⁶⁴

SR 127 (RBas. 79)

Q: **Some say it is impossible for a human being to avoid anger.**

R: **1 If it is possible for a soldier to be angry in the presence of his king!**³⁶⁵ **Yet even so, this opinion has no reasonable foundation.**

³⁶² There may be some diplography here: *παρὰ τὸ διατεταγμένον ἢ ὑπὲρ τὸ διατεταγμένον αὐτῷ.*

³⁶³ See Letter 22, Def. 1. 136–7 for the same sentiment and quotation.

³⁶⁴ RBas. 48. 1: ‘If one makes it a rule to seek not what pleases, but rather what is fitting and what is sufficient for use and not for delight.’ The Latin seems simpler than the rather convoluted Greek. Cf. Basil, Letter 22, Def. 1. 132–3, where he says ‘and should in no way be a lover of pleasure in food or drink’.

³⁶⁵ Christ the King and Christians as soldiers enlisted in his service are images that govern Basil’s *Praevia Institutio Ascetica*, or *Introductory Sketch of the Ascetic Life* (PG 31. 619–26, Clarke 55–9; Wagner 9–13).

2 For if the sight of a man of equal honour as to nature,³⁶⁶ can (merely) through the eminence of his rank, restrain passion, 3 how much more so (with God),³⁶⁷ if one is fully persuaded that God (is present even to our heart and) sees into (all) one's inner motions? For God *who searches hearts and inmost parts* (Ps. 7: 10), sees the motions of the soul far more than a human being sees what is before his eyes.

SR 128 (RBas. 88)

Q: If someone wants to practise self-control³⁶⁸ beyond his strength, so that through excessive abstinence he is hindered even in doing the commandment set before him,³⁶⁹ ought this be permitted (him)?

R: 1 (Your) The question does not appear to me to be put very well. 2 For self-control does not consist in abstinence from irrational foods, resulting in *the severity to the body* (Col. 2: 23) condemned by the Apostle, 3 but in complete secession from one's own will.³⁷⁰ 4 But how great is the peril of one who, through doing his own will, falls from (and not) the Lord's, is clear from³⁷¹ the words of the Apostle: *Fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of our thoughts, we were as much children of wrath (as were all the rest)* (Eph. 2: 3).

³⁶⁶ RBas. 79. 2: (having the same human form with other men through unity of nature). Due to the obscurity of the surviving Latin text, Zelzer obelizes this entire verse and notes: 'Cruces to be added; what Basil said is not understood except through the Greek text.'

³⁶⁷ RBas. completes the response thus: **3** how much more so with God, whom we are assured (is present even to our heart) and gazes on all our motives; **4** (the measure of whose greatness is manifest in this), that he is *the searcher of hearts and inward parts* and sees the motives of the soul (Ps. 7: 10; cf. Jer. 11: 20, 17: 10, 20: 12; Acts 2. 23).

³⁶⁸ ἐγκρατεῦσθαι.

³⁶⁹ RBas. 88. Q: hindered in the work of the commandments.

³⁷⁰ ἀναχωρήσει τῶν ἰδίων θελημάτων. RBas. 88. 2-3 uses a different scriptural text and argument, which concedes that abstinence does have some subordinate reference to food: **2** (we have said that) self-control has reference not only to foods (for even this is found to be culpable by the Apostle if it be done without faith and reason, when he says *Those who abstain from foods which God has created* (1 Tim. 4: 3), **3** rather, we said that self-control (continentiam) is perfect when one restrains (continet) oneself from one's own will.

³⁷¹ RBas. 88. 4: of one who wants to do his own will and not the Lord's is affirmed in the words . . .

SR 129 (RBas. 89)

Q: One who fasts much but at mealtime cannot endure the common food (with all the others), what should he rather choose: to fast with the brothers and to eat with them, or, because of his excessive fasting to require other foods at mealtime?

R: 1 The time for fasting does not depend on each one's will, but on the need (and order) of those following piety, 2 just as we learn from the accounts in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 13: 2–3) and from David the chosen (cf. Ps. 34: 13). 3 Therefore, anyone who fasts according to such a principle (and faithfully), is in every way counted worthy of receiving the strength for it,³⁷² for he who promised is faithful (Heb. 10: 23).

SR 130 (RBas. 90)

Q: Whenever there is need of fasting to fulfil one of the requirements for piety,³⁷³ how must we fast, with constraint or willingly?

R: 1 Since the Lord says: *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness* (Matt. 5:6), anything done for piety involves danger unless it is done with desire and zeal;³⁷⁴ (fasting therefore should be joined with zeal). Accordingly, one who fasts reluctantly does not do so without danger.

2 But that there is need of fasting on such occasions of need (especially when we desire to beseech the Lord for something), even the holy Apostle teaches 3 who among his other virtues tells of this one too for our instruction (saying), *In fasts often* (2 Cor. 11: 27).

SR 131 (RBas. 91)

Q: Does he do well who does not (want to) partake (the same food) when the brothers are at meals, but seeks something else?

³⁷² RBas. 89. 1–3 re-edits the text considerably. Instead of Basil's two scriptural allusions, a different one is used: The (measure) of fasting (*ieiunii mensura*) ought not depend on each one's will, but serve the use and order (*usu et institutione*) of those who serve God together, 2 in the same way as unanimity and concord in all things is reported of those who in the Acts of the Apostles are described as having *one heart and soul* (Acts 4: 32). 3 Therefore, whoever fasts according to this principle and faithfully (*Si quis ergo rationabiliter et fideliter*) obtains from the Lord the very strength to be able to sustain it, for *He who promised is faithful* (Heb. 10: 23).

³⁷³ RBas. 90. Q is somewhat more convoluted up to this point: when a necessary fast is enjoined, if on occasion some piety requires it to be fulfilled.

³⁷⁴ RBas. 90. 1: purposefully and zealously/devotedly—*ex proposito et devotione*.

R: 1 Fussing about food is wholly contrary to the commandment of the Lord who said: *Do not seek what you are to eat or what you are to drink and do not be of a distracted mind* (Luke 12: 29; cf. Matt. 6: 31). 2 And to impress it (on us) more forcefully, he added: *For the nations seek all these things.*

3 But the one who is assigned³⁷⁵ must carefully fulfil what is written: *It was distributed to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35).³⁷⁶

SR 132 (RBas. 92)

Q: But what if someone says ‘This does me harm!’ and grieves if another food is not given him?

R: 1 Clearly he is not established in that hope which *Lazarus*³⁷⁷ had (cf. Luke 16: 20–1) and does not recognize the love of the one entrusted with this care for everyone else and for him.³⁷⁸

2 But no one ought in any way to permit himself to decide what is harmful or what is beneficial,³⁷⁹ 3 but leave it to the one who has been assigned to assess the needs of each, who before all else seeks the benefit of the soul and in the second place, 4 ministers to the needs of the body, in accordance with the will of God.³⁸⁰

SR 133 (RBas. 93)

Q: But what of someone who murmurs about food (what judgment shall be observed in his regard)?

³⁷⁵ τοῦ δὲ ἐπιτεταγμένου. RBas. 91. 3: the one who presides—qui praeest. The Greek appears to be referring to a subordinate official, i.e. the one entrusted with the task of distributing food. The same shift between the Greek and the Latin terms appears in SR 135.

³⁷⁶ The same text is quoted at SR 135/RBas. 94. 3 and at RB 34. 1 and 55. 20.

³⁷⁷ *Lazarus* in Garnier’s text, and in Zelzer’s edition of the RBas.; *Eleazar* in HMTZ Hol. and, strangely, in Clarke’s translation; the reference is to the beggar who welcomed whatever scraps were given him, rather than the martyr who indeed had a sure hope (2 Macc. 6), but whose virtue was tested precisely in observing distinctions between foods.

³⁷⁸ RBas. 92. 1: is unsure that the (one who presides) loves him and fulfils this responsibility both for him and for all.

³⁷⁹ RBas. 92. 2–4: 2 but in no way ought it be permitted anyone to do anything by his own judgment (or will), concerning what is harmful or beneficial, 3 but it ought to be entrusted to the judgment of (the one who presides) who is to consult for each (as circumstance or) necessity demands. 4 He shall arrange first of all what is of benefit for souls and then, secondly, for bodily needs according to the will of God.

³⁸⁰ For the same order of care: first the spiritual, then the material see RB 2. 33–5.

R: **1** **Theirs is the judgment of those who murmured in the desert** (cf. Num. 11: 1); for the Apostle says *And do not murmur, as some of them murmured and they perished by the destroyer* (1 Cor. 10: 10).

SR 134 (RBas. 96)

Q: **What of one who angrily refuses to accept something given for his need(s)?**³⁸¹

R: **1** **Such a one deserves to receive nothing at all even if he does ask, until the one who presides**³⁸² **ascertains** (and when he sees) **that the passion** (of his soul)—or rather the passions—**are cured** (then indeed he shall provide for the needs of the body).

SR 135 (RBas. 94)

Q: **Should one who is fatigued with work himself seek something more than the usual?**

R: **1** **If he undertook the hard work in view of the reward from God, such a one ought not to seek compensation** (or respite) **for his toil, but reserve himself for the Lord's reward,**³⁸³ **2 knowing that** **as** he will be counted worthy of reward for his hard work, so also will he be counted worthy of consolation for his distress by God the lover of man.³⁸⁴

3 Nevertheless, the one appointed³⁸⁵ **to carry out** (that rule which says): *It was distributed to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35);³⁸⁶ **ought of necessity to recognize each of those who have worked hard and take fitting care of them.**³⁸⁷

³⁸¹ RBas. 96. Q: ad usus. See RB 43. 19 for a similar case: if one has refused something offered by the superior, but later wants it, he shall not receive anything till he makes fitting amends.

³⁸² ὁ προεστώς, RBas. 96. 1: is qui praest.

³⁸³ RBas. 94. 1: but (for these things) hasten (festinare) to the (promises) of the Lord.

³⁸⁴ παρακλήσεως . . . φιλανθρώπου Θεοῦ. RBas. 94. 2: as the Lord has prepared a reward for his toil(s), he has also prepared consolations for his distress(es).

³⁸⁵ ὁ ἐπιτεταγμένος. RBas. 94. 3: those who preside (hi qui praesunt) shall observe that rule . . . The Greek refers to the one entrusted with the distribution of food, RBas. to an echelon of officers or elders. On the question of one or several superiors in the community see SR 98 (RBas. 15. Q) and note.

³⁸⁶ Cf. RB 55. 20: A quo tamen abbate semper consideretur illa sententia Actuum Apostolorum, quia . . . *Dabatur singulis prout cuique opus erat* (cf. Gribomont, 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 258, no. 11).

³⁸⁷ RBas. 94. 3: for they ought to anticipate each one, so that they provide the solace of refreshment appropriate to the labour.

SR 136 (RBas. 97)

Q: Is it necessary that all gather at the hour of the meal,³⁸⁸ and how are we to deal with one who stays behind and arrives after the meal?

R: 1 If it was due to some necessity of place or work that he was detained (because of a common arrangement),³⁸⁹ as one who observes the precept of him who said: *Let each abide in that wherein he was called* (1 Cor. 7: 24). If the overseer of the common good order³⁹⁰ ascertains that this is so, he shall excuse him.

2 But if he was able to come in time, but did not (sufficiently) bestir himself, let him acknowledge the charge of (his) negligence and remain without food till the prescribed hour for the meal the next day.

SR 137 (RBas. 181)

Q: Is it good to decide for a certain time to abstain, for example, from such and such a food or drink?³⁹¹

R: 1 Any judgment of one's own will (of such a kind) is vulnerable to that saying of the Lord: *I came not to do my own will, but the will of the one who sent me* (John 6: 38). 2 David knew this when he said: *I have sworn and have determined to keep the judgments of your justice* (Ps. 118: 106)—not my own wishes.³⁹²

SR 138

Q: Is it right that anyone in the community be permitted to fast or keep vigil more than the others do, according to his own will?

³⁸⁸ τῆ ὥρᾳ τοῦ ἀρίστου, first meal of the day, late morning or midday. RBas. 97. Q: ad horam prandii. On meals in the community see LR 21 and note.

³⁸⁹ RBas. 97. 1: a communi ordine, as if translating κοινῇ εὐταξίᾳ, which phrase in fact appears shortly in the Greek.

³⁹⁰ ὁ τῆς κοινῆς εὐταξίας ἐφορος. RBas. 97. 1: (the one who presides)—qui praeest.

³⁹¹ RBas. 181. Q: abstinere se a tali vel tali cibo sive potu. See Letter 99. 28 to Amphilochius, Def. III. 118–19: 'One thing, however, seems to me ridiculous, that anyone should vow to abstain from swine's flesh. So do teach them to refrain from ignorant vows and promises, I beg you.' See also Palladius, *Lausiac History*, Prologue 9.

³⁹² οὐτὰ ἐμὰ θελήματα. RBas 181. 2: non meae voluntatis, 'not of my will'. This same teaching may be found in RB 49, on the observance of Lent, with some concurrence of vocabulary. Any extra works of penance e.g. 'ciborum et potus abstinentiam' (RB 49. 5) are not to be undertaken except 'cum voluntate abbatis' (RB 49. 10).

R: The Lord said: *I have come down from heaven, not in order to do my own will, but the will of the Father who sent me* (John 6: 38 Byz.); therefore, whatever anyone does according to his own will belongs to the doer and is estranged from piety. The fear is that such a one may hear from God concerning what he seems to accomplish: *To you it shall return and you shall rule over it* (cf. Gen. 4: 7).³⁹³ Moreover, the wish to do more by comparison with others, even in good matters, is itself a passion of contentiousness arising from vainglory, which the Apostle clearly forbids when he says: *For we do not dare to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves* (2 Cor. 10: 12).

It is therefore necessary that we set aside our own wishes and the desire of appearing to do anything beyond what others do, and so obey the Apostle who exhorts us saying: *Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31). For contentiousness and vainglory and self-pleasing are altogether alien to those *who contend lawfully in the good fight* (2 Tim. 2: 5 + 1 Tim 6: 12). Hence it says in one place: *Let us not be vainglorious* (Gal. 5: 26), in another, *But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither do the churches of God* (1 Cor. 11: 16); and again elsewhere: *We ought not to please ourselves* (Rom. 15: 1); to which he added, to put us to shame all the more: *For Christ also, did not please himself* (Rom. 15: 3).

But if someone thinks he needs to do more, whether by way of fasting or keeping vigil or something else, let him reveal his proposal to those entrusted with the common care and abide by their decision. For it will often be necessary to satisfy his need in another more effective way.

SR 139

Q: When fasting is prolonged we become too weak for our work; what then would be better to do: hinder our work for the sake of the fasting, or neglect our fasting for the sake of the work?

R: Both fasting and eating must be used in the way proper to piety; so that when we ought to be fulfilling God's commandment through fasting, we fast, and again when the commandment of God requires food to strengthen the body, we eat, not as gluttons, but as God's workers. For we must keep the Apostle's saying: *Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 21).

³⁹³ Πρὸς σέ ἡ ἀποστροφή αὐτοῦ, καὶ σὺ ἄρξεις. Basil has no doubt that the reason for the refusal of Cain's offering was that it was mixed up with self-will.

SR 140

Q: If someone shows no self-control with regard to harmful foods, but partakes of them freely and then falls sick, should we undertake his care?

R: Lack of self-control is a vicious thing indeed; and it is necessary to give forethought to the cure of this passion. For God the lover of man, wishing to show how great an evil is lack of self-control, often allows the soul to fall into the passion of unrestraint with regard to what harms the body, on the chance that it may come to perceive the damage it has received through the bodily harm that comes of unrestraint and so be guided to self-control in all things.

To undertake the care of the body in the case of those who are suffering the consequences of unrestraint is perhaps reasonable and in accord with kindness, but it should be done thoughtfully and not without testing, in such a way that in curing the body we do not omit to cure the soul.

Therefore if one notices that such a one is duly chastened by the cure of his body and attends to his own passions of soul, then continue the bodily cure. But if as he receives the care of his body, he is shown to ignore the soul, it is better that such a one be left in the pains which he has incurred from his own unrestraint till in the course of time he may *come to perceive himself* (cf. Luke 15: 17) and the risk of eternal punishment and so take thought again for the health of his soul. *For when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord that we may not be condemned along with the world* (1 Cor. 11: 32).

SR 141 (RBas. 101)

Q: Ought visitors be found in the workshops,³⁹⁴ or even some there (from the same monastery) leave their own place to enter the places of others?³⁹⁵

R: 1 Let anyone found doing this, except the one entrusted with oversight of the workers or (that is, who is concerned) with the assignment of tasks, 2 be (excluded from the common gathering and) forbidden even permissible comings and goings, as a dissolver of the good order of the members' harmony,³⁹⁶ 3 and sitting

³⁹⁴ RBas. 101. Q: Ought visitors come in as far as the places where the brothers work . . .

³⁹⁵ See Letter 22, Def. 1. 136-7: 'He should not be found going from one workshop to another'.

³⁹⁶ RBas. 101. 2: let him be excluded from the common gathering and altogether forbidden licit comings and goings, as one upsetting the discipline and order of the brothers.

in one place, which (the one who presides) **has been judged suitable for** (correction and) **chastisement** (let him not be permitted to go anywhere at large),³⁹⁷ **let him give himself to his work** without distraction **and more assiduously than was his custom** (and exercise himself in it daily), **until he learns to fulfil what the Apostle has said: Let each one abide in that wherein he was called (1 Cor. 7: 20, 24).**

SR 142 (RBas. 102)

Q: Should craftworkers accept a task from anyone without the approval (and order) **of him who** (presides and) is assigned the responsibility for these matters?³⁹⁸

R: 1 Let either of them, the giver and the receiver, **be subject to the judgment of the thief or of the thief's accomplice.**³⁹⁹

SR 143 (RBas. 103)

Q: How ought workers to care for those tools (or utensils) entrusted to them⁴⁰⁰ (which they use for work)?

R: 1 **First** (they ought to use them) **as** (tools) named and **dedicated to God; secondly, as being unable without them to show the unwearied zeal that is due.**⁴⁰¹

SR 144 (RBas. 104)

Q: What if someone loses one (of them) **through carelessness, or misuses it contemptuously?**

³⁹⁷ RBas. 101. 4: (but be urged to his) work much more than was his custom (and exercise himself in it daily), until he learns to fulfil . . .

³⁹⁸ On the varied testimony as to superior(s) and subordinate office holders in the community cf. SR 145.

³⁹⁹ RBas. 102. 1: One like this will be guilty of theft and likewise those who collude with his thefts. Gribomont points to RBas. 102 as the background of RB 57 title: 'Concerning the Craftsmen of the Monastery'—'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 258, no. 12.

⁴⁰⁰ τῶν πεπιστευμένων αὐτοῖς σκευῶν, as things dedicated and consecrated to God. RBas. 103. Q: curam gerere ferramentorum vel utensilium; cf. RB 32 title: 'De Ferramentis vel Rebus Monasterii'.

⁴⁰¹ ὡς (σκευῶν) Θεῷ ἐπονομασθέντων καὶ ἀναθεθέντων. RBas. 103. 1: First (they ought to use them) as vessels of God, that is, which are consecrated to God (sicut vasis Dei vel his quae Deo consecrata sunt uti debent). Secondly, as being unable without them to obtain the benefits of their devotion and zeal.

There is little doubt that RB 31. 10 has borrowed here: Omnia vasa monasterii cunctamque substantiam ac si altaris vasa sacra conspiciat; see Gribomont, 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 259, no. 16.

R: 1 Let one who misuses it⁴⁰² be judged as sacrilegious and one who loses it (through carelessness) as guilty of sacrilege **too**; (incurs the same charge), **since they are all named and consecrated to God.**⁴⁰³

SR 145 (RBas. 105)

Q: What if someone chooses of himself to lend (to another), **or receive** (from another)?

R: 1 Let him be (held) **judged as one presumptuous and rash; for these things are the proper concern of the one entrusted with responsibility and of the one who exercises stewardship.**⁴⁰⁴

SR 146 (RBas. 106)

Q: What if, under the constraint of need, the one who presides⁴⁰⁵ asks someone for (a vessel or) **a tool and he objects?**

R: 1 How can one who has handed over himself and his own members in order to serve others' needs in the love of Christ⁴⁰⁶ (be at liberty to) **dispute about tools with** the one who presides, **to whom even the care of tools belongs?**⁴⁰⁷

SR 147 (RBas. 107)

Q: When someone involved in work in the store-room or

⁴⁰² *RBas.* 104. 1: treats it casually—contemnit.

⁴⁰³ *RBas.* 104. 1: inasmuch as (because they are assigned for the use of the servants of God) they are (without doubt) consecrated to God.

⁴⁰⁴ τοῦ ἐπιτεταγμένου τὴν φροντίδα, καὶ οἰκονομοῦντος. *RBas.* 104 uses the plural: of those who preside (qui praesunt) and have the care of management. Rufinus seems to interpret the text in terms of two echelons of responsibility: the superior (or superiors) and the particular official or officials entrusted with stewardship. The Greek, however, may be confining itself to the latter. For ambiguities over singular or plural and over 'entrusted' or 'appointed' with regard to superiors or sub-officers see *LR* 43, *SR* 132 (*RBas.* 92), 135 (*RBas.* 94) and note, 142 (*RBas.* 102), 146 (*RBas.* 106), 235, 252 (*RBas.* 173), Letter 22, Def. 1. 131–3, Letter 199, Def. III, 104; cf. Elm 70 n. 37 and Rousseau 212–13.

⁴⁰⁵ ὁ προεστὼς, *RBas.* 106. Q: is qui praest.

⁴⁰⁶ *RBas.* 106. 1 continues: into the power of another because of the commandment of the Lord (se ipsum et membra sua tradiderit in alterius potestatem). Cf. *RB* 58. 25: nec proprii corporis potestatem se habiturum scit; and also *RB* 5. 12: sed ambulantes alieno iudicio et imperio . . . abbatem sibi praeesse desiderunt.

⁴⁰⁷ *RBas.* 106. 1 be at liberty to dispute about tools, especially with one to whom their care is entrusted.

kitchen or a similar task,⁴⁰⁸ does not go in time to the order of psalmody and of prayer,⁴⁰⁹ does his soul suffer no loss?

R: 1 Let each, in his work, keep to his own rule as a member of the body. He indeed suffers loss if he neglects what he is enjoined to do and if he contrives against the common purpose (of the brothers) he is in exceeding danger.⁴¹⁰ 2 So then, let him fulfil in mind (and devotedly) what is written: *chanting and singing psalms in your hearts to the Lord* (Eph. 5: 19). 3 But if he cannot go in time to be bodily present with the others (at the place of prayer, let him fulfil what pertains to piety in whatever place he finds himself), let him not be anxious, for he fulfils what is written: *let each abide wherein he was called* (1 Cor. 7: 24).

4 All the same, care must be taken in case anyone is able to complete his assigned task in good time (and go), setting an example to others, but (wants to) allege(s) that he is too busy in his work (of service), 5⁴¹¹ thus providing a stumbling-block for the others and incurring the judgment of the negligent.

SR 148 (RBas. 111)

Q: What measure of authority does he have who is entrusted with the care of the store-room?⁴¹²

R: 1 With regard to the one who entrusted him with this stewardship after testing, let him be mindful of the Lord who said *I can do nothing of myself* (John 5:30), 2 but concerning those in his charge (let him know that) that each has his need, for it is

⁴⁰⁸ τοῦ κελλαρίου, ἢ τοῦ μαγειρείου, ἢ περὶ τι ἄλλο τοιοῦτον ἀσχολούμενος. On the kitchen, see SR 152 (RBas. 131. Q) and on the one hearth that serves the whole community, LR 35. 2.

⁴⁰⁹ τῷ κανόνι τῆς ψαλμωδίας καὶ τῆς προσευχῆς. RBas. 107. Q: to the order of psalmody and (to) prayer (in ordine psallentium vel ad orationem). See also SR 173/RBas. 137. Q and 3. On the distinction between psalms and 'psalm-prayers' or collects, see Gribomont, 'Psalms and Silent *Oratio*', in his 'The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé', 237–41.

⁴¹⁰ RBas. 107. 1: but he shall be in greater peril if he neglects the common purpose (of the brothers) (communem utilitatem fratrum). Cf. RB 50. 1–3: Fratres qui . . . non possunt occurrere hora competenti—et abbas hoc perpendat, quia est—agant ibidem Opus Dei ubi operantur; whereas Basil leaves the mode of confirming the excuse indeterminate, the RB is specific: the abbot decides.

⁴¹¹ RBas. 107. 5 begins a new sentence: Anyone who does this, provides both a stumbling-block . . .

⁴¹² τὴν φροντίδα τοῦ κελλαρίου. RBas. 111. Q: cellarii cura. Cf. RB 30. 3–5 for the same teaching concerning the 'cellarer', or supervisor of material distribution in the monastery.

written,⁴¹³ *it was distributed to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35). 3 The same principle ought also to be observed by all who are charged⁴¹⁴ with such responsibilities.

SR 149 (RBas. 112)

Q: What is the judgment (is to be observed) concerning a steward who does anything with *respect of persons*⁴¹⁵ (cf. Deut. 10: 17; Matt. 22. 16; Rom. 2: 11; Eph. 6: 9), or from *contentiousness* (cf. 2 Cor. 12: 20; Gal. 5: 20)?

R: 1 Since the Apostle at one time commands *Do nothing* (from favouritism or) from *partiality* (1 Tim. 5: 21), 2 and at another time says *If anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom nor do(es) the Churches of God* (1 Cor. 11: 16), let such a one be considered estranged from the Church of God (cf. Matt. 18: 17).⁴¹⁶

3 However, we ought⁴¹⁷ (weigh and consider) with all diligence examine what each is suited (or fitted) to, and so entrust whatever the task (or office) might be,⁴¹⁸ 4 otherwise those who assign the work are (thereby) themselves condemned because they have assigned someone what is unsuitable⁴¹⁹ and are found bad stewards whether of souls or of the commandments of the Lord, 5 and those who are assigned the task think to find in this a pretext for sin.⁴²⁰

⁴¹³ RBas. 111. 2: But towards the others let him be aware that each has his need (in such a way that he fulfils) what is written, *It was distributed . . .*

⁴¹⁴ RBas. 111. 3 completes: with the responsibility (of any service or stewardship).

⁴¹⁵ *κατὰ προσωποληψίαν ἢ φιλονεικίαν ποιήσῃ*. RBas. 112. Q: *secundum personae acceptionem vel per contentionem faciat*.

⁴¹⁶ RBas. 112. 1 puts it less strongly: if someone does this (let him be reprimanded) till he emend.

⁴¹⁷ RBas. 112. 3 continues: weigh and consider with all diligence and testing what each is . . .

⁴¹⁸ RBas. 112. 3 turns it to passive voice: and to each is enjoined (iniungi) whatever work (or office) might be.

⁴¹⁹ RBas. 112. 4: an unsuitable (office).

⁴²⁰ After this verse is a continuation in GLMWZ Hol. recension of the RBas., largely replicating RBas. 92. 3-4. There are minor variations of wording: ' . . . or do something by their own will; but let the judgment of the one who presides be entrusted to each individual as principle or necessity requires. Let him consult first of all for those things in which souls benefit, then in the second place let him also accommodate bodily needs according to the will of God.'

SR 150 (RBas. 113)

Q: But what if through carelessness he does not give⁴²¹ a brother what he needs?

R: 1 His judgment is clear from the words of the Lord himself who says: *Depart from me you accursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you did not give me to eat, I was thirsty and you did not give me to drink—and the rest (Matt. 25: 41–2), 2 and also, cursed is anyone who does the works of the Lord carelessly (Jer. 48: 10).*

SR 151 (RBas. 130)

Q: Is it permissible for anyone ministering to speak with a loud voice (that is, with *crying out*)?⁴²² (Eph. 4: 31)

R: 1 The need of the hearers defines the measure of the voice. So if the voice is too low and too subdued (than occasion requires), it is (would seem) nearer to (murmuring or) **whispering than speech** and deserves censure. 2 **But if it is louder than needed** (occasion requires), **such that our hearer would be able to hear if we spoke in a softer voice, this will not be a ‘voice’, but that *crying out* (Eph. 4: 31) 3 which is condemned, unless hardness of hearing leads us perforce to use *crying out*, to *awake him from sleep* (cf. John 11: 11, 43). 4 It is for that matter told⁴²³ of the Lord: *Jesus, it says, cried out saying ‘If anyone believes in me, he believes not in me, but in the one who sent me’ (John 12: 44).* (5 For it speaks of *crying out* because of those whose inner hearing was dull and obdurate.) (Cf. Ps. 94: 7–8.)**

SR 152 (RBas. 131)

Q: When someone fulfils his service in the kitchen on the appointed day, but works beyond his strength, so that he is hindered from performing his usual work for some days (afterward), should we assign him such an office?⁴²⁴

⁴²¹ RBas. 113. Q: neglects to give.

⁴²² μετὰ φωνῆς μείζονος λαλεῖν. RBas. 130. Q: maiore voce, id est, cum *clamore* loqui. Rufinus seems to have borrowed the Scripture reference used shortly in the response. Occasions for speaking might be reading at mealtime (see SR 180) or, as Clarke suggests (284 n. 6), waiting on table. Cf. RB 38. 5–9, which excludes all speaking in the refectory but for the reader and the superior.

⁴²³ RBas. 130. 4 written.

⁴²⁴ On the kitchen, see SR 147 (RBas. 107. Q) and on the one hearth serving the whole community, LR 35. 2. Because of its contiguity with the following response

R: 1 We already said above that the one entrusted with the arrangement of work (and the one who presides)⁴²⁵ ought to⁴²⁶ assign the tasks after noting carefully the suitability and strength of the worker, 2 lest he should hear what is written: *those who frame toil by decree* (Ps. 93:20). 3 However, the one obeying must not contradict, for the measure of *obedience* to be kept is *unto death* (cf. Phil. 2:8).

SR 153 (RBas. 132)

Q: And she to whom the wool is entrusted, how ought she approach this (responsibility) and how keep watch over the workers?⁴²⁷

R: The wool indeed, as a work entrusted to her by God and (her sisters, that) without any *contention* or *respect of persons* (cf. Deut. 10:17; Matt. 22:16; Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9), she (appropriately and fittingly) assigns and dispenses to each sister her task.

SR 154

Q: If it happens that there are a smaller number of brothers serving a larger number of sisters and necessity compels them to be separated from each other,⁴²⁸ such that they are scattered at their tasks,⁴²⁹ is this free of danger?

in both the *RBas.* and the Greek, the case may be that of a sister working in the single kitchen serving the whole community.

⁴²⁵ *RBas.* 131. 1: et qui praeest—this phrase is absent in the Greek, which refers only to the supervisor of works. *RBas.* here invokes the superior as well, naming two officials, yet it continues using the singular person in v. 2.

⁴²⁶ *RBas.* 131. 1–2 continues: carefully note the strength and capacity of each, 2 and, according to his fitness assign the task . . .

⁴²⁷ ταῖς ἐργαζομέναις.

⁴²⁸ δίστασθαι ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων. The same phrase occurs in *LR* 35. 2 concerning the inadvisability of maintaining separate communities—including separate men’s and women’s, in the same district.

⁴²⁹ ὀλίγους ὄντας ἀδελφούς καὶ πλείουσιν ἀδελφαῖς ἐξυπηρευομένων, εἰς ἀναγκὴν ἐμπίπτει τοῦ δίστασθαι ἀπ’ ἀλλήλων, διαμεριζομένων πρὸς τὰ ἔργα . . . Clarke 285 n. 4 refers ‘serving’ to the same word used in *LR* 33: ὑπηρετείωσαν δὲ καὶ ταῖς τοῦ σώματος χρεῖαις ἄλλοι τινές and deduces that ἔργα cannot mean celebration of the Eucharist. He discounts Bateson’s theory that this question refers to a small community of men, of whom the majority are parted from each other while serving sisters as priests. He comes closer to the situation but still misses it by suggesting a ‘double monastery’ which began as a community of women with a small ‘subordinate’ community of men serving the sisters as priests or manual workers. Even Elm (73), mistakenly speaks in terms of ‘two communities’ and of male assistants who

R: If their purpose is attested by the commandment of the Lord and fulfilled according to God, then each worker succeeds in being well pleasing to God by doing his own work. But their unity with each other consists in the fact that they are all of one soul and one mind as they fulfil the Apostle's words: *Though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in the spirit* (Col. 2: 5).

SR 155

Q: We who serve the infirm in the hospice⁴³⁰ are taught to serve them with the same disposition we would have towards brothers of the Lord. But if one being served is not so, how should we regard him?

R: The Lord said: *Whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, this one is my brother and sister and mother* (Matt. 12: 50). If he is not so, but proves to be a sinner who deserves that sentence: *every one who commits sin is the slave of sin* (John 8: 34), he is in need first of appeal and warning from the one who presides. But if he persists in these ways, the judgment pronounced by the same Lord clearly applies in his case: *But the slave does not continue in the house* (John 8: 35) and also the Apostle's charge: *Drive out the evil one from among you* (1 Cor. 5: 13). Thus those who serve will be freed from doubt and those who live together will be reassured.

SR 156

Q: Should the one entrusted with the responsibility of the store-room or some other such place always retain this responsibility, or should there be a change?

R: If he maintains his skill with regard to good order⁴³¹ and keeps the accuracy of the rule, then it is superfluous to make a change, and moreover, troublesome and difficult. But he should have an assistant

'lived within the female community'. The setting is rather that of a single Basilian community comprising consecrated women and men, children and others (see LR 15. 1, 33, 34. 1, 35. 1 and notes). The case may be that of a community with a smaller number of brothers who find themselves detained on strenuous tasks, e.g. journeys, or work in field or kitchen, such that, at the hours through the day when the brothers and sisters would normally gather, e.g. the hours of prayer, or at least when they would be available to lend needed assistance (LR 33), the sisters find themselves without the brothers. See Stramara 304.

⁴³⁰ ἐν τῷ ξενοδοχείῳ. The questioner is not a local superior but a subordinate official who takes care of the hospice. See also SR 286. On the several 'houses' encompassed by the community, see LR 15. 1 and note.

⁴³¹ See the note on 'good order' at LR 27.

who ought gradually to be instructed in the duties, so that whenever there is need of a replacement we are not upset by finding ourselves at a loss and so constrained, as often happens, to install someone unsuited to the task, when, because of his inexperience it follows of necessity that accuracy is undermined and good order in accordance with the word is weakened.

SR 157 (RBas. 14)

Q: In what disposition⁴³² should one serve God and generally what is this disposition?

R: 1 I consider it a good disposition (or cast of mind) if we have (within us) a desire to be well pleasing to God that is eager, unquenchable, fixed firm and unchanging. 2 Such a disposition is attained through conscientious and unremitting contemplation⁴³³ of the majesty of the glories of God, by (devout and pure) thankful thoughts and unceasing remembrance⁴³⁴ of the benefits that have been bestowed on us by God. 3 From this there arises in the soul as it is said⁴³⁵ *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind* (cf. Mark 12: 30), 4 just as with him who said, *as the deer that yearns for fountains of water, so my soul yearns for you, O God* (Ps. 41: 2).

5 Such is the disposition with which we must serve the Lord, fulfilling the saying of the Apostle: 6 *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or anguish, or persecution, or hunger or nakedness or danger or the sword?* and the rest (Rom. 8: 35).

⁴³² ποταπή διαθέσει. RBas. 14. Q: quali affectu. διάθεσις (= the Latin *affectus*) in its various forms is a key term in Basil's ascetic vocabulary, occurring some 42 times in the RBas. It was a term commonly used in medical diagnosis which Basil borrowed for spiritual diagnosis. See SR 289 (RBas. 22) and note. J. E. Bamberger, ΜΝΗΜΗ-ΔΙΑΘΕΣΙΣ: The Psychic Dynamisms in the Ascetical Theology of Saint Basil', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 34 (1968), 233–51.

⁴³³ ἐν θεωρίᾳ συνετῇ (intelligent, knowing, attentive, wise?) καὶ διηγεκέι. RBas. 14. 1: per θεωρίαν vel scientiam per quam possumus intueri et perspicere—through θεωρίαν or knowledge through which we are able to look towards (and perceive) the magnificence of the . . .

⁴³⁴ There appears to be some asyndeton in the Greek text: λογισμοῖς τε εὐγνώμοσι καὶ ἀδιαλείπτῳ μνήμῃ. Following RBas., perhaps καὶ εὐλαβέσι has dropped out after τε εὐγνώμοσι. 'Memory'—per memoria—Bamberger also studies Basil's use of memory in the essay noted above.

⁴³⁵ RBas. 14. 3: From (the recollection of) these things there comes into the soul (the sweetness of) the Lord its God, so that it loves him: *with all the heart* . . .

SR 158 (RBas. 24)

Q: In what kind of disposition should one receive a penalty?⁴³⁶

R: 1 As befits a son, sick and struggling for his life, who is being treated by one who is both his father and his physician.⁴³⁷ Though the manner of the treatment⁴³⁸ (of his son) is bitter and painful,⁴³⁹ he must be fully persuaded of both the love and the experience of him who prescribes the penalty and himself desire to be healed.

SR 159 (RBas. 25)

Q: He who is sullen against the one who rebukes him, of what kind is he?

R: 1 He neither realizes the peril of sin—above all towards God—or the gain that comes from repentance, nor does he believe him who said: *he who loves is diligent in discipline* (Prov. 13: 24). **2** And he has rendered himself a stranger to the benefit he experienced who said: *The righteous shall chastise me in mercy and shall reprove me* (Ps. 140: 5). **3** Indeed such a one remains as a wound (to others) in the community, undermining those engaged in the struggle.⁴⁴⁰

SR 160 (RBas. 36)

Q: In what disposition ought we to serve the (sick) brothers?⁴⁴¹

R: 1 As offering our service to the Lord himself⁴⁴² who said

⁴³⁶ ἐπιτίμιον, i.e. not just correction or rebuke, or even a ‘penance’ in a punitive sense, but a penalty fitting the fault as remedial treatment. Basil’s analogy is very medical.

⁴³⁷ Τῇ πρεπούσῃ νιῶ ἀρρώστῳ καὶ ἀγωνιῶντι περὶ τοῦ ζῆν. RBas. 24. 1 seems to transfer the *agonia* from the son to the father: Sicut aeger filius patris aut medici de vita sua solliciti—Just as the ailing son of a father and physician who is anxious for his own (the son’s) life.

⁴³⁸ RBas. 24. 1 remains in the active: Though what he prescribes for the treatment . . .

⁴³⁹ RBas. 24. 1 concludes with a successful example of Rufinus’ improvements on Basil’s text: the son for his part knows that in order to save him, his father cannot overlook anything and as a physician cannot be fooled.

⁴⁴⁰ ἀπασχολῶν τοὺς ἀγωνιζομένους. RBas. 25. 3: for he undermines (and hinders the souls of) those able to make progress.

⁴⁴¹ RBas. 36. Q: infirmis fratribus ministrare—the influence of RBas. 36 upon the whole of RB 36 is unmistakable, beginning with the title of RB 36: De infirmis fratribus.

⁴⁴² RBas. 36. 1: Sicut ipsi Domino offerentes obsequium qui dixit quia . . . cf. RB 36. 1–3; ut sicut revera Christo ita eis serviatur quia ipse dixit: . . . (Matt. 25: 36, 40 follows); cf. Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 259, no. 15.

insofar as you did it even to the least of these my brothers, you did it to me (Matt. 25:40). **2** Yet it helps us to preserve such a disposition in our ministry if those for whom we are caring are worthy (of the services that must be rendered them).⁴⁴³ **3** So those who preside ought to take care that they (to whom service is done) do not enslave themselves to the stomach and to pleasures as lovers of the body,⁴⁴⁴ **4** but who as lovers of God and lovers of Christ (Jesus),⁴⁴⁵ perfected through patience (meriting the services of their brothers), **5** become a boast for the Lord⁴⁴⁶ and a reproach to the devil, as was righteous⁴⁴⁷ Job.

SR 161 (*RBas.* 37)

Q: With what humility ought one accept a service from one's brother?⁴⁴⁸

R: **1** As a slave from his Lord, such as the apostle Peter showed when the Lord served him (cf. John 13:6–9). From this we also learn the danger of those who do not welcome this service (from their brothers).

SR 162 (*RBas.* 38)

Q: What love ought we to have for one another?

R: **1** Such as the Lord showed and taught, when he said: *Love one another even as I have loved you; no one has greater love than to lay down his life for his friends* (John 15:12–13), **2** For if it is necessary to lay down even one's life, then how much more ought we to show (devotion and) zeal in lesser matters, **3** not (of course) to accommodate human customs, but to benefit each according to the goal (proposed to all) of being well pleasing to God.

⁴⁴³ Thus not only carers but the infirm themselves are exhorted, a note also sounded in *RB* 36.

⁴⁴⁴ *RBas.* 36. 3: So those who preside ought to take care that they (to whom service is done) are not such as indulge the flesh and the stomach. There appears to be a slight change of argument here.

⁴⁴⁵ *RBas.* 36. 4: found proven (probables) in the love of God and of Christ Jesus, . . .

⁴⁴⁶ *RBas.* 36. 5: a glory for Christ.

⁴⁴⁷ *RBas.* 36. 5: holy Job.

⁴⁴⁸ *RBas.* 37. Q: a fratibus—from one's brothers.

SR 163 (RBas. 39)

Q: In what way can one fulfil *love for one's neighbour*? (cf. Matt. 22: 39)

R: 1 First, by fearing the judgment against those who trespass the commandment of the Lord who himself said *Whoever does not obey the Son, shall not have life, but the wrath of God stays over him* (John 3: 36 Byz.). 2 Next, by seeking⁴⁴⁹ eternal life, for *his commandment is eternal life* (John 12: 50).

3 But *the first and the great commandment is 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your mind and with all your strength';*⁴⁵⁰ *and the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as your very self'* (Matt. 22: 36–7, 39). 4 Then, by desiring to made wholly like the Lord who said *A new commandment I give you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you* (John 13: 34).

5 But (even from common sense we can appreciate this) by such considerations as this: **when, for example, a brother is a benefactor,**⁴⁵¹ we owe him love even on a human level, **6 which even the Greeks**⁴⁵² (customarily) **observe, as the Lord said in the Gospel: if you love those who love you, what credit is it to you, since even sinners and pagans love those who love them** (Luke 6: 32; Matt. 5: 46–7).

7 But if he (a brother) **ill-treats us** (in some way or opposes us), **then we ought to love him not only on account of the commandment, but as one who confers even greater benefits** (in that he injures us)⁴⁵³ **8—that is, if we believe the Lord who said *Blessed are you when they revile you and persecute you and speak every kind of evil word against you falsely on my account: 9 Rejoice and leap for joy, for great is your reward in heaven*** (Matt. 5: 11–12).

SR 164 (RBas. 77)

Q: What is: *Do not judge that you may not be judged (do not condemn that you may not be condemned)*? (Matt. 7: 1; Luke 6: 37)

R: 1 Since in one place the Lord says *Judge not and you will not*

⁴⁴⁹ RBas. 39. 2: (by the desire to reach) eternal life.

⁴⁵⁰ RBas. 39. 3: *anima, soul*.

⁴⁵¹ RBas. 39. 5 completes the sentence fulsomely: when we have received a benefit from a brother and we love the brother, we have become his debtors and so love him deservedly.

⁴⁵² *Ἕλληνες*, RBas. 39. 6: Gentiles (pagans).

⁴⁵³ RBas. 39. 7: on account of that something more which he offers us (in that he harms us) . . .

be judged (Matt. 7: 1; Luke 6: 37), yet in another, *judge with right judgment* (John 7: 24),⁴⁵⁴ we are not altogether prevented from (the faculty of) judging, **2** but are taught (to recognize) that there are different kinds of judging⁴⁵⁵ (that we might know in what cases we ought to judge and in what cases not).

3 The Apostle has clearly handed down to us in what cases we are to do so and in what cases not.⁴⁵⁶ Concerning those cases which lie within the discretion⁴⁵⁷ of each and are not specified in the Scripture, he says, *But you, why do you judge your brother? and again, therefore let us no more judge one another* (Rom. 14: 10, 13).

4 But when it concerns what displeases God, he reprimands those who do not judge and himself gives his own judgment in these words: **5** *I myself, though absent in body, am present in spirit and as if present have already in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ judged him who has perpetrated such a deed.* **6** *When you have come together and my spirit is with you, in the power of Our Lord Jesus Christ, you are to hand over such a man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Cor. 5: 3–5).

7 Thus, if anything lies within our (power or) discretion or,⁴⁵⁸ as

⁴⁵⁴ ‘*Judge with right judgment* is one of the precepts most necessary to salvation’, Letter 204, Def. III. 159. Basil uses ‘judge’ in the sense of exercising a rightly formed conscience, the capacity to discern between good and evil and the shades between. ‘We have in us a certain natural tribunal (κριτήριον φυσικόν) through which to discern good from evil’ *Hom. on the Beginning of Proverbs* 9, PG 31. 405D. Yet conscience itself can be falsified: ‘there is a certain balancing scale established in secret in each of us by our Creator . . . human beings are liars who have corrupted the tribunals (κριτήρια) of their soul’, *Hom. on Ps. 61.* 4, PG 29. 479A (Way 347–8). On the conscience in a sick state see SR 301.

⁴⁵⁵ *RBas.* 77. 1–2 converts from passive to active: he does not altogether forbid the faculty of judging, **2** but teaches us . . .

⁴⁵⁶ *RBas.* 77. 3: (On this matter) the Apostle has clearly handed down to us, speaking of those cases which (ought) to lie in each one’s discretion: *But you, why do you judge . . .*

⁴⁵⁷ ἐν ἐξουσία κεμένων (Garnier: potestate) *RBas.* 77. 3, 7: arbitrio—judgment, arbitrated decision, appraisal, free-will, choice, authority, power. Would it not be precisely when we are at liberty that we would have least hesitancy about making a judgment? In fact, one of the codices of *RBas.*, P., inserts a ‘non’, reading sensibly (we might think) ‘if anything does *not* lie within our power or discretion, we ought not to judge . . .’. Not so to Basil, with whom it is only when we have *no* liberty in the matter, that is, when the criteria and the interests are God’s not ours, that we can and must so judge. Basil stresses the indispensable importance of right judgment leading if necessary to rebuke, since it was a function of evangelical mutual correction and so of love, e.g. LR 25, 27, 46, SR 182 (*RBas.* 191), SR 184 (*RBas.* 15), SR 232, 301 and *Hom. on Ps.* 7, 4–5, PG 29. 237, Way 171–3.

⁴⁵⁸ ἢ καί, *RBas.* 77. 7: et, and . . .

often happens, it is an uncertain matter, we ought not to judge our brother for this, according to the saying of the Apostle concerning matters of which we are ignorant: **8 Therefore, do not judge anything before the right time, until the Lord comes, who will surely illumine the things hidden in darkness and will manifest the deliberations of hearts (1 Cor. 4: 5).**

9 But it is indispensably necessary to vindicate the judgments of God, lest one who remains silent be overtaken⁴⁵⁹ in his turn by the wrath of God.⁴⁶⁰ **10** The exception is one who is doing the same as the accused. He has (neither warrant to reprove) no liberty⁴⁶¹ to judge a brother, for he hears the Lord saying: **11 Cast the beam from your own eye first; then you shall see clearly to cast the speck from your brother's eye (Matt. 7: 5).**

SR 165 (RBas. 78)

Q: How shall one know whether he is moved by a zeal for God against a brother who sins, or by (his own) anger?⁴⁶²

R: **1** When in confronting any sin of a brother one experiences what is written: *Zeal for you*⁴⁶³ *has consumed me, because my foes have forgotten your words (Ps. 118: 139; cf. 68: 10), 2 for in this case it is clearly zeal for God. Nonetheless, one still needs to deal with all these things wisely with a view to the upbuilding of faith. **3** But if there was no such disposition already in the soul⁴⁶⁴ as its motive, then his motivation is confused⁴⁶⁵ and in no way serves the goal of piety.*

SR 166 (RBas. 84)

Q: In what disposition ought we obey him who urges us to the fulfilment⁴⁶⁶ of the commandment?

⁴⁵⁹ συμπαρολαύση, the sense is that the wrath incurred by a wrongdoer is liable to fall also on one who was in a position to confront him about it, but did not.

⁴⁶⁰ RBas. 77. 9 puts all in the 1st person plural: 'lest we are also overtaken by the wrath of God, if we have kept quiet (and remained silent toward sinners)'.

⁴⁶¹ RBas. 77. 10: authority.

⁴⁶² ἡ ὀργίζεσθαι, RBas. 78. Q: aut propria iracundia.

⁴⁶³ RBas. 78. 1: zelus tuus, CJPS; zelus domus tuae (zeal for your house) BGHLMTWZ Hol.

⁴⁶⁴ RBas. 78. 3 concludes: then let him know that his motives (derive more from passion than from God) which can in no way bring about the promotion of piety.

⁴⁶⁵ τὸ μὲν κίνημα ἀνόμαλον γίνεται, i.e. it has become incongruous, inconsistent, discordant.

⁴⁶⁶ RBas. 84. Q: opus mandati, 'the work of the commandment'.

R: 1 In the same disposition in which a little child overcome by hunger⁴⁶⁷ obeys the nurse who invites it to partake (of her breasts),⁴⁶⁸ or (in the same disposition in which) any human being seeking to live obeys one who offers him the necessities of life. 2 Or rather, much more so, inasmuch as eternal⁴⁶⁹ life is more precious than the present life. For *the commandment of God, says the Lord, is eternal life*⁴⁷⁰ (John 12: 50). 3 But as eating is to bread, so is doing to the commandment,⁴⁷¹ since the Lord also says: 4 *My food is that I do the will of the Father who sent me* (John 4: 34).

SR 167 (RBas. 85)

Q: Of what kind ought the soul be who has been counted worthy of being admitted to the work of God?⁴⁷²

R: 1 The same as the soul who said: *What am I Lord and what is my house*⁴⁷³ *that you have loved me?* (2 Sam. 7: 18) Thus is fulfilled (each part of) what is written: 2 *Giving thanks to the Father who has fitted us to partake in the inheritance of the saints in light; who has delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of the Son whom he loves* (Col. 1: 12–13).

SR 168 (RBas. 95)

Q: In what disposition ought one to receive clothing or footwear, of any kind?

⁴⁶⁷ ὑπὸ πείνης κρατούμενον . . . This is somewhat stronger than RBas. 84. 1 which simply has a hungry little child (esuriens parvulus).

⁴⁶⁸ ὑπακούει τῇ τροφῷ καλούσῃ ἐπὶ τὴν μετέληψιν, RBas. 84. 1: ad ubera. Rufinus renders his text more explicit; see Stramara 289. Basil himself also mentions the breast in *Hom. on Ps. 59, PG 29, 460–9, Way 333*. The analogy of the nursing mother, taken from 1 Thess. 2: 7, is applied to the ministry of the word and proposed to superiors in *LR 25. 2* (twice), *SR 98, 184, and 186* and *Morals 80. 18*.

⁴⁶⁹ RBas. 84. 2: future life—futura vita.

⁴⁷⁰ RBas. 84. 2: as the Lord said: *For (my) commandment is eternal life*.

⁴⁷¹ RBas. 84. 3: Just as this present life is secured in the eating of bread, so eternal life is secured in the doing of the commandment.

⁴⁷² ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ τοῦ Θεοῦ. RBas. 85. Q: in opere Dei. In *RB 67. 2, 3* the term *Opus Dei* refers to the Divine Office. ‘Basil’s answer does not reveal the exact sense in which *opus* is used; probably it means the entire monastic life including the Divine Office’ (Clarke 290 n. 6). The theme is continued in *RBas. 86* immediately following (displaced in the Greek to *SR 200*), where it is clear that Basil’s ‘work of God’ refers to the entire life of piety, the way of life in the Christian ascetic community.

⁴⁷³ RBas. 85. 1: *the house of my father*.

R: 1 If it is too short or too long for (the measure of) his size he ought to make known the need (but) with (all) fitting (modesty and) gentleness. 2 But if he is upset because it is of a (poorer or) cheaper quality, or because it is not new, let him be mindful of (that commandment of) the Lord who says *Worthy is, not simply anyone, but the labourer of his reward* (Luke. 10: 7; cf. Matt. 10: 10).⁴⁷⁴ 3 Let him examine himself, whether he has accomplished anything worthy of the precepts or promises of the Lord⁴⁷⁵ and then he will not require anything else, but rather be anxious about the very thing given to him, whether he has received more than he deserves. 4 For what was said about food ought to be regarded as a rule for every other matter concerning the needs of the body.

SR 169 (RBas. 100)

Q: If a younger brother has been ordered to teach something to one senior to him in years,⁴⁷⁶ how should he behave toward him?

R: 1 As performing a service (with all reverence) in accordance with⁴⁷⁷ the commandment of the Lord God, in fear lest he fall under that judgment of him who said: 2 *Cursed is one who does the works of the Lord carelessly* (Jer. 48: 10), and taking care *lest he becomes inflated and falls into the condemnation of the devil* (1 Tim. 3: 6).

SR 170 (RBas. 115)

Q: Ought we regard equally those who make greater progress⁴⁷⁸ and those who make less?

R: 1 (We ought to observe) what the Lord laid down concerning the forgiveness of sins when he said: *her sins, though many, are forgiven her, this is why she has loved much; who has been forgiven little, loves little* (Luke 7: 47), 2 and again what the Apostle

⁴⁷⁴ De Vogüé brings RBas. 95. 1–2 to bear on RB 55. 8 on the fit of the habit; ‘the same spirit is found in St Benedict though in different formulae’—Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 258, no. 10.

⁴⁷⁵ RBas. 95. 3: whether he has worthily accomplished the work of God and fulfilled all the precepts whatever they may be.

⁴⁷⁶ τὸν πρεσβύτερον καθ’ ἡλικίαν, RBas. 100. Q: seniore[m] secundum aetatem.

⁴⁷⁷ RBas. 100. 1: in fulfilment of . . .

⁴⁷⁸ Following RBas. 115. Q: eos qui plus proficiunt. The Greek uses singular and a slightly different verb: τῷ πλείον κατορθοῦντι, ‘one who is more virtuous/acting uprightly’.

laid down concerning elders, saying: *Let elders who preside well, be honoured with double honours and especially those who labour in the word and in teaching* (1 Tim. 5: 47)—3 this I consider should be observed in all such cases.

SR 171 (RBas. 116)

Q: What if someone in a lesser position is sullen at seeing another of greater piety⁴⁷⁹ than he preferred to himself? How should we regard him?

R: 1 Such a one is clearly condemned for evil will,⁴⁸⁰ by that parable of the Gospel 2 in which the Lord says to those who are grieved because others received equal honour with themselves, *Is it, he asks, that your eye is evil because I am generous?* (Matt. 20: 15) 3 Moreover, the judgment of God concerning such as these is clear when it says through the prophet: *one of evil will is brought to nothing before him, but he honours those who fear the Lord* (Ps. 14: 4).

SR 172 (RBas. 134)

Q: In what fear, or conviction⁴⁸¹ or disposition should we partake of (the gift) of the Body and Blood of Christ?⁴⁸²

R: 1 The Apostle teaches us fear when he says: *Whoever eats and drinks unworthily . . . eats and drinks judgment on himself* (1 Cor. 11: 27, 29).

2 Conviction is instilled in us by faith in those words⁴⁸³ of the Lord (which teach us) where he says: *This is my body which is given for many, do this as a commemoration of me* (Luke 22: 19; 1 Cor. 11: 24), 3 and in the witness⁴⁸⁴ of John who, having first

⁴⁷⁹ τοῦ εὐλαβεστέρου, RBas. 116. Q: who has made more progress in the fear of the Lord than he—qui in timore domini praecedit. Rufinus seems to have borrowed the ‘fear of the Lord’ from the end of the response as a synonym for piety.

⁴⁸⁰ ἐπὶ πονηρίᾳ κατεγνωσμένος, i.e. ill-will, bitterness, malice, envy. RBas. 116. 1: not without the passion of malignity (quia malignitatis vitio non caret).

⁴⁸¹ RBas. 134. Q: fidem—faith. Rufinus frequently translates πληροφορίαν, ‘conviction’, with fides, a reasonable approximation. Basil, however, when revising the Greek text that lay behind RBas. 134. 2 adduced the actual Greek word for faith, πίστις.

⁴⁸² Cf. the liturgical echoes of LR 2. 3 (RBas. 2. 44–50) and notes. For similar teaching on the manner of approaching the Eucharist using the same texts, see *Morals* 21. 2, 3; cf. SR 309.

⁴⁸³ RBas. 134. 2: The word of the Lord teaches us faith which says . . .

⁴⁸⁴ RBas. 134. 3 sermo, ‘word’.

recounted the glory of the Word, then adds the manner of his incarnation⁴⁸⁵ saying: *the Word became flesh and sojourned among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1: 14), 4 and further, in the Apostle who writes: though he was in the form of God, he did not deem equality with God as something to be grasped, but emptied himself, accepting the form of a slave, 5 taking on the likeness of human beings; and being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Phil. 2: 6–8).*

6 When therefore, the soul believes in these words and others like them and of equal importance, and realizes the majesty of his glory and wonders at the excess of his humility and obedience, that one so great and of such a nature was obedient to the Father *even unto death that we might live, 7 I think the soul might well acquire⁴⁸⁶ a disposition of (affection and) love both for that same God and Father who did not spare his only son, but delivered him up for us all (Rom. 8: 32), 8 and (of love) for his Only-begotten who to redeem us and save us became obedient even unto death (Phil. 2: 8) to which it will be stirred up even more, when it sees how he bore a most shameful death for our redemption (cf. Wisd. 2: 20). 9* It will then be able to heed the Apostle when he sets out a kind of rule as to what a good conscience in these matters is for those who are sound,⁴⁸⁷ *when he says: the love of Christ urges us when we consider this, that if one man died for all, therefore all have died. And he died for all so that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who died for them and rose again (2 Cor. 5: 14–15).*

10 Such is the disposition and readiness (of mind)⁴⁸⁸ he ought to have who partakes of the Bread and the Cup.

SR 173 (RBas. 137)

Q: Should anyone be speaking (in the house) during the hour of (prayers or) psalmody⁴⁸⁹ of the house?

⁴⁸⁵ ἐνανθρωπήσεως.

⁴⁸⁶ RBas. 134. 7: provocari, be stirred to . . .

⁴⁸⁷ RBas. 134. 9 begins: The Apostle also spoke about this in similar fashion, that *The love . . .*

⁴⁸⁸ RBas. 134. 10: Such is the disposition or faith (affectum vel fidem) he ought to foster in his own mind.

⁴⁸⁹ ἐν τῇ ὥρᾳ τῆς κατ' οἶκον ψαλμωδίας, 'at the hour of psalmody in the house'. RBas. 137. Q: tempore orationum vel psalmodium loqui aliquem in domo. The 'vel' suggests another Rufinian doublet, in which the psalms themselves are considered

R: 1 No one should be doing so, except those entrusted with the responsibility and the care of good order⁴⁹⁰ and the arrangements of tasks and then only in cases of urgent need, **2** and not even then uncircumspectly but taking great care of both the place and the good order and of both reverence and avoiding offence.⁴⁹¹ For everyone else silence is necessary.⁴⁹² **3** For if at a time of conference even among those charged (in church) with the word of teaching, *the first is forewarned to keep silent if there is a revelation to another* (cf. 1 Cor. 14: 30), then how much more is silence necessary for the many,⁴⁹³ **4** unless perhaps as we said above, because of the common supervision there is need of speech.

‘orationes’. Cf. *SR* 147/*RBas.* 107. On this point see the section ‘Psalms and Silent *Oratio*’, in Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 253 n. 60. Clarke 293 offers this translation of the Greek: ‘at the hour of the Office in the several houses (κατ’ οἶκον)’ and then goes on to query whether there were individual ‘houses’ within the community, such that the Office was prayed separately in each of them. He points to examples from *Lausiac History* 7.2, 5, ‘where the Nitrian monks are said to live either alone or in groups and “the strains of psalmody arise from each habitation” and Jerome’s version of Pachomius’s rules, where the *praepositi domorum* are the superiors of the various houses within the big monastery (Ladeuze, *Cénobitisme pachomien*, p. 293).’

However, the character of Makrina’s community and Basil’s high cenobitic doctrine rules out separate liturgies in different houses—see *LR* 3 and 7 and *LR* 15. 1 and note on the constituent ‘houses’ forming a single ‘community’ praying in the one ‘house of prayer’ (ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τῆς προσευχῆς). See also Letter 207 (Def. III. 186–7), which surely reflects arrangements at Annisa, where the letter was written. Consequently, τῆς κατ’ οἶκον ψαλμωδίας refers either to ‘house’ as a figure for the entire community, or more probably to the ‘house of prayer’ itself and whether there may be extraneous speech there during the actual hour of psalmody. The mention shortly of ‘the place’ (τοῦ τε τόπου) and the ease with which those at psalmody might be disturbed, also suggests proximity in a single locale, the ‘house’ of prayer itself. An instance might occur when others who are legitimately not present (see *SR* 147, 154) find it necessary to come in with an urgent message for the superior or other officials. See *RB* 42. 10–11 on speech during the night silence: excepto si necessitas hospitum supervenerit, aut forte abbas alicui aliquid iusserit, quod tamen et ipsum cum summa gravitate et moderatione honestissima fiat.

⁴⁹⁰ τὴν ἐπιμελείαν τῆς εὐταξίας, *RBas.* 137. 1: disciplinae cura. See the note on ‘good order’ at *LR* 27.

⁴⁹¹ *RBas.* 137. 1–2: **1** No one ought to, except those who have the responsibility of service, or those whom the care of discipline or the arrangement of tasks permits and they too ought to take great care **2** (so that they speak only as necessity requires and do so quietly and) respectfully, refraining from making any disturbance or even a small annoyance for the others.

⁴⁹² *RBas.* 137. 2: it is fitting that they maintain silence.

⁴⁹³ *RBas.* 137. 3: if (concerning the prophets in church who teach), the Apostle says: *If there be a revelation to one seated, let the one speaking first fall silent* (1 Cor. 14: 30), then how much more at the time of psalmody (or prayers) is it fitting for all to (refrain from speaking and) keep silent.

SR 174 (RBas. 150)

Q: How is one enabled to fulfil the commandments of the Lord from an inward disposition and with eagerness?⁴⁹⁴

R: 1 By nature, the experience of something sweet and beneficial **2** and the very expectation of anything of the kind, engenders in the soul the disposition and desire for it.⁴⁹⁵

3 Therefore if anyone *hates and abhors iniquity* (Ps. 118: 163) and purifies himself from all sin—for just as the body suffers the loss of appetite and pleasure in food through disease, so also (through the sickness of sin) the soul suffers sluggishness and reluctance for the righteous judgments of God⁴⁹⁶—**4** and if one is fully persuaded⁴⁹⁷ that *the commandment of God is eternal life* (John 12: 50) and that all the promises made to those who keep it are true,⁴⁹⁸ **5** then (by such means) there is wrought in him⁴⁹⁹ the disposition of him who said: *The judgments of the Lord are true and all of them just, they are more desirable than gold and very precious stone and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, 6 for indeed your servant keeps them and in keeping them there is great reward* (Ps. 18: 10–12).⁵⁰⁰

SR 175 (RBas. 155)

Q: How is he manifest who loves his brother according to the commandment of the Lord, and how is he to be confronted who does not so love?

R: 1 These are the two criteria of love: to be grieved and anxious over the harm done to one loved, **2** and to rejoice over and to strive for what benefits him.⁵⁰¹ **3** Therefore, *blessed* is anyone who

⁴⁹⁴ ἐνδιαθέτως καὶ μετὰ ἐπιθυμίας [sic], RBas. 150. Q: ex animo et ex affectu.

⁴⁹⁵ RBas. 150. 1–2: By nature, we delight in those things which are good and beneficial. **2** (If therefore we believe in what has been promised, then) from our very hope there is implanted in our soul the disposition and desire (to fulfil everything by which we can attain to our desire). Basil's anthropological argument is most fully expressed in LR 2.

⁴⁹⁶ δικαιώματα Θεοῦ, RBas. 150. 3: for just as from disease the body loses delight in food, so (from the sickness of sin), the soul loses desire for the commandments of God.

⁴⁹⁷ RBas. 150. 4 recalls (recordetur).

⁴⁹⁸ RBas. 150. 4: for all who keep it there will be a fulfilment of the promises.

⁴⁹⁹ RBas. 150. 5: potest per haec, '(it is possible) that by such means there is born in the soul . . .'

⁵⁰⁰ The theme continues in SR 211 (RBas. 151), which immediately follows in the Small Asketikon.

⁵⁰¹ RBas. 155. 2: strive for that there should be, or rejoice that there are those things which are to the benefit (or advancement) of the one we love.

mourns over a sinner (cf. Matt. 5:4) who is in fearful danger⁵⁰² and who rejoices over one who acts uprightly, whose gain is beyond compare, as it is written (cf. Prov. 3:14-15; Phil. 3:7-8).⁵⁰³ 4 The Apostle Paul also testifies (to this very thing) when he says: *If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it—which accords wholly with the love that is in Christ—and if one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with him* (1 Cor. 12:26).

5 So one who is not disposed like this, manifestly does not love his brother (in accordance with charity).⁵⁰⁴

SR 176 (RBas. 156)

Q: Who are the *enemies* we are ordered to love? And also, how are we to *love our enemies* (cf. Matt. 5:44)—simply by providing them with benefits, or is it also in the very disposition? And is this possible (to attain it)?

R: 1 It is the mark of an enemy to harm and to plot against us. Therefore anyone who in whatever way harms another may be called an enemy, but especially one who sins.⁵⁰⁵ 2 For such a one, as far as he can, harms in various ways and plots against his companion or anyone he happens to meet.⁵⁰⁶ 3 Since man is constituted in both body and soul, let us love such as these, as far as the soul goes, by confronting them and warning them and rousing them in every way to conversion, 4 and as far as the body goes, by benefiting them if they are in need of the necessities of life.⁵⁰⁷

But it is clear to all that love is in the disposition.⁵⁰⁸ 5 That it is possible, the Lord has shown and taught, demonstrating the love of (God) the Father and his own love through his obedience *even to*

⁵⁰² RBas. 155. 3: (who sees the danger looming over his life).

⁵⁰³ τοῦ κατορθούντος οὐ τὸ κέρδος ἀσύγκριτον, καθὼς γεγράφται, ‘who makes progress and regards his neighbour’s progress as his own gain’.

⁵⁰⁴ RBas. 155. 5: But one who is not disposed like this (towards his brother), certainly does not love his (neighbour in accordance with charity). Hol. then adds 1 John 3: 14b, 17 without citing any source. No other codex has it, but because Clarke was relying on the PL edition of the RBas. (based on Hol.), he mistakenly supposed it an RBas. addition 294 n. 4.

⁵⁰⁵ RBas. 156. 1-2 continues with the plural: those who sin.

⁵⁰⁶ RBas. 156. 2 has the sequence the other way round: both for those who see (meet) him and those who live with him.

⁵⁰⁷ RBas. 156. 4: let us provide them with benefits and alms if they are in need of sustenance.

⁵⁰⁸ Ὅτι δὲ ἡ ἀγάπη ἐν διαθέσει ἐστὶ παντὶ δῆλον. RBas. 156. 4 reads ὅτι as a conjunction: . . . since no one doubts that love resides in the disposition (quoniam nemo dubitat quod caritas in affectu sita sit).

death (cf. Phil. 2:8)—and this for enemies (and for us who were impious), not for friends,⁵⁰⁹ 6 as the Apostle testifies when he says: *But God proves his love for us in that Christ died for us while we were still sinners* (Rom. 5:8). 7 And he exhorts us to do the same when he says: *Therefore be imitators of God as his very dear children and walk in love even as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a sacrifice and an offering to God* (Eph. 5:1–2). 8 For he who is generous and just⁵¹⁰ would never have commanded this, unless he also bestowed the capacity to do so. 9 For he has shown⁵¹¹ that this is of necessity implanted in our very nature (since) even the beasts (and animals) naturally love their benefactors.⁵¹²

10 But what benefit can a friend bestow that can match that of enemies who obtain for us that blessedness⁵¹³ of which the Lord speaks: *Blessed are you when they persecute you and revile you and speak every kind of evil word against you, falsely, on my account; rejoice and leap for joy, for great is your reward in heaven!* (Matt. 5:11–12 Byz.)

SR 177 (RBas. 177)

Q: How ought the strong bear the infirmities of the weak? (Rom. 15:1)

R: 1 To bear is to carry away and to cure⁵¹⁴ according to what is written *he took our infirmities and carried our diseases* (Isa. 53:4; Matt. 8:17), 2 not that he contracted them (these infirmities) in himself, but that he (took them away from those who had them

⁵⁰⁹ Τὸ δὲ δυνατὸν ἔδειξε καὶ ἐδίδαξεν (a doublet in Greek that does not appear in Rufinus) ὁ Κύριος, τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἐν τῇ ὑποκοῇ . . . ἐπιδειξάμενος. Rufinus possibly read accusatives of respect, expressing this by a preposition 'per' not found in the Greek. RBas. 156. 5: the Lord has taught us through the love of God the Father and through his own obedience unto death which he bore for us while we were still enemies and impious . . . (Quod autem possibile sit docuit dominus per caritatem dei patris et per suam oboedientiam . . .).

⁵¹⁰ RBas. 156.8 inverts the order: God who is just and merciful—justus et clemens.

⁵¹¹ RBas. 156. 9: this is shown to be implanted in us of our very nature (since) even beasts have (in them) a natural affection toward those who provide them with some benefit.

⁵¹² A favourite argument of Basil's religious anthropology; see LR 2. 2 (RBas. 2. 28–33).

⁵¹³ RBas. 156. 10: offer us an occasion for that blessedness . . .

⁵¹⁴ To bear: βαστάζειν, RBas. 177. 1: portare; to carry away: αἴρειν, RBas. 177. 1: tollere; to cure (or treat): θεραπεύειν, RBas. 177. 1: curare.

and) **cured** those who were suffering **them**.⁵¹⁵ **3** So in this case too, the manner and word of **repentance** shall be fitting, **in which the weak are cured by the care of the stronger**⁵¹⁶ (who are said to *bear their infirmities*, that is, to carry them off and take them away).

SR 178 (RBas. 178)

Q: What is *bear one another's burdens*, and in doing this, what is *the law (of Christ) that we shall fulfil?* (Gal. 6: 2)

R: 1 The same as was just said, for sins are deadweights dragging the soul into the depths of Hades, and we take away and bear one another's sins (that is, carry them away), when we rouse those who sin to conversion.

2 But in the vernacular use,⁵¹⁷ 'to bear' is said for 'to take away' and 'carry away', as I myself (remember having) often heard from many.

3 Now *the law of Christ that we shall fulfil* is his who said: *I came not to call the just, but sinners to repentance* (Luke 5: 32; Matt. 9: 13; Mark 2: 17). He also gave us the law: *If your brother sins, go and show him his fault; if he listens to you, you have gained your brother* (Matt. 18: 15).

SR 179 (RBas. 187)

Q: How can one, without love, acquire *such faith as to move mountains, or give away all one's possessions to the poor or hand over one's body to be burnt?* (cf. 1 Cor. 13: 2–3)

R: 1 If we remember the Lord who said: *They do all these things in order to be seen by human beings* (Matt. 23: 5; cf. 6: 5), 2 and his answer to those who said: *Lord, Lord,*⁵¹⁸ *did we not prophesy in your name, did we not cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name?* To them he said: *I do not know you, or where you come from* (Matt. 7: 22)—3 not that they lied, but that they misused the grace of God for their own wishes,

⁵¹⁵ RBas. 177. 2: and cured them.

⁵¹⁶ RBas. 177. 3: once repentance has entered in, the weak are cured by (the steadfastness and integrity of) the stronger.

⁵¹⁷ καὶ τοῖς ἐπιχωρίοις κερῆσθαι. RBas. 178. 2: ritum provincialium dici. 'Milligan-Moulton s.v. βαστάζω quote papyri instances showing that the meaning "carry" developed into "carry off", "take away". Basil says this sense was well established in Cappadocia. Did Paul in Gal. 6. 2 use a well-known local phrase in the sense "take away"?' (Clarke 296 n. 1.)

⁵¹⁸ Only one RBas. codex, but that the oldest, S, has the second 'Lord'.

which is foreign to love for God—4 (if therefore we have remembered these things), **we can understand these sayings without difficulty.**

5 But there is nothing (strange or) **surprising about receiving unworthily the charism and the gift of God, because God, in this season of forbearance and patience** (cf. Rom. 2: 4) *causes his sun to rise upon the good and the bad alike* (Matt. 5: 45); **6** And at the same time it is often to the benefit of the very one who received the charism if he may perhaps be shamed by the kindness of God and be admonished to take care to be well pleasing to him; or, to the benefit of others, **according to the saying of the Apostle:**⁵¹⁹ *Some indeed proclaim Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good-will* (Phil. 1: 15), **7** and to this he adds shortly: *Only, in every way, whether as a pretext or in truth, Christ is proclaimed and in this I rejoice* (Phil. 1: 18).

SR 180

Q: In what disposition and attention ought we listen to what is read to us at mealtimes?⁵²⁰

R: With a far greater pleasure than we take in eating and drinking, so that the mind is shown to be undistracted by the pleasures of the body, by the greater delight it takes in the words of the Lord, having the disposition of him who said: *Sweeter indeed than honey and the honeycomb* (Ps. 18: 10).

SR 181

Q: If there are communities near each another and one is poor while the other is reluctant about communion, how ought the poor community be disposed towards the one that will not share?⁵²¹

R: How can those who have been taught in the love of Christ to *lay down their very life* for one another (cf. John 15: 13), be stinting with regard to the things of the body? They seem to have forgotten him who said: *I was hungry and you gave me no food* and so on (Matt. 25: 42). But if this does happen, those who are poor should be

⁵¹⁹ *RBas.* 187. 6: this also happens for the progress of those who as yet do not believe, that his glory might be multiplied, according to the Apostle who says . . .

⁵²⁰ Cassian, *Institutes* 4. 17, states that the monastic custom of reading at meals originated not in Egypt but in Cappadocia.

⁵²¹ Basil addresses the situation also encountered in *LR* 15, where he could not have more strongly urged that neighbouring communities join in one. *SR* 181 then is probably a very early stratum of additions to the Small Asketikon.

long-suffering, being, like Lazarus, fully persuaded of their consolation in the world to come.

SR 182 (RBas. 191)

Q: What are (ought to be) the fruits by which it is shown that someone has rebuked a sinning brother with sympathy?⁵²²

R: 1 The first criterion of sympathy,⁵²³ according to the saying of the Apostle, is *If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it* (1 Cor. 12: 26), or this: *Who is caused to stumble and I do not burn?* (2 Cor. 11: 29)

2 Secondly, when he is afflicted (and grieved) in the same way towards every sin, and grieves and mourns in the same way over all who sin, whether (someone sins) against himself or another, and when he rebukes he does not corrupt the manner handed down by the Lord (cf. Matt. 18: 15–17).

(3 Thirdly, if, when he confronts someone, he observes that rule which the Lord laid down, that it is *between himself and the other alone*, or, *having brought along one or two others* (Matt. 18: 15–16; cf. Deut. 19: 15).

4 But, above all, if he observes what the Apostle says: *With all patience* (2 Tim. 4: 2).⁵²⁴

SR 183

Q: If it happens that some living in the community are in dispute with each other, is it without a danger to tolerate such as these for the sake of love?

R: Since the Lord said: *Grant, Father, that as I and you are one, so they may also be one in us* (cf. John 17: 21); and the Apostle wrote: *being of one accord, of one mind* (Phil. 2: 2); and in the history of the Acts, *those who believed were of one heart and soul* (Acts 4: 32), the disputants are estranged from these sayings.

But love that accords with the word⁵²⁵ observes the saying: *he who loves is diligent in discipline* (Prov. 13: 24), whereas love that does not accord with the word, whatever be the case, is unacceptable, for

⁵²² ὁ συμπάθως ἐλέγχων, RBas. 191. Q: is qui affectu arguit.

⁵²³ συμπαθείας, RBas. 191. 1: cum misericordia, 'with mercy': First of all by that which is the chief criterion, if he conducts himself with mercy and there is in him what the Apostle said: *If one member . . .*

⁵²⁴ If Rufinus is adding scriptural texts, he may have borrowed from elsewhere in Basil's work, e.g. RBas. 16. 4 (SR 3).

⁵²⁵ Ἀγάπη δὲ ἢ μὲν κατὰ λόγον, or perhaps love 'according to reason'.

the Lord said: *Whoever loves*⁵²⁶ *father or mother more than me is not worthy of me* (Matt. 10: 37).

SR 184 (cf. *RBas.* 15 and *SR* 98)⁵²⁷

Q: When making appeal or rebuking, how can one not only take care to speak with knowledge but also preserve the right disposition towards God and towards those to whom he speaks?

R: If one remembers the Apostle's words: *This is how one should regard us, as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God* (1 Cor. 4: 1),⁵²⁸ he will not dispense his knowledge as some private possession deriving from his own authority,⁵²⁹ but will fulfil it as a service to God through the care of souls redeemed by the blood of Christ (cf. Acts 20: 28; Eph. 1: 7; Rev. 5: 9),⁵³⁰ in fear and trembling towards God as he did who said: *We so speak, not in order to please men, but God who tests our heart* (1 Thess. 2: 4); and with an inner disposition of compassion towards his hearers, fulfilling what was said: *As when a nurse cherishes her own children, we so yearned over you that we were prepared to share with you not only the Gospel of God but even our own life* (1 Thess. 2: 7–8).

SR 185

Q: If in conversation⁵³¹ one rejoices to see the hearers affected by what is said, how shall he discern himself, whether his joy is from a good disposition, or from his own passion?

R: If he finds his joy only in the applause, clearly he is moved by his own passion. But if when he sees the quick understanding of those who applaud him as they listen, he is glad because he is

⁵²⁶ ἀγαπῶν instead of the φιλῶν of the NT text. Basil, in recalling the text from memory and making this 'mistake', shows that in his own mind there was little distinction of meaning between these two verbs for 'love'—as one might infer from John 21: 15–17, where Jesus is said to have asked the 'third time' φιλεῖς με, after twice asking ἀγαπᾷς με. See *SR* 242 and note.

⁵²⁷ There appears here in *SR* 184, not only a similar theme, but two quotations of Scripture also used in *RBas.* 15/*SR* 98.

⁵²⁸ On 'stewards of the mysteries', see *SR* 288 and note.

⁵²⁹ ἐξ αὐθεντίας.

⁵³⁰ ψυχῶν αἵματι Χριστοῦ ἐξηγορασμένων. A reference to the Apocalypse would be most unusual; it is a NT book otherwise unused by Basil, yet it is the only scriptural text using a form of this verb in connection with the blood of Christ.

⁵³¹ The case seems to be either that of a senior or someone approved who is speaking to visitors who are fellow Christians—see *LR* 32, *SR* 312, or some forum for conversation among the 'brothers' of the community.

sowing a hope of obedience, and afterwards is anxious for due results such that he either rejoices to find in them virtuous acts consistent with their applause, or else grieves to see that those who expressed the applause are in no way benefited, then let him give thanks to God that he was counted worthy to be moved in this way, for he is one who loves God and his brothers, who does not seek his own glory but the glory of God and the upbuilding of his brothers.

SR 186

Q: Since we are taught to have *such love as to lay down* even one's *life for one's friends* (cf. John 15: 13), we want to learn for what kind of friends ought one choose to do this?

R: It is likely that the disposition or the mode of such a virtuous action would vary, for it often happens that what we have to put up with on account of sinners is one thing and what we are spurred on to do for the just is something else.

All the same, we are taught to show love even unto death on behalf of both righteous and sinners without distinction. For *God proves his love for us*, it says, *in that Christ died for us while we were still sinners* (Rom. 5: 8). And the Apostle says to the saints: *As when a nurse cherishes her own children; we so yearned over you, that we were prepared to share with you not only the gospel of God, but even our own life, so dear had you become to us* (1 Thess. 2: 7–8).

SR 187 (RBas. 31)

Q: **Should one accept anything from relatives in the flesh?**⁵³²

R: **1** It is necessary that relatives should render to those coming to the Lord what is their due and retain nothing, that they may not incur the judgment for sacrilege. **2** But to disburse⁵³³ this before the eyes of those to whom it appears to be transferred, often becomes an occasion of (inflation and) pride for themselves and a cause of grief for those (other brothers) who have come poor to the same way of life. **3** Thus there happens what was indicted among the Corinthians by the Apostle where he says: *You shame those who have nothing* (1 Cor. 11: 22).

4 Therefore, if he who is entrusted with the responsibility of the

⁵³² On the disposal of one's possessions see also LR 9, SR 85, 107, 304, 305, 308.

⁵³³ ἀναλίσκεσθαι, RBas. 31. 2: praerogari.

churches in that place⁵³⁴ is faithful and capable of prudent administration, let it be brought to him 5 in imitation of those in the Acts who (did this, of whom it is said that they) brought (the proceeds of their estates) and laid it at the feet of the apostles (Acts 4: 35).

6 But inasmuch as it is not everyone's duty to administer such things (faithfully), but only to those appointed to the work after testing (it is fitting that it be offered to those who are accredited in this office before all),⁵³⁵ 7 he will be the one to administer according to his discretion what is deposited by such as these.⁵³⁶

SR 188 (RBas. 32)

Q: How should we regard those who were formerly our companions and relatives (and neighbours) when they visit us?⁵³⁷

⁵³⁴ ὁ τὴν φροντίδα τῶν κατὰ τόπον Ἐκκλησιῶν πεπιστευμένος, RBas 31. 4 more plausibly uses the plural: to those who preside over the local churches—his qui per loca singula ecclesiis praesunt; i.e. entrusted to the local bishop. See also the recourse to Church authorities in LR 9. 2. This was Makrina's practice (VSM, Callahan 177–8). Here in the Small Asketikon Basil corrects the Eustathians' tendency to act independently of the local priests, congregation, and bishop and even to arrogate to themselves Church contributions and distributions to the poor (Council of Gangra, prefatory letter and Canons 6 and 7). Basil's religious respect for the episcopal office, however, is tempered by a practical concern that its representatives or its deputies be demonstrably competent and trustworthy. See Clarke 299 n. 3.

⁵³⁵ RBas 31. 6: illis convenit qui apud omnes in hoc officio probati habentur. Verumtamen etiam de his probabit ille qui praest. Though Basil wishes the community to follow the example of Acts, in a period of so much doctrinal and political strife between bishops, he must instil a certain caution with regard to the bishop, not only as to his administrative capacity, but also with regard to his credentials in the faith, with an eye to possible political ramifications should there be any compromise here.

RBas. 31. 6 (partially) and RBas. 31. 7 do not appear in the Greek and one may wonder if they are Basil's deletions rather than Rufinus' additions. The effect in the Greek is a toning down of the note of prudence with regard to the bishop. The period in which the earlier version of this response (mid-360s) was written was marked by tension between Basil and Bishop Eusebius, though not on doctrinal grounds. The later revision (c.369/370) reflects the rapprochement between Basil and Eusebius. Nevertheless, the history of Basil's encounters with less than adequate bishops through the 360s was only a beginning. Once he himself became bishop he discovered it all over anew.

⁵³⁶ RBas. 31. 7 seems to rephrase generously: Nevertheless, even the one who presides, who ought to be administering the property, shall be prudent in these matters.

⁵³⁷ τοὺς ποτε συνοίκους ἡμῶν, ἢ συγγενεῖς, ἐρχομένους πρὸς ἡμᾶς. RBas. 32. Q: eos qui nobis aliquando vel familiares vel consanguinei fuerunt et proximi. Did Rufinus misconstrue some form of the last phrase of the Greek as 'proximi'? Garnier (PG 31. 1208 n. 58) notes variants in the text at this point.

R: 1 Just as the Lord showed and taught when they told him: *Your mother and brothers are standing outside wanting to see you* (Luke 8: 20; Matt. 12: 47),⁵³⁸ whom he answered with a rebuke saying 2 *Who is my mother and who are my brothers? Indeed anyone who does the will of my Father who is in heaven, is my brother and sister and mother* (Matt. 12: 48, 50).

SR 189 (RBas. 33)

Q: But what if they appeal to us, wanting us to come home with them? Should we bear⁵³⁹ with them?

R: 1 If it really is for the upbuilding of faith that someone could go, let someone capable be sent after (the one who presides gives) approval. 2 But if it is merely for (some) human satisfaction, let him hear the Lord answer him who asked him, *Master, first let me go and bid farewell to those at home: No one who puts his hand to the plough and looks back is fit for the kingdom of heaven* (Luke 9: 61–2). 3 If such is the judgment concerning one who had wished to bid farewell once and for all, what should we say in this case?

SR 190

Q: Ought we to feel pity for our relatives according to the flesh, earnestly desiring their salvation?⁵⁴⁰

R: One who *is born of the Spirit* according to the voice of the Lord (cf. John 3: 8) and has received *power to become a child of God* (cf. John 1: 12), is ashamed of kinship according to the flesh and owns as his relatives those who are of the *household of faith* (cf. Gal. 6: 10),⁵⁴¹ as the Lord bears witness when he says: *My mother and my brothers are those who hear the word of God and do it* (Luke 8: 21). So then, let him feel pity for all who are far removed from the Lord—and his kin too, those according to the flesh—just like the others.

Now if anyone who cherishes a greater attachment for them

⁵³⁸ For the same teaching and cited text see *Morals* 22. 2, where John 8: 47, 15: 14, and Rom. 8: 14 are also added.

⁵³⁹ ἀνέχεσθαι, ‘put up with’, bear with. *RBas.* 33. Q: acquiescere, give way to, yield way to, go along with.

⁵⁴⁰ On the ‘household of God’ and relations with relatives see *RBas.* 2. 13, 15 (*LR* 2. 1, 2), *RBas.* 5. 1–9 (*LR* 9), *LR* 26 and note, *LR* 32. Q and note, *RBas.* 196 (*SR* 94), *RBas.* 31, 32, 33 (*SR* 187, 188, 189), *SR* 304.

⁵⁴¹ οἰκέτους δὲ γνωρίζει τοὺς οἰκέτους τῆς πίστεως. Membership of a household is bound up with these considerations. One’s real relatives are those related by faith. See previous note and references.

thinks the Apostle shares the same passion when he says *For I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my own kin according to the flesh* (Rom. 9: 3 Byz.), let such a one learn from what follows that the Apostle honours not kinship according to the flesh, but Israel and God's special dealings with Israel, not because the Israelites were his kin but because his kin according to the flesh were Israelites and were counted worthy of receiving such and so great benefits from God. It was because *the adoption was theirs and the glory and theirs was the law-giving and the worship: because they had the covenants and the promises and theirs were the fathers, because from them Christ came according to the flesh* (Rom. 9: 4–5 Byz.) that he sets so high a value on their salvation, not because he looks to the kinship but to the Lord's Incarnation for their sake, who said: *I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (Matt. 15: 24).

SR 191 (RBas. 47)

Q: Who is the meek? (Matt. 5: 5)

R: 1 One who is unchangeable in the decisions by which he is (resolved and) determined to be well pleasing to God.

SR 192 (RBas. 50)

Q: What is grief according to God and grief according to the world? (cf. 2 Cor. 7: 10)

R: 1 Grief according to God is when one grieves⁵⁴² over the neglect (or contempt) of the commandment of God, as it is written: *Grief has seized me because of sinners who forsake your law* (Ps. 118: 53), 2 but it is grief according to the world, when what causes the grief is something human and worthy⁵⁴³ of the world.

SR 193 (RBas. 51)

Q: What is joy in the Lord (cf. Phil. 3: 1; 4: 4) and what ought we rejoice to do?

R: 1 Joy in the Lord is to rejoice in whatever is done according to the commandment of the Lord to the glory of God.⁵⁴⁴ So when-

⁵⁴² RBas. 50. 1: we grieve.

⁵⁴³ RBas. 50. 2: when what causes our grief has to do with human affairs or (belongs to) the world.

⁵⁴⁴ RBas. 51. 1: When we act according to the commandment of the Lord, or do anything for the glory of God, this is joy in the Lord.

ever we carry out the commandments of the Lord, or suffer in some way for the name of the Lord, we ought to rejoice and share the joy with one another.⁵⁴⁵

SR 194 (RBas. 52)

Q: What is the *mourning* we should assume, in order to be deemed worthy of blessedness? (Matt. 5: 4)

R: 1 This question is covered by the one⁵⁴⁶ on *grief according to God* (cf. 2 Cor. 7: 11), 2 that is, when we mourn over sins either because of the dishonour to God, since *through transgression of the law one dishonours God* (cf. Rom. 2: 23), or because of (we weep over) those who are in danger through sin,⁵⁴⁷ 3 for *the soul*, it says, *that sins, itself shall die* (Ezek. 18: 4, 20) and so we imitate him⁵⁴⁸ who said: *that I may mourn over many who have sinned till now* (2 Cor. 12: 21).

SR 195 (RBas. 56)

Q: How does one *do all for the glory of God?* (1 Cor. 10: 31)

R: 1 When one⁵⁴⁹ does everything according to the commandment of God, for God's sake, in no way seeking the praises of human beings and when one is everywhere mindful of the Lord who said: 2 *Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 5: 16).

SR 196 (RBas. 57)

Q: How does one *eat and drink . . . to the glory of God?* (1 Cor. 10: 31)

R: 1 Through mindfulness of (God) our benefactor, and by a disposition of soul that is witnessed in the comportment of the body, so that one does not eat carelessly, but as one who always has God as overseer, and by keeping as one's goal at mealtime not to

⁵⁴⁵ There is no v. 2; so RBas. 51. 1 concludes in this way: share the joy of others who act uprightly.

⁵⁴⁶ RBas. 52. 1: (question in which we explained) grief according to the world.

⁵⁴⁷ RBas. 52. 2: either because (we weep over those who) *through their transgression of the law dishonour God* (Rom. 2: 23), or because of those who are in danger through sin.

⁵⁴⁸ RBas. 52. 3: according to him who said.

⁵⁴⁹ RBas. 56 uses 1st person plural throughout: we.

eat as a *slave of the stomach* (cf. Rom. 16: 18) for pleasure, **2 but as God's worker**⁵⁵⁰ **for strength to fulfil one's tasks according to the commandment of Christ.**⁵⁵¹

SR 197 (RBas. 58)

Q: How does *the right hand* act so that *the left hand does not know?* (cf. Matt. 6: 3)

R: **1** Whenever the mind, with an undistracted and intense desire to be well pleasing to God strives wholeheartedly not to fall from the right path, *striving lawfully* (2 Tim. 2: 5).⁵⁵² **2** Then it takes no thought for anything (external), or for any other limb, but only (for God and for) that which concerns the present task,⁵⁵³ **3** just as the craftworker in each task looks only to the tool useful for it.⁵⁵⁴

SR 198 (RBas. 62)

Q: What is *humility* and how shall we⁵⁵⁵ accomplish it (cf. Phil. 2: 3)?

R: **1** Humility is to *consider* all (human beings) *better than oneself*⁵⁵⁶ according to the definition of the Apostle (cf. Phil. 2: 3).

⁵⁵⁰ ἐργάτης Θεοῦ, RBas. 57. 2: quasi operarium Dei. This image of God's worker appears three times in the RBas.: here and in 95. 2 and 173. 2; likewise it appears three times in the RB: Prol. 14, 7. 49, 7. 70.

⁵⁵¹ RBas. 57. 1–2 diverges widely from the Greek in verbal expression, but the doctrine remains close: **1** By ever keeping in mind him who feeds us, that is, God; and by bearing witness (in every aspect), not only in soul but also in body, that he (gives thanks to him) and does not eat carelessly, **2** rather that he is God's worker being refreshed with sufficient food for further labour and the fulfilment of the commandments.

⁵⁵² RBas. 58. **1** uses the 1st person plural: with our mind intent and our desire fixed on pleasing God, we do the works of God and strive wholeheartedly and with all care not to fall from the right path, or from a lawful task (et ab opere legitimo). Rufinus does not seem to have appreciated the Scripture reference.

⁵⁵³ RBas. 58. 2: but only (for God and) for his work which we are to fulfil.

⁵⁵⁴ RBas. 58. 3 expands the original image considerably: just as a potter fashioning a vessel (artifex faciens vas) keeps constantly in mind the task he has been enjoined to do and looks carefully to the vessel he is turning in his hands, that it may come out true and well made.

⁵⁵⁵ RBas. 62. Q: how can we fulfil it? RBas. continues the 1st person plural throughout the response, whereas Greek uses a generic 3rd person singular τῆς.

⁵⁵⁶ RBas. 62. **1**: omnes homines aestimamus superiores nobis; cf. RB 7. 51 Septimus humilitatis gradus est si omnibus se inferiorem . . . credat—The seventh step of humility is that he . . . believe that he is inferior to all.

2 Now one accomplishes it⁵⁵⁷ first by being mindful of the commandment of the Lord who said: *Learn from me for I am meek and humble in heart* (Matt. 11:29), which he both showed and taught everywhere and in many ways; and then by believing him⁵⁵⁸ who has promised: *Whoever humbles himself shall be exalted* (Matt. 23:12; Luke 14:11); **3** lastly, by applying oneself steadily and assiduously in every (deed and) dealing to practices of humility and training oneself in them.⁵⁵⁹

4 For thus with assiduous practice, it shall be possible with difficulty (to remove from ourselves the memory of our primal arrogance⁵⁶⁰ and) to attain the condition of humility, as often happens in learning crafts. **5** The same method applies to accomplishing every virtue⁵⁶¹ in accordance with the commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SR 199 (RBAs. 83)

Q: How should one be eager to risk even danger for the sake of the commandments of the Lord?⁵⁶² (Acts 15:26; 2 Cor. 11:26)

R: **1** In the first place by reminding oneself that the Lord himself was obedient to the Father even unto death (Phil. 2:8) and by being fully persuaded of the power of the commandment (of the Lord) which is eternal life as it is written (John 12:50). **2** Then also by believing in the Lord who said: *Whoever wants to save his life, shall lose it, whoever loses his life for my sake and the sake of the Gospel, is the one who shall save it* (Mark 8:35).

SR 200 (RBAs. 86)

Q: How ought those who have long been labouring in the work of God⁵⁶³ help⁵⁶⁴ those who have but lately come?

⁵⁵⁷ RBAs. 62. 2: We are able to fulfil it . . .

⁵⁵⁸ RBAs. 62. 2: and we ought to believe him who promised . . .

⁵⁵⁹ RBAs. 62. 3: striving steadily and assiduously in all our deeds and affairs to be found humbler than others and by working hard at this practice.

⁵⁶⁰ RBAs. 62. 4: a nobis pristinae arrogantiae abolere memoriam.

⁵⁶¹ RBAs. 62. 5: the other virtues, which come from the commandment . . .

⁵⁶² προθυμηθείη και προς κινδύνους υπέρ τής εντολής του Κυρίου παραβουλεύεσθαι [sic]. Clarke 303 reads παραβάλλεσθαι (throw oneself into, expose oneself to). One might also prefer παραβολεύεσθαι, to venture, to put oneself in the way of. It approximates to the NT text which uses the phrase: παραδεωκόσιν τὰς ψυχὰς υπέρ του Κυρίου.

⁵⁶³ For the term 'work of God' see SR 167/RBAs. 85 and note.

⁵⁶⁴ ὠφελεῖν, RBAs. 86. Q: instruere vel instituere—instruct and form. Here the RBAs. and AD of the Syriac contrast with the Greek and BC of the Syriac which

R: 1 If they are vigorous in body, they (edify them and) present a (good) example of every virtue by showing themselves unwearied in zeal,⁵⁶⁵ 2 but if they are weaker in body,⁵⁶⁶ by such a condition of soul that it is manifest in their face and in their every movement that they are fully persuaded that God is watching over all⁵⁶⁷ and that the Lord is very near;⁵⁶⁸ 3 and also by all the characteristics (dispositions)⁵⁶⁹ of love enumerated by the Apostle where he says: 4 *Love is patient, is kindly, is not envious, does not vaunt itself, is not inflated, is not unseemly, does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not contrive evil, 5 finds no joy in unrighteousness, but rejoices rather in the truth, bears all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails* (1 Cor. 13: 4–8). 6 For these can all be fulfilled even in a weak body.

SR 201 (RBas. 108)

Q: How may one attain to undistracted prayer?⁵⁷⁰

R: 1 Through being fully persuaded that God is before one's eyes;⁵⁷¹ for if when someone sees a ruler or officer⁵⁷² and con-

read simply 'how do they . . . help. This suggests very early variants in the Greek text even of the small Asketikon. The *ὠφελεῖν*, 'help' of the Greek text is better attested by the internal evidence, since the response shows how any and every member of the community can benefit novices simply by the example of a consistent, recollected, and virtuous way of life; no mention is made of those in the community expressly assigned to the instruction of novices or probationaries (cf. LR 15, 26, 33, etc.).

⁵⁶⁵ RBas. 86. 1: completes (all the services of humility)—*impigre ad cuncta humilitatis officia semet ipsos paratos exhibent*. Cf. RB 7. 62–4, which shows great similarity of doctrine here: 'a monk always manifests humility in his very body no less than in his heart, so that it is evident in the Work of God'.

⁵⁶⁶ RBas. 86. 2: continues: by showing (to them) in all their (actions and) movements and even on their face, that they are . . . Basil himself suffered much from bodily infirmity; see esp. his letters to Eusebius of Samosata e.g. 136, 138, 141.

⁵⁶⁷ τῆς τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐποψίας, God's 'contemplation' of us, not ours of Him is meant. See LR 5. 3 and note.

⁵⁶⁸ Or perhaps, 'the Lord is coming'—*καὶ τῆς τοῦ Κυρίου παρουσίας*, RBas. 86. 2: to have and to ponder on the presence of God always (*dei semper habere et cogitare praesentiam*).

⁵⁶⁹ *ιδιώμασι τῆς ἀγάπης*. RBas. 86. 3: *specialibus caritatis affectibus*.

⁵⁷⁰ RBas. 108. Q: How can one ensure that in prayer the senses do not wander?

⁵⁷¹ *πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν εἶναι τὸν Θεόν*. RBas. 108. 1: *assistere se ante oculos dei*, 'that he is present before the eyes of God'. Since the response continues in the sense of the Greek text, it may fairly be supposed that Rufinus has slightly altered the sense to render the more common expression of God's omnipresence.

⁵⁷² *ἀρχοντά τις ἢ προεστώτα*, 'ruler or one who presides'. RBas. 108. 1: a judge or ruler—*iudicem . . . vel principem*. See RBas. 46. 1 (SR 29). RB 20. 1–2 also uses the approach to eminent or important persons as an analogy of prayer.

verses with him, he keeps his eyes intent,⁵⁷³ **2** then how much more does one who prays to God keep his mind intent⁵⁷⁴ on him who searches hearts and inmost parts (Ps. 7: 10), **3** fulfilling what is written *Lifting up holy hands without anger and arguments* (1 Tim. 2: 8).

SR 202 (RBas. 109)

Q: Is it possible to achieve freedom from distraction in everything and everywhere, and how does one attain it?⁵⁷⁵

R: **1** That it is possible he shows us who said: *My eyes are always on the Lord* (Ps. 24: 15) and again, *I kept the Lord ever in view before me; since he is at my right hand I shall not be shaken* (Ps. 15: 8). **2** How it may be possible has already been said: by giving no occasion of idleness to the soul⁵⁷⁶ from the thought of God and from the works **3** and gifts of God and from *confession and thanksgiving for all things* (cf. Ps. 33: 1; 1 Tim. 2: 1)⁵⁷⁷ (as it is written).

SR 203 (RBas. 114)

Q: Among the virtues according to the commandment of the Lord,⁵⁷⁸ is there a single measure for all or does one have more and another less?⁵⁷⁹

R: **1** That there is not one measure for all, but that one is both credited with and gives proof of more and another of less, is clear from these words of the Lord who said in one place: **2** *Some (seed) fell upon good earth, this is he who hears the word⁵⁸⁰ and understands and brings forth fruit, one a hundredfold, another*

⁵⁷³ RBas. 108. 1: one does not grant one's eyes the liberty to roam about or look elsewhere while engaged in speaking.

⁵⁷⁴ RBas. 108. 2: one who approaches/comes to God (accedit ad Deum) never moves the eyes (of his heart) but is intent on him, who *searches hearts* . . .

⁵⁷⁵ RBas. 109. Q: Is it possible to ensure that in every occasion and place the mind does not wander, and how can it be done?

⁵⁷⁶ RBas. 109. 2–3 completes: but at all times think on God and his works and benefits and gifts **3** and (we ponder these things in our mind) with confession and giving of thanks (as it is written).

⁵⁷⁷ καὶ τῆς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἐξομολογήσεως καὶ εὐχαριστίας. Clark overtranslates mistakenly 'confession of all wrong-doing . . .'. *Exomologesis* here is the acknowledgement and proclamation in the Psalm text to which Basil refers.

⁵⁷⁸ RBas. 114. Q: commandments of God.

⁵⁷⁹ The question here seems to mean: does the accomplishment of every commandment carry equal moral and spiritual weight?

⁵⁸⁰ RBas. 114. 2 and Colb. (Ask. 6): *my words*.

sixtyfold, another thirtyfold (Matt. 13: 23). 3 This (same thing) is found also with those who received the *mnas*⁵⁸¹ (cf. Luke 19: 13), where it is said that *five talents* were given to one, *to another two, to another one* (Matt. 25: 15).

SR 204 (RBas. 124)

Q: How is someone deemed worthy of becoming a *partaker of the Holy Spirit*?⁵⁸² (Heb. 6: 4)

R: 1 Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us when he said: *If you love me, keep my commandments and*⁵⁸³ *I myself will ask the Father and he will give you another paraclete, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive* (John 14: 15–17). 2 Therefore, as long as we do not keep all the commandments of the Lord and are not such of whom he can testify (saying): *you are not of this world* (John 15: 19), then let us not expect to be deemed worthy of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁸⁴

SR 205 (RBas. 125)

Q: Who are the *poor in spirit*? (Matt. 5: 3)

R: 1 Since the Lord in one place says: *The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life* (John 6: 63), 2 and in another place: *The Holy Spirit will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all I have said to you . . . for he shall not speak as from himself, but whatever he shall hear, this he will speak* (John 14: 26, 16: 13), 3 the *poor in spirit* are those who have become poor for no other cause but for that teaching of the Lord who said: *Go and sell all that you have and give to the poor* (Matt. 19: 21).

⁵⁸¹ τὰς μνάς, RBas. 114. 3: *mnas*, following P (after correction) which transliterates the Greek. The forms of the word in the Latin are almost as various as the number of the codices.

⁵⁸² Πνεύματος ἁγίου γενέσθαι μέτοχος. Here Basil brings the ‘mystical’ aspirations of Eustathian and pre-Messalian enthusiasts back to base with the Johannine call to obedience to the commandments. See also SR 248 (RBas. 168) and note.

⁵⁸³ This ‘and’ in the Hebrew syntax followed by John introduces a consecutive clause. Basil fully understands it as such: it is obedience to the commandments that disposes one for the Father’s gift of the Paraclete at the request of the Son, the whole *commercium* itself being a participation in the life of the Trinity. The Pneumatomachian controversy of the early–mid-370s is as yet a long way off.

⁵⁸⁴ RBas. 124. 2: we cannot (non possumus) have participation in the Holy Spirit.

4 Yet if someone accepts poverty in whatever circumstances⁵⁸⁵ **and directs it according to the will of the Lord** (and bears it) **like Lazarus** (cf. Luke 16:19–25), **such a one will not be a stranger to blessedness either** (5 since the Lord commanded: *Do not be anxious about what you shall eat or what you shall drink or what you shall put on* (Matt. 6: 31).⁵⁸⁶

SR 206 (RBas. 126)

Q: The Lord enjoins us *not to be anxious about what we are to eat or to drink or to put on* (Matt. 6: 31).⁵⁸⁷ **How far does** (the observance of) **this commandment go and how is it accomplished?**

R: **1 This** (observance of the) **commandment** as also every commandment **is even to death, for the Lord himself became obedient even to death** (Phil. 2:8). It is accomplished through trust in God.⁵⁸⁸ **2 For when the Lord had forbidden the anxiety of the world, he immediately added** (the hope of) **a promise, saying: For your Father knows what you need before you ask him** (Matt. 6: 8, 31).

3 Such was the Apostle where he says: We received the sentence of death, that we might trust not in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead (2 Cor. 1: 9). **4 As to resolve and readiness of soul, he was dying daily** (1 Cor. 15: 31), yet by God's good pleasure, he was being kept safe.⁵⁸⁹ **5 This is why the Apostle could say with (all) confidence: as dying and behold, we live!** (2 Cor. 6: 9)

6 Of help to such a purpose is a burning zeal⁵⁹⁰ **and an insatiable desire for the commandments of the Lord,**⁵⁹¹ **so that anyone**

⁵⁸⁵ RBas. 125.4: if, from whatever cause, poverty has been imposed on someone, . . .

⁵⁸⁶ This scriptural passage, in the form of a genitive absolute, forms the introduction to the next question. Rufinus has mistakenly appended it to RBas. 125 (translating from dictation?).

⁵⁸⁷ RBas. 126. Q: This Scripture text is quoted at the end of the previous chapter, RBas. 125. 5 (SR 205). The Greek deletes it from SR 205 and uses it here, SR 206. Q, instead.

⁵⁸⁸ τῆ ἐπὶ τὸν Θεὸν πεποιθήσει, Garnier: fiduciam, 'faith' in the modality of confidence, secure reliance on God. Rufinus changes the argument. RBas. 126. 1: it is possible to accomplish it by the desire and love that each has for God.

⁵⁸⁹ RBas. 126. 4 uses the 1st person plural: Therefore, according to our resolve and readiness of soul, *we die daily*, but by the will of God we are kept safe.

⁵⁹⁰ RBas. 126. 6: spirit, ardentior animus.

⁵⁹¹ RBas. 126. 6: God.

constrained like this will have no leisure (or time) to be distracted⁵⁹² with the needs (and activities) of the body.

SR 207 (RBas. 127)

Q: Well then, if we ought *not be anxious* about the necessities of life (Matt. 6:31) and there is the other precept of the Lord that says: *Do not labour for the food that perishes* (John 6:27), is it superfluous to work (with our hands)?⁵⁹³

R: 1 The Lord himself explained his own precept in either place. For there he forbade seeking⁵⁹⁴ what was for this life when he said: 2 *Do not seek what you shall eat or what you shall drink, for these things all the nations of this world seek after*, to which he added a command, saying: *Seek rather the kingdom of God and his justice* (Luke 12:29–30 + Matt. 6:31–3).

3 But he declared how we are to seek what is worthy, for in the same place, after having forbidden us to *labour for the food that perishes*, he taught us to labour for the food *that endures to eternal life* (John 6:27).⁵⁹⁵ 4 Again, what this might be he made clear in another place (saying): *My food is that I do the will of the Father who sent me* (John 4:34). Now if God's will⁵⁹⁶ is that we feed *the hungry* and give drink to *the thirsty, clothe the naked* and the rest (like this) (cf. Matt. 25:35–6), 5 it is wholly necessary that we imitate the Apostle who says: *I have given you example in all things that by so labouring you ought to support the weak* (Acts 20:35), 6 and again when he teaches: *Let him (each) do honourable work with his own hands that he may have something to give to one in need* (Eph. 4:28).

7 Therefore, with these precepts handed down to us by the Lord through the Gospel or the Apostle, it is clear that we are in every way forbidden to be anxious or labour on our own account.⁵⁹⁷

⁵⁹² RBas. 126. 6: occupari (to be preoccupied, taken up with), an accurate interpretation. Basil does not mean, Messalian like, that these mundane concerns do not have to be attended to, but that they will not dominate the consciousness.

⁵⁹³ The questioner voices the thinking of some hyperascetics that 'higher' spirituality emancipates from the necessity of work. This was an identifying trait of the Messalians at the century's end. Basil typically cures the error by a summons to the Gospel realism of service to the poor.

⁵⁹⁴ RBas. 127. 1: said that we must not seek anything for this life.

⁵⁹⁵ RBas. 127. 3: for, having said: *Do not labour for the food which perishes*, He added: *but for that which endures* . . .

⁵⁹⁶ RBas. 127. 4: But the Father's will is that we *give food to the hungry* . . .

⁵⁹⁷ RBas. 127. 7: when the Lord in the Gospel or the Apostle hands down these things to us, it is clear that we ought not be anxious or labour for ourselves.

8 Rather, we must, according to the Lord's commandment, be anxious and work diligently for our neighbour's need,⁵⁹⁸ **9** especially because the zeal we show to those dedicated to him⁵⁹⁹ the Lord receives to himself (cf. Matt. 25: 40) and in return for this (these services) promises the kingdom of heaven (cf. Matt. 25: 34).

SR 208 (RBas. 136)

Q: Is it good in general to practise silence?⁶⁰⁰

R: **1** The good of silence (and taciturnity) is dependent on the time⁶⁰¹ and the person, as we are taught by the God-inspired⁶⁰² Scripture.

One such time is when it says: *He who understands will keep silent at that time, for it is an evil time* (Amos 5: 13), **2** and again in another place: *I set a guard over my mouth, when the sinner rose up against me; (I was dumb and humbled myself and kept silent even from good things, and elsewhere:)* (Ps. 38: 2–3), **3** and as to person, the Apostle wrote: *If a revelation is made to another who is sitting, let the one who was speaking keep silent* (1 Cor. 14: 30) and again, *let the women among you keep silent in the churches* (1 Cor. 14: 34).

4 But that there are times when perfect silence is necessary for those who have an unrestrained tongue and cannot guard themselves, there is: *Let no corrupt speech proceed from your mouth, but only what is good for the upbuilding of faith* (Eph. 4: 29), **5** until by this means they are cured of the passion of rashness of (tongue or) speech and they are able to learn at leisure when, what and how they ought to speak in order that, **6** as it is written (Let their

⁵⁹⁸ RBas. 127. 8: but we ought to be anxious and to work diligently on account of the Lord's commandment and on account of the necessities of our neighbours.

⁵⁹⁹ RBas. 127. 9: the things we do for his servants.

⁶⁰⁰ *Εἰ καλόν ἐστι καθόλου σιγῆν ἀσκεῖν.* RBas. 136. Q interprets the adverb *καθόλου* in the sense of 'thoroughgoing': Si bonum est penitus tacere?—Is it altogether good to keep silence? Though later in the text Basil speaks of a case when 'perfect' silence may be necessary, even this is a temporary measure for beginners while they learn discipline of the tongue. See LR 13 on the role that practice in silence plays in the training of novices. Thus for Basil the discipline of silence has more of an educative value ordered to godly speech than an absolute value in itself by association with contemplation.

⁶⁰¹ *καιρῶ*, the appropriate time or occasion. The response examines different kinds of occasions.

⁶⁰² RBas. 136. 1: holy Scripture.

speech be so wholesomely framed . . .) **it may impart grace to the hearers** (cf. Col. 4: 6; Eph. 4: 29).⁶⁰³

SR 209 (RBas. 138)

Q: How are we to fear the judgments of God? (cf. Heb. 10: 27)

R: 1 The expectation of anything terrible naturally strikes fear. Thus, we fear both wild beasts and rulers,⁶⁰⁴ **expecting to experience some evil from them. 2 If therefore one believes that the Lord's warnings** (of the future judgment) **are true** and expects that they will be a frightful and terrible experience,⁶⁰⁵ **we shall fear the judgments of God!**

SR 210 (RBas. 143)⁶⁰⁶

Q: What is the modest dress handed down by the Apostle (1 Tim. 2: 9)?

R: 1 It is that use which respects the particular purpose, taking into account place or time or person. 2 For reason does not approve the same coverings in the seasons of winter and of summer;⁶⁰⁷ **neither is the dress of a worker and of one at rest the**

⁶⁰³ RBas. 136. 4–6 rearranges the text: **4** And there is also another occasion when it says to those who have an undisciplined tongue: *Let no evil speech proceed from your mouth, but only what is good for the upbuilding of the faith* (Eph. 4: 29). **5** But taciturnity at any time is necessary until the vices of the tongue or rashness of speech are cut back and one learns to speak appropriately and at the right time and beneficially, **6** as it is written: *Let their speech be so wholesomely framed . . . that it may impart grace to the hearers* (Col. 4: 6, Eph. 4: 29).

⁶⁰⁴ RBas. 138. 1: uses 1st person plural: we fear both wild beasts and rulers, knowing that what comes from them is something that threatens the end of life. This response illustrates Basil's pragmatic view of emperors and the imperial system. Like Athanasius, Basil was no subscriber to the Eusebian/Constantinian ideology of a merger of Church and Empire. This is unsurprising since most of his adult years were spent under the Arian emperors of the East, Constantius and Valens; the latter in particular was emperor all through his years as bishop. In many ways Basil harked back to an ante-Nicene, early Christian view of Church/State relations. Gregory of Nyssa's experience under Theodosius in the 380s was destined to be very different.

⁶⁰⁵ RBas. 138: 2: If therefore we believe that the warnings of the future judgment of God are true and keep in mind the terrible tribunal of our future scrutiny, we shall fear the judgments of God! On this tribunal see also the end of Letter 173 to Theodora, Def. 11. 453.

⁶⁰⁶ On clothing, see also LR 22/RBas. 11 and note.

⁶⁰⁷ RBas. 143. 2: For the same use is not possible to a human being (homini) in winter time and in summer . . .

same, nor of a servant and the one being waited on, nor of a soldier and a civilian, nor of a man and a woman.

SR 211 (RBas. 151)

Q: What is the measure of love for God?

R: 1 To be ever stretching⁶⁰⁸ the soul beyond its strength towards the will of God, having his glory⁶⁰⁹ as its goal and desire.

SR 212 (RBas. 152)

Q: How does one fulfil love for God?⁶¹⁰

R: 1 When we show ourselves of an appreciative and grateful⁶¹¹ disposition towards his benefits, which (we can see)⁶¹² is the case even with dumb animals; for we see that dogs (for the most part) love only those who provide them with food. 2 We learn this also from what was said by way of accusation by the prophet Isaiah:⁶¹³ 3 *I begot children and I brought them up, but they have spurned me.*⁶¹⁴ *The ox knows its owner and the ass its master's crib, but Israel has not known me and my people has not understood* (Isa. 1: 2–3). 4 For just as love arises spontaneously in the ox and the ass toward their shepherd for the benefit of their pasturage, so also with us. If we receive the benefits of God appreciatively and gratefully,⁶¹⁵ then how shall we not love God⁶¹⁶ who bestows so many and such great benefits. 5 How shall such a disposition not spring up in the healthy soul quite naturally, so to speak, without being taught?⁶¹⁷

⁶⁰⁸ ἐπεκτείνεσθαι. The importance of *epektasis* (stretching beyond) in the spiritual life (cf. Phil. 3: 13) will be much developed by Gregory of Nyssa.

⁶⁰⁹ RBas. 151. 1: keeping in view and desiring whatever leads to the glory of God.

⁶¹⁰ RBas. 152. Q is pleonastic: How does one obtain within oneself a capacity for the love of God—ut possit habere in se caritatem dei?

⁶¹¹ Ἐὰν εὐσυνειδήτως καὶ ἐγνωμόνως διατεθῶμεν, RBas. 152. 1: If we show ourselves grateful and faithful—Si grati et fideles existamus.

⁶¹² Depending on the punctuation, this phrase can be read with the dumb animals, as Rufinus reads it, or with the dogs, as Garnier's text treats it. On the affection of dumb animals for their benefactors, see also LR 2. 2 (RBas. 2. 28–34).

⁶¹³ RBas. 152. 2: And the prophet Isaiah teaches this when he takes (an ungrateful people) to task and says (in the person of the Lord): . . .

⁶¹⁴ RBas. 152. 3: ipsi autem me spreverunt; quoted in RB 2. 9: Ipsi autem contemnentes spreverunt me.

⁶¹⁵ εὐαισθήτως καὶ ἐγνωμόνως. RBas. 152. 4: gratefully and faithfully.

⁶¹⁶ RBas. 152. 4: replaces Basil's question with an assertion: then (without doubt) we shall love God . . .

⁶¹⁷ RBas. 152. 5: and without being taught, by a certain natural instinct, such a disposition is awakened toward him, if one's soul is in a sound condition.

SR 213 (RBas. 153)

Q: What are the signs⁶¹⁸ (within us) of love for God?

R: 1 (What) the Lord himself taught us, when he said: *If you love me, keep my commandments* (John 14: 15).⁶¹⁹

SR 214

Q: In what way do *kindness* and *goodness* differ?⁶²⁰ (Gal. 5: 22)

R: David said in one place: *The Lord is kind to all* (Ps. 144: 9) and *A kind man is merciful and lends* (Ps. 111: 5); and elsewhere: *Do good, Lord, to those who are good* (Ps. 124: 4); while Jeremiah says: *The Lord is good to those who wait for him* (Lam. 3: 25). So I think that kindness is broader, to do with bestowing a benefit on those in need of it in any way whatever. But goodness is somewhat narrower in its bestowing of benefits, keeping to principles of justice.

SR 215 (RBas. 160)

Q: Who is the *peacemaker* pronounced *blessed* by the Lord? (cf. Matt. 5: 9)

R: 1 One who is the Lord's⁶²¹ co-worker as the Apostle says: *We act as ambassador for Christ, it is as if God were appealing through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God* (2 Cor. 5: 20) and again: *having been justified by faith, we have peace with God* (Rom. 5: 1).

2 Yet there is another kind of peace disowned by Christ when he said: *My peace I give to you, but not as the world gives, do I give to you* (John 14: 27).

SR 216 (RBas. 161)

Q: In what way ought one be *converted and become as little children*? (cf. Matt. 18: 3)

R: 1 This very passage of the Gospel teaches us,⁶²² showing us the reason why it was said⁶²³ that we should not seek (arrogance and)

⁶¹⁸ γνωρίσματα. RBas. 153. Q: indicia.

⁶¹⁹ The line of inquiry continues in SR 54 (RBas. 154) which immediately follows in the Small Asketikon.

⁶²⁰ χρηστότης και αγαθωσύνη.

⁶²¹ RBas. 160. 1: Christ's.

⁶²² RBas. 161. 1: Ipsa lectio evangelii.

⁶²³ RBas. 161. 1: . . . teaches the whole occasion in which it was revealed.

haughtiness, but realize that by nature we share an equal honour and that we should love to be honoured equally⁶²⁴ with those who seem to fall short of us in certain ways. 2 For such are children with one another—at least those not yet accustomed to the baseness of those with whom they live.⁶²⁵

SR 217 (RBas. 163)

Q: How shall we welcome *the kingdom of God as a little child?* (Matt. 18:3)

R: 1 If we become towards the teaching of the Lord as a little child at his lessons, 2 not contradicting or disputing with his teachers,⁶²⁶ but accepting faithfully and docilely what he is taught (and in fear obeying and complying).

SR 218 (RBas. 167)

Q: What is the understanding (or wisdom) we ought to ask of God (cf. Jas. 1:5) and how can we become worthy of it?

R: 1 This understanding we learn from God himself through the prophet who says: *Let not the wise boast of his wisdom, nor the strong boast of his strength, nor the rich boast of his riches, but let whoever boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows the Lord* (Jer. 9:23-4), 2 and (again) through the Apostle who said: *but understanding what is the will of the Lord* (Eph. 5:17).

3 And we can become worthy of it (in this way) if we do what is written: *Desist and know that I am the Lord* (Ps. 45:11) 4 and if we believe that every word of God is true, for *if you will not believe, it says, you shall not understand* (Isa. 7:9 Sept.).

⁶²⁴ RBas. 161. 1: acknowledge that by nature we share an equal honour and put ourselves on an equal basis with those who seem to fall short of us.

⁶²⁵ RBas. 161. 2: For this is what it is to be equal as little children are with those not joined to them by rank but by age, till at length, what with the passage of time and the baseness of their guardians, they are infected with the poison of haughtiness. See also SR 113 and *Morals* 45. 1: *That it is impossible for them to be counted worthy of the Kingdom of heaven who do not imitate in their dealings with one another the equality observed by children among themselves.*

⁶²⁶ RBas. 163. 2: not contradicting his teachers, or putting arguments and words together to contest them, but faithfully . . .

SR 219 (RBas. 169)

Q: If we receive a benefit from someone,⁶²⁷ how can we both purely and wholeheartedly render due thanks to the Lord and rightly fulfil it towards our benefactor, neither falling short of nor exceeding the measure?

R: 1 If we are fully persuaded that God is *the author and finisher* of every good thing (cf. Heb. 12:2), then we will acknowledge⁶²⁸ the servant as the minister⁶²⁹ of God's (free gift and) bounty.

SR 220 (RBas. 174)

Q: Should anyone who wishes, be allowed to meet⁶³⁰ the sisters? Otherwise, who and when and how shall one meet them?⁶³¹

R: 1 We have already spoken (sufficiently) about this in the Longer Responses,⁶³² that one man ought not even approach another man⁶³³ as each pleases, simply and by chance,⁶³⁴ but only one who is approved (by the one who presides after much testing),

⁶²⁷ RBas. 169. Q completes: how shall we be able to thank worthily and wholeheartedly both the Lord and the one who bestowed the benefit, with the measure due to each?

⁶²⁸ RBas. 169. 1 completes: . . . acknowledge him through whom we received something good as the minister of God's free gift (*gratiam*) and bounty.

⁶²⁹ τὸν δὲ διάκονον ὡς ὑπηρέτην. The RBas. seems to know only one *διάκονον*. Perhaps Basil glossed it here with 'minister'.

⁶³⁰ συντυγχάνειν. See also LR 33 and notes on the discipline of meetings between the sexes in community. The situation reflected here seems to be the chance encounters of brothers and sisters that may occur, the institution of separate houses notwithstanding. A community discipline of reticence obtains, for as Basil emphasizes here and in SR 33 (see notes), stopping for casual exchanges and idle chat is ruled out for any of both sexes or either sex. Cf. Letter 173, Def. II. 451, where Basil counsels the canoness Theodora on τὸ ἐν ταῖς συντυχίαις τῶν ἀνδρῶν πεφυλαγμένον 'guardedness (circumspection, caution) in meetings with men'. She appears to be a superior in a community of both men and women. See Stramara 100 on the implications of this letter.

⁶³¹ RBas. 174. Q: or ought only certain persons and times be allowed?

⁶³² LR 33. RBas. 174. 1: *superius*, 'above'. This later insertion in the Greek shows that at some stage after the Small Asketikon was finished Basil himself articulated the division of the Asketikon into Longer and Shorter Responses. See also SR 74 and 103. But what can the 'superius' of the Latin text be referring to? The topic is touched on in the Small Asketikon—not, however, 'above', but rather 'below' at RBas. 198 (SR 109). Perhaps qualifying for 'above' may be RBas. 136 (SR 208) concerning silence.

⁶³³ οὐτε ἀνδρὶ ἀνήρ . . . συντυγχάνειν. RBas. 174. 1: *nec vir ad virum accedere*.

⁶³⁴ RBas. 174. 1: at any time whatever, without reason, from his own decision or authority.

2 and able to benefit (the one whom he sees) **or be benefited** (by him). **How much more so with a woman!**⁶³⁵

3 But if one is mindful of the Lord who said: *For every idle word that men speak they shall give an account in the day of judgment*⁶³⁶ (Matt. 12:36), one will fear such a judgment at every encounter **4** and obey the Apostle⁶³⁷ where he says: *Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10:31); and elsewhere: *Let all be done so (with a view to upbuilding)* (1 Cor. 14:26), **5** and will not allow that anything be done idly and without purpose.

But as to who and when and how, let occasion, place, and person be so decided **6** that not even a suspicion of anything base will arise from any of them. So (every) offence will be avoided for all concerned and when a meeting takes place it will build up the faith.⁶³⁸

7 But the word (of piety) does not permit one person alone to meet another alone,⁶³⁹ *for two*, it says, *are better than one* (Eccles. 4:9) and at the same time they are worthy of belief,⁶⁴⁰ **8** otherwise, *woe to one alone, for if he falls there is no one to raise him up again* (Eccles. 4:10).

SR 221 (RBas. 179)

Q: The Lord teaches us (that we ought) **to pray that we do not**

⁶³⁵ RBas. 174. 21: to the end that he may benefit the one whom he sees or be benefited by him. Then how much more fitting it is to observe a greater caution concerning women!

⁶³⁶ The Greek here gives a more accurate citation than RBas. 174. 3, which uses the 2nd person plural: you shall render an account for every idle word in the day of judgment.

⁶³⁷ RBas. 174. 4: For indeed the holy Apostle ought to be obeyed where he says . . .

⁶³⁸ RBas. 174. 5-6: **5** Therefore nothing ought to be done idly or without purpose—instead, a definite person must meet and speak at a certain time, in a certain place with certain persons, **6** so that every base suspicion may be excluded and we may preserve ourselves from giving offence to anyone and meet with the other in a way that builds up the faith.

⁶³⁹ Ἀλλ' οὐτε ἐν πρόσωπον ἐνὶ συντυγχάνειν ἐπιτρέπει ὁ λόγος. RBas. 174. 7: does not permit one [brother] alone to meet a [sister] alone—Certe solum ad solam accedere nulla religionis ratio permittit. In Greek, 'one person' is neutral gender, whereas the Latin adjectival pronouns are masculine and feminine gender as appropriate. Secondly, ὁ λόγος might be translated as 'reason' or 'principle' as Rufinus seems to have understood it and added 'religionis': 'principle of piety', but with regard to what follows it may be better understood as the (scriptural) word.

⁶⁴⁰ ἀξιόπιστοι. RBas. 174. 7: the meeting takes place with greater credibility (and assurance).

*enter into temptation.*⁶⁴¹ Ought we then pray not to fall into bodily pains⁶⁴² or if someone does fall into them,⁶⁴³ how should he bear them? (Matt. 6: 13, 26: 41; Luke 11: 4, 22: 40)

R: 1 He made no distinction as to kinds of temptation, but commanded in general terms that we (ought to) *pray that we do not enter into temptation.* 2 But if we have succumbed to it, we should ask from the Lord (that) *with the temptation* (he give us) *a way out, so that we may be able to bear it* (cf. 1 Cor. 10: 13) and thus (be able to) fulfil (what was said): *he who endures to the end shall be saved* (Matt. 10: 22, 24: 13).

SR 222 (RBas. 180)

Q: Who is each one's *adversary*⁶⁴⁴ and how shall we agree with him (along the way)? (cf. Matt. 5: 25)

R: 1 The Lord especially names as adversary one who tries to take away what is ours. 2 And we agree with him if we keep that precept of the Lord who said: *If someone wants to contend with you at law and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak as well* (Matt. 5: 40) and similarly (it ought to be observed) in every matter of this kind.

SR 223

Q: The Lord said, *But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that your fasting does not appear to men* (Matt. 6: 17). Now what shall one do who wishes to fast for some cause pleasing to God, as the saints are often found to have done, when, against his will, it is apparent that he is doing so?

R: This precept refers to those who are engaged in performing the commandment of God in order to be seen by human beings, that they may cure this passion of courting human favour. But when the commandment of the Lord is done for God's glory, it is naturally unfitting that it be hidden from the lovers of God. The Lord showed this when he said: *A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Neither do they light a lamp and set it under a bushel* and so on (Matt. 5: 14–15).

⁶⁴¹ εἰς πειρασμόν, i.e. 'testing', 'trial', understood generically, so as to include sickness.

⁶⁴² RBas. 179. Q: that bodily distresses do not befall (or happen) to us.

⁶⁴³ RBas. 179. Q: or if we do fall . . .

⁶⁴⁴ ὁ ἀντιδικὸς ἐκάστου ἡμῶν. RBas. 180. Q: Who is our adversary and how ought we to agree with him along the way?

SR 224

Q: Are there some even now who work *from the first hour* and others *from the eleventh*, and who are they? (cf. Matt. 20: 1, 6)

R: This is perhaps very well known to all from the accounts of the God-inspired Scripture, for though there are many, according to the testimony of the Apostle, who *learn the sacred Scriptures from childhood* (cf. 2 Tim. 3: 15); there are many others, like Cornelius (cf. Acts 10: 1–6), who, while making sound use of their natural impulses,⁶⁴⁵ move only with slow steps towards that perfection which is according to knowledge, due to their lack of teachers. *For how shall they believe*, it says, *unless they hear* (Rom. 10: 14)? Thus it happens that there are some like Cornelius who do not engage in any evil and in their desire for perfection sincerely cultivate the good of which they are capable according to their knowledge. To these God grants what he gave to Cornelius and does not reckon as a charge against them the former time of idleness, since, as I said, it was not their fault. He is satisfied with their desire, which was manifest in the zeal they showed according to their opportunity and by what they brought to perfection through their diligence.

SR 225

Q: The Lord said, *Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18: 20). How can we be deemed worthy of this?

R: Those who gather in someone's name ought surely to know the goal of the one who has gathered them together and conform themselves to it, that they may find favour through being well pleasing to him and not incur judgment for bad faith or carelessness. Consider those who have been called by someone. If the goal of reaping is put before them by the one who has called, that is the task for which they prepare themselves. If the goal is building, they ready themselves to

⁶⁴⁵ τοῖς μὲν φυσικοῖς κινήμασιν ὑγιῶς χρώμενοι. For natural 'motions' see SR 75 (RBas. 195. 2). According to Basil's religious anthropology (see LR 2, SR 174, 212, 216), they respond as best they can to the 'generative word', the *σπερματικός τις λόγος* (LR 2. 1), which is the seed of a Godward orientation implanted in our nature. But this innate word needs the word of Revelation in the form of the commandments to germinate it, nurture it, and bring it to fruition, otherwise it will remain retarded. But at the end, Basil says, this will not count against sincere souls like Cornelius, who have been diligent in seeking virtue to the best of their ability. What such souls have to prevail against is seen in SR 216 (RBas. 161), which shows how the natural goodness in children can be corrupted by the culture around them.

build. So also we who have been called by the Lord ought to remember the Apostle's words: *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling in which you were called, in all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love, being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as you were called in one hope of your calling* (Eph. 4: 1-4).

The Lord puts the whole matter to us clearly in the promise given to each: *If anyone loves me he will keep my word and my Father will love him and we will come to him and make our abode with him* (John 14: 23). Just as his abiding with such a one comes from the keeping of the commandments, so also with *two or three*, he is *in their midst* if they are conformed to his will.

But those who have gathered in a way unworthy of their calling, who are not directed to the Lord's will, even though they seem to be gathered together in the name of the Lord, shall hear: *Why do you call me Lord, and not do what I say?* (Luke 6: 46)

SR 226

Q: The Apostle says, *Being reviled we bless, being defamed we make appeal* (1 Cor. 4: 13 Byz.); how ought one who is reviled bless, or what appeal should one who is defamed make?

R: On the whole, I think that here the Apostle teaches us from his own experience to use forbearance towards all and repay with good those who do us evil. So this will be our way not only with the reviler but with all who do evil, in fulfilment of the saying: *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good* (Rom. 12: 21).

As to making appeal,⁶⁴⁶ Scripture does not intend the customary use, but to persuade the heart towards a conviction of the truth, as in the saying: *Console my people, says God* (Isa. 40: 1). And the Apostle says: *For I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to strengthen you; that is, that we may be mutually comforted, each by the other's faith, both yours and mine* (Rom. 1: 11-12) and elsewhere: *But God who comforts the lowly, comforted us through the coming of Titus* (2 Cor. 7: 6).

SR 227

Q: Ought each lay his thoughts before others, or, being fully

⁶⁴⁶ τὸ δὲ παρακαλεῖν. Basil goes on to draw out that aspect of the rich meaning of *paraklesis* to do with comforting and consoling.

persuaded that he is doing what pleases God, keep them to himself?⁶⁴⁷

R: Mindful of God's declaration spoken through the prophet: *Woe to you who are prudent in your own eyes and wise in your own estimation* (Isa. 5: 21) and the Apostle's words: *For I long to see you that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to strengthen you; that is, that we may be mutually comforted, each by the other's faith, both yours and mine* (Rom. 1: 11-12), we consider it necessary that you lay these things before those who share the same mind and have given proof of both faith and understanding, in order that what is in error may be corrected, what is accurate may be confirmed, and we escape the above-mentioned judgment on those who are *wise in their own estimation*.

SR 228

Q: Must one accommodate in every matter the expectation of those who are scandalized, or are there some cases in which one should not oblige them, even if some are scandalized thereby?

R: When we were asked this before in its own place⁶⁴⁸ we showed that there is a clear distinction in these matters and, as far as we were able, we gave an accurate answer about them.

SR 229 (RBas. 200)

Q: **Should one confess forbidden deeds before all, quashing the shame⁶⁴⁹ or only before some and who are they?⁶⁵⁰**

⁶⁴⁷ Note that it is probably a superior of a community who is asking the question. Basil both teaches and personally lived the truth that no matter how mature a Christian might be, even if in a position of presiding over others, one always needed to keep one's deeds and dispositions in some way 'witnessed' by one's fellows and to be docile to appropriate correction by one's peers. On the various modalities of confession and mutual correction see LR 26, 27, 36, 46, 54 (which urges mutual witnessing among superiors), SR 227, 229, 288 and note, 289.

⁶⁴⁸ SR 64.

⁶⁴⁹ On confessing 'without shame', see LR 9. 2 and note.

⁶⁵⁰ *Εἰ χρὴ τὰς ἀπηγορευμένας πράξεις ἀνεπαισχυντότερον ἐξαγορεύειν πᾶσι, ἢ τισί.* RBas. 200. Q: Should one who is confessing (shameful or unchaste) deeds . . . Si oportet gesta turpia vel obscaena confitentem inverecundius enuntiare omnibus aut certis quibusque vel quibus illis? Rufinus is more explicit about the nature of these sins, i.e. unchastity. On no account does Basil require these to be confessed in the assembly, but privately before those accredited in the community as 'soul doctors'. See LR 26 and note. The principle of private confession Basil teaches here in the domain of community life he carries through even in the Church's system of canonical penance, for he indicates that there are occasions when private confession before the bishop is appropriate, e.g. Canon 34, Letter 199 (Def. III. 124-5). On whether priests are involved in the practice of confession in community, see the discussion in SR 110 and note, SR 288 and note.

R: 1 The confession of sins has the same principle as revealing a (wound or) disease⁶⁵¹ of the body (to a physician). 2 Just as human beings do not uncover the diseases (or wounds) of the body to any and everyone, but only to those experienced in treating them,⁶⁵² 3 so also confession of sins ought to be made only before those capable of curing them⁶⁵³ (and applying remedies) in accordance with what is written: 4 You *who are stronger, carry the weaknesses of the weak*, that is bear away and carry them off by means of treatment (Rom. 15: 1).

SR 230

Q: What is worship and what is *reasonable worship*?⁶⁵⁴ (Rom. 12: 1)

R: Worship, I consider, is an intent, assiduous, and undistracted attention to the one being worshipped. The difference between reasonable and unreasoning worship is shown us by the Apostle when he says, in one place: *You know that when you were Gentiles you were drawn to these dumb idols, however you were led* (1 Cor. 12: 2) and in another place: *Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable worship* (Rom. 12: 1).

Now one who simply drifts as he is led offers an unreasoning worship since he is not guided by reason, but is moved by his own impulse and inclination and carried away by the sway of whatever leads him, in whichever direction he is led, even contrary to his own wish. But one who, with sound reason and good counsel and with much thoughtfulness, makes it his goal always and everywhere to accomplish what pleases God, fulfils the commandment of reasonable worship as did he who said: *Your word⁶⁵⁵ is a lamp to my feet and*

⁶⁵¹ ἡ ἐπίδειξις τῶν σωματικῶν παθῶν. *RBas.* 200. 1: vulnus aliquod corporis vel passio quae medico demonstranda est. This passage documents the double meaning of τὸ πάθος, a sick condition of the body and a sick condition of the soul or spirit revealed in an inordinate craving.

⁶⁵² *RBas.* 200. 2: (who give evidence) of (thorough) expertise (and of training in cure and remedy), . . .

⁶⁵³ *RBas.* 200. 3: apud eos tantummodo qui curare haec praevalent; cf. *RB* 46. 5–6, where hidden sins are to be revealed ‘only to the abbot or to one of the spiritual elders who know how to heal their own wounds as well as others . . .’ cf. Gribomont, ‘The Commentaries of Adalbert de Vogüé’, 260.

⁶⁵⁴ ἡ λογικὴ λατρεία, or ‘service’, or ‘homage’.

⁶⁵⁵ ὁ λόγος σου, found in two MSS, Colb. and Voss. cited by Garnier *PG* 31. 1236 n. 38, and in one variant of the Sept. text. This is consistent with the argument of the response, whose verbal connotations are clear only in the Greek: λόγος is the root of the word λογικὴ (rational) though in the psalm it does not quite mean ‘reason’, but ‘word’. Many MSS of the Sept. read ὁ νόμος σου, ‘your law’ which was accepted by the Rahlfs edition.

a light on my paths (Ps. 118: 105); and again: *Your justifications are my counsel* (Ps. 118: 24).

SR 231

Q: If a brother does me some evil and shows me hostility—and sometimes it may even be a priest⁶⁵⁶—am I to observe what I am commanded concerning an enemy even in his case?

R: The Lord in his commandments about enemies did not suggest any distinctions of enemy or enmity. Indeed, with regard to those of higher rank he defined the same sin to be weightier, when he said to them: *But why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye but not notice the plank that is in your own eye?* (Matt. 7: 3) So with regard to such as these and others of seemingly higher repute, there is special need of zeal and supervision. Therefore let us dispense the care they ought to have, whether *by appeal or by rebuke with fitting patience* (cf. 2 Tim. 4: 2) and all else as the Lord commands, preserving *ourselves blameless in this matter* (cf. 2 Cor. 7: 11).

SR 232

Q: If someone is done wrong by another and, on the principle of long-suffering and endurance of evil, tells no one, thinking to leave the judgment to God, does he act in accordance with the Lord?

R: The Lord said in one place: *Forgive, if you have anything against anyone* (Mark 11: 25) and in another place: *If your brother sins against you, go, show him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take with you one or two others, since in 'the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established'* (Deut. 19: 15). *And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the Church; and if he refuses to listen to the Church as well, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax-collector* (Matt. 18: 15–17). Therefore it is necessary, on the one hand, to show the fruit of long-suffering, offering prayer to God from a

⁶⁵⁶ ἡ ἐπίστε καὶ ἱερεὺς. On priests in the community see also SR 64 and note, SR 265; for extensive discussion and references see SR 288 and note. It seems that the questioner, a superior of one of the communities, who may not be a priest himself, has had trouble with priests in the community who presume in some way on their status. Far from excusing the community's overall spiritual physician, the superior, from confronting the unacceptable behaviour of priests in community on a vague pretext of 'forgiveness', Basil insists they should take even greater pains over their correction. Cf. RB 60. 5, where priests in the community are warned not to use their status to bypass the common rule.

sincere disposition for the one who did the wrong, saying: *Lord, lay not the sin to his charge* (Acts 7: 60), so that one does not become *liable to the judgment* by being *angry with his brother* (Matt. 5: 22).

On the other hand, it is consistent that one should appeal to and rebuke him who has done the wrong, to free him also from *the wrath that comes upon the children of disobedience* (cf. Eph. 5: 6). But to forbear to do this and to remain silent, even on the principle of one's own long-suffering, is to sin a double sin in that one also transgresses the commandment which says: *You shall surely rebuke your neighbour and in this way not contract sin on his account* (Lev. 19: 17), and also one also becomes an accomplice⁶⁵⁷ of the sinner through silence, with the result that he is left to perish in evil who might perhaps have *benefited* from the rebukes, as indeed the Lord laid down (cf. Matt. 18: 15).

SR 233

Q: If someone who does all things well, but fails in some one thing, will he not be saved because of this?

R: Though there are many passages in both the Old and New Testaments which can fully persuade us on this matter, I consider that for a believer the judgment against Peter is in itself sufficient. The Apostle, after rightly accomplishing so many and such great acts and receiving such blessings and commendations from the Lord, when he appeared to disobey in one matter only—and that not from sloth or contempt but from reverence and honour towards the Lord—for this single fault heard: *If I do not wash you, you have no part in me* (John 13: 8).

SR 234

Q: How does one *proclaim the death of the Lord?* (1 Cor. 11: 26)

R: As the Lord taught when he said: *If anyone comes to me, let him deny himself and take up his cross* (Matt. 16: 24). And in his confession the Apostle declared: *The world is crucified to me and I to the world* (Gal. 6: 14 Byz.). This is what we covenanted to do when we undertook baptism itself, *for as many, he says, of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death* (Rom. 6: 3). He adds to this, explaining what it is to be *baptized into the death* of the Lord: *Our old self was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed and we no longer be in slavery to sin* (Rom. 6: 6)⁶⁵⁸ and, being

⁶⁵⁷ *κοινωνός*, i.e. shares 'communion' with the sinner.

purified from all attachment to this life we might be deemed worthy of the Apostle's testimony where he said: *For you have died and your life now is hidden with Christ in God* (Col. 3: 3), so that we may dare to say with all confidence: *The prince of this world is coming, but he has no part in me* (John 14: 30).

SR 235

Q: Is it fitting to learn much by heart⁶⁵⁹ from the Scriptures?

R: Since in accord with the *differing charisms* (cf. Rom. 12: 4), there are two general orders:⁶⁶⁰ those who are entrusted with leadership and those whose part is to accede and obey, I consider that the one entrusted with the leadership and care of the many ought to know and learn everything by heart, that he may teach the whole of God's will and show to each his duties.

But let each of the others be mindful of the Apostle's words: *Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned him* (Rom. 12: 3) and so learn his own duties diligently and practise them, not busying himself about anything else, that he may be deemed worthy to hear the words of the Lord: *Come good servant: you have been faithful over few things, I will set you over many* (cf. Matt. 25: 21).

SR 236

Q: How ought those who have been deemed worthy of memorizing the four gospels receive this grace?

R: Since the Lord pronounced: *To whom they committed much, of him they will demand the more* (Luke 12: 48), we ought to fear exceedingly and be zealous, as the Apostle taught, saying: *As his co-workers, we indeed entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain* (2 Cor. 6: 1). But this comes about if we obey the Lord who says: *If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them* (John 13: 17).

⁶⁵⁸ For use of the same texts and the same teaching on baptism, see also SR 309 and *Morals* 80. 22, PG 31. 868D. Perhaps the concluding section of the *Morals* was a later addition, reflecting the period of Basil's episcopacy.

⁶⁵⁹ ἐκμανθάνειν, to learn 'thoroughly', 'memorize'. See SR 96.

⁶⁶⁰ Δύο ταγμάτων καθολικωτέρων ὄντων. It is difficult to make sense of the comparative. On the range of new ecclesiastical meanings attaching to καθολικός, see Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961), esp. under B, where the meaning 'canonical' is recorded, and the passage from Eusebius, *Church History* 3. 3. 2 is quoted.

SR 237

Q: What kind of soul is directed to the will of God?

R: One which has accepted the invitation of the Lord who said: *If anyone comes to me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me* (Matt. 16: 24). For if one has not first put into place this denial of oneself and taking up the cross, he will find many things arising in himself that will hinder him from following.

SR 238

Q: Is it possible to sing the psalms without remission, or read or confer about the words of God without any break, given the necessities that come upon some from the grosser needs of the body?

R: The Apostle laid down a rule for us on this point, saying: *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14: 40). Consequently, we ought rather give thought to decency and good order in accordance with time and place.

SR 239 (RBas. 135)

Q: What is the good treasure and what the evil? (cf. Matt. 12: 35; Luke 6: 45)

R. 1 The good treasure is the prudence (and sensibility)⁶⁶¹ for every virtue (of the mind) in Christ to the glory of God;⁶⁶² whereas the evil treasure is cleverness in vice for all that is forbidden by the Lord. 2 From these are brought forth, according to the voice of the Lord, each in its own kind, either good or evil in deeds and in words,⁶⁶³ (cf. Luke 6: 43-5; Matt. 7: 17-20, 12: 33-5).

⁶⁶¹ *Ἡ μὲν φρόνησις*, RBas. 135. 1: Prudentia quidem et sensus. *φρόνησις*: cast of mind, the sensibility or predisposition for certain values and behaviours. Here it changes its tonality according to context: now a 'wisdom' for good, now a 'cleverness' for evil. Cf. SR 245.

⁶⁶² There is a string of doublets in RBas. 135. 1: That prudence-and-disposition which is in Christ and that virtue (of the mind) which is for the glory of God is the *good treasure*, but a prudence-and-sensibility for malice with which to savour what God does not want done, this is the *evil treasure*.

⁶⁶³ RBas. 135. 2: Out of these proceed, according to the voice of the Lord, each in its own season, good fruit or bad, in deed or in words.

SR 240 (RBas. 139)

Q: Why is it said that *the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction*?⁶⁶⁴ (Matt. 7: 13)

R: 1 The Lord in his great love for man uses the terms and vocabulary of familiar things to present (to us)⁶⁶⁵ the teachings of truth.⁶⁶⁶ 2 Just as anyone who turns aside from the direct overland route⁶⁶⁷ comes upon a wide (and vast) expanse⁶⁶⁸ 3 so too, he says, one who departs from the way which leads to the Kingdom of heaven finds himself in a great breadth of error⁶⁶⁹ (through which he finally comes to destruction). But I think ‘wide’ and ‘broad’ are the same thing. For ‘broad’ is used for ‘wide’ by those who have been educated abroad.⁶⁷⁰ So the space, that is the place of straying, is wide and its end is destruction.

SR 241 (RBas. 140)

Q: In what way is *the gate narrow and the way straitened that leads to life* and how does one *enter by it*? (Matt. 7: 14)

R: 1 And again here, narrow and straitened do not signify one thing and another⁶⁷¹ but straitened indicates a more intense kind of narrowness as when the way is so narrow 2 that the traveller is straitened, that is, hemmed in on both sides, 3 so that any deviation to the

⁶⁶⁴ *πλατεία* (wide) and *εὐρύχωρος* (broad, or spacious). RBas. 139. Q: How is it that the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to death?

⁶⁶⁵ RBas. 139. 1: with which to bring to our attention the teachings of truth—dogmata veritatis.

⁶⁶⁶ *παράστασιν τῶν ἀληθείας δογμάτων.*

⁶⁶⁷ *τῆς κατὰ γῆν εὐθείας ὁδοῦ*, as in the well-maintained Roman road system traversing the wide expanse of Asia Minor.

⁶⁶⁸ RBas. 139. 2: Just as those walking along the road who stray from the direct route (which continues within certain limits and a clear passageway), come upon wide (and open-ended) spaces.

⁶⁶⁹ *ἐν πολλῷ πλάτει τῆς πλάνης εὐρίσκεται*, RBas. 139. 3: runs into a great breadth of error—multam latitudinem erroris incurrit. Both the Latin ‘error’ and the Greek *πλάνη* have a double meaning, either of literally straying, or of moral and doctrinal aberration.

⁶⁷⁰ *παρὰ τοῖς ἕξω πεπαιδευμένοις*. Basil testifies to different uses of the words in the local dialect of Greek and in the language he knows from his education in Constantinople and Athens. Rufinus deletes the discussion of Greek terms.

⁶⁷¹ Again, Rufinus prunes the discussion of Greek vocabulary. RBas. 140. 1–3: And likewise here, narrow and straitened indicate that the way (which is our life), is narrowed and straitened by tribulations, 2 for we who make our journey are constrained on both sides, so that we do not in any way divert to this side or that. 3 For it is dangerous to deviate to either side, as it is on the confining passage of a bridge . . .

right or to the left is dangerous, **as upon the confining passage of a bridge,⁶⁷² where if anyone swerves, the swift current of the river on either side snatches** (and bears) **him** (away).⁶⁷³ **4** For this reason **David says: They have placed stumbling-blocks in my path (Ps. 139: 6).** Therefore one who has resolved to enter into life through the narrow and straitened way ought guard himself from all deviation or swerving from the commandments of the Lord, fulfilling what is written: **Do not stray to the right hand or to the left (Deut. 17: 11).**⁶⁷⁴

SR 242

Q: What does *being affectionate to another with brotherly love* (Rom. 12: 10) mean?

R: Affection would argue a more intense form of friendship shown in the desire and fervent disposition of the lover for the beloved.⁶⁷⁵ So in order that brotherly love might not be superficial but innate and fervent⁶⁷⁶ it is said: *being affectionate to one another with brotherly love* (Rom. 12: 10).

⁶⁷² A mere 8 km or so from Annisa, on the way to Neocaesarea, a Roman bridge crossed the Iris just after it was joined by the Lycus, before it entered the gorge country. It remained in use for two thousand years till the early 20th cent., and the stanchions are still there. When the Lycus and the Iris were in full spate the current became very turbulent, especially when the Iris entered the gorge country. Early in 356 Naukratios died in those swirling waters, perhaps no more than 2 km downstream from the bridge.

⁶⁷³ Cf. Letter 365, Def. iv. 346–51 ‘to the Emperor Theodosius’, petitioning for the construction of a bridge. It describes the unpredictable Cappadocian climate and the ‘violent character’ of the river Halys in the vicinity of Caesarea. It is not, however, by Basil. Of the three Cappadocians, the imagery, the vocabulary, and the rhetorical style suggest Gregory of Nyssa most of all; the ready mention of the Forty Martyrs of Sebasteia is especially suggestive. Cf. his *Life of Gregory the Wonderworker* (GNO x/1. 32), where he describes from familiar experience the havoc wrought on the surrounding countryside by the ‘wild, savage river Lycus’ (= ‘wolf’) in Pontos.

⁶⁷⁴ Rufinus inverts the order of scriptural citations. *RBas.* 140. 4: Therefore it is written: *Do not stray to the right hand or to the left* (Deut. 17: 11) and David says: *They have laid a stumbling-block in my path* (Ps. 139: 6).

⁶⁷⁵ *Ἡ στοργὴ κατ’ ἐπίτασιν τῆς φιλίας λέγοιτο ἂν ἐν ἐπιθυμίᾳ καὶ διαθέσει διαπύρω τοῦ ἀγαπῶντος περὶ τὸν ἀγαπώμενον.* It is noteworthy that *agape* is used almost indifferently for *affection*, *friendship*, and *eros*. See SR 183 and note.

⁶⁷⁶ *ἐνδιάθετος δὲ καὶ διάπυρος.* ‘Innate’ = ‘from inward disposition’. ‘Fervent’ is almost too weak: thoroughly burning, ablaze! There was no place in Basil’s piety for a bloodless voluntarism. Human emotions, enlisted for God’s service, patiently worked with and transformed, eventually become a valuable ally in spiritual progress. See SR 157 (*RBas.* 14. 1), SR 296 and note.

SR 243 (RBas. 157)

Q: What does the Apostle mean when he says: *Be angry but do not sin*; (and) *do not let the sun go down on your anger* (Eph. 4:26), while elsewhere he says: *Let all bitterness and wrath and indignation be put away from you?* (Eph. 4:31)

R: 1 I consider that here the Apostle has handled this word in imitation of the Lord. 2 For just as often in the Gospel the Lord says first: *You have heard that this was said of old*, and then adds: *But I say to you this* (and this)⁶⁷⁷ (Matt. 5:21, 27, 33, *et al.*), 3 so also here the Apostle first brings to mind what was once said of old: *Be angry but do not sin* (Ps. 4:5) and immediately adds something from himself that applies to us, saying: *Let all bitterness and wrath and indignation be put away from you* (Eph. 4:31).

SR 244 (RBas. 158)

Q: What does *Give place to wrath* mean? (Rom. 12:19) (RBas. 158)

R: 1 Either *not to resist one who is evil*, as it is written, *but rather to him who strikes you on one cheek, offer the other as well* (Matt. 5:39), 2 and (to fulfil all) the rest, or: *when they persecute you in one city, flee to another* (Matt. 10:23).

SR 245 (RBas. 162)

Q: Who is⁶⁷⁸ *wise as a serpent and simple as a dove?* (cf. Matt. 10:16)

R: 1 He is *wise as a serpent* who dispenses his teaching (and adapts it with skill so that he discerns) **with circumspection and understanding of what is possible and what is the best way** (or useful) **to persuade his hearers.**⁶⁷⁹ 2 He is *simple as a dove*, however, who never admits a thought (in his heart) of vengeance against⁶⁸⁰ one who has plotted against him, but perseveres in doing good as the Apostle enjoined:⁶⁸¹ *But as for you, do not weary of doing good* (2 Thess. 3:13).

⁶⁷⁷ τὸδε . . . τὸδε (lit. this . . . this), RBas. 157. 2 uses two different terms: illud vel illud . . . hoc vel hoc.

⁶⁷⁸ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ φρόνιμος. RBas. 162. Q: What is it to be *wise* . . .

⁶⁷⁹ RBas. 162. 1: He is *wise as a serpent* who in the dispensing of his teaching discerns circumspectly and thoughtfully what may be possible and what befitting or useful, adapting it with that skill which can persuade his hearers to listen.

⁶⁸⁰ RBas. 162. 2 completes: those who harm him.

⁶⁸¹ προστεταγμένον. RBas. 162. 2: dicit, 'says'.

3 For the Lord gave these instructions when he sent out his disciples to preach, 4 in which (no doubt) they had need both of wisdom to persuade (those who were to be taught) and of endurance of evil⁶⁸² with those who would plot against them. 5 Accordingly, as the serpent (through his wisdom) knew to approach the person more easily led, 6 and to speak plausibly to as to withdraw from God, and to lead by stealth to sin (cf. Gen. 3: 1–6),⁶⁸³ 7 so we also ought to (consider and) choose the person and the manner and the occasion and in every way so *dispense our words with judgment* (Ps. 111: 5) that we withdraw (men)⁶⁸⁴ from sin and lead (them) to God, while we sustain *to the end* our endurance in temptations, as it is written (cf. Matt. 10: 22, 24: 13).

SR 246 (RBas. 165)

Q: What is, *Love is not unseemly*?⁶⁸⁵ (1 Cor. 13: 4–5)

R: 1 It is the same as saying ‘it does not desert its own character’. 2 And the character of love has those qualities of love enumerated in the same place by the Apostle.⁶⁸⁶

⁶⁸² ἀνεξικακίας. RBas. 162. 4: patientia, ‘patience’.

⁶⁸³ ἵνα ὡς ἐκεῖ ὁ ὄφεις ἔγνω καὶ προσώπῳ προσελθεῖν εὐαγωγότερῳ καὶ πιθανῶς εἰπεῖν. RBas. 162. 5–6: 5 so that just as the Serpent knew (through his wisdom) which person he ought to approach (cf. Gen. 3: 1–6) to persuade 6 (her at any rate who seemed more vulnerable to persuasion), that he might withdraw her from God and join her to sin . . . Clarke translates: ‘knew how to approach with a docile appearance’, reading προσώπῳ as a dative of manner referring to the Serpent and taking εὐαγωγότερῳ in an active sense. Rather, it has a passive sense of ‘able to be persuaded’, ‘easily led’ (see Liddell and Scott, *Greek–English Lexicon* under εὐαγωγή). So Rufinus translates it, reading προσώπῳ as a dative following προσελθεῖν and glossing the passive meaning of εὐαγωγότερῳ.

Thus both the Greek and the Latin texts refer specifically to Eve, which is missing in Clarke’s translation. Note Basil’s use here as in RBas. 174. 7 (SR 220) of the neutral ‘person’, applicable to either sex.

⁶⁸⁴ RBas. 162. 7: homines.

⁶⁸⁵ Τί ἐστι τὸ, Ἡ ἀγάπη οὐκ ἀσχημονεῖ.

⁶⁸⁶ Ἰσαν τῷ εἰπεῖν, τοῦ ἰδίου σχήματος οὐκ ἐκπίπτει. Σχήμα δὲ ἀγάπης τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ Ἀποστόλου ἐκ τῷ αὐτῷ τόπῳ ἀπηριθμημένα τῆς ἀγάπης ιδιώματα. The response turns on the word σχῆμα—form, shape, figure, outward mien, manner, character. In later Greek σχῆμα also came to mean monastic ‘habit’. Rufinus amplifies Basil’s brief response. RBas. 165. 1–2: It is as if someone should say ‘it does not desert the condition of seemliness—statu honestatis—for there is a certain seemliness (and manner and form) proper to love, 2 (Without doubt) the Apostle has enumerated the virtues of love one by one, each of which are something of its character and adornment: *Sicut si quis dicat De (statu honestatis suae) non deducitur; est enim (propria quaedam honestas) caritatis et (habitus) eius atque (ornatus)* . . . Thus Rufinus uses *honestas* and *habitus* and *ornatus* as a triplet of ‘schema’.

SR 247 (RBas. 166)

Q: Since Scripture says: *Do not boast or speak high-sounding words* (cf. 1 Sam. 11: 17) and the Apostle declares: *What I speak, I do not speak from the Lord, but foolishly, in this confidence of boasting* (2 Cor. 11: 17) and again, *I have become a fool in my boasting* (2 Cor. 12: 11) and further, says that: *Whoever boasts, let him boast in the Lord* (1 Cor. 1: 31; 2 Cor. 10: 17). What is *boasting in the Lord* and what kind is forbidden?⁶⁸⁷

R: 1 Clearly, the Apostle was making a necessary stand against the passions.⁶⁸⁸ 2 For he did not say these things in order to commend himself, but to curb the audacity of the insolence and arrogance of some. 3 *Boasting in the Lord*, therefore, is when one refers what one does rightly not to oneself but to the Lord, saying: *I can do all things* (only) *in Christ who strengthens me* (Phil. 4: 13).

4 The forbidden⁶⁸⁹ kind (of boasting) is (found) in two forms, either according to this: *The sinner boasts of his soul's desires* (Ps. 9: 24/10: 3 Hebr.) and *Why do you boast of your baseness, you who are mighty (in iniquity)?* (Ps. 51: 3) 5 or according to this: (since) *they do* (some good) *in order to be seen by men* (Matt. 6: 5) and because of this very wish to be praised for what they do, they, as it were, *boast by their actions*. 6 Moreover such (men) as these may (also) be called sacrilegious, since they appropriate to themselves the gifts of God⁶⁹⁰ and (try to) snatch to themselves the glory due to God.

SR 248 (RBas. 168)

Q: *If the Lord gives wisdom and from his face are knowledge and understanding* (Prov. 2: 6) and *if to one through the Spirit is given the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge* (1 Cor. 12: 8), how is it that the Lord rebukes his disciples saying: *Are you still senseless (and do you not understand)?*⁶⁹¹ (Matt. 15: 16-17)

⁶⁸⁷ RBas. 166. Q: . . . what is culpable boasting?

⁶⁸⁸ RBas. 166. 1: Manifestly the Apostle's intent was to speak against passions.

⁶⁸⁹ RBas. 166. 4: culpable boasting.

⁶⁹⁰ RBas. 166. 6: the grace given by God.

⁶⁹¹ Ἀκμῆν καὶ ὑμεῖς ἀσύνετοί ἐστε; RBas. 168. Q: Et vos adhuc insensati estis et non intellegistis?

and the Apostle censures some (the *Galatians*) as *senseless?* (cf. Gal. 3: 1)⁶⁹²

R: 1 If one knows the goodness of God who wills that *all men be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth* (1 Tim. 2: 4) and has learned the providential care of the Holy Spirit, who distributes (to each) and activates the charisms of God,⁶⁹³ 2 then one realizes that the slowness of the understanding does not come from the reluctance of the bestower (of the gifts), but from the faithlessness of the beneficiaries (who through their own indolence and unfaithfulness do not deserve to receive them).⁶⁹⁴ 3 Therefore he is rightly convicted as (foolish and) *senseless who, as it were, shuts his eyes at sunrise in order to live in darkness* and not look up *and be illumined* (cf. Ps. 33: 6).⁶⁹⁵

SR 249 (RBas. 170)

Q: What is ‘(worthy or) *holy*’ (which the Greeks call *ἁγιον*) and what is just? (cf. Tit. 1: 8)⁶⁹⁶

R: 1 I consider ‘*holy* (and worthy)’⁶⁹⁷ whatever is fitting and

⁶⁹² Clarke 320 n. 11: ‘If we reconstruct the state of mind which prompted this question, we find it closely akin to that of the Illuminati, “Keswick School,” etc.’ In short, the concern here seems to be with a kind of ‘gnosis’, the ‘knowledge’ in the question. Spiritual elitism and a spirit/matter dualism were typical hyperascetic tendencies in Anatolia, seen in the Montanists of the previous century and traceable without a break from the extreme ‘Eustathians’ of mid-4th cent. to Messalianism at the century’s end. Whether or not the questioner has been in contact with such circles, he has, at any rate, been dredging the Scriptures as Basil would have him do and been puzzled by apparent discrepancies. While Basil is certainly a Christian maximalist, everything in his character and piety is opposed to the Gnostic impulse; he constantly grounds spirituality in concrete obedience to the commandments and participation in community (Church) life; he will have none of dividing the Christian life into two strata: the initiate elect and the tolerable rabble, but preaches the goal of perfection in Christ as the vocation of all the baptized and that if there are Christians who do not attain it, it is in no way due to any lack of willingness or generosity on God’s part, but to a breakdown somewhere on the human side—see also SR 204 (RBas. 124).

⁶⁹³ RBas. 168. 1: in that he assigns to each the grace/gift (*gratiam*) of God.

⁶⁹⁴ RBas. 168. 2: does not derive from the fault of him who bestowed the gifts, but from the fault of those who through their own indolence and unfaithfulness do not deserve to receive them.

⁶⁹⁵ RBas. 168: 3 completes: so that they should not see, but rather walk in the dark. Cf. SR 80.

⁶⁹⁶ τὸ ἁγιον . . . τὸ δίκαιον. Garnier translates τὸ ἁγιον as *honestum*, which seems more in keeping with the sense used in the response.

⁶⁹⁷ RBas. 170. 1: ἁγιον (or ‘holy and worthy’) is, I think . . .

due⁶⁹⁸ from subjects to their superior, according to the (very) principle of superiority.⁶⁹⁹ 2 'Just', however, is the recompense made to each according to the merit of his work. 3 With regard to the holy⁷⁰⁰ there is only recognition and recompense of the best, while the just concerns examination and recompense of both good and evil.

SR 250 (RBas. 171)

Q: In what way does one give to dogs what is holy or cast pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6), or, how does what is added happen: otherwise they may trample them underfoot and turn and rend you asunder?

R: 1 The Apostle hands down a clear answer when he adds to what he said to⁷⁰¹ the Jews: *you who boast of the law dishonour God through your transgression of the law* (Rom. 2:23). 2 So here the Lord forbids (and disallows) that dishonour with which we dishonour the holy words of the Lord through our transgression.⁷⁰² 3 From such transgression it happens that (even) those outside (the faith and unbelievers) deem the teachings of the Lord despicable, 4 and on the basis of these very teachings rise up more boldly against us and as it were tear the transgressor with reproaches and rebukes.

SR 251 (RBas. 172)

Q: How is it that in one place the Lord forbids us to carry a purse or wallet for the way (cf. Luke 10:4), while in another place he says: *But now, whoever has a purse, let him take it and likewise a wallet and whoever does not have one (a sword), let him sell his cloak and buy a sword?* (Luke 22:36)

R: 1 The Lord himself clarifies this where he said: *For there must be fulfilled in me what is written: 'he was reckoned among the wicked'* (cf. Luke 22:37; Isa. 53:12). 2 For as soon as the prophecy about the sword is fulfilled, he says to Peter (cf. John

⁶⁹⁸ τὸ πρέπον καὶ ὀφειλόμενον. *RBas.* 170. 1: . . . is whatever is deferred from inferiors to superiors as holy and due (sanctum vel dignum).

⁶⁹⁹ *RBas.* 170. 1: according to the (very) principle by which they appear to be pre-eminent.

⁷⁰⁰ *RBas.* 170. 3: 'with regard to the former only observance of the best is meant, but with the latter, recompense of both good and evil is meant'.

⁷⁰¹ *RBas.* 171. 1: in what he says against (adversum) the Jews.

⁷⁰² *RBas.* 171. 2: disallows that injury (iniuriam) which they whom this saying concerns are said to bring against the word of God *through their transgression*.

18: 10): Put your sword back in its scabbard; for all who take up the sword shall perish by the sword (Matt. 26: 52). 3 This was in order that the saying: now, whoever has a purse let him take it—or rather, will take it, for so most copies have it (Luke 22: 36)⁷⁰³—might not (appear to) be a command, but a prophecy of the Lord foretelling (what was to happen) that the apostles would forget the gifts⁷⁰⁴ and the law of the Lord and take up the sword. 4 Moreover it is clear from many passages that the Scripture often uses the imperative mood of speech for the prophetic,⁷⁰⁵ 5 as in that saying: *Let his children become orphans* (Ps. 108: 9) and *Let an accuser stand at his right hand* (Ps. 108: 6), and many similar passages.

SR 252 (RBas. 173)

Q: What is the *Give us this day our daily bread* which we are taught to say in prayer? (Matt. 6: 11; Luke 11: 3)

R: 1 This is when a worker is mindful of the Lord⁷⁰⁶ who said: *Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat and what you shall drink* (Matt. 6: 25) and of the Apostle who charges: *work that you may have something to give to one in need* (Eph. 4: 28). 2 Thus he does not work for his own need, but for the sake of the Lord's commandment—since *the worker is worthy of his food*⁷⁰⁷ (Luke 10: 7; cf. Matt. 10: 10), 3 so that he does not claim for himself *the daily bread*, that is, what confers daily life on our substance, but waits upon God for it (Cf. Matt. 6: 11; Luke 11. 3). Having shown God the necessity of his need, he eats what is given him by the one who after testing is entrusted to fulfil each day: *Distribution was made to each according to his need* (Acts 4: 35).⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰³ ἀράτω, ἥτοι ἀρεί (οὕτω γὰρ καὶ τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἀντιγράφων ἔχει) . . . Two codices have the future ἀρεί, i.e. tollet, which makes every sense in the context, but it is not in the Latin codices or in most other Greek codices. GLMW Hol. add: similiter et peram (and likewise the purse too).

⁷⁰⁴ RBas. 172. 3: gratiam, 'grace', 'gift'.

⁷⁰⁵ RBas. 172. 4: Moreover it appears as if the imperative mood (modo imperativo) used for the future tense (dici <pro> propositivo) is quite often found in the Scriptures as a figure of prophetic speech (verbi figura . . . propheticis). <pro> propositivo as corrected by Zelzer; 'pro' is missing by haplography in CGJLPSW, propositio MT Hol., non prepositivo H.

⁷⁰⁶ RBas. 173. 1 uses the 1st person plural throughout the response: If, while we are working with our hands, we are mindful . . .

⁷⁰⁷ τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ. RBas. 173. 2: mercede sua, 'his hire/wages'.

⁷⁰⁸ RBas. 173. 3-4: . . . our substance, we ask from God 4 that he might satisfy us with sufficient for our need and we acknowledge him who provides us with sufficient (sufficienciam).

SR 253

Q: What is *the talent* and how shall we multiply it? (cf. Matt. 15: 15)

R: I consider that this parable was told with reference to every gift of God; so that each one may multiply whatever charism he is judged fit to obtain from God and apply it to the benefit and advantage of many. For there is no one who does not partake of God's kindness.

SR 254

Q: What is *the bank* in which the Lord says, *you ought to have put your money?* (Matt. 25: 27)

R: The parables are not meant as theatres of outward show, but to lead the mind to the argument.⁷⁰⁹ So then, just as money is given to the bankers to trade with—for there are, as I learnt in Alexandria, those who accept deposits and do this⁷¹⁰—so it is necessary that one who has received any kind of grace should share it with one who has need, or do as the Apostle said concerning the word: *Hand over these things to faithful men who will be able to teach others also* (2 Tim. 2: 2); for this naturally applies not only to the word but to every other matter. For some have power to accomplish things, others have received skill in administering them.

SR 255

Q: Where was he bidden to go who heard, *Take what is yours and go?* (Matt. 20: 14)

R: Perhaps it was that place where those standing on the left hand were bidden to go (cf. Matt. 25: 41), who were indicted for their idleness of good works. Yet anyone who envies his brother is worse than an idler, since Scripture is accustomed in many places to class envy with murder (cf. Rom. 1: 29; Gal. 5: 21).

⁷⁰⁹ Αἱ παραβολαὶ οὐκ ἐπὶ εἶδους τὰ θεωρήματα πληροῦσι, πρὸς δὲ τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τὸν νοὸν ὀδηγοῦσιν.

⁷¹⁰ 'An interesting biographical detail, throwing light on economic history. The banking system of Cappadocia must have been rudimentary for Basil to speak in this way. Perhaps the export of the Egyptian wheat crop necessitated a more complicated system of finance' (Clarke 323 n. 2). Basil visited Alexandria during his year of wandering in c.357. Letter 1 was written from that city.

SR 256

Q: What is the reward that they receive equally with⁷¹¹ the last? (cf. Matt. 20: 10–12)

R: Perhaps to escape censure because of the good things that one has done is the common lot of all who obey. For to be crowned is proper to those who have *striven in the good contest lawfully* (2 Tim. 2: 5, 4: 7), *finished the course* and *kept the faith* (2 Tim. 4: 7) in the love of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Possibly the reward agreed upon is the same as the hundredfold which the Lord promised they would receive in this present time who for his commandment have left everything they own, so that *take what is yours* (Matt. 20: 14) is said with reference to this. But since those who insisted they had worked longer were sick with the passion of envy towards those who received an equal reward, they shall never inherit eternal life, but receiving only the hundredfold now, will be condemned for envy in the time to come and be told to ‘go’ (Matt. 20: 14).

SR 257

Q: Who are *the chaff* that is *burnt with unquenchable fire*? (cf. Matt. 3: 12)

R: They who may indeed be useful to those worthy of the Kingdom of heaven, as the chaff is useful to the wheat, but who do not act with a disposition of love towards God and their neighbour, either with regard to spiritual charisms or bodily benefits, and so allow themselves to remain imperfect.

SR 258

Q: Who is the one condemned by the Apostle, *who insists on abasement and worshipping* and the rest? (cf. Col. 2: 18)

R: I think that the argument being pursued in this place is explained by what follows. For he goes on to name *severity to the body* (Col. 2: 23). Such, for example, are the Manichaeans and others like them.⁷¹²

SR 259

Q: Who is *aglow in the spirit*? (Rom. 12: 11)

R: One who with a burning eagerness and insatiable longing and

⁷¹¹ This refers back to the parable brought up in the previous question.

⁷¹² On Manichaeans, see also *LR* 18 and note.

unwearying zeal does the will of God in the love of Christ Jesus our Lord, according to the Scripture: *he will delight greatly in his commandments* (Ps. 111: 1).

SR 260

Q: Since the Apostle says in one place, *Do not be foolish* (Eph. 5: 17) and in another, *Do not be wise in your own estimation* (Rom. 12: 16), how can one who is *not foolish* be *not wise in his own estimation*?

R: Each commandment has its own proper reference.⁷¹³ For to *do not be foolish*, he adds: *but understand what the will of God is*, and to *Do not be wise in your own eyes*, is added, *Fear the Lord and depart from all evil* (Prov. 3: 7). Consequently, whoever does not understand the will of the Lord is *foolish*, whereas anyone who uses his own reasonings and does not walk by faith in all the words of God is *wise in his own estimation*. So whoever wishes to be neither *foolish* nor *wise in his own estimation*, needs to understand what the will of the Lord is through faith in him, and in the fear of the Lord imitate the Apostle who says: *Casting down reasonings and every loftiness that raises itself against the knowledge of God and taking every thought captive for obedience to Christ* (2 Cor. 10: 5).

SR 261

Q: If the Lord promised, *whatever you ask in prayer, you shall receive, if you believe* (Matt. 21: 22); and again, *If two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it shall be done for them* (Matt. 18: 19), how is it that even the saints themselves asked for certain things and did not receive them? For this is what happened to the Apostle who said, *Concerning this I besought the Lord three times that it might depart from me* (2 Cor. 12: 8), yet he did not receive what he asked for, and the same with Jeremiah the prophet and with Moses himself.

R: Since our Lord Jesus Christ said in prayer: *My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me* (Matt. 26: 39), but then added: *Yet not my will but yours be done* (Luke 22: 42), first you must know that we are not permitted to ask for anything that we wish. Indeed, we do not altogether know how to ask for what is profitable, *for we know not how to pray as we ought* (Rom. 8: 26 Byz.). Our requests therefore ought to be made with much circumspection, in accord with the will of God.

But if we are not heard, we must know that we are in need either

⁷¹³ ἰδιον ἔχει ὄρον, ‘rule’, border, definition or parameter.

of endurance or of earnestness, according to the parable of the Lord, *that we ought always to pray and not lose heart* (Luke 18: 1) and according to what he said in another place: *Because of his persistence he will get up and give him whatever he needs* (Luke 11: 8). Or it may be that we need amendment and diligence, according to what was said to some by God through his prophet: *When you stretch out your hands towards me I will turn my face from you; and even if you multiply your supplications I will not hear you, for your hands are full of blood. Wash, make yourselves clean,* and the rest (Isa. 1: 15–16).

But that the same happens even now and that there are many whose hands are full of blood no one ought to doubt who believes that judgment of God pronounced against one who was ordered to declare to the people but remained silent, that *the blood of the sinner shall be required from the hands of the watchman* (cf. Ezek. 3: 18). Fully persuaded that this was true and inviolable, the Apostle said: *I am henceforth innocent of the blood of all. For I did not hesitate to declare to you the whole counsel of God* (Acts 20: 26–7). But if one who merely remained silent is found liable for the blood of sinners, what shall one say of those who scandalize others by words or deeds?

There are cases when a request is not obtained due to the unworthiness of the one who makes it. This was David's case, who prayed that he might build a house for God and yet was prevented. Though he was not estranged from being well pleasing to God, yet for that task he was not judged worthy (cf. 1 Chron. 17: 1–15). In Jeremiah's case, however, he appears not to have been heard due to the wickedness of those for whom he prayed (cf. Jer. 7: 16). It also happens often that through laziness the moment when we ought to have made the request passes us by and we are found asking later unseasonably and in vain.

But as regards: *Concerning this I besought the Lord three times that it might depart from me* (2 Cor. 12: 8), you ought to know that there are many and varied reasons for adversities, whether they come from without or from the body. God brings them on us or allows them by a certain dispensation that is of greater benefit to us than if we had release from them. Therefore if one is capable of recognizing that he must be freed from adversity through prayer and asking, then his request is heard—witness the two blind men in the Gospel (Matt. 9: 27), the ten lepers (Luke 17: 12–13), and many others. But if he does not recognize the reason why he has fallen into trial—for often he is meant by endurance to attain the goal for which these things were brought upon him—but, rather than endure to the end as he ought, begs off the adversity, he is not heard, since he does not run keeping in view the goal of God's love for man.

The saying *If two of you agree* (Matt. 18: 19) is made clear by the context, for it concludes the word concerning one who rebukes the sinner and the one being rebuked. Now, since *God does not wish the death of a sinner but that he should be converted and live* (cf. Ezek. 33: 11, 18: 23),⁷¹⁴ if one who is rebuked is pierced to the soul⁷¹⁵ and concurs with the goal of the one rebuking him, then concerning any matter—that is, any sin from which they seek release—it shall be awarded them by God the lover of man. But if the one being rebuked does not agree with the one rebuking, then release is no longer possible and there is a binding instead, according to what is written: *Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven* (Matt. 18: 18) and there is a fulfilment of the judgment that says: *If he who is rebuked refuses even to hear the Church, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax-collector* (Matt. 18: 17).

SR 262

Q: The Scripture puts poverty and need⁷¹⁶ among the things worthy of praise, as in *Blessed are the poor* (Matt. 5: 3), or *The Lord has heard the desire of the needy* (Ps. 9: 37/10: 17 Hebr.) and again, *The poor and the needy shall praise your name* (Ps. 73: 21). What then is the difference between poverty and need, and how does David speak truly when he says, *I am poor and needy* (Ps. 39: 18)?

R: Keeping in mind the Apostle's words concerning the Lord: *Though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor* (2 Cor. 8: 9), I consider that the poor is one who has come from riches to want, whereas the needy is one who was in want from the outset and has governed such adversity in a way that is well pleasing to the Lord.

But David confesses he is poor and needy, perhaps because he says this in the person of the Lord who is called poor according to the saying: *though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor* (2 Cor. 8: 9) and is needy in that his title according to the flesh was that of a son, not of anyone wealthy, but of a carpenter. Perhaps also it was because like Job he knew how not to guard his possessions as a treasure, or regard his wealth as his own, but administered all things in accordance with the will of the Lord.

⁷¹⁴ Basil uses the verb *θέλω* as in Ezek. 18: 23 rather than the *βούλομαι* in Ezek. 33: 11 and 'sinner' instead of either 'lawless' (Ezek. 18: 23) or 'impious' (Ezek. 33: 11—except one important MS) and omits 'from his way' after 'converted'.

⁷¹⁵ *κατανύγη τὴν ψύχην*, i.e. compunction.

⁷¹⁶ *τὴν πτωχείαν καὶ τὴν πενίαν*.

SR 263

Q: What does the Lord wish to teach by the examples he concludes with the words, *So therefore every one among you who does not renounce all that he possesses, cannot be my disciple?* (Luke 14: 33) For if one who wishes to build a tower or to go to war with another king ought to make preparations either for building or for war [but is not able to],⁷¹⁷ then is he not permitted to lay the foundations or sue for terms of peace? (cf. Luke 14: 28–32) So also with one who has desired to become a disciple of the Lord. He ought to renounce all. But if he finds this hard to carry out, is he not permitted even to begin to be a disciple of the Lord at all?

R: The Lord's purpose in these examples is not to give anyone a warrant to become a disciple of the Lord or not, but to show the impossibility of being well pleasing to God amid the things that drag the soul about. In such circumstances one is indeed in danger of becoming easy prey to the ruses of the devil and consequently deserving of mockery and laughter, because what one appeared to be eager to do is exposed as incomplete. This is what the prophet prayed might not happen to him, saying: *that my enemies do not rejoice over me and that if my feet should slip they do not vaunt over me* (Ps. 37: 17).

SR 264

Q: When the Apostle says, *That you may be sincere* (Phil. 1: 10) and again, *but as coming from sincerity* (2 Cor. 2: 17), what does he mean by sincerity?⁷¹⁸

R: I consider sincerity to be what is unmixed, absolutely purified of all that is contrary, concentrated and directed solely to piety⁷¹⁹—and not only that, but also with regard to what is accurately needed on each occasion and each task in order to serve this goal of piety. Thus one set on such a course is not distracted even by what has the appearance of good actions. The first saying is illustrated by the very words that follow, for to *but as from sincerity*, he adds, *as from God, in the presence of God, we speak in Christ* (2 Cor. 2: 17). The second saying is illustrated by: *not to think of himself more highly than he*

⁷¹⁷ Following Garnier's Latin translation. The phrase as such, obviously needed, does not appear in the edition. It reflects the Gospel verse, *καὶ μὴ ἰσχύοντος ἐκτελέσαι*, 'and is not able to finish'.

⁷¹⁸ τὸ εἰλικρινές.

⁷¹⁹ θεοσέβειαν, reverence for God, a disposition of giving God the primacy in all things.

ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned him (Rom. 12: 3) and by what is added after this.

SR 265

Q: Are the words, *if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go, first be reconciled with your brother and then come and offer your gift* (Matt. 5: 23–4 Byz.), addressed only to priests⁷²⁰ or to all others as well? And how do we each *offer a gift at the altar*?

R: It would be consistent to take this as addressed especially and first of all to priests, since it is written: *You shall be called priests of the Lord, all of you ministers of God* (Isa. 61: 6). Yet there is:⁷²¹ *a sacrifice of praise shall glorify me* (Ps. 49: 23), and again: *a sacrifice to the Lord is a contrite spirit* (Ps. 50: 19), and the Apostle says: *That you offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable worship* (Rom. 12: 1). Each of these sayings is appropriate to all and therefore it is necessary that every one of us fulfil them.⁷²²

SR 266

Q: What is the salt which the Lord charged us to have when he said, *Have salt in yourselves and be at peace one with another* (Mark 9: 50)? And there is also the Apostle's saying, *let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt* (Col. 4: 6).

R: Here also the sense is manifest from the context of each passage. For the Lord's words teach us to provide no opportunity for disunion and dissension among ourselves, but always *to safeguard what makes for the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace* (Eph. 4: 3).

But with regard to the Apostle's words, anyone who recalls the words of him who said: *shall bread be eaten without salt? Is there any savour in vain words?* (Job 6: 6 Sept.) will learn to dispense his words

⁷²⁰ *Εἰ πρὸς μόνους τοὺς ἱερεῖς.* On priests in the community, see SR 64 and note, SR 231 and note. Apparently the questioner, perhaps a superior, has heard a suggestion that such reconciliation is binding only on priests and not on all the brothers.

⁷²¹ Basil now introduces scriptural passages to answer the second part of the question.

⁷²² The priestly disposition of offering sacrifice befits the prayer and homage offered by every Christian to God. Accordingly, the Gospel call to reconciliation applies to all.

in a way that builds up the faith, that he may give grace to the hearers, using a suitable occasion (Eph. 4: 29) and a fitting order, in order to more readily persuade the hearers.

SR 267

Q: If one shall be beaten with many strokes, while another with few, how do some say that there is no end of punishment?⁷²³ (cf. Luke 12: 47)

R: The things said in a veiled and ambiguous way in certain places of the God-inspired Scripture are clarified by explicit statements in other places. The Lord at one time declares that *These shall go away into eternal punishment* (Matt. 25: 46) and at another sends certain

⁷²³ In this Response Basil affirms the strict Gospel teaching on Hell as an eternal state, which he had posted at the very beginning of the *Asketikon* (LR Prol. 2). The questioner is clearly party to Origen's conjectures, based on Acts 3: 21 and 1 Cor. 15: 24, that punishment after death is remedial and would pass away at the final recapitulation of all things in Christ (*Hom. on Ezekiel* 1. 2). Thus all rational creatures would ultimately be saved (*Peri Archon* 1. 6. 2). This opinion was condemned at the Council of Constantinople in 543, Emperor Justinian citing the question and first sentence of Basil's present response in his *Ep. ad Mennam* (Clarke 329). In taking pains to correct the questioner, possibly a superior of a community, Basil shows how someone orthodox—and by no means an anti-Origenist—might handle doubtful aspects of Origen's speculative theology. Cf. Basil's caution in *On the Holy Spirit* 29, 'his [Origen's] notions concerning the Spirit are not always sound' (Anderson 109). In one respect Basil continues Origen's spiritual interpretation of the suffering of the damned: its essence is the sense of alienation from God—see the two versions at *RBas* 2. 27 and *LR* 2. 2.

Basil's own brother is famously known for holding the very view Basil is trying to combat here. Without naming Origen, Gregory reports it as a possible view that all evil is blotted out by the long period of the ages and nothing will be left outside the good (*On the Soul and the Resurrection*, Callahan 227). He certainly believes that the soul's purification can and does continue after death as necessary (op. cit. 237) and that pain is incurred in proportion to the residue of evil in each person (op. cit. 242). It is very close to a doctrine of Purgatory, except that at this stage of doctrinal development Gregory can only argue for remedial suffering after death at the expense of the eternity of Hell. The fact that these very views are found in a reported discussion between himself and Makrina and some of them are placed on her lips, raises the interesting possibility that the views of the questioner in *SR* 267 had currency at Annisa itself. It might even be asked: might Peter himself have been the questioner? See Michael J. Tori, 'Apokatastasis in Gregory of Nyssa: From Origen to Orthodoxy', *Patristic and Byzantine Review* 15 (1996–7), 87–100.

The doctrinal settlement (at least in the West) borrowed something and refused something from both Basil's and Gregory's positions: with Basil maintaining that Hell is an everlasting state—but disallowing an 'equivalence' of sins; with Gregory maintaining that there is some state of remediation of sins after death—but disallowing the eventual cessation of Hell.

ones to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25: 41) and elsewhere he invokes a *Gehenna of fire*⁷²⁴ (Matt. 5: 22) and adds: *where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched* (Mark. 9: 48) which indeed he had said long before by the prophet: *their worm shall not die and their fire shall not be quenched* (Isa. 66: 24).

Since these and many such sayings are found everywhere in the God-inspired Scripture, this is surely one of the devil's stratagems: that many human beings, by disregarding such weighty and solemn words and declarations of the Lord, award to themselves an end of punishment in order that they may sin with greater bravado. For if ever there were an end of eternal punishment, then surely eternal life would also have an end. Now if we do not tolerate thinking like this about [eternal]⁷²⁵ life, by what logic shall we assign an end to eternal punishment? For the adjective 'eternal' is attached equally to either term. For *These shall go away*, he says, *into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life* (Matt. 25: 46). In view of such explicit sayings, we must understand that *shall be beaten with many strokes* and *shall be beaten with few* indicate not an end of punishment but a difference of degree.

For if God is a righteous judge, not only to the good but also to the evil, *rendering to each according to his deeds* (cf. Rom. 2: 6), then one may deserve *unquenchable fire*, which may burn more softly or more fiercely, while another may deserve the *undying worm*, which in turn may afflict more moderately or keenly according to what each deserves; a third may deserve *Gehenna*, which has quite different punishments; yet another deserve *the outer darkness* (Matt. 8: 12, 22: 13, 25: 30), where he may have only the *weeping*, while another also has *the gnashing of teeth* owing to the intensity of pains. And the *outer darkness* surely hints that there is an inner darkness as well.

Moreover, the saying in Proverbs *in the depths of Hades*⁷²⁶ (Prov. 9: 18) shows that some in Hades are not in *the depths of Hades*, but endure a lighter punishment instead. It is possible to illustrate this even now with respect to the conditions⁷²⁷ of the body. For one who

⁷²⁴ Since Basil is about to continue with a passage from Mark he possibly borrows this phrase ('elsewhere') from the parallel passage in Matt. 18: 9 (it also appears in Matt. 5: 22). A few NT manuscripts contain the phrase at Mark 9: 43, 45, and 47, and this may be the recension that he uses.

⁷²⁵ 'Eternal' is missing from the edited text, possibly due to a typographical error. The sentence structure and the context beg it. Garnier translates in the Latin as if it were there.

⁷²⁶ For the Hebrew *Sheol*.

⁷²⁷ *πάθεισιν*, 'passions' in the medical register: diseases, morbid states undergone.

has a fever may also have symptoms and other sufferings, while another only has the fever and is not like the other. Then in a manner different from the first a third does not have fever but is oppressed by pain in some limb, and this again may be greater or less.

Now in the present case, *many* and *few* were uttered by the Lord according to customary usage, as also many other such terms. For we know that such a manner of speech is often applied to those afflicted by some one illness; as when we say, marvelling at one who only has a fever or is suffering from smarting eyes: 'How much he has suffered!', or 'How many troubles he has endured!'

So, again I say, *to be beaten with many or few strokes* is accomplished not by the protraction or foreshortening of time, but in the difference of punishment.

SR 268

Q: In what sense are some called *sons of disobedience* (Eph. 2: 2) and *children of wrath*? (Eph. 2: 3)

R: The Lord's way is to name them the children and sons of anyone who do that one's will whether good or bad. For he says, *If you were the children of Abraham you would do as Abraham did* (John 8: 39) and again: *You are of your father the devil and your will is to carry out the desires of your father* (John 8: 44). So whoever does the works of disobedience becomes a *son of disobedience*. Perhaps because the devil is called not only sinner but sin itself, since he is the chief leader,⁷²⁸ I think, of sin, so also the devil could be called disobedience itself for the same reason.

But one is a *child of wrath* insofar as he has made himself deserving of wrath. For as the Apostle called those who are worthy of the Lord and do the works of light and day, *sons of light and sons of day* (1 Thess. 5: 7), it is fitting also to understand the phrase *we were children of wrath* (Eph. 2: 3).

All the same, one must know that the son of disobedience is also a child of wrath, since the Lord declared: *whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God stays over him* (John 3: 36 Byz.).

SR 269

Q: Inasmuch as it is written: *fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of*

⁷²⁸ ἀρχηγός, prime instigator or *agent provocateur*, but not exactly the 'author' or 'originator' of personal sin in Basil's thought. In SR 75/RBas. 195 he emphasizes each one's individual responsibility.

the mind (Eph. 2: 3),⁷²⁹ is there any difference between *the desires of the flesh* and *the desires of the mind*, and what are they?

R: In another place the Apostle gives a list of *the desires of the flesh* mentioning each by name: *The works of the flesh are manifest and they are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, abuse of drugs,*⁷³⁰ *enmities, strifes, jealousies, wraths, factions, divisions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunken bouts, revellings and the like* (Gal. 5: 19 Byz.), and elsewhere more comprehensively: *The mind of the flesh is at enmity with God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for indeed it cannot do so* (Rom. 8: 7).

The desires of the mind, on the other hand, would be reasonings⁷³¹ not attested by the Scripture, the kind of which it is said *casting down reasonings and every loftiness raised against the knowledge of God*, and thoughts that are not brought into captivity for obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10: 5).

It is therefore always a necessary safeguard to observe what was said by David: *your justifications are my counsel* (Ps. 118: 24).

SR 270

Q: What does *perplexed, yet not led to despair* mean? (2 Cor. 4: 8)

R: Here the Apostle shows the full conviction of his own trust in God by contrasting it with human wisdom⁷³² as he sets out each of the items found in this passage. Thus with regard to human wisdom he says: *We are hemmed in on every side*, but with regard to trust in God adds: *yet not crushed*. Again, with regard to human wisdom: *perplexed*, but with regard to trust in God: *yet not led to despair*. And it is likewise with the rest. He also has sayings like these in another place: *As dying and behold we live; as poor, yet enriching many; as having nothing, yet possessing all things* (2 Cor. 6: 10).

SR 271

Q: Since the Lord says, *But give as alms those things which are within and behold all things are pure for you* (Luke 11: 41), does one find purification of all one's sins, whatever they are, through almsgiving?

R: This question is explained by the preceding passage. For

⁷²⁹ τὰ θελήματα τῆς σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν or the desires of the 'thoughts'.

⁷³⁰ φαρμακεία, the use of drugs for malevolent purposes rather than simply 'sorceries' as it is traditionally translated.

⁷³¹ λογισμοί, 'thoughts', argumentations, rationalizations.

⁷³² τοῦ ἀνθρώπινου φρονήματος, or 'the human way of thinking'.

having already said: *You cleanse the outside of cup and dish, but inwardly you are full of grasping and malice* (Luke 11:39 + Matt. 23:25) he then added: *Give as alms those things which are within and behold all things are pure for you* (Luke 11:41). So it concerns all those ways in which we sin through grasping and avarice. Indeed Zacchaeus declares this when he says: *Behold, the half of my goods I give to the poor and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold* (Luke 19:8). Accordingly, when it is possible to undo sins of this kind and make a manifold restitution, they are purified in this way. By saying ‘in this way’, I do not mean that this is sufficient in itself to obtain purification; rather, there is need in advance of the mercy of God⁷³³ and *the blood of Christ, in whom we have redemption* from all other sins as well (cf. Eph. 1:7), then of *bringing forth* in each case the *fruits worthy of repentance* (Matt. 3:8; Luke 3:8).⁷³⁴

SR 272

Q: Since there is a precept of the Lord that we are *not to be anxious about the morrow* (Matt. 6:34), how are we to understand this precept soundly? For we see ourselves expending much care for the sake of need, even going so far as to lay up stores able to last a long time.

R: One who has accepted the teaching of the Lord who said: *seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness* and is fully persuaded of the truth of the promise he added: *and all these things shall be given to you besides* (Matt. 6:33 Byz.), does not retard the soul with *the cares of this life* which *choke the word and render it unfruitful* (cf. Matt. 13:22). Instead, striving in the good contest of being well pleasing to God, he believes the Lord who said: *The worker is worthy of his food* (Matt. 10:10) and in no way preoccupies himself about it.

All the same he does work, yet not with anxiety on his own account, but for the commandment of Christ, as shown and taught by the Apostle when he said: *In all things I gave you an example, that by labouring in this way, you ought to support the weak* (Acts 20:35). For to be anxious on one’s own account exposes one as a lover of

⁷³³ *χρῆζοντι δὲ προηγουμένως τοῦ ἐλέους τοῦ Θεοῦ.*

⁷³⁴ Just as the Gospels and the Pauline letters show no awareness of the dichotomies so fostered in later controversies, Basil never supposes that one either ‘earns’ one’s redemption by good works, or that there can be any ‘imputed’ forgiveness without an attendant change of behaviour. Rather, good works should somehow precede, accompany, and follow the forgiveness. He maintains in the strongest possible terms that bearing the fruit of good works, especially works that correspond to the sin being repented of, e.g. restoration in the case of theft, are a testimony of genuine forgiveness, *sine qua non*.

self; but to be anxious and work for the sake of the commandment is praiseworthy and shows the disposition of a lover of Christ and a lover of one's brothers.

SR 273

Q: Through what action does one *blaspheme against the Holy Spirit*? (Mark 3: 29; Luke 12: 10)

R: It is clear from the blasphemy with which the Pharisees blasphemed at that time and against whom this sentence was pronounced, so that even now one blasphemes against the Holy Spirit when one attributes the activities and fruits of the Holy Spirit to the opposite cause. Many of us succumb to this when, as often happens, we rashly call one who is zealous vainglorious, or falsely ascribe anger to one who displays good zeal, or through our evil suspicions give false names to other things of the kind.

SR 274 (RBas. 203)

Q: How does one *become a fool in this* (present) *world*? (1 Cor. 3: 18)

R: **1** When one fears that judgment of God who says, *woe to you who are prudent in your own eyes and wise in your own estimation!* (Isa. 5: 21), and imitates instead him who said *I have become as a beast of burden before you* (Ps. 72: 22). **2** And he casts away all arrogance of understanding and does not credit in advance any good to his own reasonings or even begin to give it consideration, until he is accustomed⁷³⁵ by the commandment of the Lord (God) itself **3** to (understand)⁷³⁶ what pleases God, whether in work or word or thought,⁷³⁷ as the Apostle said: *Such, however, is the confidence we have in Christ toward God, not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as coming from ourselves—rather, our sufficiency is from God* (2 Cor. 3: 4-5),⁷³⁸ *who teaches man knowledge* (Ps. 93: 10), as it is written.

SR 275 (RBas. 202)

Q: Can Satan hinder the purpose of the holy (person), since it is

⁷³⁵ RBas. 203. 2: illumined.

⁷³⁶ RBas. 203. 3: so that he understands what pleases God.

⁷³⁷ ἐνθυμήσει [sic], RBas. 203. 3: cogitatione.

⁷³⁸ On this resounding note the *Regula Basili* ends.

written, *I, Paul tried to come, a first and a second time, but Satan hindered us?* (1 Thess. 2. 18)⁷³⁹

R: 1 Some of the deeds accomplished in the Lord are fulfilled through the purpose and judgment of the soul (only), while some are effected in the body, whether through zeal or patience. 2 Therefore, whatever resides in the purpose and judgment of the soul, Satan can in no way hinder.

3 But with regard to deeds accomplished through⁷⁴⁰ bodily activity, God frequently permits some kind of obstacle to arise, to test and prove the one who is hindered 4 in order to prove⁷⁴¹ whether he changes from his good purpose (through hindrances of this kind) as did those who (are said to have) received the seed upon rock, 5 who for a short while receive the word with joy, but when tribulation (or persecution) comes, they fall away immediately (cf. Matt. 13: 20–1; Luke 8: 6, 13), 6 or whether indeed he⁷⁴² is shown to persevere in good works through zeal for right action (and deserve the great rewards of those who conquer in battle) 7 like the Apostle who, though he had often proposed to depart for the Romans and had been prevented, as he himself confessed (cf. Rom. 1: 9–13), yet he did not desist from his purpose until he fulfilled what he had proposed to do.

But as to patience, 8 there is the example of holy Job, who though he suffered so much from the devil who was pressing him to utter some blasphemy against God or be thankless towards God yet not even in the extremity of his misfortunes (in absolutely nothing, not even in speech), did he depart from⁷⁴³ pious judgment and from thoughts worthy of God. 9 For it was written of him: *in all these things Job neither sinned with his lips before God (the Lord), nor gave folly to God* (Job 1: 22, 2: 10).

SR 276

Q: What is the saying of the Apostle, *That you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and well pleasing and perfect* (Rom. 12: 2)?

⁷³⁹ See the related discussion on Satan as the putative author of evil in SR 75 (RBas. 195). On other aspects of negative experience in the Christian life see SR 16 and note.

⁷⁴⁰ RBas. 202. 3 completes in the passive: the ministry of the body is indeed frequently capable of being hindered, by God's permission, to test . . .

⁷⁴¹ RBas. 202. 4: that it may appear whether . . .

⁷⁴² RBas. 202. 6 uses the plural of the scriptural text: whether they persevere in good works.

⁷⁴³ RBas. 202. 8 completes: rule of piety (regulam pietatis), so as to think thoughts unworthy of God.

R: There are many things which God wills: some in patience and kindness, which are indeed good and are called so; but others in wrath because of our sins, which are called evil. For *I*, he says, *am he who makes peace and creates woes* (Isa. 45: 7)—but woes, not that we might be punished by them, but that through them we might be disciplined. Now whatever disciplines us and through distress leads to our conversion turns to good. Whatever God wills in his patience and kindness, it is necessary that we also will them and imitate them. For example, *Be compassionate*, he says, *even as your Father also is compassionate* (Luke 6: 36 Byz.). And the Apostle says: *Be therefore imitators of God as his beloved children and walk in love even as Christ loved us* (Eph. 5: 1–2).

On the other hand, the many things he brings on us in wrath because of our sins—which are spoken of as evil, as I said, because of the distress they bring—we have in no way a warrant to do. For though it is the will of God that human beings are often destroyed by famine, pestilence, war, or similar causes, it is not right that we should minister to this will. With such purposes in view God even uses evil ministers according to what is written: *he sent upon them the wrath of his fury—fury, wrath and affliction, which he sent by evil angels* (Ps. 77: 49).

We should therefore seek out first what is the good will of God. Then, when we have ascertained this good we must test whether this good is also well pleasing to God. For there is something which, considered simply in itself, may be willed by God and be good, but when done in a way not befitting the person or occasion is not at all pleasing to God. For example, it was the will of God and it was a good thing to burn incense to God, but it was not well pleasing to God that Dathan and Abiram and their followers should do so (cf. Num. 16: 1–40). Again, it is the will of God and a good thing to give alms; but to do so in order to be honoured by human beings is not at all well pleasing to God. Again, it was God's will and it was a good thing that the disciples should proclaim from the house-tops what they heard in the ear (Matt. 10: 27); yet to announce anything unseasonably was in no way well pleasing to God. For he says: *Tell this vision to no one till the Son of Man is risen from the dead* (Matt. 17: 9).

In general, everything willed by God is good and well pleasing when there is fulfilled in it the saying of the Apostle: *Do all for the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31); and: *Let all things be done decently and in order* (1 Cor. 14: 40).

Yet again, when a thing is willed by God and good and well pleasing, not even then must one be without care, but rather struggle

and give much thought that it be perfect and not lacking in anything—now taking the measure of what is being done, whether it is done in accordance with what is commanded and now taking the measure of the doer's capacity. For he says: *You shall love the Lord your God with all your soul and with all your power*⁷⁴⁴ *and with all your strength and with all your mind and your neighbour as yourself* (cf. Mark 12: 30), and as the Lord taught in the Gospel according to John (cf. John 13: 34). And, further, we must do every commandment as it is written, for *Blessed is that servant*, it says, *whom his Lord shall find so doing, when he comes* (Matt. 24: 46).

SR 277

Q: What is the *private room* which the Lord commands anyone who prays to enter? (Matt. 6: 6)

R: Custom calls a *private room* a dwelling which is unoccupied and out of the way, in which we put whatever we wish to store, or in which it is possible to hide oneself, according to what is said in the prophet: *Go, my people, enter your private room*⁷⁴⁵ *and hide yourselves* (Isa. 26: 20).

But the force of the commandment is made clear from its context; for the word is addressed to those who are diseased with the passion of courting human favour.⁷⁴⁶ Accordingly, if one is entangled in this passion, he does well to go apart in prayer and solitude till he can acquire the habit of not looking about for the praises of human beings, but of looking only to God, as the psalmist says: *Behold, even as the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters; as the eyes of a handmaid on the hands of her mistress: so our eyes are on the Lord our God* (Ps. 122: 2–3).

But if, by God's grace, someone has cleansed himself from that passion, he is under no necessity to hide his good. This is what the Lord himself teaches when he says: *A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. And they do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on the lampstand; so that it shines for all in the house. So let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 5: 14–16).

And indeed, the same thinking applies to almsgiving and fasting

⁷⁴⁴ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς δυνάμεώς σου. This phrase does not appear in the scriptural text. δύναμις, power/capacity, seems to be Basil's gloss on ἰσχός, strength.

⁷⁴⁵ Plural in Rahlfs's edition of the Septuagint.

⁷⁴⁶ ἀνθρωπαρέσκεια. See note at LR 19. 1.

which are found in the same place, and so generally, for every matter concerning piety.

SR 278

Q: How can someone's *spirit pray while his mind is unfruitful?* (cf. 1 Cor. 14: 14)

R: This was said of those who offer their prayers in a tongue unknown to the hearers, for he says: *If I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful* (1 Cor. 14: 14). Now when the words of the prayer are unknown to those who are present, the mind of him who prays is unfruitful because no one is benefited; but whenever those who are present understand the prayer, so that it can benefit the hearers, then the one praying bears fruit through the betterment of those who are benefited. The same applies every time the words of God are pronounced. For it is written: *but only such as is good for the upbuilding of faith* (Eph. 4: 29).

SR 279 (RBas. 110)

Q: What is it to *sing psalms with understanding?*⁷⁴⁷ (Ps. 46: 8)

R: 1 As taste⁷⁴⁸ is to (every) foods with respect to the quality of each food,⁷⁴⁹ so is understanding⁷⁵⁰ to the words of Holy Scripture; 2 For the throat, it says, *tastes foods, but the mind discerns words* (cf. Job 12: 11, 34: 3).⁷⁵¹ 3 Therefore if one's soul is intent on the power of each word (of the psalms), the way that the taste is intent on the quality of each food,⁷⁵² such a one fulfils the commandment which says *sing psalms with understanding* (Ps. 46: 8).

SR 280 (RBas. 148)

Q: Who is the *pure of heart?* (Matt. 5: 8; Ps. 72: 1)

⁷⁴⁷ *ψάλατε συνετῶς*, or *sing psalms wisely*, Garnier: *intelligenter*; RBas. 110:

Q: *Psallite sapienter*, which is also the reading of the Latin Vulgate Bible.

⁷⁴⁸ ἡ αἴσθησις. RBas. 110. 1: *gustus*, 'taste', somewhat more specific than the Greek.

⁷⁴⁹ RBas. 110. 1: whereby the flavour of each food is distinguished.

⁷⁵⁰ ἡ σύνεσις. RBas. 110. 1: *sensus prudentiae*, 'the sense of discernment', 'prudent judgment'.

⁷⁵¹ The scriptural order of the saying is inverted, perhaps to accommodate the sequence of his argument. The Sept., following the Hebrew has οὖς . . . ῥήματα διακρίνει. A very minor change from οὖς (ear) to νοῦς (mind), is found in some Sept. manuscripts, which is the version used by Basil.

⁷⁵² RBas. 110. 3: intent on distinguishing the flavour of foods . . .

R: 1 One who does not have to reprimand himself for setting aside the commandment of God, or overlooking it, or being careless about it.⁷⁵³

SR 281

Q: Should she⁷⁵⁴ be made to sing the psalms who does not want to?

R: If she does not come eagerly to the psalmody and if there is not manifest in her the disposition of the one who said: *Your utterances are sweeter to my throat than honey in my mouth* (Ps. 118: 103) and if she does not think idleness a great loss, then let her either correct herself or else be expelled—lest *a little leaven corrupts the whole lump* (cf. 1 Cor. 5: 6).

SR 282

Q: Who are they who say *we ate and drank in your presence* (Luke 13: 26) and yet hear *I do not know you?* (Luke 13: 27)

R: Perhaps they are those whom the Apostle described using his own person when he said: *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels and so on, And if I have . . . all knowledge and . . . all faith . . . And if I parcel out all my possessions; and if I hand over my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing* (1 Cor. 13: 1–3).

The Apostle learnt this from the Lord who said of some: *for they do it to be seen by men* (Matt. 23: 5). *Amen I say to you, they have received their reward* (Matt. 6: 2). For whatever is not done from love for God, but for the praises of human beings, whatever it may be, will find no praise for piety, but judgment for courting human favour, or self-pleasing, or contentiousness, or envy or for some other such root.

Accordingly the Lord calls such work a ‘work of iniquity’,⁷⁵⁵ saying to those who said: *we ate in your presence*, and so on, *Depart from me, all you workers of iniquity* (Luke 13: 26–7). For how are they not

⁷⁵³ An excellent example of not merely a doublet, but a triplet originating in Basil, accurately conveyed and not at all expanded in Rufinus’ translation.

⁷⁵⁴ τήν μὴ θέλουσαν ψάλλαι. Only the feminine article and participle appear in Greek. Since this pastoral problem was hardly specific to women, it must reflect the concrete situation of the superior who is questioning Basil, referring perhaps to a particular sister (τήν) in his, or perhaps her, community. The common worship of men and women in the one community is presumed, on which see Letter 207, Def. III. 186–7, Stramara 305.

⁷⁵⁵ ἔργον ἀδικίας, or ‘work of unrighteousness/injustice’, i.e. a work not ‘justified’ before God, because done in a way that does not give what is due to God and man in the right order.

workers of iniquity who misuse the gifts of God in order to contrive their own satisfaction? These were the kind of whom the Apostle speaks: *We are not, like so many, pedlars of the word of God* (2 Cor. 2: 17) and again: *imagining piety is a means of gain* (1 Tim. 6: 5), and many such sayings.

The same Apostle proves to us he is pure of all these things, through what he says of them: *Not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts. For never were we found using words to win favour, as you all know, or as a pretext for covetousness, as God is my witness; or as seeking glory from men, either from you or from anyone else* (1 Thess. 2: 4–6).

SR 283 (RBas. 120)

Q: **If one does another's will, is he his** (accomplice and) **associate** (whose will he does)?

R: **1** **If we believe the Lord who says: every one who commits sin is the slave of sin** (John 8:34) and again, *you are of your father, the devil and your will is to carry out the desires of your father* (John 8:44), **2** we know that one like this is not merely an (accomplice and) **associate, but claims as his lord and father him whose work he does.** **3** **The Apostle moreover gives witness to this when he says: Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to anyone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin that leads to death, or of obedience that leads to righteousness?** (Rom. 6: 16)

SR 284

Q: If a community is impoverished due to adversity or sickness, may it without hesitation accept necessities from others? If so, from whom should it accept help?

R: Anyone who remembers the Lord's words *Insofar as you did it even to the least of these my brothers, you did it to me* (Matt. 25: 40) will give much thought with all zeal and care, that he be made worthy of being ranked as a *brother* of the Lord. So if someone is in this case,⁷⁵⁶ let there be no hesitation about accepting help, only with thanksgiving. From whom and when and how it should be received, the one

⁷⁵⁶ εἰάν οὖν τις τοιοῦτος ᾗ. There seems some ambiguity: is this *τις* a particular *brotherhood* as such, i.e. the ἀδελφότης of the question, or is it a single sick 'brother', for whose needs an impoverished community would welcome supplies from outside?

entrusted with the common care ought to decide, being mindful of what David said: *Let the oil of the sinner not anoint my head* (Ps. 140: 5) and again: *he who walks in a blameless way ministered to me* (Ps. 100: 6).

SR 285

Q: Should one community trading with another community make a fuss about the proper price of each item?⁷⁵⁷

R: Whether the word condones buying from and selling to one another among brothers, I have nothing to say. For we are taught to hold communion with each other⁷⁵⁸ in respect to need, according to what is written: *Your abundance supplying for their want and their abundance for your want, that there may be equality* (2 Cor. 8: 14). But if at any time such necessity comes about, the buyer must take greater care not to pay a price less than it is worth to the seller. But let both remember the passage: *To exact from a just man is not good* (Prov. 17: 26).

SR 286

Q: If someone living in the community falls into bodily illness, ought we transfer him to a hospice?⁷⁵⁹

R: The aim in each case, taking into account the locality and our special goal, is the common good to the glory of God.⁷⁶⁰

⁷⁵⁷ Here Basil reluctantly tolerates a marketing practice which seems so opposed to communion between communities (see *LR* 35), but he tries to limit the damage, stressing the responsibility of those paying the price.

⁷⁵⁸ *κοινωνεῖν γὰρ ἀλλήλοις*, i.e. there should be communion not only within any one community, but communion *between* communities. This is very much in keeping with Basil's ecclesiology.

⁷⁵⁹ *εἰς ξενοδοκεῖον*. Since the community itself may be conducting a hospice, the case may be that of a chronically sick brother or sister transferred from 'inside' the community, to the hospice 'outside' superintended by community members, or it may be necessary to transfer such a sick member to another community, or a Church-sponsored hospice. See *LR* 15. 1 and note, *SR* 155.

⁷⁶⁰ Scholion 7 is inserted after *SR* 286 in several MSS; Scholion 8 (a summary of Scholion 7), appears in two MSS; an even shorter summary, Scholion 9, appears in one MS. These scholia distinguish between material coming from Pontus and from Caesarea—specifically from the *Basiliad*, according to Scholion 7. Scholion 8 puts it succinctly: 'The manuscript coming from Pontus goes only as far as this; the chapters which follow and the *epitimia* were added out of the book coming from Caesarea.'

SR 287 (RBas. 19. Q)

Q: What are the *fruits worthy of repentance*? (Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8)

R: 1 These are works which are contrary to sin, those fruits of righteousness which one who repents ought to bring forth, fulfilling the saying, *Bearing fruit in every good work* (Col. 1: 10).⁷⁶¹

SR 288 (RBas. 21)

Q: Should one who wishes to confess his sins confess them to all, whoever they may be, or only to certain ones?

R: 1 The scope of God's loving-kindness toward sinners is declared in what is written: *I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he should be converted and live* (Ezek. 33: 11). 2 The manner of conversion ought to relate to the sin and there is need of *fruits worthy of repentance*, according to the passage:⁷⁶² *Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance* (Matt. 3: 8; Luke 3: 8). 3 Otherwise the threat that follows will come upon⁷⁶³ the failure to bear fruit (as it is written:) *for Every tree, it says, which does not bear fruit, is cut down and cast into the fire* (Matt. 3: 10, 7: 19; Luke 3: 9). 4 Therefore it is (appears) necessary that sins be confessed to those entrusted with the *stewardship of the mysteries of God* (cf. 1 Cor. 4: 1).⁷⁶⁴ For

⁷⁶¹ RBas. completes the sentence: . . . he ought to bring forth who desires as it is written, *to bear fruit in every good work*.

⁷⁶² RBas. 21. 2: Since the manner of repentance should be appropriate and worthy fruit should be shown by those turning from sin through their repentance, as it is written . . .

⁷⁶³ RBas. 21. 3 continues: those who do not repent.

⁷⁶⁴ *πεπιστευμένοις τὴν οἰκονομίαν τῶν μυστηρίων τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐξομολογεῖσθαι τὰ ἁμαρτήματα*, RBas. 21. 4: his quibus dispensatio mysteriorum Dei commissa est confitenda esse peccata. On the face of it, this would appear to mean priests, but there are ambiguities. The example of John the Baptist is curious, for his role was that of a prophet not a priest (*ἱερεὺς*). Moreover in SR 312 the term 'mystery of God' refers not to sacramental ministry but to teaching on prayer. The same Pauline phrase *steward of the mysteries of God* is used in SR 98, 184 for the superior of the community, who appears to be the *presbyter* rather than the *presbytera* (who was not, of course, a *ἱερεὺς*). In *Movals* 80. 12 'faithful stewards of God's mysteries' definitely refers to bishops and to priests mandated for preaching.

The confession Basil discusses here cannot refer to public (sacramental) penance—the province of bishops dealing with grave sins—but the confession of thoughts by those striving to make spiritual progress in the ascetic community. The solution proposed in RBas. 199 (SR 110) and note was that Basil did consider it fitting and desirable that any worthy *presbyter* ('elder') or male superior of a community be a priest, but even so, the private confession made before such a priest-presbyter was

thus also those who repented of old are found to have done (confessed their sins) before the saints. 5 For it is written in the Gospel that they confessed their sins to John the Baptist and in the Acts (of the Apostles), to the Apostles, by whom they were all being baptized.

not the later ‘confession of devotion’, though it seems to have borne most of the marks of it, save the sacramental absolution. As bishop Basil made some provision for private confession within public penance—see Letter 199, Canon 34, Def. III. 124–5. The gradual convergence of ascetic confession of faults plus assignment of remedial penances, with a privately administered *sacramental* absolution and its replacement of public penance is a development of later centuries. It may be seriously asked, however, whether the beginning of this convergence is not here in Basil’s teaching, *SR* 288. It may be noted that the ‘appears necessary’ of the *RBas./Small Asketikon* becomes ‘*is necessary*’ in the Great Asketikon. Thus, what was originally fitting and desirable, that community *presbyters* be priests, may have become prescriptive, and Basil’s later teaching may have been the agent of the process.

Nevertheless, Basil retained a very Pauline and ‘pneumatic’ conception of the Christian priesthood: no man should have episcopal hands laid on him who was not *already* thoroughly examined and approved with the required charismatic gifts, and no priest at fault should be allowed to continue uncorrected. The *charismata* and skills required for the ‘ministry of the word’ both in the ascetic community and in the Church at large were the same. He would have concurred with the later idea in the West that priest-presbyters *should* be ‘soul-doctors’, i.e. capable of authoritative spiritual guidance—that their office was singularly suited to it—but not that they could be assumed to be so simply *ex officio*; empirically verifiable qualities were needed. Basil knew all too well the compromised presbyterate and episcopacy of his day. The bane of the Church, in his view, was the complacency of a clergy unable or unwilling to promote Christian piety and careless about remedying ‘small’ sins. Much of his ministry was an attempt to reground the contemporary Church in a genuinely spiritual order, using the ‘leaven’ of the ascetic communities as exemplars of baptismal maximalism.

There is no doubt that when in his letters Basil refers to a ‘fellow-presbyter’, he means a priest and that the *presbyters* of *Morals* 70. 1 are certainly priests. Basil himself was already a priest during his second period as teacher of ascetics in Pontos, 363–5. As bishop, he ordained Peter a priest for Annisa in 371/372. Peter evidently continued as presbyter of the male section and priest-presbyter over both sections, while Makrina maintained a charismatic ascendancy over the whole as the guiding genius and Peter’s spiritual mother. *Lausiac History* 49. 2 tells of Sissinius, a priest-presbyter presiding over a community of both men and women. On his return home to Cappadocia as an experienced ascetic, ‘he was considered worthy of the priesthood and he gathered together a community (*ἀδελφότης*) of men and women’. In every way it corroborates the developed Basilian pattern as sketched here.

By the end of the 12th cent. priesthood was requisite in the Greek Church for those who heard confession in the monastic life. The canonist Balsamon commented that female superiors did not have the right to hear the confession of their nuns, as it was also forbidden for male superiors who had not been ordained priests; see G. A. Rhalles and M. Potles, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων* (Athens, 1852), iv. 477. Similar canonical requirements were being implemented in the west in the same period.

On ‘priests’ in the community see *SR* 64 and note, *SR* 231, 265 and note. On the various modalities of confession and mutual correction in community see *RBas.* 3

SR 289 (RBas. 22)

Q: What shall he do who has repented of a sin but falls again into the same sin?⁷⁶⁵

R: 1 That he who has repented⁷⁶⁶ once but commits this same sin again (seems to) proves (about himself firstly) that he has not removed the primary cause of the sin,⁷⁶⁷ from which, as from a (kind of obnoxious) root there necessarily sprouts the same ills again (as before). 2 It is as if someone wishes to cut off the branches of a tree, leaving the root behind; while the root remains (in the ground the stock eventually) it sprouts the same again in no less degree (so it is with sin). 3 Therefore, since there are some sins that do not have their origin in themselves, but spring from others,⁷⁶⁸ 4 (Therefore) it is necessary that one⁷⁶⁹ who wishes to cleanse himself entirely from sin cut out from below the (very) first causes of those sins.

5 Such (for example) are *strife and envy* (cf. Rom. 13: 13 *et al.*). These do not spring from themselves, but sprout from a root of (arrogance and) love of glory; 6 for he who seeks glory from men, competes with one of high reputation or envies him who has a reputation superior to his own.⁷⁷⁰

7 Therefore, if someone who has once taken himself in hand

(LR 7. 3), LR 10. 2, 15. 2, 25, 26 and note, 27, 36 and note, 43. 2, 46, 47, 50 and note, 54 and note; RBas. 16 (SR 3), SR 15, SR 95 and note, RBas. 21 (SR 301), RBas. 23 (SR 99), RBas. 77 (SR 164), RBas. 122 (SR 47), RBas. 194 (SR 106), RBas. 199 (SR 110) and note, RBas. 200 (SR 229) and note, RBas. 201 (SR 111), SR 184, SR 227 and note, SR 303 and note.

⁷⁶⁵ RBas. puts the question in the plural: What should they do . . . ? Already by the period of the Small Asketikon Basil had developed a sophisticated teaching on *dispositions* or the motivational roots of behaviour, and how they are obliquely conditioned by our use of *memory*: in modern terms how the subconscious is affected by consciousness and vice versa. See RBas. 45 (SR 28), SR 157 (RBas. 14) and note, and *Morals* 23, PG 31, 741D: 'That one who is drawn into sin unwillingly should recognize that he is being mastered by some other previous sin which he serves willingly, so that as a consequence, he is being led by it even to do what he does not wish.' E. Bamberger discusses Basil's awareness of the 'dynamic unconscious' in '*MNHHM-ΔΙΑΘΕΣΙΣ*: The Psychic Dynamisms in the Ascetical Theology of Saint Basil'.

⁷⁶⁶ RBas. 22. 1: deliquit, offended.

⁷⁶⁷ RBas. 22. 1: seems to indicate about himself firstly that he has not expunged whatever underlies the sin . . .

⁷⁶⁸ RBas. 22. 3: not all who offend take their impulse from the sins themselves—rather the occasion of offence arises out of still others.

⁷⁶⁹ RBas. uses the plural 3rd person for the rest of the sentence.

⁷⁷⁰ RBas. 22. 6 completes: (or takes an envious view of those who live uprightly, or merely of anyone through whom his own praise or renown seems to be diminished).

with regard to (the vice of) envy or strife, falls into the same again, 8 let him recognize that the primary cause of the envy or the contentiousness is the love of glory of which we spoke above **and that this is the underlying disease,**⁷⁷¹ **9 and that he needs to cure** this passion of love of glory⁷⁷² **by the contrary** (and opposite), **that is, by exercises of humility. Occupying himself in menial tasks** (and giving himself to lowly acts of service) **is such an exercise in humility. 10 Thus** (he shall be able to cure the malady of arrogance and human reputation,) **in that, once he is established in the disposition of humility, he will not fall again into the offshoots of** (arrogance and) **love of glory** of which spoke above.

11 And (this manner of treatment) **similarly with each of these sins** (vices).

SR 290

Q: How does one *abound always in the work of the Lord?* (1 Cor. 15: 58)

R: Either by multiplying the charism given him through the advantage and advancement of those who are benefited by it, or by showing a greater zeal in the work of the Lord than is shown in merely human pursuits.

SR 291

Q: Who is the *bruised reed* or the *smoking flax*? And how is one not to *break* the one or *quench* the other? (cf. Matt. 12: 20)

R: I consider that a *bruised reed* is one who performs God's commandment under the influence of some passion. One should not break him and cut him off but rather cure him, as the Lord did when he taught, saying: *Take care not to do your almsgiving*⁷⁷³ *before men in order to be seen by them* (Matt. 6: 1). And the Apostle charges us: *Do all things without murmurings and questionings* (Phil. 2: 14) and elsewhere: *Do nothing through faction or vainglory* (Phil. 2: 3).

The *smoking flax* is when someone performs the commandment without burning desire and perfect zeal, but anyhow, sluggishly and

⁷⁷¹ *ἑαυτον . . . ἐν βᾶθει νοσοῦντα*. Rufinus uses a more graphic image. *RBas.* 22. 8: let him recognize that the primary cause of which we spoke above from which arises the envy or the contentiousness is the love of glory which he has lurking in his inner marrow.

⁷⁷² *RBas.* 22. 9: he . . . Such exercises are that he subject himself to menial tasks (and give himself to lowly acts of service).

⁷⁷³ *ἐλεημοσύνην*, as in the NT Byzantine recension, instead of *δικαιοσύνην*.

casually. We ought not to curb such a one, but rather stir him up by reminding him of God's judgments and his promises.

SR 292

Q: Ought there be a school⁷⁷⁴ in the community for children of seculars?⁷⁷⁵

R: The Apostle says: *Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath: but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord* (Eph. 6: 4). Therefore, if those who present them do so with such a goal in view, and those who accept them are fully persuaded that they can bring them up in *the discipline and instruction of the Lord*, then let the Lord's charge be kept: *Let the children come to me and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven* (Luke 18: 16).

But without such a goal and such a hope, I do not consider that it is either pleasing to God or proper and fitting for us.

SR 293

Q: How is one to deal with those who avoid the grosser sins but commit small sins as a matter of indifference?⁷⁷⁶

R: First, we must know that it is impossible to observe such a distinction in the New Testament. There is one judgment passed against all sins and that is the Lord's where he says: *Every one who commits sin is the slave of sin* (John 8: 34), and again: *The word that I*

⁷⁷⁴ διδασκαλεῖον, following the reading of Reg. prim.; otherwise διδάσκαλον, teacher.

⁷⁷⁵ παιδίων [sic] βιωτικῶν. This is not Basil's usual term for those living 'outside' and probably indicates late composition. See LR 15 where children in the community, destined for the ascetic life, are educated according to a dedicated Christian curriculum based on the Scriptures. Here Basil accepts that children of Christians outside might be educated in the community, but only if the parents intend the same goal of piety in their children's education. One may ask if it has particular reference to girls. That they should miss the secular curriculum would not have the same social consequences as for boys of a certain class. Cf. Basil's famous *Hom. 22, To young men on how to benefit from Hellenic literature* (Def. iv. 378–435), addressed to Christian children following a secular curriculum; see also *Hom. on the beginning of Proverbs*, PG 385–424.

⁷⁷⁶ On Basil's doctrine of the gravity of *all* sins including so-called 'small' sins, see also LR Preface 2 and note, SR 4 (RBas. 17) and note, SR 13, 15. This doctrine, adumbrated in the Small Asketikon, is a central concern of the autobiographical *De Iudicio*. Clarke 48, commenting on the latter, says: '[Basil] studied the Scriptures and came to a conclusion which he evidently regards as epoch-making. All sins are capital sins, sins unto death. A single sin provokes the wrath of God. "There is no difference, no discrimination, no reservation."'

have spoken, this shall be his judge on the last day (John 12: 48). John also cries out: *Whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God stays over him* (John 3: 36); though disobedience incurs the threat here, not because it is different from other sins but because it is the refusal to hear.⁷⁷⁷

If, however, we are permitted to speak of a small and a great sin, it can be irrefutably demonstrated that for each, that sin is great which masters him and that is small which he masters, just as among athletes, the one who conquers is the stronger, while the one who is worsted, whoever he may be, is weaker than the one who prevails over him. Therefore, when anyone sins—it matters not what the sin is—we ought to observe that decree of the Lord who says: *If your brother sins against you, go, confront him between you and him alone: if he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear you, take one or two more with you, since ‘in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established’* (Deut. 19: 15). *But if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the Church. And if he also refuses to hear the Church, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax-collector* (Matt. 18: 15–17). And in all these matters let the Apostle’s saying be observed: *Why*⁷⁷⁸ *did you not mourn instead, that he who had committed this deed might be removed from your midst?* (1 Cor. 5. 2)

For it is necessary that forbearance and compassion come to an issue in decisive intervention.⁷⁷⁹

SR 294

Q: From what cause does one fall from the continual remembrance of God?

R: It happens if one becomes forgetful of God’s benefits and is found insensible towards one’s benefactor.

⁷⁷⁷ Clarke 342: ‘Cf. *De Iudicio* 220D: *all disobedience is punished equally*, i.e. insofar as it is disobedience. Bellarmine (Garnier, *PG* 31, p. xxxvii) doubted the genuineness of the Rules, since such a judgment as the present one could not be ascribed to Basil! Note that Basil’s whole penitential system, as it appears in the Canonical Epistles to Amphilochius, depends on distinctions between sins. As the rest of the answer shows, he is deprecating legalistic distinctions. So-called small offences may be serious in some men. As against existing tendencies, Basil’s position is that all sins are grave, but all are forgivable. See Holl, p. 262, Introduction p. 48.’

⁷⁷⁸ *διὰ τί, why*, added to the NT text.

⁷⁷⁹ *ἐπιφέρεσθαι τῇ ἀποτομίᾳ*, severity, conciseness, cutting off; in the context, this last sense seems to be especially meant. Let not lenience continue indefinitely but be directed to a conclusion, a decisive intervention.

SR 295

Q: From what signs is it recognized that someone is distracted?

R: It happens whenever one becomes careless concerning what pleases God, for the prophet did say: *I kept the Lord ever in view before me. Since he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken* (Ps. 15:8).

SR 296

Q: How may the soul be fully persuaded that it is purified from sin?

R: If one recognizes in oneself the disposition of David, who said: *Iniquity I hated and abhorred* (Ps. 118:163), or if one recognizes that there is fulfilled in oneself the command of the Apostle, who says: *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, base desire and covetousness, which is idolatry; it is on account of these that the wrath of God comes*—to which he adds, so as to extend the judgment against every sin: *upon the sons of disobedience* (Col. 3:5–6)—so that he can say: *No crooked heart cleaved to me: when the wicked man turned away from me, I did not know him* (Ps. 100:3–4).

Again one realizes that one is in such a disposition if one has the same trembling sympathy⁷⁸⁰ for sinners as the saints had. For this is how David spoke: *I beheld the foolish and grew faint, because they did not keep your words* (Ps. 118:158); and the Apostle says: *Who is weak and I am not weak, who is scandalized and I do not burn?* (2 Cor. 11:29)

Now if, according to the truth of the word⁷⁸¹ (cf. Matt. 10:28, 16:26?), the soul surpasses the body, and we observe that with regard to the body we loathe and detest all filth and the sight of any laceration or injury works affliction and grief in the heart, then does

⁷⁸⁰ φρικώδη συμπάθειαν, or perhaps ‘shivering/quivering sensitivity’. A ‘purified’ soul, i.e. one who has sustained the cost of recovered innocence, has a special capacity to feel what sin is really doing in a brother and to touch it. His very emotions have become refined and serviceable for charity. On the use of emotions see SR 157 (RBas. 14. 1), SR 242 and note. Rousseau 217–20, esp. at 217 n. 139, takes ‘very forceful issue’ with Amand de Mendieta’s dark construction of Basil’s ‘rigorism’, *Ascèse*, 152–63. He cites this passage and SR 8 (RBas. 27), SR 10 (RBas. 117), SR 84, *Hom. on Ps. 32, 5*, PG 29. 329 (Way 232–3), *Hom. on Ps. 61, 5*, PG 29. 481C (Way 350), *Hom. on Ps. 114, 3*, PG 29. 489 (Way 355)—see also SR 13 and *Morals* 70. 20—for the ‘theology of compassion’ (220 n. 158) that undergirds all Basil’s approach to mutual correction, repentance, and strengthening. ‘It was not enough to serve others: one should feel sad at their failure and joyful at their success. So deeply felt a response was the least one’s fellows could expect (220).’

⁷⁸¹ κατὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ λόγου. Alternatively, *logos* here might be interpreted as some form of ‘reason’, ‘argument’, or ‘account’.

it not much more follow with regard to sinners, that a lover of Christ and a lover of his brothers suffers what we have spoken of, when he sees the soul of sinners wounded as if by wild beasts and savaged and displaying gore and gangrene, as it were? Thus David says: *My iniquities towered over my head: like a weighty burden they bore down upon me. My sores were foul and festering because of my own folly, I was abased and utterly bowed down. I went with downcast face all the day long* (Ps. 37: 5–7) and the Apostle says: *The sting of death is sin* (1 Cor. 15: 56).

Therefore when someone recognizes that his own soul is disposed like this, whether on account of his own sins or those of others, then, as we said at the beginning, he may be fully persuaded that he is purified from sin.

SR 297

Q: How should one turn from sins? (cf. Acts 3: 19)

R: Through zeal for the disposition of David who says first: *I acknowledged my offence, and my sin I did not hide. I said: I will confess against myself my offence to the Lord* (Ps. 31: 5), then, by declaring one's state as one learns to do in various ways in the sixth psalm (Ps. 6) and in the other psalms.

One may learn from the Apostle those things which he testified to the Corinthians concerning another's sin, when he said: *The sorrow that is of God works a repentance leading to salvation that brings no regret.* And he adds the signs of this sorrow: *But see what earnest care this very grieving according to God worked in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what yearning, what zeal, what vindication. In everything you proved yourselves pure in the matter* (2 Cor. 7: 11).

Thus from this it is clear that not only should we depart from sin and suffer these things for sinners, but we should also withdraw from sinners themselves. David made this clear when he said: *Depart from me, all you workers of lawlessness* (Ps. 6: 8); and the Apostle enjoined: *do not even eat with such a one* (1 Cor. 5: 11).

SR 298

Q: Does the word allow us to do good as it pleases each of us?

R: Whoever pleases himself, pleases man, for each of us is himself a human being. But then, *Cursed is the man who puts his trust in man and flexes the flesh of his arm*—which is, clearly, one who trusts in himself—to which it adds: *and whose soul turns aside from the Lord*

(Jer. 17:5). Thus anyone who pleases another or does anything according to his own satisfaction falls from piety and falls into courting human favour. *For they do so, says the Lord, to be seen by men. Amen I say to you, they have had their reward* (Matt. 23:5, 6:2). And the Apostle confesses: *If I were still pleasing human beings, I would not be the servant of Christ* (Gal. 1:10). But a still more serious threat is held out by the God-inspired Scripture when it says: *God has scattered the bones of men-pleasers* (Ps. 52:6 Sept.).⁷⁸²

SR 299

Q: How may the soul be fully persuaded that it has withdrawn from vainglory? (cf. Gal. 5:26)

R: Whenever it obeys the Lord who said, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 5:16) and the Apostle's charge: *Whether you eat, or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10:31). Thus, one who is pious does not seek glory either in the present or for the future, but esteems love for God above all else. So he may have the confidence to say with those that have gone before us: *neither things present, nor things to come . . . shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord* (Rom. 8:38–9). For our Lord Jesus Christ himself said: *I do not seek my own glory* (John 8:50); and: *he who speaks as of himself seeks his own glory: but he who seeks the glory of him who sent him, he is the one who is true* (John 7:18).

SR 300

Q: What is the manner of conversion when the word concerns something unseen?

R: The manner of conversion is shown in the answer to that question dealing with how we must turn from our sins.⁷⁸³ But when the word concerns something unseen, let us remember the Lord's words: *There is nothing covered that shall not be made known* (Matt. 10:26); and *from the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks* (Matt. 12:34).

⁷⁸² ἀνθρωπαρέσκων, 'men-pleasers'.

⁷⁸³ Perhaps SR 297; the entire section SR 3–15 deals with repentance of sin.

SR 301

Q: But what if he says, ‘My conscience does not condemn me’?

R: The same happens with bodily diseases. For there are many diseases which those who are affected by them do not perceive. Nevertheless, they trust the physician’s diagnosis rather than pay heed to their own insensibility.

So it is also with diseases of the soul, that is, with sins. If someone insensible of his own sin does not condemn himself, still, he ought to trust those who can see his condition more clearly. This is demonstrated by the holy apostles who, though they were convinced of their sincere disposition towards the Lord, yet when they heard: *One of you shall betray me* (Matt. 26: 21) they preferred to trust the Lord’s word and deferred, saying: *Is it I Lord?* (Matt. 26: 22)

But the holy Peter teaches us with greater clarity, for though he begged off the ministration of his Master and God and Teacher in fervent humility, yet when he heard the words of the Lord: *If I do not wash you, you have no part with me* (John 13: 8), he was convinced of their truth and said: *Not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well* (John 13: 9).

SR 302

Q: Ought we give from the common store to the needy from outside?

R: Since the Lord says: *I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (Matt. 15: 24); and: *It is not right to take the children’s bread and throw it to the house-dogs* (Matt. 15: 26), we are under no necessity to take what is assigned to those dedicated to God and dispense it indiscriminately.

But whether it is possible to do what was said by the woman who was praised for her faith—*Yes Lord, but even the house-dogs eat from the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table* (Matt. 15: 27)—let it be left to the decision of the steward⁷⁸⁴ with the consent of those who share seniority with him,⁷⁸⁵ in order that from our abundance *the sun*, as it is written, *may rise over the evil and the good* (Matt. 5: 45).

⁷⁸⁴ οἰκονόμου, not a term used in the earlier part of the Great Asketikon. See SR 307 and note.

⁷⁸⁵ τῇ τοῦ οἰκονόμου ἀνακείσθω δοκιμασίᾳ μετὰ κοινῆς τῶν μετ’ αὐτὸν προεχόντων γνώμης.

SR 303

Q: Should one obey what is said by everyone in the community?⁷⁸⁶

R: The answer to this question is fraught with difficulty.

In the first place, it clearly indicates disorder to speak of something being said by everyone, for the Apostle says: *Let two or three prophets speak while the others discern* (1 Cor. 14: 29). And when the same Apostle listed the charisms he assigned a proper rank to each of the speakers, saying:⁷⁸⁷ *to each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned him* (Rom. 12: 3); and by his example of the members of the body he shows clearly that the part of the speaker is to speak in turn and he makes an even sharper distinction when he says: *Whether he who teaches in his teaching, or he who exhorts in his exhortation* and so on (Rom. 12: 7–8).

From this it is clear that not everything has been entrusted to everyone, but that *each should abide in that wherein he was called* (1 Cor. 7: 20) and take great care to accomplish rightly what he has been entrusted to do by the Lord.

Therefore the one who presides over the whole and makes arrangements for each, ought to be entrusted with this responsibility after much testing and should, as is fitting, watch over each one anxiously, so that he gives orders and make arrangements for the common good in a way that is well pleasing to God, having acquainted himself with the abilities and capacities of each.

But those who obey—provided good order⁷⁸⁸ is observed and obedience recognizes its own measure⁷⁸⁹—must keep in mind the

⁷⁸⁶ Cf. the much earlier response to a similar query at SR 114 (RBas. 13).

⁷⁸⁷ Voss. and two other MSS give a fuller citation: *not thinking of himself above what he ought to, but thinking with sober judgment; to each . . .*

⁷⁸⁸ On 'good order' see LR 27 and note.

⁷⁸⁹ τῆς εὐταξίας φυλαττομένης, καὶ τῆς ὑπακοῆς τὸ ἴδιον μέτρον γνωριζούσης. There is no place in Basil's conception of authority and obedience in community for any member to abdicate personal responsibility for his or her own direct obedience to God. Basil wants an alert obedience, freed from any motive of courting human favour, even, and especially, in the community. Should those in authority themselves disobey, the disciple is obliged to face the issue with due evangelical procedure (LR 36). Thus obedience to the Lord and his commandments governs all, superior and disciple alike—a highly theocentric perspective which leaves no scope for either tyranny or authoritarianism, on the one hand, or 'democracy' (LR 45) or 'mob-rule' (*De Iudicio*) on the other. When a community lives within this truly theocentric ambience, the security of a shared allegiance to the Lord should free any member from worry or 'suspicion' (LR 36) and enable him or her to live an obedience in community 'unto death' with Christ. LR 27 and SR 235 suggest that in practice, not all community members would be equipped to face up to delinquency in the superior or the community, but that there should at least be some elders in the community, attested for the charism of the word, who would be.

Lord's words: *My sheep listen to my voice; and I know them and they follow me; and I give them eternal life* (John 10: 27–8), and his preceding words: *And they will not follow a stranger, but flee from him; for they do not recognize the voice of strangers* (John 10: 5). There are also the Apostle's words: *If anyone teaches a strange doctrine and does not consent to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ and to the teaching which is in accordance with piety, he is inflated, he knows nothing* (1 Tim. 6: 3–4). After telling of the consequences (1 Tim. 6: 4–5), he adds: *Withdraw from such as these* (1 Tim. 6: 11).⁷⁹⁰ And elsewhere again: *Do not despise prophesyings; test all; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every semblance of evil* (1 Thess. 5: 20–1).

Therefore, whatever is said in accordance with the Lord's commandment or is directed to the Lord's commandment, we must obey, even if it seems to hold a threat of death; but we must in no way pay heed to anything that is contrary to the commandment or hinders the commandment, not even if an angel from heaven or one of the apostles should enjoin it, whether promising life or threatening death, for the Apostle said: *But though we ourselves, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one which we preached to you, let him be anathema* (Gal. 1: 8).

On the necessity and ordered manner of correcting superiors or, if a superior, of correcting one's fellow superiors and other issues of mutual correction see *RBas.* 13 (*SR* 114), *LR* 26 and note, *LR* 27 and note, *LR* 36 and note, 47, 54, *SR* 95 and note, *SR* 114. On the superior's dispositions in giving orders: *RBas.* 15 (*SR* 98, 184), *Morals* 28, 40, and 70 generally, esp. 70. 24 and 70. 37 (Clarke 124): 'That he who is set over the word must do and say everything with great circumspection and judgment, aiming to be well pleasing to God, since he must be judged and borne witness to by the very people who are entrusted to him'; and 72. 1 (*ibid.*): 'That such hearers as have been instructed in the Scriptures should test what their teachers say and receive what agrees with the Scriptures but reject what disagrees; and sternly decline dealing with those who persist in such teachings.' In Letter 105, Def. 11. 198, Basil praises women who have kept both their piety and their wits about them in the midst of great doctrinal confusion: 'you have not given way to deceptions, surrounded as you are by the gross perversity of those who corrupt the word of truth; you have not abandoned the apostolic proclamation of the truth to go over to the faddish novelty of the day'.

⁷⁹⁰ ἀφίστασο ἀπὸ τῶν τοιούτων. This phrase, absent from the best adjudged NT texts, is found in the Byzantine manuscript recension and such codices as D *Bezae*, K, L, P, *et al.*

SR 304

Q: If relatives⁷⁹¹ of those who join the community wish to give something on their behalf, should we accept it?⁷⁹²

R: The responsibility and the decision in this matter belong to the one who presides. However, in my opinion, I think that it offers less offence to the many and is more conducive to the building up of the faith if such gifts are refused.

For if they are accepted, what happens first is that often some criticism against the common life is implied. Secondly, it gives an excuse for conceit to the relative of those who made the gift. In addition to this, there comes about what the Apostle says concerning those who eat and drink their own provisions in the common assembly: *You put to shame those who have nothing* (1 Cor. 11: 22); and there are many such sayings. This practice is so rife with pretexts for sin, that it is a good thing not to accept such gifts; but we permit the one who presides to assess both from whom they should be accepted and how they ought to be dispensed.⁷⁹³

SR 305

Q: Ought we accept anything from those outside either for the sake of friendship or from previous ties of relationship?

R: This question has the same force as the question whether we should accept anything from relatives.

SR 306

Q: How does one achieve freedom from distraction?

R: By taking on the mind of David the chosen one, who in one place says: *I kept the Lord ever in view before me, since he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken* (Ps. 15: 8); and in another place: *My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare* (Ps. 24: 15); and in another: *Behold as the eyes of servants on the hands of*

⁷⁹¹ οἰκείων. The word may also cover the sense of close friends, those part of one's immediate circle.

⁷⁹² See also SR 85, 92, 305.

⁷⁹³ Cassian (*Institutes* 4. 4) entirely ruled out the acceptance of gifts when someone enters the community; the superior is given no leeway to decide on the matter. St Benedict, however, allowed a monk to make a donation to the monastery at his profession, but the disposal of all was entirely at the abbot's discretion (*RB* 58. 24-5 and also *RB* 54). Eventually this concession became a loophole for simoniacal entry into monastic life, i.e. the acceptance of those who would otherwise have been refused, for the temporal benefits they brought with them to the community.

their lords, as the eyes of a handmaid on the hands of her mistress, so our eyes are on the Lord our God (Ps. 122: 2–3).

Let us use a lesser example that we may give more earnest attention to accomplishing the greater. Let each consider in himself that whatever his rank may be in the eyes of others who are present, even if he enjoys equal honour with them, he is anxious not to attract their criticism, whether by the way he stands or walks or moves each limb or speaks. Now if we try to be careful about outward human appearances when we are among human beings, so also and much more so when one is convinced that God is watching, *who tries the heart and inmost parts*, as Scripture says (Ps. 7: 10) and that the only begotten Son fulfils his promise: *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them* (Matt. 18: 20); and that the Holy Spirit is presiding and distributing his charisms and effecting them;⁷⁹⁴ and that the angels are keeping watch over each of us according to what the Lord says: *See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I declare to you that their angels behold always the face of my Father who is in heaven* (Matt. 18: 10). Whoever realizes this will contend vigorously and in every way to accomplish a piety well pleasing to God.

In this way we secure freedom from distraction, with keenness and accuracy—and also if one strives to fulfil the saying: *I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise always in my mouth* (Ps. 33: 1) and *In his law he will meditate day and night* (Ps. 1: 2), such that with steady and assiduous meditation and contemplation of the will and the glories of God the mind finds no occasion for distraction.

SR 307

Q: Should the intoning of the psalmody or of the prayer be in turns?

R: Let this question keep its right order among the many deserving questions, so that on the one hand the matter is not thought trivial and inconsequential and on the other hand the constant recourse to one or two persons does not lead to a suspicion of the Superior's⁷⁹⁵ arrogance and contempt of the others.

⁷⁹⁴ Note the trinitarian formulation: God . . . Son . . . Holy Spirit.

⁷⁹⁵ τοῦ ἡγουμένου. Though this became a standard term for the superior in later Greek monasticism, it is new in the Asketikon, as is also οἰκόνομος for the manager of stores in SR 302. Such terms indicate a late phase of composition.

SR 308

Q: Should a benefactor receive some recompense from the community and, if so, should a return be made him in proportion to the gift?

R: The whole question is weak.⁷⁹⁶ But if one must give a proof of gratitude let the decision rest with the steward, both as to receiving gifts and rewarding the benefactor.

SR 309

Q: When something customary and according to nature happens to someone,⁷⁹⁷ should such dare approach the Communion of the holy things?⁷⁹⁸

R: The Apostle showed us that whoever is buried with Christ in baptism (cf. Rom. 6: 4) surpasses nature and customary things. In one place—following the passage about baptism in water mentioned before—he said: *Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed and we no longer be enslaved to sin* (Rom. 6: 6). In another place he commands: *therefore mortify your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire and covetousness, which is idolatry, on account of which the*

⁷⁹⁶ ἀνθρώπινον, ‘human’ with a pejorative connotation, ‘this-worldly’. Clarke has ‘on a very low level’.

⁷⁹⁷ *Εἰ τῶν συνήθων καὶ κατὰ φύσιν γινομένων τινί.* The background is the association of ritual ‘uncleanness’ in Lev. 15 with sexual and reproductive matters. Basil’s general principle seems to be that physical phenomena do not disbar one from Holy Communion unless they are due to wantonness or wilful indulgence. In SR 67 Basil distinguishes ‘uncleanness’ as a natural occurrence, from ‘sensuality’ or wantonness, which is culpable. See *Concerning Baptism*, bk. 2, Q. 2, 3, PG 31. 1584A (Wagner 350, 393–6 at 394): ‘the blemish . . . is not considered here with reference to bodily members, but is determined by the justifications of piety in accord with the Gospel’. Since Basil is also addressing women, it means that, against the Levitical legislation, menstruation would not render a woman ‘unclean’ for Communion, as it is no symptom of false disposition, which is always his criterion. Nevertheless, he encourages the line of greatest resistance, bearing witness that perfection in chastity (after long struggle, with much divine help) renders one free even from involuntary movements of our sexual nature.

Cf. Cassian’s nuanced and sympathetic treatment of this topic in *Conferences* 22: ‘The Illusions of the Night’, especially the case of the chaste and abstemious monk in 22. 6, who, regularly suffering a discharge during the Saturday night, shrank from partaking of Holy Communion on the Sunday. His ‘spiritual physicians’ judged it a ruse of the devil to keep him from the ‘medicine of the divine remedy’ and bade him approach Holy Communion anyway. When he did so it set him free from his ‘habitual delusion’.

⁷⁹⁸ For other considerations on approaching Holy Communion see SR 172 (RBas. 134) and Cassian, *Conferences* 2. 23.

wrath of God comes down upon the sons of disobedience (Col. 3: 5–6). Elsewhere he lays down a rule, where he says: *They who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and cravings* (Gal. 5: 24). And I myself have known that these things have been achieved by both men and women, by the grace of Christ, through sincere faith in the Lord.⁷⁹⁹

But we learn even in the Old Testament the fearful judgment upon anyone who approaches the holy things in uncleanness (cf. Lev. 15: 31). Now if *there is something greater than the temple here* (Matt. 12: 6), the Apostle will surely chastise us all the more fearfully, saying: *Whoever eats and drinks unworthily . . . eats and drinks judgment on himself* (1 Cor. 11: 27, 29).⁸⁰⁰

SR 310

Q: Should the Offering⁸⁰¹ take place in an ordinary house?

R: Since the word does not permit a common vessel to be taken into the holy places,⁸⁰² so it does not allow the holy things to be performed in a common house, for by God's command the Old Testament manifestly permits no such thing to be done (cf. Lev.

⁷⁹⁹ Basil's testimony, similar to one he makes in *LR* 12, indicates that as a spiritual father and director he received the confession of thoughts from both sexes. Stramara (306), takes this reference to both men and women in the context of approaching Holy Communion as another pointer to the shared worship of the two sexes in the one liturgy: 'Given that only one Eucharist should be celebrated in one community, it is extremely unlikely that the monks and nuns participated in separate divine liturgies.'

⁸⁰⁰ Basil's *a fortiori* argument is that if engaging in Temple worship in a state of extrinsic uncleanness incurred such a penalty in the OT, how much more terrible is it in the NT to approach Holy Communion unworthily, i.e. in a state of unrepented wantonness. Cf. Cassian, *Conferences* 22. 5: 'But if the emission is due to our own fault, then we should haul our conscience before the bar of the Apostle's fearful words: *Whoever eats the bread of the Lord and drinks his cup unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord . . .*' (1 Cor. 11: 27–9).

⁸⁰¹ προσκομιδὴν, i.e. the eucharistic offering, as the subsequent response makes clear. Basil is very much in line with Gangra's censure of private assemblies or 'conventicles', i.e. the offering of liturgies outside the 'Church', whether the consecrated 'place' or ecclesial communion, see Gangra Preamble 2 and 3, Canons 5 and 6, the Council of Laodicea, Canons 35 and 58, and *Concerning Baptism*, bk. 2, Q. 8, *PG* 31. 1600D–1601B, Wagner 408–9.

⁸⁰² This is the negative expression of the positive principle that all vessels used in the sanctuary were to be dedicated and hallowed, e.g. Exod. 30: 25–9 at 28, 38: 3, 40: 10, and Num. 8: 3. The most positive statement about distinguishing between the holy and the common in Temple worship seems to be Lev. 10: 9–11. On the other hand, *SR* 143 inculcates the reverent use even of ordinary vessels, as 'dedicated to God'.

10: 9–10). But since the Lord says: *There is something greater than the temple here* (Matt. 12: 6) and the Apostle says: *What, do you not have houses to eat and to drink in? . . . What am I to say to you? Shall I commend you in this? I do not commend you in this. For I myself handed on to you what I too received* etc. (1 Cor. 11: 22), we are taught thereby not to eat and drink an ordinary meal in church, or to bring indignity on the Lord's feast⁸⁰³ in a private house, unless in necessity someone has chosen a purer kind of place or house on an occasion that rightly calls for it.

SR 311

Q: Should we go out on visitation,⁸⁰⁴ if some have asked us to do so?

R: To go on visitation is pleasing to God; but the one visiting ought to listen wisely and be prudent in his answers, fulfilling the saying: *Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each* (Col. 4: 6). But to undertake visits for the sake of family relationships or friendship is foreign to our profession.

SR 312

Q: When the laity⁸⁰⁵ visit us should we exhort them to prayer?

R: If they are friends of God, it is consistent; it is for these the Apostle wrote: *Pray also for me, that the word may be given me in opening my mouth, to speak with boldness the mystery of God* (Eph. 6: 19).

SR 313

Q: Should we continue with our work when we have some visitors?

R: Nothing that is done according to commandment should be broken off on account of those who come to us for the sake of friendly get-togethers, unless there is some special care for the soul, which, in accord with the Lord's commandment, takes precedence

⁸⁰³ κυριακὸν δεῖπνον.

⁸⁰⁴ ἐπίσκεψιν. The reference is to pastoral activity, e.g. visiting the sick and needy.

⁸⁰⁵ τοὺς ἐπισκεπτομένους λαϊκοὺς, presumably 'people' outside the ascetic community, hardly 'non-clergy'. The term is not used elsewhere in the Asketikon. Here it is in the mouth of an interlocutor who seems to bracket monks and clergy in a 'religious' class; use of the term surely indicates a late period of composition or a late editor. See SR 307 and note.

over zeal in the body (cf. Matt. 6: 25), as the holy Apostles say in the Acts: *It is not good that we should forsake the word of God to serve tables* (Acts 6: 2).

SR 314

Q: Is it fitting and blameless for a Christian to make use of physicians?⁸⁰⁶

R: The holy and God-inspired Scripture tells of King Hezekiah, that when he was sick he heard from God through the prophet: *take a cake of figs, and make a poultice* (2 Kgs. 20: 7), and yet of Asa that when he was ill and *sent for physicians* he provoked God's anger (cf. 2 Chron 16: 12). I learn therefore that bodily illnesses do not all have one and the same reason—but that God allows or sends infirmities, now for one cause, now for another.

One reason is that one who is just might be manifest and shine forth like Job, to whom it was said by God, by way of explaining why he was delivered into temptation: *Do you think I have dealt with you for any other reason than that you should prove just?* (Job 40: 8 Sept.) Another reason is that through patience in afflictions he might be made worthy of consolation in the age that is to come, like Lazarus, of whom Abraham says: *in his life he received evil things, and so he is comforted here* (Luke 16: 25). Another reason is that someone caught in sins unobserved by others might be rebuked through illness, according to the Apostle's saying: *he who eats and drink . . . unworthily . . . eats and drinks judgment on himself . . . which is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died* (cf. 1 Cor. 11: 27–31). Another reason is that he might be converted through chastisement, *for when we are judged by the Lord we are chastened, that we might not be condemned along with the world* (1 Cor. 11: 32).

But since some who suffer do not benefit from it, the prophet is astonished at their tenacity in malice, saying: *You have smitten them, but they felt no anguish, you have consumed them, yet they refused to take correction* (Jer. 5: 3). Another cause is that, the malice of sins might through the example of bodily illness appear also to the sinner himself, who often is unaware of it and does not *turn to* the examination of *himself* (cf. Luke 15: 17) or perceive his own ills, as happened with the paralytic, to whom the Lord in the Gospel says: *Behold, you*

⁸⁰⁶ SR 314 to the end are the *extravagantes*, as edited by Gribomont. See above Ch. 1, 'The *extravagantes* and variant passages', and comments at the end of 'Choosing a recension for translation'. The topic of SR 314 receives its final, magisterial treatment in LR 55.

are made whole! Sin no more lest something worse befall you (John 5: 14).

Illnesses often arise also as a manifestation of the goodness and the power of God, that God might be glorified, as with the man born blind, concerning whom the Lord was questioned: *who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind? He answered them saying: it was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be made manifest in him* (John 9: 2–3). Often the weakness of the body is appointed as a rebuke to human nature and a demonstration of God's power, as happened to the Apostle himself who said: *to keep me from being too elated by the excess of these revelations, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan, to harass me* (2 Cor. 12: 7).

Accordingly, if anyone who has fallen into an illness for one of these reasons mentioned should busy himself with physicians, as if to set aside the judgment of God, he labours in vain and provokes God's anger.

But if it happens that the soul needs to be taught by this very care of the body to accept the Lord's teaching for the cure of its own passions, just as someone infirm accepts the instruction of the physician, then I consider that it is permissible to give care to the infirm body, and to illustrate by the benefit that comes of it the cure of what belongs to the soul. The Lord reproaches those who are not benefited in this way saying: *Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why has the health of the daughter of my people not been restored?* (Jer. 8: 22), so that by comparing the zeal for what is less important, it may be realized how much more fearful is indolence with regard to what is greater.

For often the Lord knows how to use lesser cases as examples in order to convey more important matters, and sometimes even to use inferior cases to show our need to pray always (cf. Luke 18: 1–8).

SR 315

Q: What is the difference between vainglory and love of glory?⁸⁰⁷

R: I consider that vainglory is to obsess oneself with the glory of vain affairs, whereas love of glory is to perform a work painstakingly and worthily but for the sake of one's own glory and not that of the Lord's. What the Lord says is: *Let your light so shine before human beings that they may see your good works and glorify your father who is*

⁸⁰⁷ κενοδοξίας . . . φιλοδοξίας. A synonym for the latter: 'vanity'. For the form of the question, cf. SR 55, 56, 66–8, 77, 214, 239, 247, and 262. For a fuller treatment, see SR 299.

in heaven (Matt. 5: 16), and the Apostle proclaims *whether you eat or drink, whatever you do, do all for the glory of God* (1 Cor. 10: 31).

SR 316

Q: With what kind of care can one withdraw oneself from these things?⁸⁰⁸

R: If one is fully persuaded of the greatness of the promises, as the Apostle says: *The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed* (Rom. 8: 18), and: *things that are seen are for a time only, but the things that are unseen are eternal* (2 Cor. 4: 18).

SR 317

Q: What is the measure of obedience?⁸⁰⁹

R: Death, for the Apostle says of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, *he became obedient even unto death* (Phil. 2: 8), so that however difficult the order that accords with piety, even if it involves the threat of death, one will deem it preferable to die on account of the commandment, than to set aside the commandment through fear of death. The Apostle himself bears witness to this: *risking his life, that he might fulfil what was lacking in your service to me* (Phil. 2: 30).

SR 318

Q: Is it necessary to master and to read the God-inspired Scripture?

R: This question is covered in the first question.⁸¹⁰

⁸⁰⁸ The 'from these things' is vague, pointing back to previous discussion. The questioner is concerned with discouragement in the toil of renunciation (see *LR 8/RBas. 4*), whether from the 'love of glory' in *SR 315* or *SR 299*, or from the 'cares of this life' (*SR 272*), or in the dispensing of one's property *LR 9/RBas. 5, SR 89/RBas. 118*, and esp. *SR 92*. Gribomont (p. 191) thinks the present response fits best after *SR 299*.

⁸⁰⁹ The use of Phil. 2: 8 to teach the measure of obedience is utterly characteristic of Basil. *SR 317* parallels *SR 116 (RBas. 65)*, the end of *LR 28, SR 199*, and the beginning of *SR 206*.

⁸¹⁰ The reference is to *SR 1*. This is very important evidence that Basil himself had a system of numeration of the Shorter Responses, undoubtedly instituted in the Pontic revision of c.375/6. Also on the topic see *SR 95* and note. For the style, see *SR 14, 103, 178, 194, 228, 305*.

LR 55 cross-reference

Q: Is it fitting and blameless for a Christian to make use of physicians?

R: We have clarified this sufficiently in the longer answers, chapter 20.

LR 54 cross-reference

Q: Is it fitting for those charged to preside over the community, to refer their concerns to each other?

R: We have spoken on this in the longer answers, chapter 20.

LR 48 cross-reference

Q: Ought one to concern oneself about the administrative decisions of the one who presides?

R: We have spoken about this also in the longer answers, chapter 20.

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APPENDIX I

Table of Recensions I

The following table is aligned on the first column: Ask. 1r *RBas.*¹

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i> ²	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
1	1	1	no number	<i>LR</i> 1
2: 1-57	2	2	1	<i>LR</i> 2
2: 58-69	2 cont.	3	2	<i>LR</i> 3
2: 70-3	2 cont.	4	3	<i>LR</i> 4
2: 74-93	2 cont.	5	4	<i>LR</i> 5
2: 94-112	2 cont.	5 cont.	5	<i>LR</i> 6
3	3	6	6	<i>LR</i> 7
4	4	7	7	<i>LR</i> 8
5	5	8	8	<i>LR</i> 9
6	6	9	9	<i>LR</i> 10
7: 14-15	7	9 cont.	11 cont.	<i>LR</i> 14
7: 1-10	7 cont.	10	12	<i>LR</i> 15
8: 1-25	8	11	13	<i>LR</i> 16
8: 26-37	8 cont.	11 cont.	13 cont.	<i>LR</i> 17
9	9	11 cont.	14	<i>LR</i> 19
10	10	13	16	<i>LR</i> 21
11: 1-31	11	14	17	<i>LR</i> 22
11: 32-41	—	14 cont.	17 cont.	<i>LR</i> 23
	12			<i>LR</i> 23a
	13			<i>LR</i> 23b
12	14	45	42	<i>SR</i> 1
13	15	46	43	<i>SR</i> 114
14	16	47	44	<i>SR</i> 157
15	17	48	45	<i>SR</i> 98
16	18	49	46	<i>SR</i> 3
17	19	50	47	<i>SR</i> 4
18	20	51	48	<i>SR</i> 5
19	21	52	49	<i>SR</i> 287
20	22	53	50	<i>SR</i> 6

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i> ²	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
21	23	54	51	SR 288
22	24	55	52	SR 289
23	25	56	53	SR 99
24	26	57	54	SR 158
25	27	58	55	SR 159
26	28	59	56	SR 7
27	30	60	57	SR 8
28	29	61	58	SR 9
29	31	62	59	SR 85
30	32	63	60	SR 86
31	33	64	61	SR 187
32	34	65	62	SR 188
33	35	66	63	SR 189
34	36	67	64	SR 21
35	37	68	65	SR 22
36	38	69	66	SR 160
37	39	70	67	SR 161
38	40	71	68	SR 162
39	41	72	69	SR 163
40	42	73	70	SR 23
41	43	74	71	SR 24
42	44	75	72	SR 25
43	—	76	73	SR 26
44	—	77	74	SR 27
45	45	78	75	SR 28
—	46 ³	—	—	—
46	47	79	76	SR 29
47	48	80	77	SR 191
48	49	81	78	SR 126
49	50	82	79	SR 30
50	51	83	80	SR 192
51	52	84	81	SR 193
52	53	85	—	SR 194
53	54	86	142	SR 31
54	55	87	82	SR 88
55	56	88	83	SR 32
56	57	89	143	SR 195
57	58	90	144	SR 196
58	59	91	145	SR 197
59	60	92	84	SR 33
60	61	93	146	SR 34
61	62	94	85	SR 35

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i> ²	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
62	63	95	86	<i>SR</i> 198
63	64	96	87	<i>SR</i> 36
64	65	97	88	<i>SR</i> 115
65	66	98	89	<i>SR</i> 116
66	67	99	90	<i>SR</i> 37
67	68	100	91	<i>SR</i> 117
68	69	101	92	<i>SR</i> 118
69	70	102	93	<i>SR</i> 119
70	71	103	94	<i>SR</i> 38
71	72	104	95	<i>SR</i> 39
72	73	105	96	<i>SR</i> 40
73	74	106	97	<i>SR</i> 41
74	75	107	98	<i>SR</i> 42
75	76	108	99	<i>SR</i> 43
76	77	109	100	<i>SR</i> 44
77	78	110	147	<i>SR</i> 164
78	79	111	148	<i>SR</i> 165
79	80	112	149	<i>SR</i> 127
80	81	113	101	<i>SR</i> 120
81	82	114	102	<i>SR</i> 96
82	83	115	103	<i>SR</i> 121
83	84	116	150	<i>SR</i> 199
84	85	117	104	<i>SR</i> 166
85	86	118	105	<i>SR</i> 167
86	87	119	106	<i>SR</i> 200
87	88	120	151	<i>SR</i> 97
88	89	121	107	<i>SR</i> 128
89	90	122	108	<i>SR</i> 129
90	91	123	—	<i>SR</i> 130
91	92	124	109	<i>SR</i> 131
92	93	125	110	<i>SR</i> 132
93	93 cont.	126	111	<i>SR</i> 133
94	94	127	112	<i>SR</i> 135
95	95	128	113	<i>SR</i> 168
96	96	129	114	<i>SR</i> 134
97	97	130	115	<i>SR</i> 136
98	98	131	116	<i>SR</i> 100
99	99	132	117	<i>SR</i> 87
100	100	133	118	<i>SR</i> 169
101	101	134	119	<i>SR</i> 141
102	102	135	120	<i>SR</i> 142
103	—	136	121	<i>SR</i> 143

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i> ²	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
104	103	137	122	<i>SR</i> 144
105	104	138	123	<i>SR</i> 145
106	—	139	124	<i>SR</i> 146
107	—	140	125	<i>SR</i> 147
108	—	141	126	<i>SR</i> 201
109	—	142	153	<i>SR</i> 202
110	—	143	154	<i>SR</i> 279
111	—	144	127	<i>SR</i> 148
112	—	145	128	<i>SR</i> 149
113	—	146	129	<i>SR</i> 150
114	—	147	—	<i>SR</i> 203
115	—	148	130	<i>SR</i> 170
116	—	149	131	<i>SR</i> 171
117	—	150	132	<i>SR</i> 10
118	—	151	133	<i>SR</i> 89
119	105	152	134	<i>SR</i> 45
120	106	153	155	<i>SR</i> 283
121	107	154	135	<i>SR</i> 46
122	108	155	136	<i>SR</i> 47
123	109	156	137	<i>SR</i> 16
—	110 [†]	—	—	—
124	111	157	138	<i>SR</i> 204
125	112	158	156	<i>SR</i> 205
126	113	159	157	<i>SR</i> 206
127	114	160	158	<i>SR</i> 207
128	115	161	159	<i>SR</i> 17
129	116	162	160	<i>SR</i> 90
130	117	163	139	<i>SR</i> 151
131	118	164	161	<i>SR</i> 152
132	159	—	311	<i>SR</i> 153
133	119	165	140	<i>SR</i> 122
134	120	166	162	<i>SR</i> 172
135	121	167	163	<i>SR</i> 239
136	122	168	164	<i>SR</i> 208
137	123	169	141	<i>SR</i> 173
138	124	170	165	<i>SR</i> 209
139	125	171	166	<i>SR</i> 240
140	126	172	167	<i>SR</i> 241
141	127	173	168	<i>SR</i> 48
142	—	174	169	<i>SR</i> 49
143	128	175	170	<i>SR</i> 210
144	129	176	171	<i>SR</i> 50

Ask. 11 <i>RBas.</i> ²	Ask. 18 Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
145	130	177	172	<i>SR</i> 51
146	131	178	173	<i>SR</i> 52
147	132	179	174	<i>SR</i> 53
148	133	182	175	<i>SR</i> 280
149	134	180	176	<i>SR</i> 11
150	135	181	177	<i>SR</i> 174
151	136	183	178	<i>SR</i> 211
152	137	184	179	<i>SR</i> 212
153	138	185	180	<i>SR</i> 213
154	139	186	181	<i>SR</i> 54
155	140	187	182	<i>SR</i> 175
156	141	188	183	<i>SR</i> 176
157	142	191	186	<i>SR</i> 243
158	143	192	187	<i>SR</i> 244
159	144	193	188	<i>SR</i> 55
160	145	194	189	<i>SR</i> 215
161	146	195	190	<i>SR</i> 216
162	148	196	191	<i>SR</i> 245
163	147	197	192	<i>SR</i> 217
164	149	198	193	<i>SR</i> 56
165	—	199	194	<i>SR</i> 246
166	150	200	195	<i>SR</i> 247
167	151	201	196	<i>SR</i> 218
168	152	202	197	<i>SR</i> 248
169	153	203	198	<i>SR</i> 219
170	154	204	199	<i>SR</i> 249
171	155	205	200	<i>SR</i> 250
172	156	206	201	<i>SR</i> 251
173	157	207	202	<i>SR</i> 252
174	158	208	203	<i>SR</i> 220
175	—	209	204	<i>SR</i> 57
176	164	210	205	<i>SR</i> 123
177	165	211	206	<i>SR</i> 177
178	166	212	207	<i>SR</i> 178
179	167	213	208	<i>SR</i> 221
180	168	214	209	<i>SR</i> 222
181	169	215	210	<i>SR</i> 137
182	170	216	211	<i>SR</i> 58
183	171	217	212	<i>SR</i> 59
184	172	218	213	<i>SR</i> 60
185	173	219	214	<i>SR</i> 101
186	174	220	215	<i>SR</i> 91

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i> ²	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
187	—	221	216	SR 179
188	—	227	222	SR 62
189	—	262	255	SR 67
190	175	263	256	SR 68
191	163	277	265	SR 182
192	—	281	302	SR 105
193	176	282	269	SR 73
194	177	283	270	SR 106
195	178	286	272	SR 75
196	179	288	292	SR 94
197	160	332	306	SR 108
198	161	233	307	SR 109
199	162	327	308	SR 110
200	180	289	293	SR 229
201	—	328	309	SR 111
—	181 ⁵	—	—	—
202	182	299	279	SR 275
203	183	295	275	SR 274

¹ The table is selected and rearranged from *BBV* III, esp. 9–15. Cf. Gribomont's three hypothetical orders of Q/R: 'X' (Grib. 165–70) approximating to the Small Asketikon and Ask. 2; 'Y' (Grib. 171–9) approximating to Ask. 3; 'V' approximating to Ask. 4, the Vulgate of the printed editions.

² On the several enumerations and arrangements of the *RBas.* itself, see *BBV* III, 5–9. The sequence entered here is that of Holste's edition in 1661 and Zelzer's edition of 1986, which is also the most common in the MSS and hence may be considered the *ordo vulgatus*.

³ One of three Q/Rs found only in the Syriac. The others are Ask. 1s 110 and 181.

⁴ Another of the three Q/Rs found only in the Syriac; the others are Ask. 1s 46 and 181. Ask. 1s 110 is edited in Grib. 139–41, with French translation.

⁵ The third of the three Q/Rs found only in the Syriac. The others are Ask. 1s 46 and 110.

APPENDIX 2

Table of Recensions 2

The following table is aligned on the last column: Ask. 4 Pontic/Vulgate.¹

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
1	1	1	no number	<i>LR</i> 1
2: 1-57	2	2	1	<i>LR</i> 2
2: 58-69	2 cont.	3	2	<i>LR</i> 3
2: 70-3	2 cont.	4	3	<i>LR</i> 4
2: 74-93	2 cont.	5	4	<i>LR</i> 5
2: 94-112	2 cont.	5 cont.	5	<i>LR</i> 6
3	3	6	6	<i>LR</i> 7
4	4	7	7	<i>LR</i> 8
5	5	8	8	<i>LR</i> 9
6	6	9	9	<i>LR</i> 10
—	—	9 cont.	10	<i>LR</i> 11
—	—	9 cont.	11	<i>LR</i> 12
—	—	9 cont.	11 cont.	<i>LR</i> 13
7: 14-15	7	9 cont.	11 cont.	<i>LR</i> 14
7: 1-10	7 cont.	10	12	<i>LR</i> 15
8: 1-25	8	11	13	<i>LR</i> 16
8: 26-37	8 cont.	11 cont.	13 cont.	<i>LR</i> 17
—	—	11 cont.	13 cont.	<i>LR</i> 18
9	9	11 cont.	14	<i>LR</i> 19
—	—	12	15	<i>LR</i> 20
10	10	13	16	<i>LR</i> 21
11: 1-31	11	14	17	<i>LR</i> 22
11: 32-41		14 cont.	17 cont.	<i>LR</i> 23
	12			<i>LR</i> 23a
	13			<i>LR</i> 23b
—	—	15	18	<i>LR</i> 24
—	—	16	18 cont.	<i>LR</i> 25
—	—	17	19	<i>LR</i> 26
—	—	18	20	<i>LR</i> 27

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	19	21	LR 28
—	—	20	22	LR 29
—	—	21	23	LR 30
—	—	22	24	LR 31
—	—	23	25	LR 32
—	—	24	26	LR 33
—	—	25	27	LR 34
—	—	26	28	LR 35
—	—	27	29	LR 36
—	—	28	30	LR 37
—	—	29	31	LR 38
—	—	30	31 cont.	LR 39
—	—	31	31 cont.	LR 40
—	—	32	31 cont.	LR 41
—	—	33	31 cont.	LR 42
—	—	34	32	LR 43
—	—	34 cont.	32 cont.	LR 44
—	—	35	33	LR 45
—	—	36	34	LR 46
—	—	37	34 cont.	LR 47
—	—	38	35	LR 48
—	—	39	36	LR 49
—	—	40	37	LR 50
—	—	40 cont.	38	LR 51
—	—	41	39	LR 52
—	—	42	40	LR 53
—	—	43	287	LR 54
—	—	44	41	LR 55
12	14	45	42	SR 1
—	—	254	296	SR 2
16	18	49	46	SR 3
17	19	50	47	SR 4
18	20	51	48	SR 5
20	22	53	50	SR 6
26	28	59	56	SR 7
27	30	60	57	SR 8
28	29	61	58	SR 9
117	—	150	132	SR 10
149	134	180	176	SR 11
—	—	224	219	SR 12
—	—	257	251	SR 13
—	—	267	300	SR 14

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	270	258	<i>SR</i> 15
123	109	156	137	<i>SR</i> 16
128	115	161	159	<i>SR</i> 17
—	—	258	298	<i>SR</i> 18
—	—	260	253	<i>SR</i> 19
—	—	261	254	<i>SR</i> 20
34	36	67	64	<i>SR</i> 21
35	37	68	65	<i>SR</i> 22
40	42	73	70	<i>SR</i> 23
41	43	74	71	<i>SR</i> 24
42	44	75	72	<i>SR</i> 25
43	—	76	73	<i>SR</i> 26
44	—	77	74	<i>SR</i> 27
45	45	78	75	<i>SR</i> 28
46	47	79	76	<i>SR</i> 29
49	50	82	79	<i>SR</i> 30
53	54	86	142	<i>SR</i> 31
55	56	88	83	<i>SR</i> 32
59	60	92	84	<i>SR</i> 33
60	61	93	146	<i>SR</i> 34
61	62	94	85	<i>SR</i> 35
63	64	96	87	<i>SR</i> 36
66	67	99	90	<i>SR</i> 37
70	71	103	94	<i>SR</i> 38
71	72	104	95	<i>SR</i> 39
72	73	105	96	<i>SR</i> 40
73	74	106	97	<i>SR</i> 41
74	75	107	98	<i>SR</i> 42
75	76	108	99	<i>SR</i> 43
76	77	109	100	<i>SR</i> 44
119	105	152	134	<i>SR</i> 45
121	107	154	135	<i>SR</i> 46
122	108	155	136	<i>SR</i> 47
141	127	173	168	<i>SR</i> 48
142	—	174	169	<i>SR</i> 49
144	129	176	171	<i>SR</i> 50
145	130	177	172	<i>SR</i> 51
146	131	178	173	<i>SR</i> 52
147	132	179	174	<i>SR</i> 53
154	139	186	181	<i>SR</i> 54
159	144	193	188	<i>SR</i> 55
164	149	198	193	<i>SR</i> 56

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
175	—	209	204	SR 57
182	170	216	211	SR 58
183	171	217	212	SR 59
184	172	218	213	SR 60
—	—	222	217	SR 61
188	—	227	222	SR 62
—	—	232	227	SR 63
—	—	237	232	SR 64
—	—	241	236	SR 65
—	—	251	246	SR 66
189	—	262	255	SR 67
190	175	263	256	SR 68
—	—	276	264	SR 69
—	—	278	291	SR 70
—	—	279	266	SR 71
—	—	280	267	SR 72
193	176	282	269	SR 73
—	—	284	303	SR 74
195	178	286	272	SR 75
—	—	291	273	SR 76
—	—	296	276	SR 77
—	—	297	277	SR 78
—	—	301	281	SR 79
—	—	302	282	SR 80
—	—	320	316	SR 81
—	—	330	317	SR 82
—	—	321	318	SR 83
—	—	322	319	SR 84
29	31	62	59	SR 85
30	32	63	60	SR 86
99	99	132	117	SR 87
54	55	87	82	SR 88
118	—	151	133	SR 89
129	116	162	160	SR 90
186	174	220	215	SR 91
—	—	255	297	SR 92
—	—	265	289	SR 93
196	179	288	292	SR 94
—	—	313	326	SR 95
81	82	114	102	SR 96
87	88	120	151	SR 97
15	17	48	45	SR 98

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
23	25	56	53	SR 99
98	98	131	116	SR 100
185	173	219	214	SR 101
—	—	268	301	SR 102
—	—	269	257	SR 103
—	—	331	290	SR 104
192	—	281	302	SR 105
194	177	283	270	SR 106
—	—	287	304	SR 107
197	160	332	306	SR 108
198	161	333	307	SR 109
199	162	327	308	SR 110
201	—	328	309	SR 111
—	—	290	294	SR 112
—	—	300	280	SR 113
13	15	46	43	SR 114
64	65	97	88	SR 115
65	66	98	89	SR 116
67	68	100	91	SR 117
68	69	101	92	SR 118
69	70	102	93	SR 119
80	81	113	101	SR 120
82	83	115	103	SR 121
133	119	165	140	SR 122
176	164	210	205	SR 123
—	—	292	274	SR 124
—	—	314	328	SR 125
48	49	81	78	SR 126
79	80	112	149	SR 127
88	89	121	107	SR 128
89	90	122	108	SR 129
90	91	123	—	SR 130
91	92	124	109	SR 131
92	93	125	110	SR 132
93	93 cont.	126	111	SR 133
96	96	129	114	SR 134
94	94	127	112	SR 135
97	97	130	115	SR 136
181	169	215	210	SR 137
—	—	264	288	SR 138
—	—	272	260	SR 139
—	—	318	330	SR 140

Ask. 11 <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 15 Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
101	101	134	119	SR 141
102	102	135	120	SR 142
103	—	136	121	SR 143
104	103	137	122	SR 144
105	104	138	123	SR 145
106	—	139	124	SR 146
107	—	140	125	SR 147
111	—	144	127	SR 148
112	—	145	128	SR 149
113	—	146	129	SR 150
130	117	163	139	SR 151
131	118	164	161	SR 152
132	159	—	311	SR 153
—	—	326	310	SR 154
—	—	293	295	SR 155
—	—	315	—	SR 156
14	16	47	44	SR 157
24	26	57	54	SR 158
25	27	58	55	SR 159
36	38	69	66	SR 160
37	39	70	67	SR 161
38	40	71	68	SR 162
39	41	72	69	SR 163
77	78	110	147	SR 164
78	79	111	148	SR 165
84	85	117	104	SR 166
85	86	118	105	SR 167
95	95	128	113	SR 168
100	100	133	118	SR 169
115	—	148	130	SR 170
116	—	149	131	SR 171
134	120	166	162	SR 172
137	123	169	141	SR 173
150	135	181	177	SR 174
155	140	187	182	SR 175
156	141	188	183	SR 176
177	165	211	206	SR 177
178	166	212	207	SR 178
187	—	221	216	SR 179
—	—	225	220	SR 180
—	—	273	261	SR 181
191	163	277	265	SR 182

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	285	271	<i>SR</i> 183
—	—	304	284	<i>SR</i> 184
—	—	305	285	<i>SR</i> 185
—	—	325	331	<i>SR</i> 186
31	33	64	61	<i>SR</i> 187
32	34	65	62	<i>SR</i> 188
33	35	66	63	<i>SR</i> 189
—	—	310	332	<i>SR</i> 190
47	48	80	77	<i>SR</i> 191
50	51	83	80	<i>SR</i> 192
51	52	84	81	<i>SR</i> 193
52	53	85	—	<i>SR</i> 194
56	57	89	143	<i>SR</i> 195
57	58	90	144	<i>SR</i> 196
58	59	91	145	<i>SR</i> 197
62	63	95	86	<i>SR</i> 198
83	84	116	150	<i>SR</i> 199
86	87	119	106	<i>SR</i> 200
108	—	141	126	<i>SR</i> 201
109	—	142	153	<i>SR</i> 202
114	—	147	—	<i>SR</i> 203
124	111	157	138	<i>SR</i> 204
125	112	158	156	<i>SR</i> 205
126	113	159	157	<i>SR</i> 206
127	114	160	158	<i>SR</i> 207
136	122	168	164	<i>SR</i> 208
138	124	170	165	<i>SR</i> 209
143	128	175	170	<i>SR</i> 210
151	136	183	178	<i>SR</i> 211
152	137	184	179	<i>SR</i> 212
153	138	185	180	<i>SR</i> 213
—	—	189	184	<i>SR</i> 214
160	145	194	189	<i>SR</i> 215
161	146	195	190	<i>SR</i> 216
163	147	197	192	<i>SR</i> 217
167	151	201	196	<i>SR</i> 218
169	153	203	198	<i>SR</i> 219
174	158	208	203	<i>SR</i> 220
179	167	213	208	<i>SR</i> 221
180	168	214	209	<i>SR</i> 222
—	—	223	218	<i>SR</i> 223
—	—	229	224	<i>SR</i> 224

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	238	233	<i>SR</i> 225
—	—	246	241	<i>SR</i> 226
—	—	253	249	<i>SR</i> 227
—	—	266	299	<i>SR</i> 228
200	180	289	293	<i>SR</i> 229
—	—	298	278	<i>SR</i> 230
—	—	303	283	<i>SR</i> 231
—	—	306	286	<i>SR</i> 232
—	—	308	335	<i>SR</i> 233
—	—	309	336	<i>SR</i> 234
—	—	311	337	<i>SR</i> 235
—	—	312	338	<i>SR</i> 236
—	—	316	339	<i>SR</i> 237
—	—	324	340	<i>SR</i> 238
135	121	167	163	<i>SR</i> 239
139	125	171	166	<i>SR</i> 240
140	126	172	167	<i>SR</i> 241
—	—	190	185	<i>SR</i> 242
157	142	191	186	<i>SR</i> 243
158	143	192	187	<i>SR</i> 244
162	148	196	191	<i>SR</i> 245
165	—	199	194	<i>SR</i> 246
166	150	200	195	<i>SR</i> 247
168	152	202	197	<i>SR</i> 248
170	154	204	199	<i>SR</i> 249
171	155	205	200	<i>SR</i> 250
172	156	206	201	<i>SR</i> 251
173	157	207	202	<i>SR</i> 252
—	—	226	221	<i>SR</i> 253
—	—	228	223	<i>SR</i> 254
—	—	230	225	<i>SR</i> 255
—	—	231	226	<i>SR</i> 256
—	—	233	228	<i>SR</i> 257
—	—	234	229	<i>SR</i> 258
—	—	235	230	<i>SR</i> 259
—	—	236	231	<i>SR</i> 260
—	—	239	234	<i>SR</i> 261
—	—	240	235	<i>SR</i> 262
—	—	242	237	<i>SR</i> 263
—	—	243	238	<i>SR</i> 264
—	—	244	239	<i>SR</i> 265
—	—	245	240	<i>SR</i> 266

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	247	242	<i>SR</i> 267
—	—	248	243	<i>SR</i> 268
—	—	249	244	<i>SR</i> 269
—	—	250	245	<i>SR</i> 270
—	—	256	250	<i>SR</i> 271
—	—	271	259	<i>SR</i> 272
—	—	294	305	<i>SR</i> 273
203	183	295	275	<i>SR</i> 274
202	182	299	279	<i>SR</i> 275
—	—	307	343	<i>SR</i> 276
—	—	319	344	<i>SR</i> 277
—	—	317	—	<i>SR</i> 278
110	—	143	154	<i>SR</i> 279
148	133	182	175	<i>SR</i> 280
—	—	329	312	<i>SR</i> 281
—	—	323	—	<i>SR</i> 282
120	106	153	155	<i>SR</i> 283
—	—	274	263	<i>SR</i> 284
—	—	275	262	<i>SR</i> 285
—	—	259	252	<i>SR</i> 286
19	21	52	49	<i>SR</i> 287
21	23	54	51	<i>SR</i> 288
22	24	55	52	<i>SR</i> 289
—	—	334	247	<i>SR</i> 290
—	—	335	248	<i>SR</i> 291
—	—	336	268	<i>SR</i> 292
—	—	337	313	<i>SR</i> 293
—	—	338	314	<i>SR</i> 294
—	—	339	315	<i>SR</i> 295
—	—	340	320	<i>SR</i> 296
—	—	341	321	<i>SR</i> 297
—	—	342	322	<i>SR</i> 298
—	—	343	323	<i>SR</i> 299
—	—	344	324	<i>SR</i> 300
—	—	345	325	<i>SR</i> 301
—	—	346	327	<i>SR</i> 302
—	—	347	329	<i>SR</i> 303
—	—	348	333	<i>SR</i> 304
—	—	349	334	<i>SR</i> 305
—	—	350	341	<i>SR</i> 306
—	—	351	342	<i>SR</i> 307
—	—	352	345	<i>SR</i> 308

Ask. 1r <i>RBas</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	353	346	<i>SR</i> 309
—	—	354	347	<i>SR</i> 310
—	—	355	348	<i>SR</i> 311
—	—	356	349	<i>SR</i> 312
—	—	357	350	<i>SR</i> 313

¹ The table is selected and rearranged from *BBV* III, esp. 88–99.

APPENDIX 3

Table of Recensions 3

The following table is aligned on the central column: Ask. 2 Basiliad.¹

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
1	1	1	no number	<i>LR</i> 1
2: 1-57	2	2	1	<i>LR</i> 2
2: 58-69	2 cont.	3	2	<i>LR</i> 3
2: 70-3	2 cont.	4	3	<i>LR</i> 4
2: 74-93	2 cont.	5	4	<i>LR</i> 5
2: 94-112	2 cont.	5 cont.	5	<i>LR</i> 6
3	3	6	6	<i>LR</i> 7
4	4	7	7	<i>LR</i> 8
5	5	8	8	<i>LR</i> 9
6	6	9	9	<i>LR</i> 10
—	—	9 cont.	10	<i>LR</i> 11
—	—	9 cont.	11	<i>LR</i> 12
—	—	9 cont.	11 cont.	<i>LR</i> 13
7: 14-15	7	9 cont.	11 cont.	<i>LR</i> 14
7: 1-10	7 cont.	10	12	<i>LR</i> 15
8: 1-25	8	11	13	<i>LR</i> 16
8: 26-37	8 cont.	11 cont.	13 cont.	<i>LR</i> 17
—	—	11 cont.	13 cont.	<i>LR</i> 18
9	9	11 cont.	14	<i>LR</i> 19
—	—	12	15	<i>LR</i> 20
10	10	13	16	<i>LR</i> 21
11: 1-31	11	14	17	<i>LR</i> 22
11: 32-41	12-13	14 cont.	17 cont.	<i>LR</i> 23
—	—	15	18	<i>LR</i> 24
—	—	16	18 cont.	<i>LR</i> 25
—	—	17	19	<i>LR</i> 26
—	—	18	20	<i>LR</i> 27
—	—	19	21	<i>LR</i> 28
—	—	20	22	<i>LR</i> 29

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	21	23	<i>LR</i> 30
—	—	22	24	<i>LR</i> 31
—	—	23	25	<i>LR</i> 32
—	—	24	26	<i>LR</i> 33
—	—	25	27	<i>LR</i> 34
—	—	26	28	<i>LR</i> 35
—	—	27	29	<i>LR</i> 36
—	—	28	30	<i>LR</i> 37
—	—	29	31	<i>LR</i> 38
—	—	30	31 cont.	<i>LR</i> 39
—	—	31	31 cont.	<i>LR</i> 40
—	—	32	31 cont.	<i>LR</i> 41
—	—	33	31 cont.	<i>LR</i> 42
—	—	34	32	<i>LR</i> 43
—	—	34 cont.	32 cont.	<i>LR</i> 44
—	—	35	33	<i>LR</i> 45
—	—	36	34	<i>LR</i> 46
—	—	37	34 cont.	<i>LR</i> 47
—	—	38	35	<i>LR</i> 48
—	—	39	36	<i>LR</i> 49
—	—	40	37	<i>LR</i> 50
—	—	40 cont.	38	<i>LR</i> 51
—	—	41	39	<i>LR</i> 52
—	—	42	40	<i>LR</i> 53
—	—	43	287	<i>LR</i> 54
—	—	44	41	<i>LR</i> 55
12	14	45	42	<i>SR</i> 1
13	15	46	43	<i>SR</i> 114
14	16	47	44	<i>SR</i> 157
15	17	48	45	<i>SR</i> 98
16	18	49	46	<i>SR</i> 3
17	19	50	47	<i>SR</i> 4
18	20	51	48	<i>SR</i> 5
19	21	52	49	<i>SR</i> 287
20	22	53	50	<i>SR</i> 6
21	23	54	51	<i>SR</i> 288
22	24	55	52	<i>SR</i> 289
23	25	56	53	<i>SR</i> 99
24	26	57	54	<i>SR</i> 158
25	27	58	55	<i>SR</i> 159
26	28	59	56	<i>SR</i> 7
27	30	60	57	<i>SR</i> 8

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
28	29	61	58	SR 9
29	31	62	59	SR 85
30	32	63	60	SR 86
31	33	64	61	SR 187
32	34	65	62	SR 188
33	35	66	63	SR 189
34	36	67	64	SR 21
35	37	68	65	SR 22
36	38	69	66	SR 160
37	39	70	67	SR 161
38	40	71	68	SR 162
39	41	72	69	SR 163
40	42	73	70	SR 23
41	43	74	71	SR 24
42	44	75	72	SR 25
43	—	76	73	SR 26
44	—	77	74	SR 27
45	45	78	75	SR 28
46	47	79	76	SR 29
47	48	80	77	SR 191
48	49	81	78	SR 126
49	50	82	79	SR 30
50	51	83	80	SR 192
51	52	84	81	SR 193
52	53	85	—	SR 194
53	54	86	142	SR 31
54	55	87	82	SR 88
55	56	88	83	SR 32
56	57	89	143	SR 195
57	58	90	144	SR 196
58	59	91	145	SR 197
59	60	92	84	SR 33
60	61	93	146	SR 34
61	62	94	85	SR 35
62	63	95	86	SR 198
63	64	96	87	SR 36
64	65	97	88	SR 115
65	66	98	89	SR 116
66	67	99	90	SR 37
67	68	100	91	SR 117
68	69	101	92	SR 118
69	70	102	93	SR 119

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
70	71	103	94	SR 38
71	72	104	95	SR 39
72	73	105	96	SR 40
73	74	106	97	SR 41
74	75	107	98	SR 42
75	76	108	99	SR 43
76	77	109	100	SR 44
77	78	110	147	SR 164
78	79	111	148	SR 165
79	80	112	149	SR 127
80	81	113	101	SR 120
81	82	114	102	SR 96
82	83	115	103	SR 121
83	84	116	150	SR 199
84	85	117	104	SR 166
85	86	118	105	SR 167
86	87	119	106	SR 200
87	88	120	151	SR 97
88	89	121	107	SR 128
89	90	122	108	SR 129
90	91	123	—	SR 130
91	92	124	109	SR 131
92	93	125	110	SR 132
93	93 cont.	126	111	SR 133
94	94	127	112	SR 135
95	95	128	113	SR 168
96	96	129	114	SR 134
97	97	130	115	SR 136
98	98	131	116	SR 100
99	99	132	117	SR 87
100	100	133	118	SR 169
101	101	134	119	SR 141
102	102	135	120	SR 142
103	—	136	121	SR 143
104	103	137	122	SR 144
105	104	138	123	SR 145
106	—	139	124	SR 146
107	—	140	125	SR 147
108	—	141	126	SR 201
109	—	142	153	SR 202
110	—	143	154	SR 279
111	—	144	127	SR 148

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
112	—	145	128	<i>SR</i> 149
113	—	146	129	<i>SR</i> 150
114	—	147	—	<i>SR</i> 203
115	—	148	130	<i>SR</i> 170
116	—	149	131	<i>SR</i> 171
117	—	150	132	<i>SR</i> 10
118	—	151	133	<i>SR</i> 89
119	105	152	134	<i>SR</i> 45
120	106	153	155	<i>SR</i> 283
119	105	154	135	<i>SR</i> 46
122	108	155	136	<i>SR</i> 47
123	109	156	137	<i>SR</i> 16
124	111	157	138	<i>SR</i> 204
125	112	158	156	<i>SR</i> 205
126	113	159	157	<i>SR</i> 206
127	114	160	158	<i>SR</i> 207
128	115	161	159	<i>SR</i> 17
129	116	162	160	<i>SR</i> 90
130	117	163	139	<i>SR</i> 151
131	118	164	161	<i>SR</i> 152
133	119	165	140	<i>SR</i> 122
134	120	166	162	<i>SR</i> 172
135	121	167	163	<i>SR</i> 239
136	122	168	164	<i>SR</i> 208
137	123	169	141	<i>SR</i> 173
138	124	170	165	<i>SR</i> 209
139	125	171	166	<i>SR</i> 240
140	126	172	167	<i>SR</i> 241
141	127	173	168	<i>SR</i> 48
142	—	174	169	<i>SR</i> 49
143	128	175	170	<i>SR</i> 210
144	129	176	171	<i>SR</i> 50
145	130	177	172	<i>SR</i> 51
146	131	178	173	<i>SR</i> 52
147	132	179	174	<i>SR</i> 53
149	134	180	176	<i>SR</i> 11
150	135	181	177	<i>SR</i> 174
148	133	182	175	<i>SR</i> 280
151	136	183	178	<i>SR</i> 211
152	137	184	179	<i>SR</i> 212
153	138	185	180	<i>SR</i> 213
154	139	186	181	<i>SR</i> 54

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
155	140	187	182	SR 175
156	141	188	183	SR 176
—	—	189	184	SR 214
—	—	190	185	SR 242
157	142	191	186	SR 243
158	143	192	187	SR 244
159	144	193	188	SR 55
160	145	194	189	SR 215
161	146	195	190	SR 216
162	148	196	191	SR 245
163	147	197	192	SR 217
164	149	198	193	SR 56
165	—	199	194	SR 246
166	150	200	195	SR 247
167	151	201	196	SR 218
168	152	202	197	SR 248
169	153	203	198	SR 219
170	154	204	199	SR 249
171	155	205	200	SR 250
172	156	206	201	SR 251
173	157	207	202	SR 252
174	158	208	203	SR 220
175	—	209	204	SR 57
176	164	210	205	SR 123
177	165	211	206	SR 177
178	166	212	207	SR 178
179	167	213	208	SR 221
180	168	214	209	SR 222
181	169	215	210	SR 137
182	170	216	211	SR 58
183	171	217	212	SR 59
184	172	218	213	SR 60
185	173	219	214	SR 101
186	174	220	215	SR 91
187	—	221	216	SR 179
—	—	222	217	SR 61
—	—	223	218	SR 223
—	—	224	219	SR 12
—	—	225	220	SR 180
—	—	226	221	SR 253
188	—	227	222	SR 62
—	—	228	223	SR 254

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	229	224	<i>SR</i> 224
—	—	230	225	<i>SR</i> 255
—	—	231	226	<i>SR</i> 256
—	—	232	227	<i>SR</i> 63
—	—	233	228	<i>SR</i> 257
—	—	234	229	<i>SR</i> 258
—	—	235	230	<i>SR</i> 259
—	—	236	231	<i>SR</i> 260
—	—	237	232	<i>SR</i> 64
—	—	238	233	<i>SR</i> 225
—	—	239	234	<i>SR</i> 261
—	—	240	235	<i>SR</i> 262
—	—	241	236	<i>SR</i> 65
—	—	242	237	<i>SR</i> 263
—	—	243	238	<i>SR</i> 264
—	—	244	239	<i>SR</i> 265
—	—	245	240	<i>SR</i> 266
—	—	246	241	<i>SR</i> 226
—	—	247	242	<i>SR</i> 267
—	—	248	243	<i>SR</i> 268
—	—	249	244	<i>SR</i> 269
—	—	250	245	<i>SR</i> 270
—	—	251	246	<i>SR</i> 66
—	—	252	—	[<i>SR</i> 314] ³
—	—	253	249	<i>SR</i> 227
—	—	254	296	<i>SR</i> 2
—	—	255	297	<i>SR</i> 92
—	—	256	250	<i>SR</i> 271
—	—	257	251	<i>SR</i> 13
—	—	258	298	<i>SR</i> 18
—	—	259	252	<i>SR</i> 286
—	—	260	253	<i>SR</i> 19
—	—	261	254	<i>SR</i> 20
189	—	262	255	<i>SR</i> 67
190	175	263	256	<i>SR</i> 68
—	—	264	288	<i>SR</i> 138
—	—	265	289	<i>SR</i> 93
—	—	266	299	<i>SR</i> 228
—	—	267	300	<i>SR</i> 14
—	—	268	301	<i>SR</i> 102
—	—	269	257	<i>SR</i> 103
—	—	270	258	<i>SR</i> 15

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	271	259	<i>SR</i> 272
—	—	272	260	<i>SR</i> 139
—	—	273	261	<i>SR</i> 181
—	—	274	263	<i>SR</i> 284
—	—	275	262	<i>SR</i> 285
—	—	276	264	<i>SR</i> 69
191	163	277	265	<i>SR</i> 182
—	—	278	291	<i>SR</i> 70
—	—	279	266	<i>SR</i> 71
—	—	280	267	<i>SR</i> 72
192	—	281	302	<i>SR</i> 105
193	176	282	269	<i>SR</i> 73
194	177	283	270	<i>SR</i> 106
—	—	284	303	<i>SR</i> 74
—	—	285	271	<i>SR</i> 183
195	178	286	272	<i>SR</i> 75
—	—	287	304	<i>SR</i> 107
196	179	288	292	<i>SR</i> 94
200	180	289	293	<i>SR</i> 229
—	—	290	294	<i>SR</i> 112
—	—	291	273	<i>SR</i> 76
—	—	292	274	<i>SR</i> 124
—	—	293	295	<i>SR</i> 155
—	—	294	305	<i>SR</i> 273
203	183	295	275	<i>SR</i> 274
—	—	296	276	<i>SR</i> 77
—	—	297	277	<i>SR</i> 78
—	—	298	278	<i>SR</i> 230
202	182	299	279	<i>SR</i> 275
—	—	300	280	<i>SR</i> 113
—	—	301	281	<i>SR</i> 79
—	—	302	282	<i>SR</i> 80
—	—	303	283	<i>SR</i> 231
—	—	304	284	<i>SR</i> 184
—	—	305	285	<i>SR</i> 185
—	—	306	286	<i>SR</i> 232
—	—	307	343	<i>SR</i> 276
—	—	308	335	<i>SR</i> 233
—	—	309	336	<i>SR</i> 234
—	—	310	332	<i>SR</i> 190
—	—	311	337	<i>SR</i> 235
—	—	312	338	<i>SR</i> 236

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	313	326	<i>SR</i> 95
—	—	314	328	<i>SR</i> 125
—	—	315	—	<i>SR</i> 156
—	—	316	339	<i>SR</i> 237
—	—	317	—	<i>SR</i> 278
—	—	318	330	<i>SR</i> 140
—	—	319	344	<i>SR</i> 277
—	—	320	316	<i>SR</i> 81
—	—	321	318	<i>SR</i> 83
—	—	322	319	<i>SR</i> 84
—	—	323	—	<i>SR</i> 282
—	—	324	340	<i>SR</i> 238
—	—	325	331	<i>SR</i> 186
—	—	326	310	<i>SR</i> 154
199	162	327	308	<i>SR</i> 110
201	—	328	309	<i>SR</i> 111
—	—	329	312	<i>SR</i> 281
—	—	330	317	<i>SR</i> 82
—	—	331	290	<i>SR</i> 104
197	160	332	306	<i>SR</i> 108
198	161	333	307	<i>SR</i> 109
—	—	334	247	<i>SR</i> 290
—	—	335	248	<i>SR</i> 291
—	—	336	268	<i>SR</i> 292
—	—	337	313	<i>SR</i> 293
—	—	338	314	<i>SR</i> 294
—	—	339	315	<i>SR</i> 295
—	—	340	320	<i>SR</i> 296
—	—	341	321	<i>SR</i> 297
—	—	342	322	<i>SR</i> 298
—	—	343	323	<i>SR</i> 299
—	—	344	324	<i>SR</i> 300
—	—	345	325	<i>SR</i> 301
—	—	346	327	<i>SR</i> 302
—	—	347	329	<i>SR</i> 303
—	—	348	333	<i>SR</i> 304
—	—	349	334	<i>SR</i> 305
—	—	350	341	<i>SR</i> 306
—	—	351	342	<i>SR</i> 307
—	—	352	345	<i>SR</i> 308
—	—	353	346	<i>SR</i> 309
—	—	354	347	<i>SR</i> 310

Ask. 1r <i>RBas.</i>	Ask. 1s Syriac	Ask. 2 Basiliad ²	Ask. 3 Caesarean/ Studite	Ask. 4 Pontic/ Vulgate
—	—	355	348	<i>SR</i> 311
—	—	356	349	<i>SR</i> 312
—	—	357	350	<i>SR</i> 313

¹ The table is selected and rearranged from *BBV* III, esp. 49–57.

² ‘From Ask. 2 missing are five: ErAp br [= SR] 153 315 316 317 318 and the five doublets 48a fus, 54a fus, 130a br, 169a br, 314a br.’ *BBV* III. 671.

³ *SR* 314 is edited as one of the ‘Extravagantes’ in Grib. 180–3. See *BBV* III. 55 and 665 n. 137, where, despite the note ‘See below for an explanation’ in the latter, no explanation is traceable. On p. 671 314a is twice described as a ‘doublet’, presumably of *LR* 55. See *BBV* III. 71.

APPENDIX 4

Codices and Editions of the *Regula Basili*

The following is a list of the manuscripts collated by Klaus Zelzer for the *Basili Regula: A Rufino Latine Versa*, CSEL 86 (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1986). His notes on the text may be found on pp. xvii–xxvii. Gribomont's notes, *Histoire du Texte des Ascétiques de Saint Basile* (1953), 96–102, have also been consulted.

- B Codex Mediolensis Ambrosius C. 26 sup. (Milan, Ambrosian Library) 7th century; in Anglo-Saxon majuscule script (and orthography) very like script from the monastery of Bobbio; corrected by later hands.
- C Codex Leninopolitanus F. v. I. 2¹ formerly 'Corbeiensis', end of 7th, beginning of 8th century; uncial and semi-uncial script very like script from Corbie abbey c.700; Merovingian orthography; together with E and S preserves more often the sparer, most authentic text.
- E Codex Parisiensis Bibl. Nat. lat. 12634 (Paris) late 6th century; in southern Italian uncial script. Passed through the abbeys of Corbie and St-Germain-des-Prés, whence to the National Library. This interesting and very old codex originated in the same area of Italy, Campania, as did the *RB*, and at almost the same period. It bears witness to the same field of monastic literature as that underlying the *RB*. De Vogüé has plausibly connected the codex with Eugippius of Lucullanum, whose library was also the source of a transmission of Rufinus' translations.² Folios 9^r–77^v contain a collection of excerpts from the Rules of Augustine, the Four Fathers, the Master, Basil, Pachomius, the works of Novatian, the Conferences and Institutes of Cassian, and Jerome's Letter 125. The ensemble is edited by de Vogüé and F. Villegas under the name of *Regula Eugippii*.³ It contains seventeen chapters of the *RBas*. Together with C and S, E tends to preserve a sparer, more authentic text.
- F Fragmenta codicis Aurelianensis 192 (169) (Orléans), fos. 2–3, 6th/7th century; in southern Gallic script; once of the abbey of

¹ I do not know whether the manuscript has been renamed following the reversion of Leningrad to its former name, St Petersburg, or returned to its former name 'Corbeiensis'.

² See Zelzer in *RB* 5.

³ It was published as vol. 87 in the CSEL series immediately following the *Regula Basili*.

- St-Benoît-sur-Loire, Fleury; mutilated condition; an inept later hand has 'corrected' with mistakes, e.g. 8. 25 *vagos* (accusative) to *vagus*.
- G Codex Sangallensis 926 (Sankt Gallen), pp. 2–226, 9th century; in Carolingian minuscule; written without doubt at the abbey; its collection of documents stems ultimately from Lerins and is very close to LW, even deriving from a single copy (Zelzer in *RBas.* x–xi); represents the most 'amplified' or augmented text.
- H Codex Londiniensis Musei Britannici Add. 30055 (London), fos. 142–94, 10th century; a collection of monastic rules, beautifully executed in Visigothic script and with Visigothic orthography; it once belonged to the monastery of St Peter in Cardena, diocese of Burgos, and was known as Codex Caradignensis, whence Dom Bivar borrowed it for his edition. It includes texts from the Iberian Fathers.
- J Codex Rotomagensis 728 (Rouen), fos. 1–50, 10th century. Once of the monastery of Jumièges; the order of chapters (which Zelzer gives) is in considerable disarray; Merovingian orthography.
- L Codex Lambacensis XXXI (Lambach), fos. 1–72, beginning of 9th century; a collection of rules and monastic writings in Carolingian script very like that of the monastery of Münster-Schwarzach; heavily corrected by later hands; composed of two parts, joined, it is thought, in the 12th century. The earlier part is an extensive collection of monastic rules and writings stemming ultimately from Lerins and representing the most 'amplified' or augmented text of the *RBas.*
- M Codex Monacensis Bibl. Nat. lat. 28118 (Munich) 9th century. Codex Regularum S. Benedicti Anianensis—St Benedict of Aniane's collection of monastic rules and of a dating contemporary with him. It is a huge collection, beginning with the *RB*; once of St Maximinus of Trier; written before the year 821 in the same monastery in which Codex Z was written, perhaps Indae (Korneli-Münster). Transmitted from copy to copy, it is the ultimate source of Holste's printed edition. Zelzer (*RB* 632) tested M against concurrences of the two oldest Italian manuscripts, ES, and found that of all the codices containing the *RBas.*, M had the widest divergence.
- P Codex Parisiensis Bibl. Nat. lat. 12238 (Paris), fos. 1–72, beginning of 9th century; once of St-Germain-des-Prés; in southern Gallic script.
- S Codex Romanus Bibl. Nat Sessorianus 55 (Rome) second half of 6th century. S along with E is the oldest surviving witness to the text. In northern Italian semi-uncial script; it was renovated in 8th/9th century at the monastery of Nonantola (nr Modena); folios 68 and 69 are in pre-Carolingian minuscule; folios 169–76 are a palimpsest over the natural history of Pliny the Elder (at folio 177 *RBas.* begins). Together with C and E tends to preserve the sparer, most authentic text.
- T Codex Turonensis 615 (Tours) 9th century. This codex, containing only the *RBas.*, is the first part of a codex of monastic rules from the monastery of Marmoutiers and was divided into three in Toulouse at the beginning of the 18th century; Visigothic orthography.
- W Codex Guelferbytanus 4127 (Wolfenbüttel), fos. 81–118^v, 8th/9th

century. Title in the first folio: 'Codex of the monastery of the holy apostles Peter and Paul in Wissenburg', where it was written; its collection of writings stems ultimately from Lerins; represents the most 'amplified' or augmented text.

- Z Codex Aurelianensis 233 (203) (Orléans) beginning of the 9th century. Concordia Regularum S. Benedicti Anianensi—St Benedict of Aniane's collection of monastic rules; once of the monastery of Fleury—see M; written before 821.

EDITIONS

Hol. Benedicti Aniansis Codex Regularum, ed. Lucas Holstenius (Paris, 1663); first published at Rome by V. Mascarudus, 1661; this edition of the *Codex Regularum* was reproduced by Migne in 1851, *PL* 103. 423–702. The *RBas.* is found in cols. 483–554, introductory material including Rufinus' Preface, cols. 483–6, the text, cols. 487 ff.

APPENDIX 5

Rufinus' Copy of the Small Asketikon

Where and when did Rufinus obtain his copy of Basil's Small Asketikon? Certainly the great city of Alexandria was a crossroads of culture, books, trade, and intellectual work second to none. Might Basil's book have reached that far as early as the 370s, while Rufinus was resident there? Or, more feasibly, did a copy reach the great library at Caesarea of Palestine by the 380s and 390s when Rufinus was resident at Jerusalem?

F. X. Murphy assigned¹ Rufinus' tour through Palestine and Syria to about the year 378.² There is surely no occasion more likely than this for Rufinus' acquisition of a copy of the Small Asketikon. He visited Antioch and reached as far as Edessa—this was much closer to Cappadocia than Alexandria or Jerusalem and well within Basil's sphere of direct influence.³

¹ F. X. Murphy, *Rufinus of Aquileia (345–411): His Life and Works* (Washington, DC: CUA, 1945), 49–50.

² Murphy's chronology relies on three hinge texts. First there is a passage in Rufinus' *Apologia contra Hieronymum* II. 12 (*PL* 21. 594) where he speaks of an 'interval' in the midst of his Alexandria period: 'I tarried for six years in God's interests (*Dei causa*) and again after some interval (*post intervallum aliquod*), for another two, where Didymus and others were . . .'. Secondly, in his own additions to Eusebius' *Church History* I. 37 (Amidon, *The Church History of Rufinus*, 40), Rufinus spoke of a Theodore who had been wracked during the reprisals which broke out in Antioch in 362 and says that he himself had the opportunity of meeting him personally in Antioch. Thirdly, in the same work, II. 8 (Amidon, *ibid.* 70) Rufinus relates: 'Of these monks we ourselves have seen not a few in Edessa and in the regions of Carrhae; but we have heard about many more.' Murphy assigns this trip north to the *intervallum aliquod* after Rufinus' first six years in Alexandria. He continues: 'It would be the logical time for such a trip, for it was after the full establishment of peace and the recall of the Egyptian as well as the Edessan monks from exile. Perhaps it was at this time too and while he was in Antioch or Edessa, that he made acquaintance with the friends of St. Basil of Caesarea and of St. Gregory Nazianzen. It is not inconceivable that part of his object in going up to Antioch and to Edessa was to obtain the books and writings of the eastern Fathers whose names must have echoed in the schools at Alexandria. At any rate, in his *History* he does manifest a tremendous admiration for the Cappadocians.'

³ Many of Basil's letters show his engagement in Syrian affairs. Frequently they deal with the Antiochene schism. In addition to his extensive correspondence with Meletius of Antioch and Eusebius of Samosata, there are Letters 118 to Jovinus of Perrha, 132 to Abramius of Batnae, 135 to Diodorus of Antioch, 185, 220, 221, and

The timing fits well—Basil himself was near his life's end and possibly still augmenting his *Asketikon* at Caesarea. Thus the only form of it that had already had several years of general circulation would have been the earlier version, which the Syriac translation proves to have been current in the region of Rufinus' travels. Moreover, the securing or copying of worthwhile manuscripts was probably an important part of Rufinus' travel agenda. A collection of manuscripts was indispensable to the scriptorium workshop of his Jerusalem monastery and later still in the great project of translation and book propagation he undertook back in the west and which he may have had in mind for years.

All the circumstances underscore the likelihood that Melania, Rufinus, and their community on the Mount of Olives used the *Small Asketikon*. Certainly Melania's friend Palladius, testifies in his *Lausiaca History* 55. 3 that she was an assiduous student of the works of Basil, along with those of other authors, especially Origen.⁴

For Rufinus' part, his Preface to the *RBas.* shows that by the time of his return to the west in late 397, he was already well acquainted with the *Small Asketikon*, regarded it as a normative guide for the way of life in monasteries and was eager that through his translation it be promoted as such in the west. This argues that it had been in his possession and he had been making use of it for at least some years beforehand in his own monastery in Jerusalem.

256 to Berrhoea, 222 to Chalcis, 253 to the presbyters of Antioch, 361–4 to Apollinaris of Syrian Laodicea, 254 to Pelagius of the same, 255 to Vitus of Carrhae, 264 and 267 to Barses of Edessa. See David Taylor, 'Basil of Caesarea's Contacts with Syriac-speaking Christians', *Studia Patristica* 32 (1997), 213–19. In the text cited in the preceding note, Rufinus expressly mentions that he has been in Carrhae and Edessa.

⁴ 'She was most erudite and fond of literature and turned night into day going through every writing of the ancient commentators—three million lines of Origen and two and a half million lines of Gregory, Stephen, Pierius, Basil and other worthy men. And she did not read them once only in an offhand way, but she worked on them, dredging through each work seven or eight times. Thus it was possible for her to be liberated from the *knowledge falsely so called* (1 Tim 6.20) and to mount on wings, thanks to these good books—by good hopes she transformed herself into a spiritual bird and so made the journey to Christ.' Palladius: *The Lausiaca History*, tr. and annot. R. T. Meyer (New York: Newman Press, 1964), 136–7.

APPENDIX 6

Rufinus' Preface to the *Regula Basili*, Translation¹

1. We had scarcely arrived from eastern parts, my very dear brother Ursacius, when we were longing again for the accustomed fellowship of brothers. So we were very glad to enter that monastery of yours, sited there above the narrow ridge of a sandy causeway, washed about on this side and that by the waves of the shifting and uncertain sea; 2. only a scattering of pines marked out the hidden places at a distance,² from which the world³ has given it the famous name of Pinetum.

3. But we were above all delighted in this, that you did not, as others do, press inquiries about the places or riches of the east. 4. Instead, you eagerly enquired what might be the observance of the servants of God there, what their character of mind and what the institutes kept in their monasteries.

5. To your request I reply—but that what I expound for you be not unworthy I say not of myself, but of the dignity of the subject—6. I bring forth from the holy Basil, bishop of Cappadocia, a man much renowned for faith and works and for every mark of holiness, his Institutes for Monks,⁴ which he handed down as a kind of sacred case law⁵ to monks who

¹ See also the critical edition of this Preface by M. Simonetti: 'Tyranni Rufini Prologus in Regulam Sancti Basili', in *Tyranni Rufini Opera*, vol. 20 of the Corp. Chris. ser. lat. (Brepols: Turnhout, 1961), 239–41.

² *Rara tantummodo latentes locos eminus arguit pinus*; the cadence of the hexameter will be noted. Clarke (pp. 28–9 n. 1) puzzles over a monastery situated *above* (superpositum) the ridge and the places *lying hidden* (latentes). He provides three diagrams of possible geographic arrangements.

³ †saeculo dedit† *1, with a note querying whether there is a lacuna in the text. With Simonetti I read 'saeculum' as the subject of 'dedit'.

⁴ instituta monachorum.

⁵ *quae interrogantibus se monachis velut sancti cuiusdam iuris responsa statuit*. The conceptual background is Roman civil law, in which interpretations of already existing statutory law were made by authorized jurists on a case-by-case basis. This is not such an inaccurate idea of Basil's approach. He regards Scripture as the book of the commandments of the Lord to be used thoughtfully, strictly, and in detail; it is the rule of life for Christian ascetics. He acts in the Asketikon as a dispenser of the scriptural word, interpreted according to the faith of the Church and lived in the testimony of the Holy Spirit. By looking to Basil himself and his 'Rule' as a statutory source of authority and using the term 'monks', Rufinus reflects a subsequent stage both in the establishment of monastic life and the canonization of the holy orthodox 'Fathers' as guarantors of authentic Christian doctrine.

questioned him. **7.** For as you were admiring his definitions and pronouncements, you begged me urgently to translate this work into Latin. **8.** You promised me that if these holy and spiritual institutes of a holy and spiritual man were to become known through all the monasteries of the west, **9.** the great progress accruing to the servants of God from precepts like this, would, through their merits and prayers, bring me some grace or reward.

10. I have exerted myself therefore, to the best of my ability: do you fulfil your part then, and may all you who read also keep the favour and remember me as you act and pray in accordance with the content of these statutes.⁶

11. Make it your⁷ concern to provide copies for other monasteries, in order that, as in Cappadocia,⁸ all the monasteries may live not by different but by common institutes and observances.⁹

⁶ statutes: statuta CMS, instituta GHLPW Hol.

⁷ Singular second person; he returns to addressing Ursacius.

⁸ secundum instar Cappadociae omnia monasteria . . . vivant; I read secundum with Simonetti as a gloss on the comparatively rare word 'instar' (which takes the genitive), so that 'omnia monasteria' does not follow 'secundum', but is nominative and the subject of 'vivant'. Rufinus hoped that the *Regula Basili* would be an instrument of common monastic observance in the west. His hopes were not realized. That role was won by the 6th-cent. *Regula Benedicti*. In its concluding chapter, however, those 'hastening on to the perfection of the monastic life' are referred, *inter alia*, to 'the Rule of Our Holy Father Basil' (73. 5), which means, of course, Rufinus' translation.

⁹ The manuscripts mark the transition to Basil's text with a variety of discretionary formulas, e.g. 'The Preface of the Rule of holy Basil the Bishop finishes. The chapters begin . . .' C; 'It finishes. The book of holy Basil the Bishop on the Institute of monks begins . . .' G; 'The Rule of holy Basil the Bishop on the Institute of monks begins . . .' H; 'Here begins the teaching of the holy Basil Bishop of Cappadocia to monks . . .' M; 'The Preface finishes; here begins the Institute for monks, dispensed by the holy Basil to seniors who questioned him . . .' P; 'The Prologue finishes. Here begin the sayings of holy Basil the Bishop . . .' S.

APPENDIX 7

The Synod of Gangra,¹ Text and Translation

The text is translated from J. D. Mansi (ed.), *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, 31 vols. (Florence and Venice, 1757–98), vol. II, 1097–1106. There is also a critical edition of the canons by P.-P. Joannou in

¹ The salutation names the bishops but not their sees, which hinders their identification and so also the dating of Gangra. Tillemont placed the council in about 340, identifying Eusebius as of Nicomedia (died late in 341) and Eulalius as Eustathius' father. This date is followed by many scholars, e.g. Maran, Gribomont. T. D. Barnes, 'The Date of the Council of Gangra' in *JTS*, NS 40 (1989), 121–4 surveys the opinions, but himself favours c. 355, though his argument seems little more than a train of negative possibilities. Fedwick 15 n. 81 favours a still later date, in the 360s, with Eusebius as Basil's predecessor in Caesarea, 362–70. He asserts that correctives of the Eustathians' excesses are found only in Basil's Great Asketikon and not in the Small Asketikon. The evidence assembled in Ch. 2, sect. 'Remedies of Eustathian excesses' does not bear this out. Reasons were put forward in Ch. 4 for preferring a date of 340/1, arguing that Gangra best fits the spate of indictments incurred by Eustathius around 340 and that only some readiness to accommodate himself can explain his rehabilitation with his father, his credit with Basil Senior's and Emmelia's family in the 340s, and his acceptability as an episcopal candidate in c. 356. Also in favour of a dating in the early 340s are: (1) the dating given in the Syriac translation; (2) the attendance of three of the signing bishops, Bithynicus of Zela, Philetus of Juliopolis (western Galatia), and Proaeresius of Sinope at the Council of Sardica in 343 (Barnes, *ibid.* 125); (3) the placement of Gangra before the Antioch council of 341 in most ancient collections of canons. On the 340 dating see Jean Gribomont, 'Le Monachisme au IVE s. en Asie Mineure: de Gangres au Messalianisme', *Studia Patristica* 2 (1957), 400–15, and 'Saint Basile et le monachisme enthousiaste', *Irénikon* 53 (1980), 123–44. That Basil takes note of Gangra's caveats but never mentions the council by name may be due to its auspices under the Arian Eusebius. For his dim view of 'Eusebius of Constantinople' see Letter 244, Def. III. 471, and Letter 263, Def. IV. 95. Moreover, the geographical purview of the prefatory letter is northern Anatolia, with Cappadocia somewhat out of it, confirming the historical evaluation in Ch. 4. Accordingly, ideas that 'Gregory' might be Gregory Senior of Nazianzus, or 'Eusebius' bishop of Caesarea in the 360s are unlikely. There is discussion of this council and some translation of its canons—which I found to be most unsatisfactory—in C. J. Hefele, *Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux*, tr. H. Leclercq, vol. 1/2, pp. 1029–45. A translation by Henry R. Percival also appears in *NPNF*, 2nd ser. 14. 91–101, but was not consulted here.

his *Discipline Générale Antique*, vol. 1, part 2 (Fonti IX, Grottaferrata, Rome, 1962), 83–99.

PREFATORY LETTER: SALUTATION

Κυρίοις τιμιωτάτοις ἐν Ἀρμενίᾳ
συνλειτούργοις, Εὐσέβιος,
Αἰλιανός, Εὐγένιος, Ὀλύμπιος,
Βιθυνικός, Γρηγόριος, Φίλητος,
Πάππος, Εὐλάλιος, Ὑπάτιος,
Προαιρέσιος, Βασίλειος, Βάσσοσ,
οἱ συνελθόντες εἰς τὴν κατὰ
Γάγγραν ἁγίαν σύνοδον, ἐν Κυρίῳ
χαίρειν.

TO THE MOST honoured lords in
Armenia, fellow ministers with us,
Eusebius, Aelianus, Eugenius,
Olympius, Bithynicus, Gregory,
Philetus, Pappus, Eulalius,²
Hypatius, Proaeresius, Basil,
Bassus, who have assembled in the
holy synod at Gangra, greetings in
the Lord.

PREFATORY LETTER: CHARGES AGAINST THE EUSTATHIANS

Ἐπειδὴ συνελθούσα ἡ ἁγιωτάτη
σύνοδος τῶν ἐπισκόπων κατὰ
Γάγγραν ἐκκλησία διὰ τινὰς
ἐκκλησιαστικὰς χρείας, ζητουμένων
καὶ τοὺς κατ' Εὐστάθιον, εὔρισκεν
πολλὰ ἀθέσμως γινόμενα ὑπὸ
τούτων αὐτῶν τῶν περὶ Εὐστάθιον.
ἀναγκαίως ὤρισεν, καὶ πᾶσι
φανερὸν ποιῆσαι ἐσπούδασεν, εἰς
ἀναίρεσιν τῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ κακῶς
γινομένων.

Since the most holy synod of
bishops, convened at Gangra on
account of certain needs of the
Church, has inquired into the
charges against Eustathius, it has
found that many lawless deeds have
been committed by those of
Eustathius' following. It is resolved,
of necessity, to put an end to the
evils brought about by him and is
concerned to have this made clear to
all.

καὶ γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ καταμύμφεσθαι
αὐτοὺς τὸν γάμον, καὶ ὑποτίθεσθαι,
ὅτι οὐδεὶς τῶν ἐν γάμῳ ὄντων
ἐλπίδα παρὰ Θεῷ ἔχει, πολλαὶ
γυναῖκες ὑπανδρῶ ἀπατηθεῖσαι τῶν
ἑαυτῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀνεχώρησαν, καὶ
ἄνδρες τῶν ἰδίων γυναικῶν. εἶτα ἐν
τῷ μεταξύ μὴ δυνηθεῖσαι ἐγκρατεῖν,
ἐμοιχεύθησαν, καὶ διὰ τὴν τοιαύτην
ὑπόθεσιν ὠνειδιάσθησαν.

For because (1) they find grave fault
with marriage and suppose that
none of those in the married state
has hope with God, so that many
married women, being deceived,
have withdrawn from their own
husbands and husbands from their
own wives. But in the meantime,
unable to practise self-control, they
have committed adultery and
through such presumption, have
incurred reproach.

² Socrates 2. 43, records Eulalius' canonical censure of his own son. Loofs convincingly argued that he was bishop not of Caesarea, but of Sebasteia in Armenia, a view now commonly accepted.

εὐρίσκοντο δὲ καὶ ἀναχωρήσεις
ἐκ τῶν οἴκων τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τῆς
ἐκκλησίας ποιούμενοι,
καταφρονητικῶς διακείμενοι κατὰ
τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ
ἐκκλησίᾳ,

καὶ ἰδία συνάξεις ποιούμενοι, καὶ
ἐκκλησιάσεις, καὶ διδασκαλίας
ἐτέρας, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα κατὰ τῶν
ἐκκλησιῶν καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἐν τῇ
ἐκκλησίᾳ,

ξένα ἀμφιάσματα ἐπὶ καταπτώσει
τῆς κοινότητος τῶν ἀμφιασμάτων
συνάγοντες·

καρποφορίας τε τὰς ἐκκλησιαστικὰς
τὰς ἀνέκαθεν διδομένας τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ,
ἑαυτοῖς καὶ τοῖς συνάντοῖς, ὡς ἁγίοις,
τὰς διαδόσεις ποιούμενοι·

καὶ δοῦλοι δεσποτῶν ἀναχωροῦντες,
καὶ διὰ τοῦ ξένου ἀμφιάσματος
καταφρόνησιν κατὰ τῶν δεσποτῶν
ποιούμενοι·

καὶ γυναῖκες παρὰ τὸ σύνθητες
ἀντὶ ἀμφιασμάτων γυναικείων
ἀνδρικὰ ἀμφιάσματα
ἀναλαμβάνουσαι, καὶ ἐκ τούτων
οἰόμεναι δικαιοῦσθαι. πολλαὶ δὲ
καὶ ἀποκείρονται προφάσει
θεοσεβείας τὴν φύσιν τῆς κόμης τῆς
γυναικείας.

νηστείας τε ἐν κυριακῇ ποιούμενοι,
καὶ τῆς ἀγιότητος τῆς ἐλευθέρης
ἡμέρας καταφρονοῦντες, καὶ τῶν
νηστειῶν τῶν ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις
τεταγμένων ὑπερφρονοῦντες, καὶ
ἐσθίοντες,

καὶ τίνες αὐτῶν μεταλήψεις κρεῶν
βδελυττόμενοι·

καὶ ἐν οἴκοις γεγαμηκότων εὐχας
ποιεῖσθαι μὴ βουλόμενοι, καὶ
γινομένων εὐχῶν καταφρονοῦντες,

They are found (2) to be effecting
withdrawals from the houses of God
and from the Church, being
contemptuously disposed against
the Church and those in the Church,

(3) to be devising their own
assemblies and quasi-churches and
strange teachings and other actions
against the churches and those in
the Church,

(4) to be introducing strange clothes
in subversion of the common kind
of clothing,

(5) to be appropriating the
distributions of first-fruits
belonging to the Church and given
of old to the Church, for themselves
and their followers, because they are
the holy ones.

(6) Slaves are withdrawing from
their masters and despising them,
presuming on their strange dress.

(7) Contrary to custom, women
assume men's dress instead of
women's dress and think themselves
thereby justified; moreover, on the
pretext of piety, many of them cut
short that form of hair which is
proper to women.

(8) They observe fasts on Sundays,
despising the sanctity of the free
days, whereas they make light of the
fasts ordained among the churches
and eat on them.

(9) Some of them revile the
partaking of meat for food.

(10) And they will not offer
prayers in the houses of the
married and indeed spurn such
prayers.

καὶ πολλάκις προσφορῶν ἐν αὐταῖς
ταῖς οἰκίαις μὲν γεγαμηκότων
γινομένων μὴ μεταλαμβάνοντες·

καὶ πρεσβυτέρων γεγαμηκότων
ὑπερφρονοῦντες, καὶ τῶν λειτουργιῶν
τῶν ὑπ' αὐτῶν μὴ ἀπτόμενοι,

καὶ τὰς συνάξεις τῶν μαρτυρῶν⁴ καὶ
τῶν ἐκεῖ συνερχομένων καὶ
λειτουργούντων καταγινώσκοντες,

καὶ πλουσίων δὲ τῶν μὴ πάντων τῶν
ὑπαρχόντων ἀναχωροῦντων, ὡς
ἐλπίδα παρὰ Θεῷ μὴ ἔχοντων·

(11) Often they will not take part in
the sacrifices³ made in these same
houses, that is, of the married.

(12) They look down on married
presbyters and will not touch the
liturgies offered by them.

(13) They condemn the assemblies of
the martyrs and those who gather
and worship there.

(14) Likewise they condemn the rich
who do not forsake all their posses-
sions, as having no hope with God.

PREFATORY LETTER: SUMMARY

καὶ πολλὰ ἄλλα, ἃ ἀριθμῆσαι οὐδεὶς
ἂν δυνηθεῖ. ἕκαστος γὰρ αὐτῶν,
ἐπειδὴ τοῦ κανόνος τοῦ
ἐκκλησιαστικοῦ ἐξῆλθεν, ὥσπερ
νόμους ἰδιάζοντας ἔοχεν. οὔτε γὰρ
κοινὴ γνώμη αὐτῶν ἀπάντων
ἐγένετο· ἀλλ' ἕκαστος, ὅπερ ἂν
ἐνεθυμήθη, τοῦτο προσέθηκεν ἐπὶ
διαβολῇ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, καὶ ἑαυτοῦ
βλάβη.

διὰ οὖν ταῦτα ἠναγκάσθη ἡ
παραγενομένη ἐν Γάγγραις ἁγία
σύνοδος καταψηφίσασθαι αὐτῶν, καὶ
ὄρους ἐκθέσθαι, ἐκτὸς αὐτοῦ εἶναι
τῆς ἐκκλησίας· εἰ δὲ μετανοοῖεν, καὶ
ἀναθεματίζοιεν ἕκαστον τούτων τῶν
κακῶς λεχθέντων, δεκτοὺς αὐτοῦ
γίνεσθαι· καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐξέθετο ἡ
ἁγία σύνοδος ἕκαστον, ὃ ὀφείλουσιν
ἀναθεματίσαντες δεχθῆναι.

And there are many other things
they do that no one can number.
This is because each of them has
departed from the canon of the
Church, as if maintaining his own
laws. For indeed, they are not all
of a common mind, but each one,
whatever his enthusiasm battens on,
this he hurls as an accusation against
the Church, to his own harm.

Because of these things the holy
synod met at Gangra is compelled
to pronounce judgment against
them and to set out guidelines, to
the effect that these people are
outside the Church. But if they
come to a better mind and
anathematize each of their
erroneous assertions, they are to be
received back. Therefore the holy
synod sets out each item that they
must anathematize if they are to be
received back.

³ In the context, this must mean Eucharistic liturgies. A possible setting might be that of a 'house of prayer' in the villa of an aristocratic household.

⁴ Through a typographical error the words καὶ τὰς συνάξεις τῶν μαρτυρῶν are missing from Mansi II. 1101. They are restored here from the note in C. J. Hefele and H. Leclercq, *Histoire des conciles*, tr. H. Nutcombe Oxenham in *A History of the Christian Councils*, II. 326–429 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1876), II. 327.

εἰ δέ τις μὴ πεισθείῃ τοῖς
λεχθεῖσιν, ὡς αἰρετικὸν αὐτὸν
ἀναθεματισθῆναι, καὶ εἶναι
ἀκοινωνήτον καὶ κεχωρισμένον
τῆς ἐκκλησίας. καὶ δεήσει τοὺς
ἐπισκόπους ἐπὶ πάντων τῶν
εὕρισκομένων παρ' αὐτοῖς τοιοῦτον
παραφυλάξασθαι.

But if anyone does not obey these pronouncements, let him be anathematized as a heretic and be out of communion and separated from the Church. And it will be the duty of bishops to be on their guard when anyone of this kind is detected among them.

CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF GANGRA

ΚΑΝΟΝΕΣ ΤΩΝ ἘΝ ΓΑΓΓΡΑ

α'. Εἴ τις τὸν γάμον μέμφοιτο, καὶ τὴν καθεύδουσαν μετὰ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς αὐτῆς, οὖσαν πιστὴν καὶ εὐλαβῆ, βδελύττειτο ἢ μέμφοιτο, ὡς ἂν μὴ δυναμένην εἰς βασιλείαν εἰσελθεῖν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

β'. Εἴ τις ἐσθίοντα κρέα χωρὶς αἵματος καὶ εἰδωλοθύτου καὶ πνικτοῦ, μετ' εὐλαβείας καὶ πίστεως, κατακρίνοι, ὡς ἂν διὰ τὸ μεταλαμβάνειν, ἐλπίδα μὴ ἔχοντα, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

γ'. Εἴ τις δοῦλον προφάσει θεοσεβείας διδάσκει καταφρονεῖν δεσπότη, καὶ ἀναχωρεῖν τῆς ὑπηρεσίας, καὶ μὴ μετ' ἐννοίας καὶ πάσης τιμῆς τῷ ἑαυτοῦ δεσπότη ἔξυπηρετεῖσθαι, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

δ'. Εἴ τις διακρίνοιτο παρὰ πρεσβυτέρου γεγαμηκότος, ὡς μὴ χρῆναι λειτουργήσαντος αὐτοῦ προσφοράς μεταλαμβάνειν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

ε'. Εἴ τις διδάσκει τὸν οἶκον τοῦ Θεοῦ εὐκαταφρόνητον εἶναι, καὶ τὰς ἐν αὐτῷ συνάξεις, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

ς'. Εἴ τις παρὰ τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἰδίᾳ ἐκκλησιάζοι, καὶ καταφρονῶν τῆς ἐκκλησίας, τὰ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐθέλοι πράττειν, μὴ συνόντος τοῦ πρεσβυτέρου κατὰ γνώμην τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.

CANONS OF THE GANGRA BISHOPS

1. If anyone finds fault with marriage, reviling and finding fault with her who sleeps with her husband, though she is a believer and pious, as if she were unable to enter the Kingdom, let him be anathema.

2. If anyone condemns him who in all piety and faith eats meat while *abstaining from blood, things offered to idols, or things strangled* (Acts 15: 29), as if by such partaking he has no hope, let him be anathema.

3. If anyone teaches a slave, under pretext of piety, to despise his master, to withdraw from his service and not to serve him with goodwill and all respect, let him be anathema.

4. If anyone discriminates against a married presbyter, as if one should not take part in sacrifices when offered by him, let him be anathema.

5. If anyone teaches that the house of God is to be altogether despised and likewise the assemblies held there, let him be anathema.

6. If anyone would make up his own church outside the Church, and in contempt of the Church perform what belongs to the Church without the presence of a presbyter approved by the bishop, let him be anathema.

ζ'. *Εἴ τις καρποφορίας ἐκκλησιαστικὰς ἐθέλοι λαμβάνειν, ἢ διδοῖναι ἔξω τῆς ἐκκλησίας, παρὰ γνώμην τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, ἢ τοῦ ἐγκεχειρισμένου τὰ τοιαῦτα, καὶ μὴ μέτα γνώμης αὐτοῦ ἐθέλοι πράττειν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

η'. *Εἴ τις διδοί ἢ λαμβάνοι καρποφορίαν παρεκτὸς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου, ἢ τοῦ ἐπιτεταγμένου εἰς οἰκονομίαν εὐποιίας, καὶ ὁ διδοὺς, καὶ ὁ λαμβάνων, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

θ'. *Εἴ τις παρθενεύοι, ἢ ἐγκρατεύοιτο, ὡς ἂν βδελύττων τῶν γάμων ἀναχωρήσας, καὶ μὴ δι' αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἅγιον τῆς παρθενίας, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ι'. *Εἴ τις τῶν παρθενεύόντων διὰ τὸν κύριον κατεπαίροιο τῶν γεγαμηκότων, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ια'. *Εἴ τις καταφρονοίη τῶν ἐκ πίστεως ἀγάπας ποιούντων, καὶ διὰ τιμὴν τοῦ κυρίου συγκαλοῦντων τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς, καὶ μὴ ἐθέλοι κοινωνεῖν ταῖς κλήσεσι, διὰ τὸ ἐξευτελίζειν τὸ γινόμενον, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ιβ'. *Εἴ τις ἀνδρῶν διὰ νομιζομένην ἄσκησιν περιβολαίω χρήται, καὶ ὡς ἂν ἐκ τούτου τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἔχων, καταψηφίσοιτο τῶν μετ' εὐλαβείας τοὺς βήρους φορούντων, καὶ τῇ ἄλλῃ κοινῇ καὶ ἐν συνηθείᾳ οὕσῃ ἐσθῆτι κεχρημένων, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ιγ'. *Εἴ τις γυνὴ διὰ νομιζομένην ἄσκησιν μεταβάλλοιτο ἀμφίασμα, καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰωθότος γυναικείου ἀμφιάσματος, ἀνδρεῖον ἀναλάβοι, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

7. If anyone would appropriate the first-fruits belonging to the Church, or distribute them outside the Church, without the consent of the bishop or of the one entrusted with such things, and will not act in accord with his will, let him be anathema.

8. If anyone distributes or appropriates such offerings apart from the bishop or of the one appointed by him for the dispensing of alms, both the one distributing and the one appropriating shall be anathema.

9. If anyone practising virginity or continence has withdrawn himself because he reviles the married state and not on account of the beauty and holiness of virginity, let him be anathema.

10. If anyone practising virginity for the Lord's sake exalts himself over those who are married, let him be anathema.

11. If anyone despises those who from faith, hold *agape* feasts and who for the honour of the Lord invite the brothers, and will have no fellowship with those invited because he belittles the practice, let him be anathema.

12. If any man, from supposed asceticism, uses the philosopher's mantle and, as if by this he were maintaining righteousness, despises those who with piety wear ordinary cloaks and make use of other common clothing as is customary, let him be anathema.

13. If any woman, from supposed asceticism, exchanges her clothing and instead of the customary clothing of women, assumes that of men, let her be anathema.

ιδ'. *Εἴ τις γυνὴ καταλιμπάνοι τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ ἀναχωρεῖν ἐθέλοι βδελυττομένη τὸν γάμον, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ιε'. *Εἴ τις καταλιμπάνῃ τὰ ἑαυτοῦ τέκνα, καὶ μὴ τεκνοτροφῇ, καὶ ὅσον ἐν ἑαυτοῦ πρὸς θεοσεβείαν τὴν προσήκουσαν ἀνάγῃ, ἀλλὰ προφάσει τῆς ἀσκήσεως ἀμελοῖ, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ις'. *Εἴ τινα τέκνα γονέων, μάλιστα πιστῶν, ἀναχωροῖ προφάσει θεοσεβείας, καὶ μὴ τὴν καθήκουσαν τιμὴν τοῖς γονεῦσιν ἀπονέμοι, προτιμωμένης δηλονότι παρ' αὐτοῖς τῆς θεοσεβείας, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ιζ'. *Εἴ τις γυναικῶν διὰ τὴν νομιζομένην ἀσκησιν, ἀποκείροιτο τὰς κόμας, ἃς ἔδωκεν ὁ Θεὸς εἰς ὑπόμνησιν τῆς ὑποταγῆς, ὡς ἀναλύουσα τὸ πρόσταγμα τῆς ὑποταγῆς, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ιη'. *Εἴ τις διὰ νομιζομένην ἀσκησιν ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ νηστεύοι, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

ιθ'. *Εἴ τις τῶν ἀσκουμένων χωρὶς σωματικῆς ἀνάγκης ὑπερηφανεύοιτο, καὶ τὰς παραδεδομένας νηστείας εἰς τὸ κοινὸν, καὶ φυλαττομένας ὑπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας, παραλῦοι ἀποκυροῦντος ἐν αὐτῷ τελείου λογισμοῦ, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

14. If any woman forsakes her husband and would withdraw herself, because she reviles the married state, let her be anathema.

15. If anyone forsakes his own children and does not nurture them and, as far as in him lies, brings them up in fitting habits of piety, but, on a pretext of asceticism, neglects them, let such a one be anathema.

16. If any child, specially of the faithful, withdraws from his parents on a pretext of piety and will not pay the honour due to his parents, as if, indeed, piety had a higher claim on him, let him be anathema.

17. If a woman, from supposed asceticism, cuts off the hair given to her by God as a reminder of subjection (cf. 1 Cor. 11: 5-16), as if to annul the commandment of subjection, let her be anathema.⁵

18. If anyone, from supposed asceticism, fasts on a Sunday, let him be anathema.

19. If any of the ascetics, not from any bodily necessity, but from arrogance, as if he were possessed of a more perfect understanding, disregards the traditional fasts observed by the Church in common, let him be anathema.

⁵ Sozomen 7. 16, reports that Theodosius I also condemned this practice some time after the Council of Constantinople: 'By this law it was also decreed, that women who had shaved their heads should be ejected from the churches; and that any bishop by whom such women were admitted should be deposed from his bishopric.'

κ'. *Εἴ τις αἰτιώτο, ὑπερηφάνῳ
διαθέσει κεχρημένος καὶ
βδελυττόμενος, τὰς συναῖξεις τῶν
μαρτυρῶν, ἢ τὰς ἐν αὐτοῖς γινομένας
λειτουργίας, καὶ τὰς μνήμας αὐτῶν,
ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.*

20. If anyone, from a prideful disposition, censures with scorn and disgust the assemblies of the martyrs⁶ and the liturgical services held there and their commemorations,⁷ let him be anathema.

CONCLUDING EXHORTATION⁸

*ταῦτα δὲ γράφομεν, οὐκ
ἐκκόπτοντες τοὺς ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ
Θεοῦ κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς ἀσκειῖσθαι
βουλομένους. ἀλλὰ τοὺς
λαμβάνοντας τὴν ὑπόθεσιν τῆς
ἀσκήσεως εἰς ὑπερηφανίαν, κατὰ
τῶν ἀφελέστερον βιούντων
ἐπαιρομένους τε, καὶ παρὰ τὰς
γραφὰς καὶ τοὺς ἐκκλησιαστικούς
κανόνας, καὶ νεοτερισμοὺς
εἰσάγοντας. ἡμεῖς τοιγαροῦν καὶ
παρθενίαν μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης
θαυμάζομεν, καὶ ἐγκράτειαν μετὰ
σεμνότητος καὶ θεοσεβείας
γινομένην ἀποδεχόμεθα· καὶ
ἀναχώρησιν τῶν ἐγκοσμίῳ
πραγμάτων μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης
ἀποδεχόμεθα, καὶ γάμου συνοίκησιν
σεμνῆν τιμῶμεν·*

We write these things not in order to cut off those in the Church of God who desire to practise asceticism according to the Scriptures, but rather those who make asceticism a pretext for pride, who exalt themselves against those who lead simpler lives and who introduce innovations contrary to the Scriptures and the canons of the Church. For indeed, we too highly esteem virginity when joined with humility and approve continence when practised with reverence and piety. We both approve withdrawal from worldly affairs, when practised with humility and also honour the reverent cohabitation of marriage.

*καὶ πλοῦτον μετὰ δικαιοσύνης καὶ
εὐποιίας οὐκ ἐξουθενοῦμεν· καὶ
λιτότητα καὶ εὐτέλειαν
ἀμφιασμάτων, δι' ἐπιμέλειαν
μόνον τοῦ σώματος, ἀπερίεργον
ἐπαινοῦμεν· τὰς δὲ ἐκλύτους καὶ
τεθρυμμένας ἐν τῇ ἐσθῆτι προόδους
οὐκ ἀποδεχόμεθα,*

We do not despise wealth if united with justice and almsgiving. We unreservedly praise simplicity and unpretentiousness of clothing, such as but serves the needs of the body; unrestrained and luxurious excesses in dress we do not approve.

⁶ Though *συναῖξεις* means basically 'meetings', 'assemblies', the whole phrase seems to refer to the place where they were held, i.e. the *martyria*, chapels in honour of the martyrs.

⁷ Or 'memorials'. *τὰς μνήμας* in this context is ambiguous; it could cover both ceremony or a building. It probably recapitulates the preceding phrases.

⁸ Listed in some manuscripts as *κά*, Canon XXI.

καὶ τοὺς οἴκους τοῦ Θεοῦ τιμῶμεν, καὶ τὰς συνόδους τὰς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς, ὡς ἁγίας καὶ ἐπωφελεῖς ἀποδεχόμεθα· οὐ συγκλείοντες τὴν εὐσέβειαν ἐν τοῖς οἴκοις, ἀλλὰ πάντα τόπον τὸν ἐπ' ὀνόματι τοῦ Θεοῦ οἰκοδομηθέντα τιμῶντες· καὶ τὴν ἐναυτῆ τῆ ἑκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ σύνδοδον κοινήν, εἰς ὠφέλειαν τοῦ κοινοῦ, ἀποδεχόμεθα· καὶ τὰς καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εὐποΐας τῶν ἀδελφῶν, τὰς κατὰ τὰς παραδόσεις διὰ τῆς ἑκκλησίας εἰς τοὺς πτωχοὺς γινομένας, μακαρίζομεν·

καὶ πάντα συνελόντας εἰπεῖν, τὰ παραδοθέντα ὑπὸ τῶν θείων γραφῶν καὶ τῶν ἀποστολικῶν παραδόσεων, ἐν τῇ ἑκκλησίᾳ γίνεσθαι εὐχόμεθα.

We also honour the houses of God and approve the assemblies held in them as holy and beneficial; yet we do not limit piety to these houses alone, but honour every place which is built in the name of God. We approve the common assembly in the Church of God for the common benefit and we bless the most generous alms of the brothers⁹ to the poor—when made, that is, according to the traditions, through the Church.

To sum up all in a word, we pray that there be observed in the Church all that is handed down by the divine Scriptures and the apostolic traditions.

⁹ ἀδελφῶν. This evidently refers to the ascetics; 'sisters' is included in the meaning.

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