



Cyril of Jerusalem, Mystagogue: The Authorship of the Mystagogic Catacheses (Patristic Monograph Series) (v. 17)

Alexis James Doval

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After centuries of unresolved dispute over the question of whether the *Mystagogic Catecheses* belongs among the works of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, this book finally settles the controversy. These post-baptismal Easter sermons are a prized witness to the way the rites of initiation (baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist) were celebrated in fourth-century Jerusalem and for the rich sacramental theology they contain. Uncertain authorship has prevented the text from being fully appreciated as an integral part of Cyril's works. Cyril's reputation as a catechist is time-honored, and his *Baptismal Catecheses* has served as an invaluable source of early Church doctrine and practice. Scholars can now confidently include the mystagogic sermons in their study of Cyril's doctrinal and sacramental theology and practice.

This study addresses much more than the question of authorship. A thorough examination of the *Mystagogic Catecheses* in conjunction with Cyril's *Baptismal Catecheses* provides a new view into his life and thought as both catechist and mystagogue. It begins with a survey of those aspects of Cyril's life and his Jerusalem church that are relevant to reassessing the authorship of the *Mystagogic Catecheses*. It then examines the text's manuscript tradition, literary tradition, and date. There follows the most extensive section, a comparative analysis of the disputed sermons and Cyril's *Baptismal Catecheses* in the areas of liturgical rites, theology, spirituality, and literary style. The text is then compared to the known works of the contending author, John II of Jerusalem. Finally, the sermons are subjected to a stylometric analysis, that is, a computer-based statistical analysis of literary style.

This book will be welcomed by scholars of early Christianity, especially those interested in the life and works of Cyril of Jerusalem. Of special interest is its treatment of the history and development of liturgy in the Christian East through the fourth century. This is the first volume in the Patristic Monograph Series of the North American Patristic Society to be published by the Catholic University of America Press.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Alexis James Doval is associate professor of religious studies at Saint Mary's College of California.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK:

"[A] considerable contribution to a vexed but vital question about Cyril and the mystagogical catacheses. . . . Doval's study is a must for any patrologist interested in liturgical history and theology, concerned about the

resurgence of the Jerusalem church, studying the development of catachesis and catechumenate, or exploring questions related to the controversies of the fourth century."?Prof. Thomas Finn, College of William and Mary

"The persistent question of authorship receives a comprehensive treatment in this work. . . . The door on John's authorship of the mystagogical catechesis is not completely closed, but for Doval it remains an improbability at best. Barring new evidence, it will probably never be opened wide again in the wake of this study."?William P. McDonald, *Journal of Early Christian Studies*

"[A]n important purchase for libraries which have patristics collections or collections in the history of doctrine and liturgy." Cecil R. White, *Catholic Library World*

"Doval's cumulative case is compelling, and the onus must now be on those who dispute Cyril's authorship to justify continued dissent. . . . [A]n important contribution to studies of Cyril of Jerusalem and the fourth-century liturgy of the Holy City."?Bryan D. Spinks, *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*

"[This] book offers a very carefully defined structure and method for dealing with a highly complicated question." ? Pablo F. Argarate, *Toronto Journal of Theology*

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