

Hippolytus on nude baptism...

(note: this is only chapter 21 of *The Apostolic Tradition*, the chapter on how to baptize....)

The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome

The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus of Rome was composed in approximately 215 in Rome. It apparently preserved older second century practices which were in danger of falling to disuse or innovation. Hippolytus, a presbyter of the Roman Church at the time, was so distraught over the innovating practices of his former friends, the Pope Zephyrinus and his successor Callistus, that he set himself up as history's first antipope! He continued in this role through the rules of Callistus successors, Urban and Pontius, and in the time of Pope Pontianus, both he and Pontianus were exiled to Sardinia, from all accounts an extraordinarily unhealthy place, where they were forced to work the mines. Shortly afterward, in 235, both died there. Sometime before his death, Hippolytus was reconciled to the Roman Bishop. The two were martyrs, and their bodies were both brought back to Rome, where they were honorably buried.

21 ¹At the hour in which the cock crows, they shall first pray over the water. ²When they come to the water, the water shall be pure and flowing, that is, the water of a spring or a flowing body of water. ³Then they shall take off all their clothes. ⁴The children shall be baptized first. All of the children who can answer for themselves, let them answer. If there are any children who cannot answer for themselves, let their parents answer for them, or someone else from their family. ⁵After this, the men will be baptized. Finally, the women, after they have unbound their hair, and removed their jewelry. No one shall take any foreign object with themselves down into the water.

⁶At the time determined for baptism, the bishop shall give thanks over some oil, which he puts in a vessel. It is called the Oil of Thanksgiving. ⁷He shall take some more oil and exorcise it. It is called the Oil of Exorcism. ⁸A deacon shall hold the Oil of Exorcism and stand on the left. Another deacon shall hold the Oil of Thanksgiving and stand on the right.

⁹When the elder takes hold of each of them who are to receive baptism, he shall tell each of them to renounce, saying, "I renounce you Satan, all your service, and all your works." ¹⁰After he has said this, he shall anoint each with the Oil of Exorcism, saying, "Let every evil spirit depart from you." ¹¹Then, after these things, the bishop passes each of them on nude to the elder who stands at the water. They shall stand in the water naked. A deacon, likewise, will go down with them into the water. ¹²When each of them to be baptized has gone down into the water, the one baptizing shall lay hands on each of them, asking, "Do you believe in God the Father Almighty?" ¹³And the one being baptized shall answer, "I believe." ¹⁴He shall then baptize each of them once, laying his hand upon each of their heads. ¹⁵Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and died, and rose on the third day living from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of the Father, the one coming to judge the living and the dead?" ¹⁶When each has answered, "I believe," he shall baptize a second time. ¹⁷Then he shall ask, "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit and the Holy Church and the resurrection of the flesh?" ¹⁸Then each being baptized shall answer, "I believe." And thus let him baptize the third time.

¹⁹Afterward, when they have come up out of the water, they shall be anointed by the elder with the Oil of Thanksgiving, saying, "I anoint you with holy oil in the name of Jesus Christ." ²⁰Then, drying themselves, they shall dress and afterwards gather in the church.