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## IMAGES OF PRIESTHOOD AND MONASTICISM IN THE WORKS OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM: RHETORIC AND HISTORICAL REALITY

*The article provides a comparative analysis of the attitude to priests and monks, the manifestations of which can be found in the works of the outstanding thinker and theologian, representative of patristics, John Chrysostom (347–407 A. D.). It is shown that depending on the purpose of each specific work, he used his own rhetorical abilities in different ways when speaking about priests and monks. When Chrysostom considered each of these figures separately, without comparing them with each other, he certainly showed considerable elevation. For example, when he wanted to exalt the exploits of monks and virgins, he did it in the most refined way. At the same time, in the treatise “Six Discourses on the Priesthood,” while highly evaluating the functions and role of priests, he downplayed the role and importance of monks. In particular, in the last part of this work, Chrysostom portrays the figure of a monk as a kind of egoist who thinks only about his own salvation and has no connection with the outside world. In order to clarify the nature of this duality, we examine the uncertainty and variability in the nature and status of monasticism in the first centuries of Christianity, in particular, we pay attention to the complex nature of the monastic movement in the 4th century, when Chrysostom lived and worked. The historical comparison we have made allows us to assert that in those times, when the Church institution was being formed and its integration into society was still ongoing, the institution of the priesthood had already acquired a fairly stable (“routinized”) charisma, while monasticism had not yet undergone such “routinization.” But, as shown in the article, in general, the institution of monasticism was of great importance for the early Church. Based on this, we conclude that the downplaying of the image of monasticism, which can be seen in the “Six Conversations on the Priesthood,” did not reflect reality in its entirety, but the specific rhetorical intentions of the author of this treatise, due to the specifics of the historical moment.*

**Keywords:** John Chrysostom, priesthood, monasticism, virgins, rhetoric, virtues, charisma, early Christianity, patristics, theology.

### Introduction

John Chrysostom (c. 350–407) in his work “*De Sacerdotio*” answers the accusations of his friend Basil why he escaped the ordination and builds up his argument concerning the priesthood. As one scholar notices, it is not an all-embracing treatise and was not intended to be as such (Fotineas, 2007, pp. 53–65). Chrysostom raises the themes of difficulties and glory of the priesthood, and of the responsibilities and the character of a priest. At the end of the work he compared the vocation of a priest and a monk. It follows from his description that a monk is only concerned with his own sins and sal-

vation, is completely isolated from the society, and has no responsibilities towards the world. This article will argue that monks *did play* an important role in the early Church, in real life, despite the theologian’s rhetorical description in this treatise. First, it will be shown that Chrysostom elevates or belittles the role of a monk depending on the particular rhetorical intention of his works, which does not correspond to reality. Second, it will be also demonstrated that the fourth-century world presents the complexity of the monastic situation. It will also be shown that although initially monks ran away from the world to lead a true Christian life, they were not totally detached from the society; monks also sup-

port the existence of the world and church by their prayers and intercessions; after continuous fighting with their passions and cultivating of virtues they become open and able to provide help and give advice to lay people; and, finally, they perform miracles of healing. It is worth noting, as Mayer writes, that Chrysostom's writings on asceticism became dated, but "the link he drew between pursuit of the moral Christian life and the call to a life of simplicity (moderate asceticism) contributed to an interest in his works over the centuries within monastic circles" (Mayer, 2015, p. 143). There has been no research till now focusing purely on the portrayal of monks and their role in this theologian's writings, taking into account the rhetorical intent of his works.

### Chrysostom's Rhetorical Arguments in His Works

First, in his treatise "*De Sacerdotio*" (PG 48), written between 381–385, Chrysostom elevates a priest over a monk because he is rhetorically arguing for the high value of the priesthood. His argument required to show the position of a priest in the best light compared to the other members of the Body of Christ. In order to show the glory and the dangers of the priestly office and in this way to explain his indignity for it and defend his escaping of it, Chrysostom needed a rhetorical contrast between a priest and a monk. However, this did not correspond to reality and in his other works ("*De Virginitate*" PG 48, "*Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae*" PG 47) he exalts a monk and monasticism as we will show further. So in this we can see the complexity in Chrysostom's works and also in the fourth-century reality because the position of monks in the Church has not been officially fixed by the Church yet. Monasteries have been put under the authority of local bishops only after the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Moreover, in this work, in books 4 and 5 the theologian considers education very important for a priest in order to explain and defend the Christian doctrines. And at the same time it is implied that monks do not have any education because they flee from the cities and the school. However, Rubenson argues that St. Anthony and the monks were educated as we will show later (Rubenson, 1995). Therefore, Chrysostom's rhetorical contrast does not stand to reality.

It is worth noting that Chrysostom received classical education and was taught rhetoric by his pagan teacher Libanius. The theologian widely used rhetorical methods in his writings in order to prove his point and to make his arguments more persuasive. As Mitchell writes, "Chrysostom's writings perva-

sively employ the same kinds of rhetorical figures and tropes as the predominantly epideictic compositions of the second sophistic" and "Chrysostom quite knowingly deployed his rhetorical skills and strategies ... and deliberately employed oratorical arts to enliven his arguments and entertain his audiences" (Mitchell, 2002, pp. 24–25). Constantelos also mentions that Chrysostom's "success as a preacher is attributed not only to an excellent knowledge of the Christian Scriptures and his homiletical charisma but also to his broad Greek rhetorical and classical learning" (Constantelos, 1991, p. 116).

So who is a priest and what are his functions? According to the account given by Chrysostom in the work "*De Sacerdotio*," a priest is responsible for many people. If he performs his ministry inappropriately, he will deserve eternal punishment. He should possess the angelic virtue and should be able to approach God with frankness and spotless purity. Chrysostom writes that "his [priest's] soul must be purer than the rays of the sun, in order that the Holy Spirit may never leave him desolate" (Chrysostom, 1984, p. 137). He encounters more temptations than a monk because he is placed in the thick of things and so he must practise self-denial and self-discipline. It is more difficult to control people's spiritual lives than for an elder monk the lives of a few monks. In his duty to God, the priest is an ambassador for the world and intercedes for people's sins before God, and for this task he should surpass people in all virtues. He is constantly training the soul and is fighting with his passions. If he endures the sins of the community, he deserves commendation. And he should prevent evil suspicions in the Church. Orosz, while analysing this theme of the elevated position of a priest, notices that Chrysostom talks about superiority of a priest as a charismatic and ontological superiority. And this superiority is not in a priest himself, as Chrysostom understands, but comes from the grace of the Holy Spirit (Orosz, 2005, pp. 594–595).

A monk, on the contrary, lives in solitude, as Chrysostom describes. He has immunity to temptations because he encounters no distractions from the external world. He is responsible only for himself and some monks. A monk is free from worldly business and is under the constant supervision of his master. He is concerned with bodily training. His states are inactivity and detachment and according to Chrysostom these virtues are useless for the administration of the Church. A monk does not commit serious sins and avoids agitation, so should not cause admiration. He has no scope to practise absence of anger, fame and fullness of tact, and if he

happens to appear in the public arena, in the place of a priest, he might not succeed in spiritual perfection but might even lose his achievements in virtues. Monks also struggle with the devil and even more because they are not surrounded with people (Chrysostom, 1984, pp. 136–139).

This contrast is true but not complete for a number of reasons. A monk must also have the angelic virtue and be pure. He also prays for the world and for the forgiveness of people's sins before God. And he leads a combat against the sins and through fasting suppresses his body in order to develop the virtues and to improve the spiritual state of his soul. He also meets the temptations but not so much from the people as from the devil and evil spirits. Monks were also regarded at that time as Spirit-bearers. If Chrysostom argued against monks, then he acknowledged their power.

Moreover, as Chrysostom continues, the priest differs from the monk by his service to the neighbours: the priesthood prevails over the monastic life in the same measure as the public good wins over the individual good. The priest is “practically useful” as Rylaarsdam formulated it (Rylaarsdam, 1999, p. 299).

Further on, Chrysostom points out the difference between a monk and a priest by using the term “fight.” This notion was specific for monasticism, but Chrysostom for the first time transferred the place of fight from the desert to the world of clergy. He applies to the life of the Church the image of warfare and a priest as the leader of the army in the fight with the devil. As Orosz writes, the monastic fight becomes the pastoral fight. The fight of all Christians is directed by the priest (Orosz, 2005, pp. 600–601).

Then Chrysostom presents purity as necessary for priests. Although this virtue was dominantly required from the monks, priests also have to purify the others. What is new is discernment which distinguishes the priestly purity from the monastic one. As Chrysostom emphasises, what is required in the Church is intelligence. Monks have nothing to present in this regard (Orosz, 2005, pp. 602–603). As Orosz concludes his article, “John Chrysostom considers priesthood almost more ‘spiritual’ than the monastic life.” Nevertheless, Chrysostom highly estimated the monastic life and often invited Christians to practise asceticism away from the cities (in the work “*De Virginitate*” and “*Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae*”) (Orosz, 2005, pp. 603–604).

What arises from the acquaintance with the research of Orosz and Rylaarsdam is that Chrysostom in his rhetorical zeal in some way exalted priesthood

thanks to the monastic virtues. He applied classical monastic virtues, comprehension, spiritual fight, purity etc. to the ideal of a priest. Having experienced the life of a monk by himself and seeing disorder in the process of election of priests, Chrysostom imported monastic virtues to his ideal description of a priest. In addition, Chrysostom was an orator and he used rhetorical methods to support his arguments. The essential element of the encomium, one kind of the rhetorical speeches, is amplification, the presentation of some qualities in such a manner that they will seem greater than they actually are. Comparison is also used for this purpose (Hubbell, 1924, p. 264). And Chrysostom used it in his works.

There are other possible reasons why Chrysostom showed priests in a better light than the rest of the members of the Church. Valantasis states that Chrysostom wanted to elevate the anthropology of the ecclesiastical authorities in the hierarchy of being and so to change the nature of their relationship with the world (Valantasis, 1985, p. 456). Politicisation and socialisation of the leadership of Church stimulated Chrysostom to support a change of criteria for electing priests and exalting bishops by laying out the characteristics of a person necessary for the office, the nature and duties of priesthood, and obstacles on the way of effective functioning of the office. Importantly, the physical level of the existence of the Church must be oriented to its spiritual Head (Valantasis, 1985, pp. 459, 462). Valantasis writes, “if a human being lives at a pivot point of the hierarchy, then the priest lives at the point of transformation where the bodily existence is totally subject to the spiritual nature. There seems to be a tension here: a human being ascends upward in the hierarchy, but the priest seems to be upward already pulling the lower level to the higher” (Valantasis, 1985, p. 464). And he continues, “The priest, in short, transcends normal human existence in stature, perception, values, skills, discernment, and understanding so that he may communicate... the superiority of the heavenly reality over the physical” (Valantasis, 1985, p. 471). So as Valantasis explains it, Chrysostom raised the position of a priest in order to change the existing criteria for their election, to oppose the politicisation of the office, and to emphasise the superiority of the spiritual reality.

Chrysostom also touches on the question of spiritual equality of all people before God. As Fotineas notices, he clarifies that in respect to the spiritual life “there is no difference between the priest and those under him ... for we are all alike counted worthy of the same things.” Priest only differs in his responsibility before God (Fotineas, 2007, p. 57).

Priest is an instrument through which divine grace is imparted on the communion of believers in the life of Church. And so the priest should show Christ in his appearance. Priest is elevated from a public servant to a representative of Christ (Fotineas, 2007, p. 61). However, from Chrysostom's work it does not follow that monks and priests are equal before God.

Before we move on to consider Chrysostom's other ascetic writings, it is important to mention that he himself led an ascetic life for six years some time before his ordination as a deacon in the mountains near Antioch. He was forced to put an end to such a lifestyle since his health deteriorated because of harsh fasting, lack of sleep, and other austerities. Mayer challenges this popular explanation and puts forward an idea that it was not health which made him change his life, but probably his desire of social service in the Church. In addition, when he was in exile, we learn from his correspondence that he lacked social contacts and church services, and experienced physical discomforts. All of these would not cause a difficulty if he had ascetic inclinations (Mayer, 2006, pp. 451, 455). Thus, Chrysostom himself was a more socially oriented person rather than a recluse, even though he kept some ascetic habits during his life. However, as Miller writes, though some scholars claimed that Chrysostom abandoned ascetic life because of a "disillusionment with the monastic life" rather than poor health, his admiration for monks is expressed in a vast number of his writings. These years of asceticism were formative for his work as a priest and a bishop. As this scholar states, "... when Chrysostom wrote about monks, he had an existential and not merely intellectual comprehension of their lives and practices" (Miller, 2013, p. 82).

Turning to the other Chrysostom's works we see that he had a very high regard of monasticism and virginity and this may astonish one who has first read "*De Sacerdotio*." It proves that in the latter Chrysostom pursued the rhetorical intention of exalting the priest. First, in one of his earliest works (dating presents a difficulty), "*De Virginitate*" Chrysostom explains the Christian attitude to virginity and marriage to the heretics who depreciated the marriage. He considers virginity more worthy than marriage. He argues with the heretics that if for them marriage is something interdicted, then becoming a virgin because of this reason is no feat. What is essential, virgins should be admired for their refusal of a marriage as a free gift to God, as those who have done something which was not required by the law. He writes that marriage is good in itself but virginity is as better than marriage as "heaven is better than earth and angels than men and

to say stronger – even more than that" (Chrysostom, 1983, p. 30). Through virginity men are competing with the angels. Becoming a virgin, a person starts a fight with nature. Virginity gives holiness (Chrysostom, "De Virginitate"). So priests need to have angelic virtues, but monks are called to an even higher position, that is angelic life.

Second, his other work, the treatise "*Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae*," was written shortly after Chrysostom returned to Antioch, and certainly before his ordination to the priesthood (Kelly, 1995, p. 34), and when the monks were persecuted and mocked in the reign of emperor Valens. It consists of three words: one introductory, then one addressed to the pagan father and the other to the believing father concerning the education of their sons and monastic vocation. As Festugiere defines it, Chrysostom's thesis in this work was the statement that the monks are the only human beings who lead authentic Christian life and it is necessary to follow their example and flee to the monastery (Festugiere, 1959, p. 193). Chrysostom uses this as an argument for the best education of the young people. Christianity can contribute to the secular education and the moral formation of a young citizen of Antioch, or more precisely, monasticism is the only safeguard of the Christian virtues for the pagan city (Festugiere, 1959, p. 195). First, Chrysostom writes that his contemporaries who disregard and persecute monks are worse than the rich man in the Gospel, because they do not let monks eat spiritual food freely. Multiplicity of accomplices in sins does not free people from guilt and punishment. Second, in the word to the unbelieving father Chrysostom states that freedom from all worldly affairs and passions (for money, fame etc.) makes a person truly happy. Nothing can hurt a monk because he does not have money which can be stolen, or the fatherland, from which he can be exiled, he does not seek fame and even death can bring use because the life after death is desirable and is the rest from this worldly work. He is not only invulnerable but protects and helps others. Transferring to monastic life makes a person even more famous and people look at him/her as an angel. The son who will become a monk will respect his father even more than being in the world, he will pray for him and will be able to die for his father in love to God. Third, in writing to the father-believer theologian states that those who do not care about the salvation of their neighbours are worse than the pagans. Corruption of children happens because their parents are attached to worldly things and do not pay attention to the salvation of their children. They teach children self-interest and vainglory – the two biggest passions. He writes that

it is bad when their children are being sent to learn rhetoric and initially learn vices. So it is necessary first to teach them good morality while they are still young. The true wisdom and true education is the fear of God (Chrysostom, “Against Those Who Oppose the Monastic Life”). Thus, we see how the theologian elevates a monk and monastic vocation as the true path to virtue and as the best way of life.

Now we will turn to the other Chrysostom’s work, “*Comparatio Regis cum Monacho*” (PG 47), one of the earliest works, written some time between 367, when he began studying with Diodore, to 378, the end of his monastic period and return to the city (Miller, 2013, p. 80). Chrysostom compares a monk and a king, the fruits of their lives, their power, their activities at nighttime, and their usefulness to society. A monk exceeds a king in all these respects. The purpose of this work itself is to uphold the monk as the life oriented to the true goods, as the life to emulate. The monks are in possession of true wealth, power, and glory, and that this is life all people should desire. Chrysostom even writes that a monk is the one who glorifies God through hymns and prayers earlier than birds in the morning, who lives together with the angels, talks with God and enjoys heavenly blessings (Chrysostom, “A Comparison Between a King and a Monk”). Hunter claims that Chrysostom borrowed some ideas and expressions for this work from Libanius’s “*Apologia Socratis*” which was concerned with the emperor Julian and his revival of pagan traditions. Chrysostom uses the expressions by which Libanius described the ascetic habits of the emperor and applies them to the portrayal of the Christian monks (Hunter, 1988b, pp. 525–526). Socrates as the outstanding intellectual figure of Hellenism was used by Libanius to represent the moral benefits of Hellenic education (παιδεία). As Hunter states, Chrysostom’s treatise is to be seen as the response and inversion of the pagan argument, and also his argument should be regarded as a defence of both monasticism and Christianity against pagans. Chrysostom wants to show that monastic life is an embodiment of the philosopher’s ideals and uses virtuous lives of the monks as an argument for the truth of Christianity (Hunter, 1988b, pp. 527–529). So in this work the theologian showed that Christianity, and specifically monasticism, can teach the true moral virtues. Here he talked about the significant role of monks and not so much of priests.

As Miller writes, Chrysostom in this work even goes so far as to call monks “‘common saviours of the earth,’ those to whom even the kings should look for help, so that ‘being exhorted by the just to every good and charitable action, they might learn to honour their counsels and obey good admonitions.’ If

kings are supposed to look to the monks for instruction in morality and as living exhortations to a faithful life, the argument implies, everyone should look to the ascetics for the same” (Miller, 2013, p. 83).

Moreover, Pak-Wah Lai notes that Chrysostom “presents the monk as a philosophical figure who, when fully trained, is no different from the philosopher-king idealised in Plato’s Republic, and who is, indeed, far more capable than an ordinary king in ruling over cities and men with kindness... such a portrayal of the monk is probably hyperbolic and undoubtedly skewed by the polemical concerns of his treatise. Nevertheless, its underlying emphasis on the monk’s active life of ministry is clearly important for Chrysostom and is reiterated time and again in his writings elsewhere, as in the case of Book 3 of his «Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life»” (Pak-Wah, 2011, p. 23). Thus, we see from both these scholars that Chrysostom viewed monks highly and used rhetorical techniques to exalt them.

As we mentioned above, one of the reasons why Chrysostom portrayed priests in a better light than monks is that the former were educated and could use their knowledge for the benefit of the lay people. What is important is the fact that Chrysostom stressed the necessity of education for a priest, which should be used in the ministry of the word. However, the monk, since he flees society and, consequently, all educational institutions, it is implied, is uneducated. Rubenson in his work “*The Letters of St Anthony. Monasticism and the Making of a Saint*” showed from “*The Letters*” that Antony was not an unlettered peasant but an intellectual monk influenced by the Platonic philosophy and Origen’s, Alexandrian tradition and in this way changed the now accepted view of the early Egyptian monasticism. Antony shared Platonic concepts of knowledge and being and the idea of unity of everything that is spiritual and rational. In addition, Antony had the same views as Origen not only on the creation, fall and the salvation of humans, but also on the interpretation of the Scriptures. Rubenson states that monks were not uneducated people but intellectuals dissatisfied with what tradition had to offer (Rubenson, 1995, pp. 59–68). He writes that we can find evidence in the papyri of a much more extensive contact between Alexandria and the towns of Upper Egypt than it was supposed before. And this cautions us from opposing Alexandria as urban, Greek, philosophical and international and Egypt as rural, Coptic, illiterate and nationalistic. Although it is difficult to define the degree of literacy in Egypt at this time, it is clear, as Rubenson states, that Egypt was no less literate than other parts of the Graeco-Roman

world. And also literacy was not required even for the membership in a town council. Illiteracy was no social stigma and literacy was not a sign of high status (Rubenson, 1995, pp. 95–98).

Furthermore, Orosz sharply notes, Chrysostom dialectically imported the monastic classical virtues into the pastoral service. And among these virtues Chrysostom especially emphasises comprehension (σύνεσις) because he wanted to prevent monks in the region of Antioch from becoming anti-intellectualist. Monastic life is important because it creates the connection between God and humanity but as Chrysostom thinks Church requires virtuous men in the cities and not in the desert (Orosz, 2005, pp. 597, 599).

Thus, we have seen that Chrysostom attributed to a priest virtues and features which were traditional for the depiction of a monk. On the one hand, he did so having a rhetorical intent. On the other hand, he also wanted to elevate the position of a priest to change the existing criteria for their election, to oppose the politicisation of the office, and to emphasise the superiority of the spiritual reality. We have shown that in his other works, such as “De Virginitate,” “Adversus oppugnatores vitae monasticae,” and “Comparatio Regis cum Monacho” Chrysostom described monks and monastic life as the most authentic mode of existence of a Christian.

#### The Fourth-Century World and Monasticism

It is important to consider the historical situation of monasticism at that time. The role of monks in the Church had not been defined for centuries. Only after 451, monks were put under the authority of the local bishops. Monks were involved in the worldly businesses, not always and to different degrees. First, monks refused ordination to priesthood and even after forced ordination remained in solitude. There was a practice of honorific ordination as the one attesting a monk’s spiritual authority. But after the Council of Chalcedon in 451 any such ordinations carried no weight, because the clergy was supposed to serve in the church (Rapp, 2007, pp. 139–141). Second, many monks expressed their fear of losing their spiritual gifts or weakening in their ascetic discipline if they accepted service in the Church. The main concern of a monk is mental tranquillity and detachment (Rapp, 2007, pp. 142–143). Chrysostom acknowledged that monastic formation was not sufficient for the priestly ministry. This task required administrative and rhetorical skills. Rapp also writes that what counted was not the ordination of monks but adoption of monastic values by the priesthood. We can see this in the case with Athanasius of Alexandria who depended on

Egyptian monks in his struggle with Arians and Meletians (Rapp, 2007, pp. 147, 149).

Besides monks there was an institute of the consecrated virgins (“the sons and daughters of covenant”) in Syria which existed till the seventh century. These were men and women who led monastic life in the city and helped in the life of the local church. They were elected to become deacons, priests and bishops. There was also a phenomenon of the urban monks in Jerusalem, Syria, Rome, and Constantinople (Leloir, 2012).

In addition to ordinary monks and virgins, there were monks who were engaged in administrative life of the Church. As Patrucco explains, on the contrary to the first monks who opposed ordination and led the life of solitude a new model of a bishop-monk engaged in the fields of doctrine, pastoral care, economy, and charity was formed. For example, Basil of Caesarea combined in his life ascetic, pastoral and doctrinal components of priestly activity (Patrucco, 2004, pp. 333, 336). Urban monks were continuously utilised as supporters of one or the other conflicting party in the Church, as a pressure group in electing a bishop. Chrysostom initially wanted monks to leave the cities and lead a life of solitude, but after living some time in Constantinople he understood that they can help in the Church hierarchy (Patrucco, 2004, pp. 339–340).

As time passed, monastic groups became incorporated into the institute of the Church. Russell shows basing on the historical facts that in the fourth-fifth centuries monks-charismatics became identified with the Episcopal program (Athanasius adapted Antony’s teaching, Theophilus purged the Nitriots and Dioscorus extended campaign into Upper Egypt through Shenoute). Therefore, monks became controlled and doctrinally united with the hierarchy of the Church (Russell, 2003, pp. 99–110).

Looking at the fourth century reality we see that monks are not totally detached from the society and help their neighbours if there is such an occasion; the riot in Antioch brings witness to this. Chrysostom proclaimed his “*Homiliae XXI de Statuis*,” which still remain the main source of our information about this event along with similar orations by Libanius, while this was happening in 387. During the Lent when a riot against the hardening of the taxes arose in Antioch, first, bishop Flavian travelled to emperor to intercede for the city, but, later, the monks that lived outside of the city left their caves in the mountains and interceded for the people and city before emperor’s representatives. They were asking to be put to punishment instead of the people who were accused, they were ready to lay their lives for the neighbours. The monks pleaded for the accused and

persuaded the commissioners to submit any their decision for the final approval of the emperor (Kelly, 1995, p. 75). One of the monks, a hermit named Macedonius, delivered a speech in Syriac which was then relayed to the officials in Greek (Hunter, 1989, p. 122). Chrysostom had polemical and not only pastoral interests in proclaiming these homilies. His main apologetic argument is that “Christianity, not paganism, truly educates people in the virtues and schools them in «philosophy»” (Hunter, 1989, p. 123). One of the aspects of his argument is exalting the virtues of humanity, magnanimity, and boldness as truly Christian virtues. As Hunter writes, “The intercession of the monks before the imperial commissioners provides Chrysostom with a striking example of magnanimity and boldness... monks offered to give up their own lives along with the prisoners... With a clear reference to the Cynic philosophers, Chrysostom contrasts the fearlessness of the monks with the flight of pagan philosophers and distinguished citizens from the city” (Hunter, 1989, p. 127). Thus, it is clear that monks were not totally isolated from society and they were not concerned only with their own salvation.

We will find some support for the argument that monks also intercede and pray for people if we turn to Torrance and Dunn. Torrance states in his article that the saints (among which are monks) play an important role in working out the salvation of the Christians. The intercessions of the saints (presently hidden and future ones) cover and erase the sins of those who heed them. The true sign of becoming a saint is acquisition of the “greater love” of Christ: readiness to carry the burdens of each other. World requires saints for its existence. And they are the inheritors of the way of life of Christ (Torrance, 2009, pp. 459–473).

Further, Dunn states that people started visiting Egypt as early as the 370s. She writes, “The power of monks which came from their renunciation attracted faithful people willing to find cures, advice and mediation which monks could do through their spiritual power and charisma.” For example, some generals sought help from John of Lycopolis. As she puts it, “The charisma and self-marginalisation of the hermit increased his power as intermediary and intercessor in the eyes of non-ascetic society” (Dunn, 2003, pp. 19–20).

From all this historical evidence we see that monks were not “useless” or isolated elements of society, as Chrysostom wrote, but they provided help and interceded for the people. They were becoming part of the Church and helped their neighbours in the world if there was such a need.

### Conclusion

In summary, in this essay it has been argued that a monk deserves high respect and did play an important role at the time of Chrysostom. It has been shown that although in his work “*De Sacerdotio*” Chrysostom exalted a priest and depreciated a monk, in his other works he showed how great the vocation of a monk is, what moral virtues they can teach the pagans and how important it is not to prevent children from the monastic way of life. Thus, both a priest and a monk have their particular and essential roles in the Church as Chrysostom argues in his various writings. It has been also demonstrated that the monks pray and intercede for the world and the example of the riot in Antioch and monks pleading for the accused people was given. Rubenson’s argument in explaining that the monks were educated was outlined.

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## ОБРАЗИ СВЯЩЕННИЦТВА ТА ЧЕРНЕЦТВА У ТВОРАХ ЙОАНА ЗОЛОТОУСТОГО: РИТОРИКА ТА ІСТОРИЧНА ДІЙСНІСТЬ

У статті здійснено порівняльний аналіз ставлення до священників і ченців, прояви якого можна знайти у творах видатного мислителя і богослова, представника патристики Йоана Золотоустого (347–407 рр. н. е.). Показано, що залежно від мети кожного конкретного твору, він, говорячи про священників та ченців, по-різному використовував власні риторичні здібності. Тоді, коли Золотоустий розглядав кожну з цих фігур окремо, не порівнюючи одну з одною, він неодмінно демонстрував значне піднесення. Наприклад, коли він хотів піднести подвиги ченців і дів, то робив це найвитонченішим чином. Разом з тим, у трактаті «Шість бесід про священство», високо оцінюючи функції та роль священників, він применив роль та значення ченців. Так, в останній частині цього твору Золотоустий зображає фігуру ченця як свого роду егоїста, який думає лише про власне спасіння і не має зв'язку із зовнішнім світом. Щоб прояснити природу цієї двоїстості, ми оглядаємо непевність та мінливість у характері та статусі чернецтва у першій столітті християнства, зокрема звертаємо увагу на складний характер чернецтва руху в IV столітті, коли жив і діяв Золотоустий. Здійснене нами історичне зіставлення дає змогу стверджувати, що у ці часи, коли відбувалося становлення інституту Церкви та її інтеграція в суспільство це тривало, інститут священства вже набув доволі стійку («рутинізовану») харизму, тоді як чернецтво такої «рутинізації» це не зазнало. Але, як показано у статті, загалом інститут чернецтва мав величезне значення для ранньої Церкви. Зважаючи на це, ми робимо висновок, що приниження фігури ченця, яке можна помітити у «Шести бесідах про священство», відображало не так дійсність в усій історичній повноті, як конкретні риторичні наміри автора цього трактату, зумовлені специфікою історичного моменту.

**Ключові слова:** Йоан Золотоустий, священництво, чернецтво, діви, риторика, чесноти, харизма, раннє християнство, патристика, богослов'я.

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