

## **Pseudo Dionysius the Areopagite, (5<sup>th</sup> Century), Records the Duties of Christians, Including the taking of the Eucharist and other Church Doctrine.**

St. Paul first ministered and converted some of the Areopagite's in Athens in chapter 17 of the Book of Acts. The writings of Dionysius appear very similar to the Church Fathers from the 3-4 centuries before him.

 *Shaun Prario*

### **Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite**

**“Himself also, through the same holy Apostles, gave a precept to the whole company and congregation of the faithful, saying, ‘This do to the memory of Me, and as oft as ye shall eat this bread and drink the commixture which is in this cup, and shall celebrate this feast, ye shall perform a commemoration of My death until I come.’”** P. “Of Thy death, O Lord, we perform a memorial.” Pr. “Obeying, then, Thy sovereign precept, and celebrating a commemoration of Thy death and resurrection, through this sacrifice in perpetual mystery, we await also Thy second coming, the renovation of our race, and the vivification of our mortality. For, not simply, but with glory worthy of God, in Spirit ineffable, Thou wilt terribly come, and seated upon the lofty throne of Thy majesty, Thou wilt exact the acknowledgment of Thy royal power, from all things created and made: and  
**Pg. 193**

justly, Thou wilt take vengeance for Thy image upon those who have corrupted it through evil passions. This sacrifice, here celebrated, we commemorate to Thee, O Lord, and the sufferings which Thou didst endure on the Cross for us. Be propitious, O Good, and Lover of men, in that hour full, of fear and trembling, to this congregation of those adoring Thee, and to all sons of the holy Church, bought by Thy precious blood. May coals of fire be kept from those who are tinged with Thy blood, and sealed by Thy sacraments in Thy holy Name, as formerly the Babylonian flame from the youths of the house of Hanania; for neither do we know others beside Thee, O God, nor in other have we hope of attaining salvation, since indeed Thou art the Helper and Saviour of our race; and on this account, our wise Church, through all our lips and tongues, implores Thee, and through Thee, and with Thee, Thy Father, saying”—

P. “Have mercy.” Pr. “We also.” D. “How tremendous is this hour.” (The Priest bending, says the prayer of the invocation of the Holy Spirit.) Pr. “I invoke Thee, O God the Father, have mercy upon us, and wash away, through Thy grace, the uncleanness of my evil deeds; destroy, through Thy mercy, what I have done, worthy of wrath; for I do not extend my hands to Thee with presumption, for I am not able even to look to heaven on account of the multitude of my iniquities and the filth of my wickedness. But, strengthening my mind, in Thy loving-kindness, grace and long-suffering,

**Pg. 194**

I crave Thy holy Spirit, that Thou wouldst send Him upon me, and upon these oblations, here set forth, and upon Thy faithful people.” Pr. “Hear me, O Lord.” P. “Kyrie eleison,” three times. Pr. “Through His alighting upon them, and His overshadowing, may He make this **bread** indeed, living body, and procuring life to our souls; body salutary—body celestial—body saving our souls and bodies—body of

our Lord God and Saviour, Jesus Christ—for remission of sins, and eternal life, for those receiving it.” P. “Amen.” Pr. “And the commixture, which is in this **cup**, may He make living blood, and procuring life to all our souls; blood salutary—blood celestial—blood saving our souls and bodies—blood of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, for remission of sins to those receiving them.” P. “Amen.” Pr. “Further, according to the tradition, and Divine recommendation of those, who were eye witnesses of Thy mysteries, and interpreters of Thy wonderful acts, we offer this **Eucharist** before Thee, O Lord, and through it we commemorate Thy charity towards us, and the universal dispensation of Thine Only-begotten One, in this world, that Thou wouldst also be reminded through it of Thy mercy, cognate and natural to Thee, which, at all hours, is shed upon Thy creatures, and wouldst snatch us from the wrath, reserved for the wicked; and from the punishments of those who work iniquity; and from the cruel attack of demons, who attack our souls,

**Dionysius the Areopagite, Works (1897)**

when we shall go hence; and wouldst make us worthy of Thy kingdom, and the habitations of those

**Pg. 195**

who have kept Thy precepts; and we will render to Thee, glory and the giving of thanks, &c.” P. “Amen.” Pr. (bending) “By Thy words, that cannot lie, and by Thy most true teachings, Thou hast said, O Lord, that great is the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Rejoice then now, O Lord, in the conversion of Thy servants, who stand here before Thee; add also, exultation over us, to the souls of the pious and just Fathers — Patriarchs — Prophets — Apostles — Preachers — Evangelists — Martyrs — Confessors — Zealots” of Divine Worship—Benefactors—Givers of Alms—of those who minister to the necessities of the poor—and from all, may there be one act of praise to-day, before Thee, at this holy Altar, and in the heavenly Jerusalem.” (Elevating his voice) “And on account of these, and other things of the same kind, may **Thy holy Church**, which is from one end of the earth to the other, be established, and preserved in tranquillity and peace, in **doctrines evangelical and apostolical**, by **Divine Hierarchs**, rightly dispensing the word of truth, and instructing, by the **dogmas** of true religion: through holy **Priests**, who embrace the word of life, and carry themselves illustriously in dispensing Thy celestial mysteries: through **Deacons**, who are modest, and perform the pure and royal ministry without flaw, through true, faithful ones, who occupy themselves in words and acts worthy of a Christian; through choirs of virgins of each sex, bearing about in their members the life-giving mortification of Thy Only-begotten Son. And from hence,

196

in one troop, may we all be sent to that Church, the Jerusalem of the firstborn, whose names are written in the heavens, and there let us spiritually glorify Thee, O God the Father, and Thine Only-begotten Son, and Thy Holy Spirit.” P. “Amen.” Pr. “Assist also, O Lord, all those who assist Thy Holy Church, **by offerings—by tenths—by ministry—and by oblations**; and those also, who ask the prayers of our littleness, give to them the object of those their prayers, O Lord, Lover of men.” (Raising his voice) “Send also perfect attention and full health to all those who have the charge of the poor, who provide food for orphans and widows, and visit the infirm

and afflicted. Restore to them, here indeed abundance and goods, there also delights incorruptible, because thou art Lord of each age, and distributor of immense reward. And to Thee beseems beneficence, both here and there, and to Thine Only-begotten Son.” P. “Amen.” Pr. (bending) “Restrain, O King of Kings, the wrath of kings, mitigate the fury of soldiers, take away wars and seditions, cast down the pride of heretics, and the sentences pronounced against us by Justice, may Thy love for mankind overcome, and turn into the gentleness of benignity”; (raising his voice) “Tranquillity and Peace from Thee, concede to the earth and all its inhabitants, visit it with Thy benefits and the care of Thy mercy, with a good and temperate condition of atmosphere, copiousness of fruits, and abundance of crops, and variety of flowers; preserve it from all pests of fury, and all unjust attacks of enemies,

**Pg. 197**

both spiritual and sensible, that without any injury of passion, we may **sing perpetual hymns of praise**, to Thee and to Thine Only-begotten Son.” P. “Amen.” Pr. (bending) “At this **altar**, and at that more exalted one in heaven, may there be a good remembrance of all those, who, out of the world, have pleased Thee—chiefly indeed of the Holy genitrix of God, of John the Messenger, Baptist and Forerunner, of Peter and Paul, and of the holy company of the Apostles, of Stephen also, and of the whole multitude of Martyrs, and of all those, who, before them, with them and after them, have pleased, and do please Thee.”

