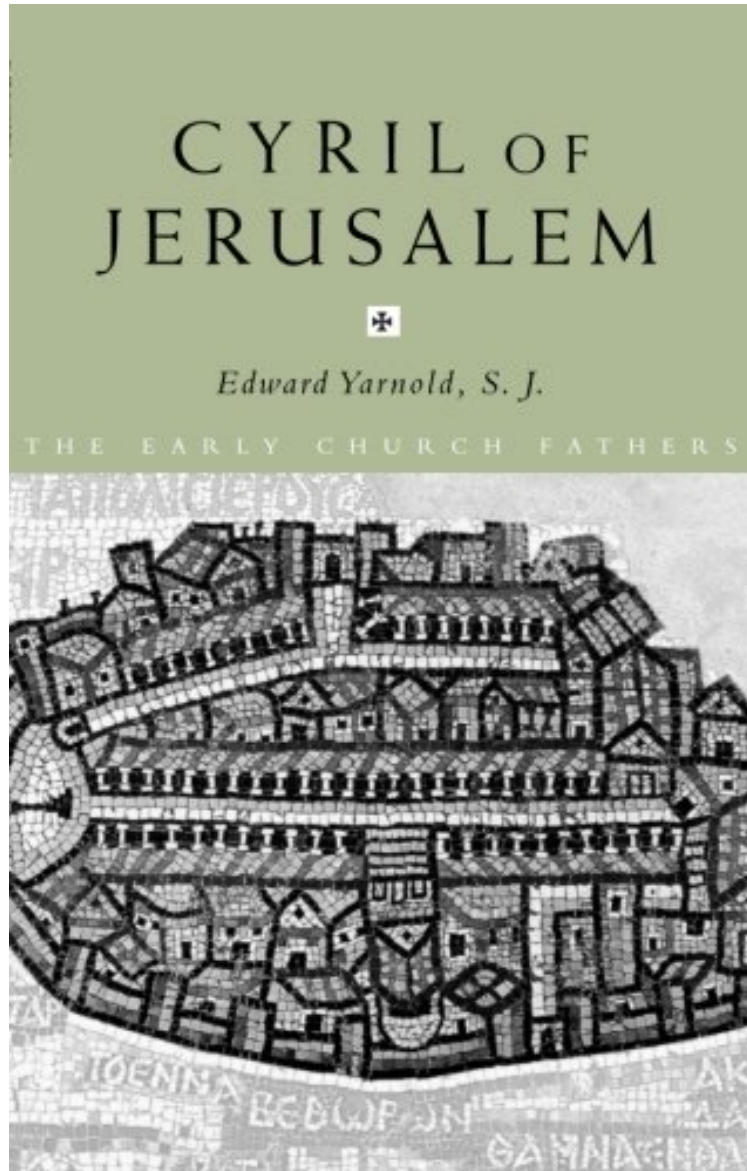


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Cyril of Jerusalem (The Early Church Fathers)

E.J. Yarnold S.J.

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E.J. Yarnold S.J. : Cyril of Jerusalem (The Early Church Fathers) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Cyril of Jerusalem (The Early Church Fathers):

3 of 5 people found the following review helpful. CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, by EDWARD YARNOLD s.jBy monk chanan mattisonFor the English world, a great interest in the Fathers of the Church wasrevived coincident with the very beginnings of the Oxford movement. R.W.Church at Oxford, eventually Dean of St Pauls, began the seminal

translation of the works of St Cyril of Jerusalem. John Henry Newman's great interest and studies of the fathers supplemented this interest. He praised the initial translation and added to it. Not long after, Dr Edwin Hamilton Gifford tidied all of this previous work with his own, meeting with worldwide appeal up until the 1950s when it was rightly felt that the archaic Victorian prepositions called for a more modern English version, undertaken by Fr Andrew Stephenson at Exeter and edited and prepared for submission by Fr Leo McCauley S.J. to a new series on the Fathers published by the Catholic University of America. Thus Fr Yarnold S.J. follows a distinguished pedigree, although he does not in the text of Cyril of Jerusalem mention this earlier American achievement by his Jesuit brother. Perhaps this is because the bulk of the work was done by Stephenson whom he does mention in passing. It is clear however that Fr Yarnold's scholarship is very extensive. He eventually became the first honorary Doctor of Divinity at Oxford since the Reformation and one-time Head of the Theology Department of the University. During or slightly after this achievement, Fr Yarnold worked as co-editor with my own Oxford tutor, Rev Cheslyn Jones (Principal of Pusey House), on the seminal, *A Study of the Liturgy* (1976) and the later equally valued *A Study of Spirituality*. Both men have now passed on, I trust, to their reward in the Kingdom of Heaven. Cheslyn was, like Pusey before him (and C.S. Lewis), a hold-out (then at least!) in the Church of England and not a modernist. The pressures of the university modernist persuasion, I have good reason to believe, were very great upon both men, but especially one in Fr Yarnold's case, who was Head of the Theology Department. I think this is, to a degree, detectible in this book. The book is, I take it, not the greatest work of Fr Yarnold's, having other titles more award-noticing. It is the work of a distinguished scholar who is no longer having to worry about his status and is free to roam (if you'll excuse the pun). And roam he does, for he gathers research notes that are pertaining to Jerusalem's geographical, historic, architectural, anthropological and generally metropolitan status at the time of St Cyril, but it doesn't serve well as any ideal introduction to the particular father of Holy Church. In addition, he spends a lot of the first sizable segment of the book on these amalgamated topics and it isn't hard to imagine too many satisfied with the approach, neither the novice student nor the specialist patrologist. Because what he gains in breadth he loses in communication. What he gains in research, he loses in pedagogical strength. It is remarkable how one gets the feeling that from the time of Gifford to the publishing of this volume there was a decade by decade decline in the spiritual significance of their esteemed conclusions. Irrespective of the archaic language employed by Gifford, his insights consistently seem more noteworthy. However, archaic language IS a detriment to the reading of the text. This is the strongest aspect of Fr Yarnold's work here. It is fluid and readily comprehensible to any undergraduate, but I suppose that, even at the graduate level, his prior roaming before one actually gets to the text takes on somewhat of a challenging mystery. If you own the volume, you can read once again, making cross-references to just these readily available works that I consulted to get a handle on things. I made some notes, but I think we must in the interest of the reader pass on to what is most interesting, and that is the work here of St Cyril himself. The catechetical lectures of St Cyril are stirring material, as they were meant to be to the candidates for baptism in the latter half of the fourth century A.D. Fr Yarnold, because he spent so much time with the mentioned desiderata, or data (take your pick) had to leave out a number of the few lectures (xviii) themselves. This is disappointing, so I took the time to read them from these theological predecessors in translation, where I found no small degree of significance. The Lecture on Repentance at the outset is missing, and such crucial later lectures on the Holy Spirit which one would have thought very important to NOT leave out since the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit was soon to be worked out at the Council of Constantinople in 381, with perhaps St Cyril's theological work playing a role. St Jerome, which was typical of the mercurial saint, accused Cyril of being an Arian, which when you read his lectures you realise that it was a preposterous accusation. They are fully complete with the doctrine of the eternal divinity of Jesus Christ as the Word, the Logos which preceded creation. He makes firm that there is nothing between God as eternal Father and creation, no medium creaturely role but the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, consisting in complete union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. He apparently does not yet use the Greek word for consubstantial but he came to accept it fully as the decided conciliar doctrine of the Church. If tears are an indication of the power of St Cyril's depth of inspiration getting through to me and his thus being a fit vessel of these lectures, then they were more of an oracle for me than the philosophical tendency I have previously sampled in much of St Augustine's writings. St Cyril is a biblical theologian, it is clear. He states that the theologian's primary duty, in fact, is to mouth no article which cannot be ultimately derived from the Holy Scriptures. He does this in a creative manner, yet he is no simpler an intelligence at work than many other fathers of a more philosophizing tendency. Thus Cyril is a favorite of the Orthodox Church, and if memory serves correct (plus it stands to reason) he is a favorite of the classical, non-modernist Protestant scholar as well. Is St Cyril correct that the Catholic theologian should derive his cardinal doctrines from the Holy Scriptures? Of course the Orthodox would argue that one is free to develop theology from an Holy Tradition which includes the Holy Scriptures, though not subsisting in them. The Catholic theologian argues that he has the blessing of Holy Tradition, Holy Scriptures and the Magisterium (the harmony of all three being a crucial topic in itself, with Pope Benedict XVI arguing for the Popes needing to constantly have their Petrine ears glued to the Holy Scriptures). What I think makes Cyril popular with the Orthodox is his decided absence of philosophical syllogisms. His doctrine of the Holy Trinity is what we would now associate with the preference of the Greeks (a tradition which includes that of the Slavs). That is to say, he starts from the personal Threeness and then argues for their

unity (whereas the West has taught the unity, the consubstantiality first and then teach of the Three Persons). The Orthodox thus fault the Western theological consciousness of being too philosophical and syllogistic. They view this as having ramifications to the formation of Christian discipleship, which also seems related to the Pauline cautions against vain philosophy that the Apostle spells out in his first Epistle to the Corinthians. To St Paul and to the older tradition of Orthodoxy, philosophy lends a worldly element to theology, and as such will have negative repercussions upon the spiritual formation of the Christian. There is a correlative stream of the West in monastic theologians, where one has to live one's theology; it must come from the experience of living the Christian life and not from scholastic speculation. It also occurred in the Protestant Reformers that faulted especially the later scholastics, whom they viewed, like some of the Orthodox to this day, as being out of touch with theology-as-lived in and under the Spirit of God, who resists the proud and who confounds the worldly. And yet I was also struck that St Cyril in many ways is a Catholic theologian. He manages this spending some sentences in asserting the leadership of St Peter, who he states not only as the rock foundation on which the Church is built but also singles him out as the exclusive keeper of the keys as well. In addition, his doctrine of the Holy Eucharist is surprisingly Catholic, even down-right Thomistic, for he brings home to his hearers that the sacrificed bread has become the Body of Christ, the wine of the chalice becomes the precious Blood of Christ and even states that they are no longer bread and no longer wine, but only appear that they are. This teaching of only the appearances of bread and wine could have been sent back in time travel from the pages of St Thomas Aquinas. In a correlative manner, St Cyril touches upon the Holy Spirit as proceeding from the Father and from the Son. He spends a good while showing that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the Son of God as well as proceeding from the Father. Thus we see that the Filioque was no additive and heterodox, let alone heretical innovation of a schismatic pope, as Photios and later Orthodox opinion makers held - some, sadly and erroneously, even to this day (in spite of an historic agreement as to first their misunderstanding their prospective sides and then agreeing on an entirely satisfactory solution to both sides, which occurred at the Council of Orange). In conclusion, irrespective of the great esteem in which Fr Edward Yarnold S.J. was held by ecumenical Catholics and Anglicans of his day, I found this book to be what the teacher in me would term just a Pass. It is not an especially great advertisement for this new series on the fathers, for the only real pedagogical strength is a new and acceptable translation of only a sampling of the Lectures of St Cyril of Jerusalem, not the whole corpus. That is better accomplished by the series of the Catholic University of America, ironically put together for submission by a fellow Jesuit that Fr Yarnold does not seem much to mention. But the translation is equally modern, sometimes more prescient, and is of the complete works of this great and inspiring Servant of God, St Cyril of Jerusalem. - Shane Mattison (Stanford University)

1. S. CYRIL, ARCHBISHOP OF JERUSALEM, by Edwin Hamilton Gifford D.D., Nicene And PostNicene Fathers, editor Philip Schaff (W.M. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Mich.: Christian Classics Ethereal Library 1893)

2. THE WORKS OF ST CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, by Leo P. McCauley S.J. Anthony A. Stephenson, The Fathers of the Church, editor: Bernard M. Peebles (Catholic University of America: Washington D.C., ISBN 0-8132-1026-7, 1970)

Cyril was bishop in Jerusalem from c350-351 AD until 386 AD. His writings are an important source for the history of early Christian doctrine. This book provides full English translations, with explanatory commentary, of his most important works. The introduction covers Cyril's life; his historical and archaeological context; his theology; and contemporary doctrine and practice. This will be essential reading for students and scholars of patristics, and those studying the history of the early Church and late antiquity.

'One of the greatest strengths of the series The Early Church Fathers is the provision of readily accessible translations of key patristic texts. Yarnold's contribution to the series will not disappoint the student of the early church.' - Alvyn Pettersen

About the Author Edward Yarnold, S. J., is a University Research Lecturer at the University of Oxford. His previous publications include The Study of Liturgy (co-editor, 1976-92), The Study of Spirituality (co-editor, 1986) and Truth and Authority (with Henry Chadwick, 1977).