

This is an extract from:

Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents:

A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments

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60. *Charsianeites: Testament of Patriarch Matthew I for the Monastery of Charsianeites Dedicated to the Mother of God Nea Peribleptos*

Date: September 1407

Translator: Alice-Mary Talbot

Edition employed: I. M. Konidares and K. A. Manaphes, “*Epiteleutios boulesis kai didaskalia tou oikoumenikou patriarchou Matthaïou A’ (1397–1410)*,” *EEBS* 45 (1981–82), 462–515, with text at 472–510.

Manuscripts: Codex Vindobonensis historicus graecus 55; Codex Parisinus Coislinianus graecus 243 (both 15th c.)¹

Other translations: German paraphrase of the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos [B] and the *Subsequent Chapters* [C] by Herbert Hunger, “Das Testament des Patriarchen Matthaïos I. (1397–1410),” *BZ* 51 (1958), 288–309, at 305–9.

Institutional History

A. Foundation by John Charsianeites

The history of this Constantinopolitan foundation is known primarily from the document translated below. The founder John Charsianeites, who is said [A6] to have believed that “wealth is a cause of spiritual destruction for those who do not divert it to needful purposes,” purchased the site for the monastery from a certain Ambar. Charsianeites endowed it with certain properties, including the village of Palatitzia that had been granted to him by Emperor John VI Kantakouzenos (1347–54). He was able to recruit [A7] Mark, then serving as superior of the monastery of Kosmidion, to direct his monastery, which was dedicated to the Mother of God *Peribleptos*.² After the return of John V Palaiologos (1341–1391) to Constantinople in 1354 and the abdication of John VI, Charsianeites, a supporter of the latter, was disgraced, and all his properties were confiscated [A7], including Palatitzia. It is not clear when Charsianeites himself became a monk under the monastic name Job, nor is it certain that he lived out the rest of his life at his own monastery, but his friend the ex-emperor John VI did take up [A8] residence for a time after 1354 and according to Nicol (*Kantakouzenos*, p. 94) may have composed his memoirs and other works there.

B. Association with the Patriarchate

Two of Mark’s eventual successors entered the Charsianeites monastery as his disciples during his superiorship; both went on to become patriarchs of Constantinople. The first was Neilos Kerameus, who became a monk at Charsianeites in 1354, and the second was our author Matthew, who entered the monastery at the age of fifteen, perhaps circa 1375.³ Neilos served as Mark’s immediate successor, shortly before his own elevation to the patriarchate in 1380. Neilos continued [A8]

the work of his predecessor in increasing the monastery's endowment, and evidently completed the testamentary *Rule* Mark had drawn up [A12] for Charsianeites. This work, called for convenience here the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos, was later incorporated by Matthew in his own *Testament* translated below (see [B]). This *Rule* probably dates from the late 1370s and the early 1380s.

Although Neilos continued to serve as superior of Charsianeites during his patriarchate (1380–88), he was unable [A9] to devote sufficient attention to its welfare, and its properties deteriorated. Neilos conveyed [A5] the monastery to our author in a testamentary disposition, probably circa 1388. Matthew then worked [A9] diligently to increase the monastery's endowment during the next few years, yet nearly all its properties were destroyed in the course of the Ottoman siege of Constantinople (1394–1402) by Beyazid I. Undeterred by this calamity, Matthew worked to restore [A12] the ruined properties up through the time he drew up this document. Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos (1391–1425) assisted [A11] with tax exemptions for a few of the foundation's properties. Meanwhile, our author was elected patriarch of Constantinople as Matthew I (1397–1402, 1403–10). He was the last of the great reform patriarchs of the Palaiologan era.⁴ Like Neilos Kerameus, he continued to serve as superior of the Charsianeites monastery during his patriarchate, but with more diligence than his predecessor. He issued the foundation's testamentary *typikon* translated below in 1407.

C. Subsequent History of the Foundation

In the first half of the fifteenth century, Makarios Makres, superior of the Pantokrator monastery for which (28) *Pantokrator* was written, was the author of a description of an icon of the Nativity located in the church of the Charsianeites monastery.⁵ The monastery was still in operation in the middle of the fifteenth century when ca. 1450–52 the future patriarch Gennadios II Scholarios began his monastic career there.⁶ According to George Sphrantzes, the superior in 1451 was a certain Neophytos. Earlier, Sphrantzes' younger brother had become a monk there in 1417. He studied under Joseph Bryennios, who was still living at the monastery at the time that Emperor Manuel II Palaiologos dictated his personal testament to Sphrantzes in 1425.⁷ Presumably the monastery remained active up to the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453, but nothing is known of its fate thereafter. Although presumed to have been situated somewhere in Constantinople, the monastery's precise location is unknown.⁸

Analysis

This document, formally titled as “Final Will and Instructions,” is composed of three parts, an *Autobiography* [A] of the author, Patriarch Matthew I, the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos [B], the author's predecessors, and the *Subsequent Chapters* [C], a kind of supplementary *typikon*. The author's quotation of the earlier *Rule* [B] within the text of the present document is a novel way for a patron to incorporate the customs of his like-minded predecessors in his own legislation. More typically, patrons accomplished this more circuitously by freely incorporating unattributed quotations from a respected model *typikon*. Only Isaac Komnenos, in (29) *Kosmosoteira* [8], comes close to our author's willingness here to acknowledge his indebtedness to earlier legislation that had served to form his own notion of how a monastic community should be organized.

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A. *Model Typikon*

Both Mark and Neilos' *Rule* and the author's own *Subsequent Chapters* are militantly pro-cenobitic documents. The *Rule* in particular is useful for illustrating the impact of the idiorhythmic challenge to cenobitic life that was one of the most salient features of Byzantine monasticism in the last centuries of the empire. Thus, while a contemporary document like (58) *Menoikeion* weakly claims a place in the Evergetian tradition based on its sharing the more moderate, late-reform phraseology of (32) *Mamas*, the referenced parts of the present document, like the surviving extracts of (40) *Philanthropos* and (56) *Kellibara II*, are aggressively neo-Evergetian by virtue of sharing a common ideological outlook as well as consistent customs and usages with (22) *Evergetis* itself. Typically, the *Rule* and the *Subsequent Chapters* echo some of the most significant content found in (22) *Evergetis* itself.⁹ They even advance more extreme positions on some subjects such as private friendships, relations with family members, the acceptability of entrance gifts, and the admissibility of monks without assets. Finally, since this long document, along with the very brief (5) *Euthymios* and (55) *Athanasios I*, are the only ones in our collection written by patriarchs, we gain from it our best insight into the thinking of the public officials of the Byzantine church at a critical time when the hierarchy was attempting, with some success, to redefine the rights and responsibilities of private patronage over ecclesiastical institutions.¹⁰

B. *Lives of the Monks*

1. Number of Monks

There is no specification of the number of monks at the foundation, but since the need to replace the monks as they are reduced by attrition is foreseen [B12], there was likely a fixed number of positions.

2. Liturgical Duties

There is no systematic discussion of liturgical duties, although there is a reference [C17] to an unidentified *typikon* in connection with the psalmody prescribed for Lent and other periods of fasting. There are special provisions for the celebration of the patronal feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God [C14], for the annual memorial service for the founder Neilos [C15], for the memorial services for departed monks [C13], and for a weekly liturgy for the emperor and his family [A11].

3. Manual Labor

Manual labor is one of several areas of monastic life that the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos prefers to leave [B20] to the discretion of the superior.

4. Length of the Novitiate

Laymen entering the monastery with the intent of becoming monks were to serve [C1], [B15] a novitiate of three years. Candidates had to be at least sixteen years old [C2] even though the author himself was no more than fifteen years old [A3] when Neilos received him into the monastery. The author categorically rejects [C18] imposition of candidates (i.e., as *katapemptoi*) upon the monastery by either the emperor or the patriarch.

5. Sacramental Life

The monks were to confess [C6] their sins to the superior rather than to an outside spiritual father. This is a return to the usage of (22) *Evergetis* [15] that contrasts with the more indulgent practices seen in (52) *Choumnos* [A17] and (58) *Menoikeion* [13]. The elaborate rationale for this requirement includes an argument that an outside confessor could not prescribe suitably for a monk in accordance with the rules of the latter's monastery.

6. Cenobitic Lifestyle

Although the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos [B2] presents an unusually open-minded discussion of the various forms of monastic life, the cenobitic lifestyle is to be preferred [B3]. The authors considered [A1] cenobiticism to be the ideal median between the solitary life and life in the secular world. This was an uncompromising form of cenobiticism, too, such as might have pleased the founders of *Evergetis*. All property was to be held [B5], [B21], [B22] in common; no monk was to have any private property; and cells were to be furnished with only the bare necessities from the common storeroom. Not only are personal quarrels condemned [B6] but personal friendships [B7] as well. Monks were not to fraternize [B7] privately with other monks, but content themselves with communal companionship instead. Even stricter than (58) *Menoikeion* [22], which banned nighttime visits to cells, this document bans [B7] daytime visits as well.

For his own part, our author condemns [C3] secret eating, but considers a monk's helping himself to his favorite foods as worse than secret gluttony. Therefore, the refectorian was to place all food out on the table equally, except for the sick, who could request either sweet or salty foods but not both. As in (22) *Evergetis* [22], monks were not to be allowed to receive correspondence, which is here said to be a sign of idiorhythmism, and, as in (22) *Evergetis* [27], the superior was to inspect the monks' cells (here monthly) to enforce the prohibition against personal possessions.

Mark and Neilos' *Rule* condemns [B17] fellowships (*adelphata*) which are said to "divide godly communities into thousands of parts." Our author was likewise unwilling to accept [C2], cf. [C18] fellowship holders, either those living inside (*esomonitai*) or outside (*exomonitai*) the monastery, even in exchange for donations of money or property.

Likewise Mark and Neilos refuse [B18] admission to kelliotic monks desiring to practice an idiorhythmic life. Even those who might be considered "truly important and God-fearing" were nevertheless considered a harmful example for less perfect monks under obedience to the cenobitic rule. Current monks who were unable to live in common were to be expelled or allowed to withdraw [B8], cf. [B13] from the monastery to adopt a "self-regulating" (i.e., idiorhythmic) lifestyle on their own. Even hospitality was to be limited [B19] to two or three days as a precaution against visiting monks establishing themselves permanently as idiorhythmics.

7. Care of Sick Monks

Mark and Neilos urge [B4] the monks to care for both the physical and spiritual health of those of their number in need. Accordingly, they are instructed to "summon doctors skilled at curing such afflictions." Elsewhere, the prohibition of individual monks retaining part of their personal property as a provision for old age and illness suggests [B13] that monks were losing their willingness to rely upon their monastery to look after them in need.

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8. Diet and Clothing

As with psalmody, the author discusses [C17] the monks' diet only during periods of fasting, in accordance with an unnamed liturgical *typikon*. Mark and Neilos were willing to leave [B20] both dietary regulation and the determination of suitable clothing to the superior's discretion.

9. Relations with Family

Mark and Neilos' *Rule* expects [B13] candidates for tonsure to renounce not only their money and property but also their family and social ties, accepting the monastic community as a substitute family. This was not simply a nominal renunciation, for the *Rule* prohibits [B14] visits to or from blood relatives, and for his part our author cites canon law in forbidding [C9] the monks to serve in such secular capacities as guardians of widows and orphans or (in a more surprising capacity) as advocates at law, even for supposedly needy individuals.

C. Constitutional Matters

1. Constitutional Status

At the conclusion of the *Testament*, the author provides [C18] for the maintenance of the monastery's freedom, which he claims has been honored by emperors and patriarchs since its foundation. The pious but unlucky founder Charsianeites, after choosing Mark as the foundation's first superior, removed [A6] himself from the foundation's "management and ownership, since it had been dedicated by him once and for all to God." Thus Charsianeites serves as a rare model of how the reformist ecclesiastical hierarchy would have liked all private benefactors to behave, and his foundation therefore appears to have been a genuinely independent monastery on the Evergetian model. Later, after the monastery fell on hard times [A7], it seems to have come under some form of patriarchal protection (see [A9]), perhaps just coincidentally since several of its superiors went on to become patriarchs later in their careers.

2. Leadership

The functions as well as the titles of a protector and a superior were combined at this foundation to create a strong leadership under the *prostates*. After Neilos' elevation to the patriarchate in 1379, the monastery is said [A9] to have been left without a protector, with debilitating consequences for the monks and their properties, until our author became actively involved upon Neilos' death in 1388. The superior was to be free to make [C18] his own choice of a successor as had been [B10] the tradition at this foundation; if no suitable candidate was available internally, an outsider (i.e., a *xenokourites*) was eligible [B11] for selection instead. There is no mention of any role played by the community as a whole in the selection of the superior. A blank space is left [C18] in the document where our author intended to insert the name of his chosen successor, whom he evidently expected would be an ordained monk.

Other officials are not mentioned in the document, though the heavenly patron the Mother of God is honored [C18] not only with the titles of "founder" and "protector" but also, curiously, as "superior" and "steward."

3. Style of Rule

Although it emphasizes [B8] the importance of the monks' obedience to the superior, Mark and

Neilos' *Rule* warns the latter that he should not govern [B9] the community as if his spiritual leadership were actually "some secular authority which came to him from a paternal inheritance." Our author adds [C4] that the superior should not entertain visitors in his cell or anywhere else except in the refectory and at regular mealtimes. Moreover, he was not to have [C1] a servant or retainer, nor fraternize with lay people on pretext of "management of the monastery." However, as in (22) *Evergetis* [18], the superior was not to be accountable [C16] to the monks for his administration of finances "as long as he abides by all the rules and regulations."

4. Patronal Privileges

The founder (*ktetor*) Charsianeites exercised [A7] his patronal right to choose Mark as the monastery's first superior. Eventually this was transformed [A5], [C18] into the right of the superior to choose his own successor. Usually, it was the Byzantine pietistic practice to honor a monastery's original founder even after the lapse of many centuries (e.g., as in (33) *Heliou Bomon* [51], (38) *Kellibara I* [12], and (40) *Anargyroi* [6]). Here, however, Charsianeites fails to receive even a founder's memorial, though the foundation did retain his name.

5. Reading of the *Typikon*

The author provides [C10] for the reading of the *Rule* of Neilos and Mark in the refectory at the beginning of each month. The *Ascetic Treatises* of Basil of Caesarea were to be read there daily, and the *Gerontika* also on occasion.

D. Financial Matters

1. Financial Administration

Consistent with his hostility to entanglements with the secular world, our author was unwilling to permit [C8] business transactions or loans engaged in with an expectation of financial gain. Instead, the monks were to rely on the income from the foundation's endowment, which had been painstakingly put together, destroyed, and then reconstituted twice already in the relatively short history of this monastery.

This document is unique among those in our collection for viewing [C8] the payment of taxes on its non-exempt properties as a fair civic responsibility. As our author in his extreme formulation of the issue declares, "they should hand over to the tax collectors with all truth and honesty everything owed them from all the revenues of the monastery, even if nothing else remains for the sustenance of the monks." In another position that puts him at variance with most of his fellow patrons, the author forbids [C7] his monks to go to court to defend their title to properties, declaring "I prefer that they be deprived of physical possessions without justice than for them to become involved in lawsuits." This same distaste for litigation was one of the reasons Mark and Neilos sought to ban [B18] kelliotic monks from the monastery, for fear that court suits would result if it was necessary to expel these monks (presumably without returning their entrance donations).

2. Entrance Fees Prohibited

Neilos and Mark's *Rule* forbids [B16] the exaction of entrance fees from postulants on the grounds that it is hypocritical to demand that they be paid while also teaching that money is unnecessary in the cenobitic life. The *Rule* goes so far as to prefer penniless monks for admission since they

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would already be propertyless, accustomed to a spare diet, and amenable to obedience and humility. Wealthy postulants should donate their possessions to the poor or to their relatives; the (no doubt traditional) counter-argument that the management of such a candidate's property should be entrusted to the foundation that would be looking after him henceforth is acknowledged but rejected: "you must absolutely avoid taking any fees from the postulant monks." This is certainly an extreme, and perhaps unprecedented, position on this controversial issue, exceeding in rigor even the classic reform solution to the problem proposed long ago in (22) *Evergetis* [37].

E. Overall Philosophy

1. Attitude towards Privilege

Before our author's own superiorship, the ex-emperor John VI Kantakouzenos resided at the monastery. Despite the fierce opposition noted above to kelliotic monasticism, this distinguished resident was given [A8] the residence of the superior "because there was no other cell suitable for his habitation and repose," where he carried out renovations to create a kind of apartment for himself. Apparently this was the exceptional case, since in every other respect this foundation exceeds even (22) *Evergetis* in its disdain for aristocratic privilege. We have noted the author's instruction to prefer [B16] penniless applicants and the prohibition against taking any entrance fees, even those offered voluntarily. In a passage that echoes (22) *Evergetis* [14], Mark and Neilos' *Rule* admonishes [B10] the monks that "leadership (i.e., the superiorship) is not the reward of friendship or noble birth or wealth, but of virtue." Also, our author instructs [C4] that visiting nobles are to get no special privileges not given other guests, but should eat with the monks at the regular midday meal.

2. Misogynist Tendency

Endorsing and indeed exceeding the Evergetian tradition, our author forbids [C2] women to enter the foundation "whether dead or, even worse, alive." For other restrictions on the burial of the opposite sex, see (27) *Kecharitomene* [70] and (37) *Auxentios* [13]; (29) *Kosmosoteira* [86] discourages burial of either sex within the monastery. The ban on female animals is not an Evergetian prescription, but has old precedents in the Studite and Athonite traditions.¹¹ For good measure, the author also bans the admission of youths under sixteen because of "their tendency to loose behavior and the scandal produced therefrom by the devil."

F. External Relations

1. Relations with the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy

Our author obliges [C12] the superior to visit the patriarch twice a year, before Lent and during Easter week, in order to demonstrate that he remained in communion with the leader of the church. Otherwise, neither the superior nor any of the monks were to attend services at the cathedral church of Hagia Sophia.

2. Institutional Philanthropy

This foundation provided the customary donations of bread and wine (and here cooked food also) at the gate to the poor on the patronal feast of the Dormition [C14] and on the respective feast days

for the founders Neilos and Mark [C15]. On other days, two “larger loaves” of bread were to be distributed. Our author proudly notes [A9] that his acquisitions for the monastery’s endowment made charitable donations possible for both the poor and for travelers.

Notes on the Introduction

1. See Hunger, “Testament,” pp. 288–89, and Konidares and Manaphes, “*Epiteleutios boulesis*,” pp. 467–69.
2. The dedication is known from notes in two manuscripts that once belonged to the monastery; see A. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Hierosolymitike Bibliothek* (St. Petersburg, 1891–1915), vol. 2, p. 112, with Hunger, “Bildbeschreibung,” p. 137. Makarios Makres’ description of an icon in the monastery church (ed. Hunger, “Bildbeschreibung,” p. 126) also states that the church of the Mother of God *Nea Peribleptos* was located at what was popularly known as “the monastery of Charsianeites.”
3. For our author, see Talbot, “Matthew I,” p. 1316.
4. See the 228 documents in his patriarchal register for the years 1399–1402, in Darrouzès, *Regestes*, nos. 3059–286.
5. Ed. Hunger, “Bildbeschreibung,” pp. 126–27.
6. See Hunger, “Bildbeschreibung,” pp. 138–39.
7. George Sphrantzes, *Chronicon* 5.1, 15.2, 33.5, ed. Riccardo Maisano (Rome, 1990), pp. 12, 32, 120.
8. See Janin, *Géographie*, vol. 3, p. 502.
9. Echoes of Evergetian usages include: [B10] no preference for aristocrats as leaders, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [14]; [B16] evils of entrance fees, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [37]; [C2] access to women forbidden, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [39]; [C3] inspection of cells, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [27], and ban on correspondence, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [22]; [C6] confession to the superior, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [15]; [C16] superior not financially accountable, cf. (22) *Evergetis* [18].
10. For which see E. Herman, “‘Chiese private’ e diritto di fondazione negli ultimi secoli dell’impero bizantina,” *OCP* 12 (1946), 302–21, and my own *Private Religious Foundations in the Byzantine Empire* (Washington, D.C., 1987), pp. 253–69.
11. Cf. (3) *Theodore Studites* [5], (13) *Ath. Typikon* [31], and more recently (45) *Neophytos* [19], and (59) *Manuel II* [14].

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Translation

Final will and instructions of our most holy master, the ecumenical patriarch, to the monks in his charge, including his biography from beginning to end, and also including an exposition, divided into chapters, of the contents of the *Rule* previously written by his venerable master,¹ the most holy monk lord Mark.

Autobiography [A]²

[A] 1. Of the many features which characterize a godly life, one of the most important and most beneficial is for monks to live together in the same [place], brethren who have chosen the same life, lending each other a helping hand to accomplish and acquire virtue, and setting forth the achievements of each as common accomplishments. For such a way of life is like a compromise between the completely eremitical and, on the other hand, life in a worldly society, dividing [men] in appearance as far as their bodies are concerned, but in soul and heart uniting each other into one body, just as occurred once among the apostles. I believe that this is the shortest path and ascent to heaven, and free of every danger. As for those fathers who rivet their attention on this world below, and are all agape for earthly matters, it follows that they will be greatly concerned that their own children continually enjoy wealth and glory. But for spiritual fathers it is fitting rather to be concerned for appropriate and beneficial behavior which leads to the success and spiritual advancement of their spiritual children. This is a reminder of divine words, and explanation and precepts of the rules of the Fathers, whereby virtue is achieved.

Since my humble self has deemed this especially useful, I decided that I should set down in writing the responsibilities of the monastic vocation, and bequeath it to you with a prayer as a paternal inheritance and inalienable treasure. I have collected these [precepts] from the actions and teaching of my holy venerable masters, from whose guidance I profited by divine providence, even though on account of my indolence I lag far behind them in virtue.

I should first describe briefly my own career from the beginning—I think that it is all to the glory of God who disposes everything for the best—and then discuss the rest with as simple language as possible. [The story of] my life is as follows:

[A] 2. When I was very young and had not yet passed through my twelfth year, [p. 473] the idea and thought occurred to me to reject the vanity of the present world as the cause of all evils, and to withdraw to monastic life, which offers complete peace and tranquility and provides much gain and “spiritual profit”³ for the soul. Thus I became obsessed with this [idea], removing my mind from all present things, in which the tender nature of children makes them to take pleasure and delight. Above all I imagined in my mind and told stories with my tongue and marveled at the men who are dedicated to God and lead an angelic life upon earth. I prayed to God that I might live under the tutelage of such a guide and trainer, and that my soul be so ordered and that I might receive such a spiritual education as to enjoy the blessings and prayers of his virtue and not fail to achieve my salvation.

Therefore since such thoughts possessed my soul daily and burned it like fire, but it was not possible for me to achieve my desire easily by myself, I was forced to reveal my intentions to my

parents, and to share with them my wish to flee from the world and my desire for the monastic life, as a result of which I was clearly convinced that I would enjoy the pure and absolute blessing of solitude.⁴ I did not cease to join tears to my words, in my entreaties that they might help me, since my heart was irrevocably fixed on this desire, and, in any case, I had no intention of changing my mind, even if they objected. My parents were sorely distressed and grieved at my words, overcome by their natural affection, as a result of which they “left no stone unturned,”⁵ as the proverb says, in the hope that they might weaken somewhat the intensity of my desire and my stubborn resolution. They recounted the arduous life of monks, the mortification of the body, and the extreme hardship and ill-treatment, all of which were difficult and scarcely tolerable for immature adolescents like myself. But although they posed these objections, I managed to avoid being persuaded by them, or being affected with any of their timidity, to such an extent that I became even more eager, as if I had heard encouraging words. My soul was inflamed, and I desired even more to lead such a life, which has no easy or smooth stretches, but is rough and steep; it can, however, convey those who have chosen to live in this way to the truly blessed and eternal life, the true homeland which has no end.

[A] 3. Therefore after three years passed, during which my original desire and intention grew and did not slacken in any way, and it was obvious to my parents from my words and actions that I was even more sorely grieved [p. 474] by remaining in the world, I found them reluctantly yielding to my wishes, considering the passage of time a clear teacher of my future eagerness for my vocation, and praising me and joining with me in prayer for a fortunate outcome from God. I think it was the work of Divine Providence which provided for both [of us] equally, so that my action was rewarding for them, and for me it was a source of great pleasure to achieve my desired goal with their blessing and approval. So they brought me to the most holy monk lord Mark,⁶ whose virtue was so preeminent that no one at all who either saw or heard him did not marvel at him and deem him worthy of much remembrance; indeed he was even revered by the very emperors⁷ who wield all power, who heeded him as if he were their common father and teacher.

Thus they approached this man and explained to him my intention from early life, and entreated and begged him to accept me and enroll me in the band of monks who were his disciples. At first he appeared to hesitate about accepting me on account of my tender years. For usually [immature youths] flit from one thing to another, and tire easily of the intensity of virtuous discipline, and soon take their leave. But at last, through the providence of the Almighty, he agreed to their request and received me with prayers, after first giving me a great deal of instruction on these matters. In this way even further eagerness, so to speak, and spiritual strength entered into my soul through his holy tongue and the truthful charm of his words. For he encouraged me greatly in the labors of virtue, from the very start as they say, and instilled in my soul the greatest benefit with the healing remedies of his hortatory and paternal words.

[A] 4. Therefore from that time on I lived in his cenobitic monastery, acknowledging my great gratitude to God, and carrying out my assigned duties with pleasure and the greatest of zeal. For never through any hesitation or laziness did I fail to fulfill any of the requirements, nor did I appear to procrastinate or complain, even when I was engaged in particularly difficult and un-

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pleasant tasks, but I carried out my assignments gladly, as if I were receiving a favor rather than an order. For I was mindful of the divine voice of Our Lord, which said, “When you have done all that is commanded you, say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty’” (Luke 17:10). Therefore through the grace of God and the prayers of the father and venerable master who received me, I have maintained from beginning to end the same eagerness in everything; and to say nothing more, I did what he approved and desired. This was much more important and more valuable for me than thousands of treasures and every other honor and glory, to show every effort and eagerness on behalf of those things which were pleasing to him. [p. 475]

[A] 5. Furthermore, after his most blessed departure to God for whom he longed, I maintained pure and undiminished the affection of my soul for the most holy patriarch lord Neilos,⁸ who was left as successor and heir of his virtue and his monastery, since he clearly retained the virtuous features of the teacher and father; and I had no thought, either great or small, which I did not reveal to him as to “God who knows the hearts of men” (cf. Luke 16:15). At all times I enjoyed his even more paternal disposition and kindness, so that I was established in the same position as that of which he had been deemed worthy by the common father. [This held true] not only when we were living in the monastery, but even more so when he assumed the leadership of the ecumenical church,⁹ by the vote of God who could not bear for the great light of his virtue and teaching not to shine over the entire world. For then I did not spare myself in the least, but exerted the greatest and constant zeal for the sake of those things which pleased and refreshed him. My zeal was not worthy of his gifts to me, I mean both spiritual and physical; however, it was not inferior to his expectations, as he showed later when he was moved of his own accord to entrust to me the inheritance and leadership of the entire monastery in the same way in which he had received it from our common father [Mark], confirming my authority and rule over the monastery with testamentary letters which possessed complete validity. When I took over the monastery,¹⁰ in accordance with his wishes, I had to expend much care for both spiritual and physical matters, on account of the crisis caused, on the one hand, by the wickedness of some of the monks, on the other hand by the confusion and disorder of affairs, as will be recounted a little later in the appropriate section of the document.

[A] 6. Now it is necessary for me to speak briefly about this holy and divine monastery of mine, how and by whom it was originally established, and to what extent it has prospered, first under the leadership of the [two] holy venerable masters, and then up to the present time under the supervision of my humble self. The late and blessed lord John Charsianeites, who took the name of Job when he assumed the monastic habit, prospered during his life on earth, had good repute among emperors and officials, and enjoyed extraordinary honor and glory from everyone. But he realized that this glory in mortal affairs is truly precarious, shifting and rolling about sometimes like dice, and he also realized that wealth is a cause of spiritual destruction for those who do not divert it to needful purposes and a foundation of philosophy and virtue. [p. 476] For this reason, since he considered all worldly things of little account, and desire for them completely unworthy of a noble and magnanimous soul, he decided it was necessary to dedicate his entire life to God, its giver, and to exchange these ephemeral matters, which quickly fade away like spring flowers, for that eternal

and blessed glory. Therefore he found it in accordance with this divine purpose of his to construct a monastery for monks at his own expense, and to donate his fortune to it in the desire that the monks should continually preserve the blessing of virtue and solitude through not lacking in any necessities.

The late Ambaros owned at that time the property, where the monastery is now situated. Only a church was still standing there, and some dilapidated houses and old arcades; it was otherwise deserted and a place where robbers and murderers lurked—for often the corpses of murder victims were found there. The deserted and quiet character of the place, which naturally contributes to the working of virtue by men dedicated to God, led Charsianeites to purchase it. After he gained possession of it, he exerted the greatest possible zeal (for he knew how much profit he would gain for himself) first on the decoration of the divine church, and then he cleared everything else away to make the land tidy and serviceable. He built some small cells, which are still standing, as a residence for the future monks. He also donated the village called Palatitzia¹¹ (which had been granted to him with a divine and solemn chrysobull by the late and venerable emperor [John VI] Kantakouzenos, on behalf of which he also acquired a sealed patriarchal letter), and two vineyards outside the capital opposite the Golden Gate, another vineyard in the territory of the Saurai, as well as two houses, one near the Milion, the other one, with a courtyard, near the Beautiful Gate, and a vineyard within [the walls] at Kyparissia. After building this monastery, and donating to it the properties which I have described, he did not think it sufficient to stop at this point, nor did he seem careless and lazy in his pursuit of the good. Instead he carefully investigated and made inquiries like ardent money-lovers in the hope that he might chance upon some hidden treasure, I mean a man united with God through virtue, and hand the monastery over to him, thus removing himself totally from its management and ownership, since it had been dedicated by him once and for all to God.

[A] 7. He learned that the late lord Mark, my venerable master, who was greatly distinguished at that time for his virtue and knowledge of God, had moved to Constantinople [p. 477] from the *skete* because of the attacks of the infidels there, and that here he had been appointed superior of the great monastery of Kosmidion¹² at the request of the emperor.¹³ Therefore the above-mentioned founder approached him, and resorted to many entreaties and prayers, not only his own, but also those of many other worthy men; and after he disclosed to him his original desire and his pious intention, he persuaded him with difficulty to give up the demanding leadership of the monks [at Kosmidion], and to assume responsibility for this monastery, because he especially liked its tranquility and the way it was otherwise situated and constructed. These were the reasons that persuaded him, since he was a man who always held dear the contemplative life and was not accustomed to worldly pursuits and concerns.

Therefore after he was entrusted [with the monastery] in the aforesaid manner, he lived in it for the rest of his life. The founder made no additional contributions besides the above-mentioned; for although he wished to make further donations, since he possessed a considerable fortune, he was prevented by the tumultuous times from realizing a goal proportionate to his desires. For when the late and venerable emperor Lord John [V] Palaiologos entered the capital,¹⁴ the whole populace was in uproar, inasmuch as it tends to riot at such times of change and confusion.

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Nor did Charsianeites escape the frenzy of the mob because he was supposedly a partisan of the emperor [John VI] Kantakouzenos. For suddenly certain individuals attacked his house and completely plundered it, and did not deem him worthy of any consideration, in fact they even tried to bury him alive. But he sought sanctuary at the Great Church of God [Hagia Sophia], and thus was barely able to escape the danger that threatened him, and to emerge safe and sound, although he was stripped of all his property. Shortly afterward the emperor took away the village at Palatitzia, and donated it to the monastery of Stoudios.

[A] 8. All later additions to the monastic property were the fruits of the sweat and labor which my holy venerable masters laboriously expended. When the venerable emperor Kantakouzenos embraced monastic life at our monastery,¹⁵ and subjected himself to my holy venerable master as one who had amassed great experience in true philosophy, and was well trained in leading his disciples to the perfection of virtue, he was given the residence of the superior, since there was no other cell suitable for his habitation and repose. He constructed the sun porch and the small upper floor over it, and had the interior of the cells plastered and painted green, as he described in the letter written in his own hand. Nothing else whatsoever has been donated to this monastery by anyone else at all, neither emperor, nor noble. [p. 478] For it was my venerable masters who added the other vineyards, and constructed the tower which can now be seen. However, some other gardens were purchased, because previously there were some very small courtyards on either side of the monastery.

[A] 9. Shortly after my venerable master, lord Mark, was summoned from this world to the “eternal habitations” (Luke 16: 9), the most holy and venerable patriarch lord Neilos was elevated to the ecumenical throne,¹⁶ illuminating everyone like a sun with the rays of his words, and the monastery was left bereft of its protector. Little by little its properties began to show signs of deterioration, as did the monks, on the one hand because of the absence of their leader, on the other because of their neglect of higher things. Therefore when Neilos journeyed to the God for whom he longed, I returned to the monastery and engaged in much toil and labor in order to improve the monks as much as possible and to set them free from the sluggishness which afflicted them, and to concern myself with the condition of the estates which were completely neglected. Therefore I purchased fields and vineyards, and created others from scratch, and, as it were, I left nothing undone which could contribute to their well-being. These properties became established and prosperous so as to furnish sufficient provisions not only for the monks who lived in the monastery, but for many other poor people and strangers as well. This situation continued for some time.

When the general disaster befell [us], God permitting this for our chastisement, for ineffable reasons which he himself knows, and the infidels ravaged the environs [of the capital],¹⁷ these estates were totally destroyed along with the others, with only a few small roots remaining here and there, but neither trees nor anything else at all surviving. In the course of this disastrous state of affairs the patriarch lord Antony [IV] died.¹⁸ Immediately as his successor was ordained patriarch lord Kallistos [III],¹⁹ who lived only a short time and also departed to the blessed other world.

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[A] 10. Therefore since the church was bereft [of a leader] and seeking a spiritual bridegroom, by vote of the entire synod and approval of the most divine emperor, my humble self was entrusted with this position by decisions which God knows.²⁰ Yet I kept putting off my decision in this matter and was extremely reluctant; and this was caused by considerations of my own inadequacy and the enormity of the task entrusted to me. However I referred my [concerns] to Divine Providence, and remained peacefully in possession of the patriarchal throne, by grace of God, as long as the most divine emperor stayed in the capital.

But when it was necessary for the holy emperor [Manuel II Palaiologos] to undertake his arduous journey for the sake of help for the Christians, to travel to Italy to unite the people there with us in alliance, he invited his own [p. 479] nephew, the emperor [John VII Palaiologos], to a reconciliation, and left him in charge of the city.²¹ For a while the affairs of the Church continued peacefully even under him. Then little by little trouble started as if from a spark, and [the flames] of wickedness rose high, kindled by certain men who wished to pursue their own desires. First they stirred up confusion in the church and rebellion against it. Then they set to work openly, as if they interpreted the mission of the holy emperor on behalf of the Christians as a lucky windfall. Led astray by their slanders against me, the incumbent ruler deposed me from the patriarchate.²² When these men were given free rein, just as they were dreaming, of their own accord they threw the entire church of Christ into confusion, and caused grievous harm for the souls of those who listened to them, as insults and unspeakable calumnies were hurled from all sides against the most revered name of Christians, and to the greatest extent possible they exposed the immaculate and pure church of Christ to derision and ridicule by all. Under these circumstances I was exceedingly grieved and sorely wounded in my heart.

I did not attach any importance to the mischief devised against myself, heeding the wise James, who wrote, “Count it all joy, my brethren, when you meet various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness” (James 1:2), “and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us” (Rom. 5:4). The great Paul says, “No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man” (I Cor. 10:13), that is temporary, just as the illuminator and teacher of the world, John Chrysostom, explained. It would take a long time to recount in detail all the passages of the holy [fathers] which have one and the same purpose. Wherefore I shall pass over any of their wicked machinations which clearly affected me alone, and forgive the perpetrators, whoever they may be, both during my lifetime and after my death, as the result of a pure disposition and heart; and I pray to my God that they will not be held liable for this, either in this ephemeral age, or at the future and awesome Last Judgment of Christ.

But to the extent that they have worked shamelessly to destroy and slander the church of Christ, with calumny and unjustly as He knows who watches over the hearts of men—for, as God is my witness, I speak the truth, with a clear conscience—I beg God that they may be granted an intelligent mind and true understanding, so that, as the result of a change of heart through repentance, they [p. 480] may find God kindly toward them, and that they become aware of how much destruction they have caused for themselves and the souls of men by exposing the church of Christ to derision and ridicule to the greatest extent possible. For it is no small or insignificant crime for someone to sin against God and to tear asunder into limbs and parts the body of the church which has been well joined by him.

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[A] 11. Thus I first prayed for them, when with God's permission that storm was still raging about the church, and now I am setting it down in writing for informational purposes, since the Church is prospering again,²³ through the grace of Christ, and has received the proper honor and glory from the holy emperor [Manuel II Palaiologos]. For he has striven magnificently on its behalf, so that there might be added to his many noble accomplishments this special achievement, that the Church of Christ which was grievously divided might be restored to harmony and enduring peace by his excellent and most imperial soul. Furthermore when peace was restored to earthly affairs, too, through the ineffable solicitude for us of God who crushed the spirit of the barbarian and delivered it to total destruction, and vouchsafed that the holy emperor returned from Italy to his own city and empire, and everyone began to restore their estates, I, too, set to work to care for and improve to the best of my ability our estates which were completely devastated by that lengthy siege. At great expense I restored these [properties] as best I could, as well as the tower which had been set on fire by the infidels and was in danger of imminent collapse, so that, with God's assistance, I was able to bring them to even greater prosperity and increase so as to furnish adequate provisions for the brethren in the monastery.

I also petitioned on their behalf the holy emperor, who with great kindness granted this concession, referring the favor to my Virgin, that the imperial treasury would collect only three *hyperpera* annually on every hundred-measure of wine produced at the dependency, and, of the two *zeugaria* of land which we own, that one *zeugarion* should be maintained in perpetuity completely exempt and not liable for the customary tithe of the crops harvested, and that absolutely all our land should be free of tax, just as we had it previously. For most of our fields consisting of no longer cultivated vineyards²⁴ outside [the city] were free of tax. Wherefore I enjoin and beg of you that each week the monks in this holy monastery celebrate a liturgy solely in honor of the holy emperor and his family. You should not be content with this, but whenever the liturgy is celebrated, you should commemorate the name of the holy emperor and his family.

[A] 12. Thus from the beginning, even while my holy venerable masters were still alive, as I have already explained, I showed great concern for this monastery, and even greater after their death. For I added [p. 481] to the properties left by them other lands both at the monastery itself and at the dependency, which I consider unnecessary to mention by name. And now again after the destruction from the siege, I restored and improved these properties as much as possible with great expense and labor to provide sufficient food and livelihood for the monks in this holy monastery. I also thought it necessary to provide for their spiritual and holy tasks, and to give them a written rule and regulation. If they live in accordance with this *typikon*, they will please God and will continually provide the necessities not only for themselves, but also for others, with the help of God.

It seemed to me then, in accordance with the desire and purpose of my heart, that worthy and sufficient was the *Rule* which my holy venerable master lord Mark had already issued. It was written by the most holy and venerable patriarch lord Neilos, and included in complete detail the [rules] appropriate for the holy monastic and cenobitic way of life. My humble self, satisfied with it, enjoins and exhorts all the monks, both those who now live in this holy monastery and their successors, and especially the superior, to cleave to this rule as if it were holy tablets and laws of

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God, and to endeavor to leave none of its commandments unfulfilled. The rule reads as follows:

Rule of Mark and Neilos [B]

[B1.] [Introduction]

It is appropriate both that the life of those who choose to live in accordance with God be a holy life, and that they abstain from those things which seem pleasant in this life, so as not to be greatly distressed at the harshness of the godly life, nor consider the working of virtue to be labor. In the belief that the promised bliss is ineffable and marvelous and fitting only for the One who awards the prizes, they should not only traverse the road that leads to it quickly and with great eagerness, but should also congratulate themselves and rejoice, because they happen to be among those who have chosen “the good portion, which shall not be taken away from them” (Luke 10:42), as the Gospel says.

Therefore all our marvelous fathers have made it their single business throughout life to regulate with deeds and words us, their successors. On the one hand, they provide the example of an irreproachable life and follow a very strict regime, spending their life in constant fasting, subduing the body with vigils and labors and preferring the better [course], through prayer and study and the care of the heart revealing themselves as a pure dwelling-place for God. They also advise us with words, either [p. 482] by offering their teaching orally and transmitting it to us like a paternal inheritance, so that the good may travel to everyone until the end, or by writing accounts of virtue, sometimes persuading us that it is a fine and honorable possession and necessary for us, sometimes inciting us to acquire it. Then again, they show us ways and methods through which we will hold fast to virtue and reject evil, exposing the treachery and wickedness of the insidious [enemies], and enduring lengthy and constant travails, and being everything, and leaving no stone unturned, so as to prepare us to choose and walk upon this true and narrow path, and not the broad path followed by the majority, which ends in distress and pain and sighing and, in short, destruction. For, like prophets, they knew that they would need little or no human teaching, since they had the Paraclete dwelling in them, teaching and reminding them of the whole truth, but that we, who in the last days will be among those whose great negligence and indolence is condemned by the great teacher of the Church, I mean Paul (cf. II Tim. 3:1–5), together with the other evils which he enumerates, that we would need much and continual teaching, in the hope that, after being stung by the number and severity of the rebukes, we might be able to rouse ourselves and dispel the thick and gloomy cloud of laziness.

The superiority of their virtue gave them confidence, and they proposed common laws for all the people of the earth, as if they were common teachers of salvation, using the power of the Spirit in them. This is evident: for they could easily subdue to themselves and humble those who did not obey them, for the most part treating them well and benefiting them in various ways, but sometimes using a light whip to tame the unruly. Just in this way the great Paul, for instance, delivered the sinner in Corinth to the devil “for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved” (I Cor. 5:5), since when he was chastened with words, he was not willing to abstain from evil. Before him, Peter, the chief [of the apostles], delivered Ananias to an early death (cf. Acts 5:1–5), [though] I am not sure why, either engaging in such cruelty so that the life of Christians might not be

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infested with evil weeds straightaway from the beginning, or else judging that those who deceive the Holy Spirit must be so severely punished as to deserve death. I certainly incline to this latter explanation, since his every act and word and thought depended on the will of God, and whatever he wished, this Peter manifestly did and taught that band of believers [p. 483]. I will pass over the other fathers and teachers, not to mention the apostles, who manifestly lead on their disciples through both these [principles], as if showing that what pleases them, pleases God first, and it is necessary to receive them with gratitude and not act rashly.

They then acted in this way, and it is in no way remarkable, for they had the authority which they received from the Spirit. But I believe that it is not at all appropriate for me, who lacks their virtues to an extraordinary degree, to propose general precepts and a rule of life. On the other hand, it is possible for me to teach you who are in my charge (in the capacity not only of counselor but also of teacher), what I think is best, and, as it were, to set down laws and order you to abide by my precepts, or if you do not abide by them, to suffer the appropriate punishment. Yet I do not intend to devise some novel regime for you, nor things which no one has proposed or done until now, so as to incur the charge not only of innovation, but also of disobedience, because I neglected the [path] which was not only revealed by the holy fathers, but also previously traveled by them, which, as God himself is a trustworthy witness, is the right path, because not only after their departure from this world (for those things are neither perceptible to the mind, nor can they be spoken), but also while they were still alive, he enriched them with many spiritual blessings, and because I took another course, an untrodden path, so to speak, and not explored by the fathers, which is not possible to call new, but rather the contrary, which clearly ends in destruction, since [its] opposite has been shown by deeds themselves to end in eternal life.

[B2.] [Discussion of the forms of monastic life]

Therefore since [our] argument has rejected innovation, it remains for us, following in the footsteps of the holy fathers, to convince you to abide by the traditional and ancient regime of the pious ascetics, so that by “fighting the good fight” (cf. I Tim. 6:12 and II Tim. 4:7), and running the course of virtue, you may be deemed worthy by them of the same prizes. For there are many paths of piety for athletes, since our heavenly Father also has “many mansions” (cf. John 14:2), or rather since there are many paths, therefore there are many mansions. For we hear that this makes the difference between mansions, but all [paths] lead to heaven and stand before God and always receive one of those mansions. Therefore some men embrace the completely solitary and reclusive life, truly choosing the angelic life, having one goal, to be united with the most pure light, and to engage in its study and contemplation, with little or no attachment to earthly things. [They do] this so that, while still encased in this carnal and earthly body, they may be fortunate enough to experience their ascent from this world and their deification in the world to come, pledges of which they have already [p. 484] had on earth, being able to do whatever they wish, like gods. Other men live with each other and derive much consolation therefrom, but these men also live by themselves to the extent of each one’s desire or ability, possessing individually not only virtues and accomplishments, but also the very necessities of life, as if they were on a borderline between those who are completely solitary and those who on the other hand live a communal and cenobitic life, who have not only their possessions and bodies in common, but also one heart and soul. Now

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I must write a few words about them, since you have stripped for this course of asceticism.

[B3.] [Advantages of the cenobitic way of life]

To recount all the virtues inherent in such a way of life would take longer than the intent of my present discourse, and so to speak would require a separate treatise. But lest through ignorance of the treasure of virtues hidden therein, you be disheartened [and think] that you have chosen a humbler and even mundane lifestyle, I have selected a few of its blessings to recount to you, so as to show that it is a sister of the aforementioned [forms of monasticism], and leads to the same prize of the higher calling.

First then they maintain and preserve the main point of the Savior's incarnation, as best they can, for we are taught by the Holy Scripture that there is no other principal tenet than this, [namely] how to join us to him and to each other, and remove the separation and division which resulted from sin, uniting "all things" and "reconciling" (Col. 1:20) them to God the Father. Although they are gathered together from different nations and places, they join themselves together into one purpose and way of life, and bind their souls together as much as possible. Then too they imitate exactly our Savior's life on earth, for they take the place of disciples, while bestowing upon the superior the role of Christ, and rendering to him absolute obedience in all things. The many are one through the union of free will, and the one is not alone because he uses the bodies of all as his own limbs; and if one is "honored," then all are glorified as members of each other; if one "suffers," they "suffer together" (cf. I Cor 12:26), in the words of the apostle. They are each other's masters, and each other's servants, and they believe that this servitude is sweeter than any freedom. For the cause of this is not necessity, in which there is an element of pain, but free will and right choice. They own their possessions in common, they have one purpose, their salvation is in common, as is their wealth. At the same time, it suffices for them all in common, and the whole belongs to each one individually, for it is not material, so that it can be decreased by division into many parts. Therefore what could be more blessed than this way of life? For if the great Paul cites as the most perfect teaching, "Be imitators of me, as I of Christ" (I Cor 4:16), then [p. 485] it must be a great thing for them to become imitators of Christ.

I have related these few [virtues] out of many, not in order to give praise (for I am afraid lest I detract greatly from their value because of the inadequacy of my narration), but in order to show how great and what sort of blessing you lay claim to²⁵ and what eagerness and zeal you should demonstrate for its acquisition. So great is this topic that you can form an idea of the web [of my discourse] from the words I have woven at the beginning. Therefore I want you, my beloved sons, my true brothers beloved in Christ, to be workers and heirs of such a great good. For what more sublime or magnificent [possession] could I have to bequeath to you as a paternal inheritance?

[B4.] [Care for the physical and spiritual health of the monks]

First of all, I entreat [you] all to be one through good works and mutual love, so that you are separated only in your bodies, but are united in your souls, and each preserves the relation of limbs to the natural cohesion of the whole body. When everyone is healthy, you should be grateful to the Provider of health, each one on behalf of the others rather than on his own behalf, but if one of you is ill, then you should all be sympathetically disposed to his illness and share in his suffer-

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ing, just as the other limbs of the body suffer, if one is in pain. You should do everything and exert yourselves to see the brother cured of his illness, sparing nothing, neither deed nor effort, each of you reckoning that the same zeal and equal affection, as they go around, will reach him too, since we are all clad with the same weak body. But if, God forbid, someone should happen to be afflicted in his soul, then you must demonstrate even greater zeal and more ardent concern, since inasmuch as the soul is more valuable than the body, the harm is greater and more grievous. You should summon doctors who are skilled at curing such [afflictions], and in every way divert your brother from sin, exhorting him to proper behavior with words, and propitiating God with supplications and prayers.

[B5.] [Maintenance of all possessions in common]

Next [I enjoin you] to hold all your possessions in common, and that no one should have private property, nor even speak of it. You should condemn to utter banishment from this holy sheepfold [the words] “mine” and “yours,” which cause much trouble in life.²⁶ You should have nothing in your cells except for the bare necessities, and I do not mean food for the body, since the communal storerooms will have that, but whatever coverings are required for daytime use and for your rest at night, or even a book, so that when you have leisure from external distractions, you may occupy your mind with this, lest it wander off into improper thoughts as the result of idleness; and these items should be from the common [stores].

[B6.] [Expulsion of quarrelsome monks]

As for the arguments and rivalries and fights, I do not even wish to exhort you to avoid them. For how could the blessing of peace be preserved, or how could it not be torn into thousands of pieces by those who argue and fight? So that, as long as peace and equality remain, there is no possibility of fighting. If, however, [p. 486] the whole body is at peace and harmony, but one of the limbs is in discord, in this case the superior must concern himself with which drugs he can restore health to the ailing [brother], provided that [the latter’s illness] is such that he can somehow expel the evil and embrace harmony in the future. But if [the limb] is completely incurable, then even though we grieve and are pained at this, we must amputate it, lest it infect the other members with its disease, or even bring death to the whole body.

[B7.] [Prohibition of private companionships and friendships]

Not should you have private companionships or friendships, for this destroys harmony in yet another way. Paradoxically strife arises from friendship, for “slanders” and grumbling and “gossip” (cf. II Cor. 12:20) and suspicions and countless ills result from this, and grow upon the beautiful body of the community like spots and blemishes; and as a result its beauty withers and decays and its strength is gradually consumed, just like bodies consumed by lengthy illness. You should guard against all these things with every precaution. You must guard against this evil as well, and not permit anyone to do it, since it is one of the forbidden actions. Thus none of you should fraternize privately with another [monk], but should engage only in that communal companionship which members [of a community] owe each other. Nor will anyone be allowed to go to another’s cell, and visit or talk with him, either at nighttime or during the day, unless he wishes to

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be guilty of the charge of disobedience. But if the superior who is entrusted with the direction of the community orders a monk to convey one of his decisions to a monk in his cell, he should stand outside the door and depart as soon as he has delivered the message.

[B8.] [Importance of obedience to the superior]

It does not seem necessary for me to review in detail all the appropriate behavior. For you are not ignorant of these things, but as a result of your long association with me, you have experience of everything. Besides, this will be the concern of my successor as superior, to maintain your virtuous actions, by both his words and deeds, and to correct your faults with fatherly advice and instruction. Thus this will be his concern; and I ask you to maintain your obedience to him in a genuine and pure fashion, inasmuch as you owe him the same obligation as me, and you should render to him the appropriate reverence and honor. If someone asks, "Why should I? It is to you that I came and entrusted myself, and submitted myself with humble spirit. I do not wish [to submit] to another, you will not force and compel me to obey [another] against my will," we will quickly answer him that he will receive the same reward for submission, whether he submits to me or to him. For it is not the rank of one who subjects him, but the humility of the one who submits that leads to wreaths [of glory]. But if he should not be able to endure the submissiveness, and once and for all surrenders himself to a self-regulating regime and vainglory, he should withdraw from [p. 487] the monastery and live by himself wherever he wishes. No one will refuse him, since there can be no compulsion in the godly way of life. But I am not giving instructions now about those who choose to withdraw from the community of brethren, but about those who wish to live with the monks and share their possessions. These I enjoin to observe obedience toward my successor as superior. For I believe that this will be to your advantage and will lead to harmony and will bring you peace, as the many become one through obedience to one man. But in case one of you rebels and follows his own desires, if the superior can somehow reform him and make him submit to the yoke of Christian humility, this would be the best solution; but if he is incurably ill, he should be expelled from the monastery. For as John Klimakos said, "it is not right to permit the visible and the invisible enemy in the monastery."²⁷

[B9.] [Exhortation to the superior]

Neither should the superior govern with arrogance and insolence, considering himself the master of the monks, and them his servants, believing that his leadership is not a spiritual leadership, but some secular authority, which came to him as if from a paternal inheritance. For such [a superior] not only does not follow the strict regime of monks, but is clearly its enemy and opponent. Rather he should govern and care for [the monks] as a father cares for his own children, being guided by fatherly love in everything he says and does. For thus he will endure the unpleasant odor of the ailing [monk] and the rashness and congenital stupidity of the novice and the inability to perform bodily [functions] as a result of old age or disease. He should always hold the position of head with regard to the other limbs of the body, supervising them all and telling them all what needs to be done to manage the body, moving the limbs as he wishes, and they should not rebel against nor resist any of his wishes, but offer unquestioning obedience. He should treat them all as his own, deeming each one worthy of the appropriate care, maintaining the same affection

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and compassion toward all of them, but assigning each its own. For it would be inappropriate, or rather completely foolish, to assign to the hand the function of the foot, or the function of the eye to the mouth, or that of the mouth to the kidneys. For thus these limbs or organs will be worn out, and he will labor in vain, not having put them to appropriate use. Such a character do I wish in my successor as superior of this community.

[B10.] [Designation of a successor]

Wherefore after much deliberation on this matter, as the result of long trial and having learned from his very deeds that Neophytos Kerameus²⁸ is suited for this position, I want him to [p. 488] succeed me in authority over my brethren. For I have not passed over, as the result of some friendship or affection, a candidate who was suitable for the task on account of his virtue and experience, and preferred someone who lacked intelligence and made no pretense of virtue, but thus simply and honestly I have judged him capable of the task, so that his authority will not bring him any harm, but an increase in virtue, so that he will be able not only to instruct himself, but also to be a good example to the others, since the subject always tends to resemble the ruler. When he approaches the end of his life, in the same way he too should choose from the current monks the one who is pre-eminent over the others, and should appoint him as the leader of the brothers. The others should not be annoyed, or pierced with darts of envy, because they surpass the one who was preferred, but instead they should make the affair material for the acquisition of virtue, in the clear conviction that leadership is not the reward of friendship or noble birth or wealth, but of virtue. Again, when he is about to depart this present world, he should do the same; and this procedure should be followed in succession, with preference always being given to the best candidate. For I think this will not only be to your material advantage, but even more to your spiritual profit.

[B11.] [Permission to select a superior from outside the community]

But if it should ever occur that no one from the community is competent to assume the position, not because of wickedness, but because of lack of experience, the superior at that time, heeding my present discourse, should not subject the monks to an inexperienced [leader], since as a result he may be ruined and destroy²⁹ the others too. For he would be acting in a similar fashion to someone who took men whom he wished to save and whose salvation he deemed most important, and put them in a boat and released it upon the ocean, but then entrusted the tiller to a farmer or smith or cobbler, who not only did not know how to battle the waves and save the boat from the swell, but did not even know this fact, that it is by means of the tiller that [the boat] is steered. For they will surely sink with the ship, since there is no one who knows how to save them. But first of all he should make a search and exert a great deal of effort on this matter and bring in from the outside a shepherd who has a virtuous disposition and who, above all, fits in with your way of life. For it would be foolish to see no danger in importing food from the outside for the body, if there are no local provisions, but not to provide for the soul from the outside one who can nourish it with the bread of life. No one of any intelligence would find it harmful to entrust his sheep to an experienced shepherd brought in from outside, if he realizes the inexperience of those he has trained; and so in the case of rational souls [it would be foolish] to consider it shameful to entrust them to someone with pastoral experience, thinking this is not a fine thing, for the good to be

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found in others. In the case of the vineyard, no one would insist that its owner prune it, if he had no experience, [p. 489] but would call in vine-dressers from outside to prune it knowledgeably; and so in the case of “the plant which our heavenly Father has planted” (cf. Matt. 15:13), [it would be foolish] not to call in from outside someone to care for it and surround it with a trench, and make it inaccessible to wicked beasts. But so much for this.

[B12.] [Qualities of postulants and manner of their reception]

When, as is to be expected, certain members of your community depart this life, or for some other reason it is necessary to introduce new [monks], we would consider what sort of people they should be and the manner of their reception. First of all then it is fitting that anyone who wishes to join your community and become a member of it should renounce all his possessions. For how could he be numbered among the disciples of Christ if he has not renounced everything, since our Lord Jesus Christ said, “Whoever does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:33), and again, “If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross,” and then he added, “and let him follow me” (Matt. 16:24); or again, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and children and brothers, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26). Since therefore one who does not renounce everything and sever his attachment to the world cannot be a disciple of Christ, how could he be numbered among you, who have not only renounced money and property and friends and intimates and relatives, but have even denied yourselves, which is the greatest and most difficult [sacrifice]? Since then this is impossible, the reverse [alternative] would be possible, and [would prove] both profitable and beneficial.

[B13.] [Requirements for tonsure]

Therefore the [prospective monk] who comes to you must first renounce his money and property and family and social ties, and not be encumbered with any worldly evils, but he should believe that his true father is the one who brings him to the True and First Father, and that his brothers and friends and relatives are those who have chosen the same ascetic way of life as he has. He must also believe that his true property and wealth are above all the lack of possessions and poverty, which will procure for him the inalienable wealth of heaven, and in the second place the common property of the brethren, which belongs both to everyone and no one, on the one hand because it fulfills equally everyone’s basic need, on the other hand because each [monk] believes it belongs to the others and is not his own; and thus it happens that everyone practices perfect poverty.

Next he must adapt himself to the habits and system of the community, and believe that he should aspire to those goals [p. 490] which he also sees the community pursuing, and avoid those things towards which he sees the brothers ill-disposed. He should not have any private property, using as an excuse perhaps that only taking something from common property is forbidden and incurs a charge of theft, whereas storing up something for oneself from his own property, with a view to his old age or illness, is not liable to any charge. For first of all he entangles himself in faithlessness, not believing that he who gave this promise is trustworthy, and capable of doing what he promised, and he imputes injustice to God, [believing that] if he were to give all his

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property to the poor, in obedience to God, God would not be present at a time of need to relieve his necessity. How could he then say to Christ, “Lo, we have left everything and followed you” (Matt. 19:27), when he has kept back certain items, or how could he say, “You cannot serve God and Mammon” (Luke 16:13), and “No one can serve two masters” (Matt. 6:24)? He should avoid such an action. Indeed the parable of the merchant, which bears on this, is clear to everyone, “who finding one pearl of great value” bought it “for everything he had” (Matt. 13:45–46); and in another parable the Lord clearly declared that [the seed] “that is choked by the” anxieties and “cares of wealth” is not able “to bring its fruit to maturity” (cf. Luke 8:14). The Lord himself declared that the wealthy man is enmeshed in all sorts of cares, saying, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:24). Besides these, such [a monk] will be inclined to defect from the community of brothers. Rather right away from the beginning he is infected with the disease of rebellion, cut off from the others by his possession of private property; and such [a monk] is arrogant,³⁰ and becomes contradictory and contentious and useful for nothing. But if such [a monk] is discovered before he even enters the monastery, do not let him enter even at first, although some people may think he is adorned with other good qualities, since he has thoughts unworthy of the community and of the profession [of vows]. But if his [true nature] should be revealed after his vows, either he should be chastised and embrace poverty and lack of possessions and humility to the same extent as the other monks, or he should be expelled from the monastery as one who has already divorced himself from the community through the possession of private property.

[B14.] [Required renunciation of secular relations]

Moreover the monk should neither have private engagements, nor should he visit his blood relatives nor receive them if they come to visit. For if they too have renounced the world and chosen the same [ascetic] way of life, he will not see them as blood relatives, but as spiritual brothers. But if they are still laymen, it is not right for a [man] who is crucified to the whole world for the sake of Christ to be still the servant of laymen. So much for the [postulants] who come to our community.

[B15.] [Examination of postulants]

As for you who receive them, [p. 491] you should not receive the postulant thus openly and without due examination, but should first inquire if his character is suitable for the [monastic] profession, and then you should make trial of him and test him for a considerable length of time, to see whether he is obedient and tractable, whether he is easily led and changes his mind with the slightest provocation, wafted about on every breeze, like the seed which fell on rocky ground, and quickly sprouted, but then withered away when a little heat struck it because it had no depth of heart. If he is thus tested, and found to be a worthy laborer in the divine vineyard of Christ, then let him be included among the brothers.

[B16.] [Entrance fees not allowed]

In no way should you ask the postulant for an entrance fee. For it is improper to teach him, on the one hand, that the possession of money is not necessary, but rather superfluous and even

harmful, but through your deeds to show that it is necessary, that it is impossible to obtain salvation or to adopt the monastic habit except through the payment of money. But if he should happen to be penniless, this should make you even more eager [to receive him], because you will find that this brother is already trained in ascetic discipline, and has already successfully attained the renunciation of property, and is accustomed to a spare diet and amenable to obedience and humility, since for the most part the inner condition of the soul is disposed by nature to resemble the outer garments and diet. If, on the other hand, he should be wealthy, he should first distribute his fortune to the needy or to his friends and relatives, and after ridding himself of this consuming passion,³¹ he should come to the monastery relieved of his burden and lightly equipped, as if ready for battle and to run the good race of piety. However, one could argue that it is right also to entrust the management of his money to whomever he entrusts his body and soul, and no one could find any fault, since we find that those who first believed in the gospel sold their property, and “bringing the proceeds laid it at the apostles’ feet” (Acts 4:34–35). But sometimes harm results from this, because the monk who makes this donation is lax in his obedience, or looks down on the others, because he has made a larger donation, or else because the situation causes shame for the poorer [monks]. For these reasons therefore you must absolutely avoid taking any fees from the postulant monks.

[B17.] [Prohibition of so-called fellowships]

As for the so-called “fellowships,”³² which fill the life of the monks with much negligence and laziness, and drive out love and divide godly communities into thousands of parts, and bring countless reproaches and disgrace on the solitary way of life, you should not let them even be mentioned, but forbid them with all [p. 492] your might as a source of evils, as an estrangement from Christ, since they separate and divide his members, as completely alien to the tradition of the holy fathers. So you should always maintain a vigorous and zealous opposition to fellowships. You should bear in mind the [punishments] decreed on this matter in synods by the holy fathers, which will befall the man who accepts these fellowships in the first place and persuades others, inasmuch as he will be responsible for countless murders, or rather something worse than murder, since depriving the body of present life and depriving the soul of future life are not equal [offenses].

[B18.] [*Kelliotai* not to be admitted]

I shall end my discourse after adding yet one more point, which might perhaps seem at first hearing to contradict the commandment, but if we put the matter to the test, it will be seen not to be in contradiction but in agreement with it. For although the commandment bids, “When you saw me a stranger and welcomed me” (cf. Matt. 25:35, 38, 43), I command you never to receive in the monastery the kind of monk called a *kelliotēs*, who is a monk in his habit, but has chosen an idiorhythmic regime and to live by himself as he wishes.

If we consider then the reason for the commandment, we will find no other than to unify everyone through love, and thereby eagerly to care for the ill and the poor and strangers like one’s own limbs, as much as is practicable. But if it should happen that on this account the unified [limbs] are torn apart, and love and harmony vanish, and we are filled with great confusion, will

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we not avoid harm, if we are able to carry out the same commandment in other [ways] by which we would not be harmed? If then we find great harm resulting from this *kelliotes*, must we not avoid the situation for this reason?

This man will either be an important [monk] who lays claim to virtue, or one who lives carelessly and lazily, and demonstrates no concern for his own salvation. If then he is careless and lazy, the evil is at once obvious. For it is easier for him to bring them down to the imitation of his wickedness than for him to be elevated to the peak of virtue, since evil is easy to imitate, but virtue requires much sweat and toil, and is an uphill battle for the present and hard [to attain]. So that for this reason one must prevent his residence in the monastery, lest we lose everything, through showing concern for one man.

If however he is an important monk and one who seems to love wisdom, either he is one of those who both seems and is important, or he is a charlatan and wears his virtue like a mask, [like those] whom the Lord compared to “whitewashed tombs” (cf. Matt. 23:27), beautiful on the exterior, but on the inside full of corpses and foul odors.

If he is one of those who is truly important and God-fearing, perhaps he himself will not cause any harm. But merely [p. 493] by following an idiorhythmic regime in the midst of monks who have vowed obedience, he will provide an example of insubordination for the less perfect of monks under obedience. If one of them should ever be ridiculed by the superior, or ordered to perform a difficult task, he will immediately look to the idiorhythmic monk as a model. With the devil as his advocate, he will say, “Why would not God support me like this monk, who has no one to order him about and who lives a trouble-free life, without singing many psalms and fasting and being preoccupied with physical distractions, but always communing with God? Most important is that he avoids all unpleasantness and sorrow, neither scorned or ridiculed by anyone, but regulating and disciplining himself, while I will always remain overwhelmed by hardships and destroyed in vain and to no purpose. What is worse, I have this stern judge as examiner of my actions, who in accordance with his authority judges affairs not as they are but as they seem to him, and sometimes he purposely slanders the good, so that he may make my life more bitter than death. Let me go away and live in a cell by myself, and rid myself of the present situation. For God did not limit man’s salvation to obedience alone.” The infected monk will say these things and will be destroyed by the idiorhythmic regime of the monk who lives together with them.

Above all, who will be a trustworthy guarantor that a man who now concentrates on himself, and causes no offense to anyone, will always remain thus, and will not change and bring some harm to the community? Therefore since of necessity harm results from this situation, even if [the *kelliotes*] himself does not contribute to this, and since, on the other hand, it is unclear whether he will never wish to become deliberately evil, why should we heap up evils on ourselves unnecessarily? But if it should happen that he is discovered to be a fraud and one who feigns virtue, even should I wish, it will not be easy for me to relate how many evils will overwhelm you. Rather why need I list them in laborious detail, when I can sum up briefly that there is no evil that he will not teach you?

If you should ever agree with him, and [then], after realizing into what a depth of evil you have fallen, you wish to get rid of the evil, then it will be necessary for you to be dragged before the tribunal for having committed the ultimate injustice against him, and you will have to listen to

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our affairs being basely exposed by him, and matters of which he was perhaps the teacher. You will run the danger either of being totally destroyed, scattered hither and thither, or remaining in the same place you will stray from your blessed obedience, and will destroy the good of peace. There will be the danger that you will rebel against your supervisor and yourselves, and, although you share the same residence, and perhaps some bodily [necessities], you will be far removed from each other in your souls, in fact you will be enemies.

[B19.] [Limitation on hospitality]

If then such ills are expected from this [kind of monk], one must guard against this. I do not absolutely forbid you to receive a stranger, but you should offer hospitality for [only] two or three days to the stranger who arrives, and then, giving him as much as you can from [p. 494] your stores, dismiss him in peace, so that we may both carry out the commandment and avoid the problems caused by living together with idiorhythmic monks.

[B20.] [Other matters left to the superior's discretion]

I do not believe it necessary to discuss everything in detail and say what things you should cling to, for one should entrust these decisions to the superior, who has as his counselor him who approves of all good deeds and “imparts understanding to the simple” (cf. Ps. 118 [119]:130) and “teaches man knowledge” (Ps. 93 [94]:10): for example, about diet and clothing and manual labor, as well as about punishments, for which faults he should indicate his displeasure with words alone, and for which ones he should chastise with work in due measure, and again in which cases it is necessary to cut off the incurable limb after much admonition and as much treatment as possible. May it never happen that my brothers, my fine congregation in Christ, be in need of such medical attention. I pray that it may be in good health and condition. But if ever they are fated to fall ill, betrayed by our common nature, inasmuch as they are men, may they not require cautery or surgery, but milder drugs and those with which doctors reduce inflamed swellings.

[B21.] [Summary of injunctions]

Now I will briefly review and describe the chief features of our godly life, without which it is impossible ever to establish on earth this heavenly way of life. First of all, you must seek after genuine obedience throughout your entire life, and never quarrel with or contradict the superior, heeding the apostle who said: “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as men who will have to give account” (Heb. 13:17). Then you should maintain harmony with one another, bound together with ties of love, and being one body and having as your head Christ Who has joined together that which is divided, and unified everything and “reconciled” (cf. Eph. 2:10) the world to God the Father. “You should outdo one another in showing honor” (Rom. 12:10), and in his love each [monk] should be concerned for all [monks] as for himself, not only in bodily matters, but much more in spiritual affairs. In fact they should be more concerned for each other than for themselves, obeying in this, too, the apostle who said, “Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor” (I Cor. 10:24). You should hold all property in common, and nothing should be called or be private property. For it is foolish to procure in common our heavenly inheritance, but not to have joint possession of earthly things, which are nothing in reality.

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[B22.] [Warnings against transgressions of the *Rule*]

I give you this advice as your father, and it is fitting for you to abide by it; for it is good to obey one's father. I also enjoin you as one who holds authority, and you must be content with [my injunction]. But if anyone through meanness should [p. 495] attempt to undo any of these things, you must oppose the evil and demonstrate all zeal and eagerness. If you must die to prevent any of this from being undone, you must believe it is to your advantage to run the course of martyrdom, confident, too, that evil will not prevail over virtue, nor will God, the judge of virtue, grow drowsy, nor will "he slumber, so as not to keep Israel" (cf. Ps. 120 [121]:4). But consider the possibility, God forbid, that with one accord you become fainthearted in the pursuit of virtue, and wish to destroy your community and union and concord, and each of you wishes to look out for himself and tend his own needs, using the monastery only as a pretext; and rejecting the truth, you utter these cold words, "Will not we alone show ourselves more intelligent than all the others? God will not deliver to destruction such a multitude of monks, because although they seem to be in a community, they have acquired private property, and do not observe fitting obedience toward the superior."

First of all, I do not know how to lament you and describe your destruction, that "you will be as a garden that has no water and as a terebinth tree that has cast its leaves" (Is. 1:30), or any other passage taken from Holy Scripture about someone's destruction. Then I will proclaim the judgment that awaits you, that even in the present world you will live in dishonor and disgrace, persecuted and insulted by everyone and deprived of your property and rightly being ill spoken of, because through your indolence you have extinguished the small spark of a true community which others established with much sweat and toil, and you have revealed yourselves unworthy of your vows. In the world to come, you will pay a severe penalty for your rash act, even though in other matters you may appear long-suffering and eager for virtue. For who will believe of you, that although you destroyed the common good, in private you acted in an appropriate matter? For when one labors alone and forces himself to some difficult task, it is completely clear that he would accomplish it more easily if many people shared [the work]. But I pray that you may never sink to such a degree of negligence, nor turn your backs to the devil, so as to be mocked by him, as you are thus shamefully and ignobly defeated. But if you scrupulously observe all [my precepts], and live the life which is hidden in Christ, on the great and remarkable day of the Second Coming of Christ you will be gloriously praised by him on the common stage of the world, and will receive the crown of justice (2 Tim. 4:8), and there [p. 496] you will obtain the universal abode in heaven, in Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be glory forever, Amen.

Subsequent Chapters [C]

Preamble to the *Subsequent Chapters*

This is a verbatim transcription of the instructions set forth in the form of a testament by my most holy father and venerable master, of blessed memory, for my encouragement and advice. He presented it all in a fine manner and as no one else at all would express the discipline and order of the cenobitic and monastic life; and if one examines it, he would find this in the grandeur of the ideas

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and the graceful composition of the phrases, from which anyone who wishes may learn to what extent they possessed the grace of the divine spirit.

It is the desire of my humble self to select a few [items] from their many wondrous sayings in order to present them in a simpler and clearer fashion to those who do not yet have exact experience of the spiritual precepts which are operative in this monastery of ours. Thus if those who come to the monastery after my death read the [instructions] which they would have received through my presence and advice, “as the next best thing”³³—as the saying goes—having these instructions before their eyes in written form, and by walking in their footsteps, they will enjoy the true and blessed life as a result of this pious regime and way of life, just as if I were still alive and were uttering these admonitions to them in a living voice.

[C] 1. That the superior should be kind to the monks in his charge, and should not make outside friendships, nor enter into spiritual relationships or loans or anything else of this sort. Neither should he ever permit a layman to stay in the monastery without a trial period of three years, if he wishes to become a monk.

Therefore first of all I enjoin the superior of this monastery not to lay exclusive claim to some of the brothers and behave in a familiar or friendly fashion with them, but reject others as strangers and outcasts. Rather he should maintain the same spiritual attitude and love toward all, the one maintaining the form of the head, the others the form of limbs, in order to make up one complete body. Neither should he ever acquire a servant or retainer or anyone, either an outsider or monk, supposedly to serve his needs. Nor on the pretext of the management of the monastery should he make friends with outsiders, especially with laymen, and enter into friendships or adoptions of lay brothers or what are called spiritual relationships with them, and engage in [p. 497] loans and worldly transactions and business deals. Nor should he establish a tavern or bakery or oil-press for profit and for provision of the monastery, since they clearly bring perdition and spiritual ruin on the workers, and total destruction of the most holy monastic way of life. Nor should he receive any layman at all to take up residence in this monastery, unless he comes to the monastery for the fine purpose of submission, in observance of the rule which the divinely inspired Pachomios was taught by angelic visitation,³⁴ that is, that the person who comes to try out the monastic habit must be trained for three years, and, if he wishes to remain after this, he is deemed worthy of the holy habit, and to live together with them in the future; otherwise he is to be expelled from the monastery once and for all.

[C] 2. That there should be no female animals at all in the monastery or in the dependency, and that no woman should enter or be buried in the monastery. Neither should you receive holders of fellowships nor a youth younger than sixteen.

In general I enjoin you never to possess female animals, neither in the monastery, nor in the dependency, and never to permit in any way a woman to enter within the holy precincts, whether dead or, even worse, alive. There should be no other entrance or exit except for the general gateway to the monastery. In no way should one admit a holder of a fellowship, either for money or property, either inside or outside the monastery. You should never receive youths below the age of sixteen, precisely on account of their tender years and their tendency to loose behavior and the scandal produced therefrom by the devil.

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[C] 3. How it is sinful to eat in secret and even worse than theft and fraud, and that no one should be allowed at mealtime to serve himself his favorite foods, for this is a cause of disgrace and scandal for the monks.

None of the monks should eat in secret, nor receive messages from anyone at all from outside [the monastery], since secret gluttony is forbidden by our holy fathers. For it is said, “We have seen the salvation of negligent men, but never of the secret glutton.”³⁵ For such a man will be condemned by God to the same punishment as one who robs and defrauds his own brothers. Nor should he refrain from the appearance of secret gluttony, but in another way do something worse, and at mealtime shamelessly serve his favorite foods to himself, or perhaps to others as well to conceal his own disease. For this is even more offensive than secret gluttony, since the secret glutton acts in secret and with hesitation, but the former acts openly and boldly. One could not easily [p. 498] imitate the secret glutton, but [blatant greediness] will attract many, even apparently serious monks, to imitate this shameless behavior, and will be a cause of great harm and disgrace. For from this always follows contempt and everything will be thrown into confusion.

The old custom must be observed, namely that the official should place all the food, whatever it is, on the table in equal fashion, and each [monk] should take it to eat with indifference, and should not seek out his favorite foods and what is tasty and sweet to his tongue. The only exception is in the case of a [monk] who is ill and does not wish to eat salty food, but sweet. Even this should not be permitted for the ailing monk without the superior’s permission. When he has informed the official about him, then in accordance with his discretion he should offer the monk who requests it sweet food instead of salty, or, if he prefers, salty food instead of sweet. It is unreasonable to wish to partake of both at the same time, out of hedonism. For it is not fitting for those who have chosen the crucified life to indulge in luxury and pursue physical pleasures, which introduce war to the soul.

Likewise it is inappropriate for monks who have taken vows of obedience to receive messages, and thereby be forced to reply to them. For this is a sign of an idiorhythmic discipline, and anyone who does something of the sort must be reprimanded by the superior, to whom his correction must be entrusted.

[C] 4. Concerning visitors to the monastery, either at mealtime or at another time, that the superior should not be permitted to entertain them, if it should be necessary, either in his own cell or anywhere else, whoever they may be, except in the refectory at the appointed [mealtime].

Visitors to the monastery at the time of the midday meal should be invited to the refectory, whether they are men of virtuous and spiritual character, or nobles, or others. Whatever has been prepared at that time for the monks’ food should also be served to the guests for their meal, for this is our custom from of old. The superior should not invite them and entertain them in his cell or in the garden or anywhere else except the refectory at the appointed [hour]. If the visitors should arrive before or after lunch, whoever they are, and it should be necessary to offer them some hospitality and refreshment, they should be invited into the refectory, but none of the monks should share in their meal. The superior should engage in spiritual instruction, and the other [p. 499] monks should carry out their proper duties in a serious and quiet manner, and then the [guests] should be dismissed with blessings.

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[C] 5. That the entrance into the monastery should not be easily accessible for all who desire it, for this is a cause of spiritual harm.

Entrance into the monastery should not be readily available to all who wish it, especially for those from whom it will not be possible to acquire any spiritual profit, but rather grave spiritual harm. For although these people always wear a mask of friendship, as in a play, they usually throw their simple and right-minded audience into turmoil by the words they sow. Instead of being kind and peaceful, they rouse everyone to anger and distress and disgust, and try to attract people to their own passions and wicked ways, and ridicule the behavior of others. Therefore you must turn them away as corrupters of the community and manifest enemies of the monastic life, and not give them any opportunity for words and speech.

[C] 6. That all the monks in the monastery should confess their private thoughts to their superior and not to any outsider. Anyone who does not conform should be expelled from the monastery.

The monks who live in the monastery should not confess their private thoughts to any outsider, but to their superior, to whom they have vowed obedience until their dying breath. For it is improper for any of them, when sharing his thoughts, to bypass his own superior, and convey his [confession] to an outsider. For of these two, whose rules and instructions will he carry out? Certainly of neither. For one of two things will happen: either the outsider selected by him will relate [his confession] to the spiritual director of the monastery, and it will be superfluous for him to have chosen another [confessor] (for he tries to acquire outside what he has near at hand, and thereby the superior of the monastery is scorned), or he will give different advice. How is it right for a brother from the monastery to go to another person, who gives some advice that is spurious and alien to the monastic life? Where will he then carry out his admonitions? In the monastery? That is impossible, since the situation is not in accordance with its rules. Nor can he do this in his cell. For how can he, since he does not even control his own body? He will not, then, carry out the commands of either one, as has been said. For, on the one hand, he has shown his contempt for his own superior by his choice of a stranger and interloper. On the other hand, he has no place to carry out [p. 500] the instructions he receives from him. Furthermore, how is it clear that the man chosen from outside is virtuous rather than the opposite? For in any case, if he appeared to be virtuous and was capable of leading those who consulted him toward spiritual perfection, he would have advised them to go back to the spiritual director of the monastery and themselves, and to humble themselves, and accept with gratitude his decisions and instructions. If he fails to do this, he reveals that he is not from the ranks of the virtuous, but one of those who wear a mask of virtue, who pretend that they can teach the monastic way of life, but are far removed from it. The saying well fits them that externally they appear in the guise of sheep, but inwardly they are filled with rapine and greed (cf. Matt. 7:15). "For by their fruits shall they be known" (Matt. 7:16). Thus for monks to approach such men and entrust them with their thoughts, disregarding their own shepherds, causes enormous spiritual harm. For these men, who neither walk in the path of the Lord, nor give advice appropriate to the monastic way of life, have made themselves answerable to God. In the same way, these [monks] could rightly be called "thieves," in the words of the Lord, "because they do not enter by the door, but climb in by another way" (cf. John 10:1), inasmuch as they do not appear to obey their own superior, but consult another, who is a corrupter rather than a shepherd.

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But someone will object and say that he will carry out the instructions of both the common father and of the stranger. Rather, if the truth be known, he will show his contempt for both, as has been demonstrated above. For it is not permissible for one who has chosen to carry out to the utmost the commandments of our common protector, the “narrow and hard” (cf. Matt. 7:14) [path], in the words of our Lord, not to be satisfied with this [path], which is for him the most desirable accomplishment, and to leave it and seek another [path] outside, as if the first does not satisfy him. Rather it is clear that he has contempt for both, since he does not confidently attach himself to anyone, for [the Lord] says, “No one can serve two masters” (Matt. 6:24). In any case it is appropriate that a monk who falls victim to such a disease, and is not willing to mend his ways even after exhortation and counsel, but relies rather on his own inclination, should be severed from the rest of the community, like a diseased member, lest he infect the others with his disease. Since it is not at all lawful for a disobedient and willful [monk] to be found in the monastery, his correction must be entrusted to the superior. [p. 501]

[C] 7. That monks should not go to law courts. But if it becomes necessary, they should go only to state the case, and should immediately depart without getting involved in the affair.

[Monks] should not go to law courts concerning any sort of financial suit. If they are wronged by someone and deprived of their property, then they should approach those who wrong them, in accordance with the words of the Savior: “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one of two others along with you. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector” (Matt. 18:15–17). Wherefore, following this commandment of the Lord, they ought to approach those who wrong them, and discuss among themselves their injustice to them. If after listening to their words, one renounces his wrongdoing, a double advantage results therefrom: the wrongdoer renounces his wrongdoing, and the [property] taken unjustly is recovered for the monastery. But if he takes no heed of their words, then they should take one or two [others] with them, for perhaps the one who wronged them will be ashamed and will renounce his sin. But if he pays no heed to these either, then they should approach the protector of the Church [i.e., the patriarch], not to lodge an accusation against the wrongdoer, nor seeking a lawsuit with him, but only to state the amount of which they have been deprived by the brother who has wronged them, and not to get any further involved in the affair. For the protector of the Church will see to it that the monastery recovers its property and that the wrongdoer is corrected, unless he wants to be subject to the Lord’s judgment: “Let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector” (Matt. 18:17).

But if the monks should be accused by another of theft, it is my wish, to begin with, that my [monks] not be seen as thieves of any movable or immovable property, since they are obligated to renounce their own [property], if the commandment is observed. But if ever such an occurrence should take place as a result of beguilement [by the devil], I do not want them to wait to be accused by their victim and then make restitution, but they should give up the stolen property even before the summons of the court. For thus they will induce the love of their [opponents] and will secure their own peace and quiet. But if that person suspects that he has been wronged by the monks, but the reality and truth are different, they should go to court, whether they were accused before the holy and divine [tribunal] of the church of Christ, or the imperial and royal *sekreton*, for

three reasons: on account of the respect owed to the court, so that the monks may not be [p. 502] dishonored and slandered as thieves and people covetous of the property of others, and, moreover, so that they may reveal the truth in a clearer fashion for the satisfaction of the judges and the plaintiff. [The monks] should not become further involved in this business, but immediately after the statement of the case they should depart from the court, cheerfully accepting the decision made by the judge, even if it does not turn out as they wish. For I prefer for them to be deprived of physical [possessions] without justice rather than for them to become involved and interfere in their lawsuits and in the struggle and battle against their adversaries, contrary to the commandment, which says, “the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome” (II Tim. 2:24), but should be peaceful with “those who hate peace” (Ps. 119 [120]:7).

[C] 8. That the treasury should be paid without any reduction what the monastery is accustomed to pay on the annual harvests of wheat and wine.

Since I have mentioned law courts and injustice, I think I should not overlook this point, the payment of taxes to the treasury. First of all, my holy [predecessors], the venerable masters, with a view to the discipline of the monastic life, strove to apply, among others, the following [rule], which indeed was observed their entire life, and after their death this practice was continued by me up to the present day, in accordance with their holy wishes: that no business affairs be carried out in the monastery, either for revenue or for a loan or any other transaction resulting in financial gain. I myself enjoin that my [monks] should continue this practice in the future, as long as, with God’s help, the monastery exists.

Next, since our food is provided above all by the mercy of my all-holy Virgin, to whom as foundress this monastery has been dedicated from the beginning, and then from our estates and the crops they bear annually, and from this harvest has been paid the customary tax to the treasury, I say that in the future everything that belongs to the state from this harvest, whether it is wine or wheat or any other products, should be paid by the monks without any reduction to the collectors of the state taxes, and nothing that belongs to the fisc should be kept back, perhaps with the excuse of private profit, that what is hidden results from the labor of the monks. Rather they should hand over to the tax collectors with all truth and honesty everything owed them from all the revenues of the monastery, even if nothing else remains for the sustenance of the monks, [p. 503] and they should not prefer falsehood to the truth for the sake of personal gain. For it is better for them to tell the truth and be deprived even of their own property than to choose falsehood, and for the sake of material gain to renounce truth, that is, Christ himself, who is Truth (cf. John 14:6). For this is the work of the wicked devil who with mind and senses begrudges good deeds, to grasp matters on the right and end on the left, and through a few small matters causes enormous harm to those who obey him. For through his advice that it is not sinful for someone to keep back his own [property] and to lie about this, he gradually casts them into greed and desire for the property of others. For when someone becomes accustomed to lie and keep back his own property, he will advance along this road and use these [tactics] with regard to the property of others, which is covetousness. My brethren, there is no difference between this and idol worship, according to the blessed Paul, who says: “Flee covetousness, which is idolatry” (Col. 3:5). Moreover, according to God’s ancestor, the prophet David, everyone who lies will fall into the abyss of perdition, for he says, “Thou wilt

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destroy all that speak falsehood” (Ps. 5:6). At all events my all-holy Virgin will not overlook these monks who have chosen³⁶ to speak the truth, through the compassion and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, “Who opens his hand and fills with pleasure every living thing” (Ps. 144 [145]:16), who said, “Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet our heavenly Father feeds them” (Matt. 6:26), who commanded, “Seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well” (Matt. 6:33), but [the Virgin], the Nurse and Protectress and Provider of all the monastery’s property from the beginning until now, will provide for their needs many times over.

Therefore, as has been said, you must pay the fisc its due, without any reduction, from the income of the monastic estates, since we have this obligation according to the blessed Paul, the universal teacher of the world. For he says, “Brethren, pay all of their due, taxes to whom taxes are due, honor to whom honor is due, revenue to whom revenue is due. Owe no one anything, except to love one another” (Rom. 13:7-8). The same is also found in the commandments of the holy and divine fathers who enjoin, “Child, if you are a disciple of the gentle and humble One, give and pass by.”³⁷ [p. 504]

[C] 9. That no one of the monks should ever be a protector or guardian of anyone at all, nor should he be readily disposed to bear witness about any matter whatsoever.

On no pretext whatsoever should any of the monks become a guardian or protector or attorney for anyone, whether a foreigner or one of his countrymen; for this is contrary to the divine and holy canons. For those who have mortified themselves for the sake of the Christian life and have renounced the world, and are not masters of their own will, and have vowed to be proper monks, have the obligation to act in accordance with the canons and not be involved in any worldly affairs. This would be impossible for anyone to avoid if he is the guardian of widows and orphans, and is an advocate at trials, and appears before emperors and patriarchs allegedly to succor the needy. For such a man will be forced, on the one hand, as a guardian to be concerned with material matters, and to busy himself with those things whose possession he renounced once and for all when he became a monk; on the other hand, if he spends a lot of time at lawsuits, as an attorney and advocate, [he will be forced] to contend with his opponents and to attack and be attacked by his adversaries. This is not the role for disciples of the gentle and peaceful one, who enjoined them to deny themselves and raise his cross and follow him (Matt. 16:24).

Neither do I want my monks to be eager to bear witness, unless they should be ordered to do so by the superior, because it is not otherwise possible to ascertain the truth and where justice lies, except from their testimony. [I permit] this only if they are simply questioned; but if [they are to testify] under duress and upon orders, in no wise do I permit it. For without this [prohibition], if they were ready to testify, they would be well liked by the party on behalf of which their testimony seemed to be delivered, but hated and opposed by the other, inasmuch as they testified against it. If the latter party takes offense at them, how could these monks who are asked by the commandment to be peaceful with “those who hate peace” (cf. Ps. 119 [120]:7) have a peaceful conscience? This certainly would not occur, if they lived like monks, in the words of the commandment, mortifying themselves to things on earth for the sake of the hidden life in Christ, just as the blessed Paul says, “For you have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3). For if this was

said once and for all to all Christians, it is even more right that it be observed by monks, since they have renounced the present world and mortified themselves to the world, and have clothed themselves in the monastic habit as a second baptism, so that they may recollect the first [baptism]. Thus for monks to revert to the same [worldly concerns] [p. 505] and to defile this second baptism by associating with those things which they have renounced, makes them transgressors of their vows, inasmuch as they are building up those things which they tore down as an obstacle to them in their pursuit of virtue. Suitable for them would be the words of the blessed Paul, “But if I build up again those things which I tore down, then I prove myself a transgressor” (Gal. 2:18). Therefore it is fitting for you to avoid these things, so that you may not experience punishment in the world to come as transgressors of the commandments, but rather may be deemed worthy of eternal life as workers of virtue.

[C] 10. That daily during the brothers’ mealtime should be read the *Ascetic Treatises* of the great father Basil and the sayings of the holy fathers.

Daily, while the brothers are eating in the refectory, should be read aloud, in everyone’s hearing, the *Ascetic Treatises* of our holy father Basil the Great, and sometimes the sayings and deeds of the holy fathers, which are called *Gerontika*, since both contribute to the contemplation and action, through which the person who lives according to God and renounces earthly things and likens himself to God as much as possible. For together with this material nourishment monks should consume the angelic and heavenly food which is the word of God, and the monks should occupy themselves above all with this [spiritual food], comprehending the readings, since “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (Matt. 4:4), and according to the blessed Paul, “Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (I Cor. 10:31), and again, “pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances” (I Thess. 5:17–18), lest by doing otherwise they be subjected to the judgment of being ranked by Holy Scriptures with dumb animals, because they treat the refectory like a stable. For it is said, “A refectory without the word of God is like a stable for animals.”³⁸

At the beginning of each month should be read aloud the treatise of the most holy patriarch lord Neilos for the regulation of monastic life, in the form of the testament of our most holy monk lord Mark,³⁹ and the treatise which my humble self recently composed in a more comprehensible and clearer style,⁴⁰ treating systematically the benefit of the monks therefrom. [p. 506]

[C] 11. That no one should have any private property in his cell unbeknownst to the superior, and that the superior has the obligation continually to oversee such matters.

No one should keep in his cell any garment for day or night nor anything else, even a needle, without the knowledge of the superior. If someone should be caught concealing anything of this sort, he should be rebuked and disciplined with the appropriate penalties, and that which he concealed, no matter what it is, should either be distributed to the poor or thrown into the fire to be burned and destroyed in front of all the monks. Therefore it is perforce necessary that the superior enter the cell of each monk at the beginning of each month and make the required inspection and examination of the things in each one’s cell.

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[C] 12. That none of the monks should go to services at the Great Church, but the superior has the obligation to visit the incumbent ecumenical patriarch twice a year, and that [the monks] should not interfere in his affairs.

No one is to attend the services and feast days of the Great Church, neither the superior, nor any of his entourage, not because the holy rites celebrated there are blameworthy, but because it is not appropriate for monks, who have once and for all vowed to embrace contrition and sorrow (for it is to this that we are appointed), to surrender themselves to celebrations and festivals. For it is ridiculous for someone to mourn and celebrate at the same time. Moreover it was not customary for the inhabitants of our monastery to do this, and it is my wish that this tradition be maintained forever.

I permit only this, that the superior should visit the incumbent ecumenical patriarch twice a year, that is during the week of the tax collector and Pharisee,⁴¹ when the divine and revered days of Lent are approaching, to receive from him a prayer and blessing for the accomplishment of virtue, and again during Easter week, in all ways demonstrating his fellowship to the defender of the Church.

No one from our monastery should ever listen to gossip and slanders against him [the patriarch], or in any way dislike him (unless he falls into manifest heresy, either with regard to the divine and ineffable dispensation and accommodation of our Savior and God, or in theology), but should honor him in every way and speak his name with sincere affection and love, and not interfere at all in his affairs, whether they are carried out well or not; for, to quote [Gregory] the Theologian, "it is sufficient for you if you are well tended."⁴² [p. 507]

[C] 13. That the customary commemorative services should be performed for the monks who have passed away, and that there should be a liturgy on the day of their death and every day thereafter for forty days, and that sick [monks] deserve a great deal of attention.

You must exert all zeal and diligence without fail to carry out the traditional [services] for deceased monks, that is, commemorative services and liturgies. On the very day of their death, if the time [of death] does not prevent it, during the very hour, if possible, a liturgy should be celebrated on behalf of the deceased. This should be continued without interruption for forty days. In the evenings, until the aforesaid forty days are accomplished, after compline all the monks should each make twelve prostrations on behalf of the deceased, saying, "Lord, grant rest to the soul of your servant so-and-so."

Furthermore, you should visit and take suitable care of those brothers who fall ill, and a doctor should be summoned, and in no way should his orders be thwarted by any excuse of cost and expense.

[C] 14. That every year there should be celebrated without fail the feast day of our most holy Mother of God, that is of the Dormition, and the following day there should be a *parastasimon* and liturgy on behalf of the blessed founders.

The feast day of my *Panagia*, I mean of the Dormition,⁴³ should be celebrated without fail, just as it was first celebrated by my holy fathers and monks and then by myself, that is, the monks should spend the entire night in psalmody and reading, and during the day should celebrate the

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divine liturgy. The usual arrangements should be made in the refectory, and at the monastery gate a distribution should be made to the poor of half a *modios* of bread and wine and sufficient cooked food. A *parastasimon* and liturgy for the founders should be celebrated on the next day. In like manner we say that on the feast day of my holy great martyr Demetrios,⁴⁴ and on the following day, there should be a *parastasimon* and liturgy for my holy fathers and monks, the blessed lord Mark and the celebrated patriarch lord Neilos. [p. 508]

[C] 15. That each year, without interruption, a commemorative service should be celebrated at the appointed time for the most holy ecumenical patriarch lord Neilos and for the most holy monk lord Mark.

On the first of February should be celebrated the commemorative service and feast day of the most holy and venerable patriarch lord Neilos and a liturgy on the following day, and there should be a distribution to the poor of one-quarter *modios* of bread and wine and sufficient cooked food.

I ordain that the same thing should also happen without any change on the [first]⁴⁵ of March, the commemorative service for my most holy father and monk, lord Mark of blessed memory, and a liturgy on the following day, and a distribution to the poor of the same amount of bread, wine and cooked food, and on all the other days of the year the poor should be provided with two loaves of bread of the larger size.

[C] 16. That the superior should not be questioned by anyone with regard to the revenues and expenses of the monastery, and that [monks] should not speak to each other privately and should avoid idle gossip.

This too can be stated summarily: the superior should not be questioned by any of the monks about the revenues and expenses of the monastery, as long as he abides by all the rules and regulations I have set forth.

I ordain that all the monks should avoid idle gossip in common, and should not visit each other's cells, either by night or by day, and converse with each other in private, especially after the office of compline, but each should go straight to his own cell to perform prostrations or prayers, to the extent of his strength and inclination.

[C] 17. That on all the days of the year, including fast days, [the monks] should chant their own office.

I think I should write a few words, as a reminder, about communal psalmody, I mean that of both night and day. During Lent everything should be carried out exactly as the *typikon* specifies at the Sunday vigils and the daily offices. On Saturday and Sunday [the monks] should partake of wine and a boiled dish with olive oil, on the other days they should abstain from food cooked with olive oil. If perhaps they need some boiled dish in between these, add vinegar instead of oil. On Tuesday and Thursday they may have wine. During Easter week they should follow the rules [p. 509] of the *typikon*, and begin to chant the customary hours daily without fail and the entire night office together with the *kathismata* and readings. They should also sing the vesper hymns with the prayers, that is, on Sunday the canon of the "Angel, guardian of the soul," on Monday the [canon] of my *Panagia*, that begins, "Oppressed by many trials," on Tuesday the [canon] of our Lord God

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and Savior Jesus Christ, that begins “Alas, what shall I lament, what shall I bewail,” on Wednesday the [canon] of my holy and glorious martyr Demetrios and the other canons composed for him by mode, on Thursday the [canon] of our Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, that begins “Sweetest Jesus,” on Friday the hymns and canon of the *Akathistos*. In like manner should be celebrated all the vigils on the feast days of the Lord and anniversaries of the great saints, as the *typikon* ordains.

During the fast of the Holy Apostles and the fast preceding the Dormition of my *Panagia*,⁴⁶ [the monks] should abstain from boiled food, olive oil and wine on Wednesday and Friday. Also during the forty days before Christmas, [the monks] should abstain from olive oil and wine on Wednesday and Friday, except on feast days of the Lord or on the anniversary of a great saint. On these days they should chant the hours and the *mesoria* in unison at vespers, and should eat only once a day, consuming dry foods and drinking only water and partaking only of seasonal fruits at mealtime.

[C] 18. Exhortation that all the foregoing rules should be continuously observed by the monks, and a petition to future emperors and patriarchs not to interfere with the monastery.

These [rules] then have been set forth by my humble self for the sake of clear explanation, as has been said, on the one hand as a reminder of the monastic and cenobitic condition, on the other hand to maintain and preserve all the previous regulations, as well as those which I have now set forth. I pray to my God that you be revealed as trusty workers of virtue, who regard the written rules as if they were an image and archetype of every good, so that if some depraved person should renounce his vows to God, and dare to transgress and overturn these [rules], he will receive a heavy sentence from God, and will be subject to the punishment of my mediocrity, unless he makes amends through repentance.

Furthermore, since by the grace of God this monastery has been preserved free and unenslaved up to the present time by successive venerable emperors and most holy patriarchs, I pray to God that it be maintained in the same freedom even after my death. I beg and entreat future emperors and patriarchs [p. 510] to maintain the same attitude toward the monastery as their predecessors, and no one else should be appointed superior against the wishes of the incumbent superior of the monastery, nor should a fellowship be given to anyone at all as a gift, nor should any other ill-treatment and abuse or any demand whatsoever be inflicted upon the monks, nor should any monk, or, even worse, layman be sent to the monastery by emperor or patriarch. For anyone who attempts anything of this sort, either totally or in part, my humble self considers him as unjust and unreasonable and as one who throws into confusion good rules and regulations and overturns the good order of monastic life, to the best of his ability, and considers him as excommunicated and unforgiven by God the Ruler of All.

Therefore just as the most holy and blessed venerable master lord Mark entrusted this monastery to the most holy and venerable patriarch lord Neilos, and he in turn passed it on to my humble self, and I exerted considerable effort and zeal for its prosperity and improvement, thus in turn my humble self transfers it to the most honorable ordained monk _____⁴⁷ whom I decided was distinguished above the others in his edification and improvement of the souls to be found in this *kellion*, with God’s help. Therefore I want him as my successor to have all license and authority in the monastery. When he, too, is about to depart this present world and journey to God, he has

the obligation to pass it on to the monk whom he chooses as the best of all, and who is capable of protecting souls and guiding them to the path of salvation, and this should occur in succession in perpetuity. We have had my *Panagia* as the sole founder and steward and superior from the beginning until now, and I bequeath her to you as protector and perpetual patron.

I pledge to you all and assert to my beloved children in Christ, that if you dwell in this monastery with eagerness and zeal, striving for virtue until the end and observing the rule, you will attain the same rewards and crowns as those promised by God the Judge to the hierarchs and holy men and martyrs on the great and illustrious day of his judgment. To him be power, glory, honor and kingdom now and forever and to everlasting generations. Amen.

Written and signed in the month of September of the year 6916 [= 1407 A.D.], first indiction. Matthew, by God's mercy archbishop of Constantinople, the New Rome, and ecumenical patriarch.

Notes on the Translation

Editors' note: The assistance of our translator, Alice-Mary Talbot [AMT], is gratefully acknowledged for the notes to this document.

1. *kalogeros*. [AMT]
2. The chapter numeration in [A] follows Hunger's edition. [AMT]
3. John Chrysostom, *Homilia in Rom.*, 8.28, PG 51, col. 170.
4. *hesychia*. [AMT]
5. E. Leutsch and F. Schneidewin, *Corpus paroemiographorum graecorum*, vol. 2 (Göttingen, 1839–51; repr. Hildesheim, 1958), p. 104, line 99. [AMT]
6. Perhaps ca. 1375. For Mark, see [7] below, and Trapp, *PLP*, fasc. 7, no. 17017, p. 115.
7. Probably John V (1341–91) and Andronikos IV Palaiologos (1376–79) are meant.
8. Neilos Kerameus (1380–88), for whom see Alice-Mary Talbot, "Neilos Kerameus," *ODB*, pp. 1449–50, and Trapp, *PLP*, fasc. 5, no. 11648, Kerameus Neilos, pp. 173–74.
9. In 1380.
10. Sometime before 1388; see Talbot, "Neilos Kerameus," p. 1449.
11. Location uncertain; see Janin, *Géographie*, vol. 3, p. 501, and D. Nicol, *The Byzantine Family of Kantakouzenos (Cantacuzenus) ca. 1100–1460* (Washington, D.C., 1968), p. 94, n. 146.
12. For this foundation, see Janin, *Géographie*, vol. 3, pp. 286–89.
13. Probably John VI Kantakouzenos (1347–1354).
14. In 1354, after the fall of John VI Kantakouzenos.
15. After his abdication on December 10, 1354, John VI, under the monastic name Joasaph, first retired to the monastery of St. George of Mangana, then to the Charsianeites monastery; see Nicol, *Kantakouzenos*, pp. 86, 94.
16. In 1380; see [5] above.
17. A reference to the Turkish siege of Constantinople (1394–1402) by Beyazid I.
18. Antony IV (1389–90, 1391–97)
19. Kallistos II Xanthopoulos (1397).
20. In October 1397.
21. In 1399; John VII Palaiologos served as regent from 1399 to 1403; see Barker, *Manuel II*, pp. 202–11, and Talbot, "Matthew I," p. 1316; for John VII, see John Barker, "John VII in Genoa: A Problem in Late Byzantine Source Confusion," *OCP* 28 (1962), 213–38.

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22. Matthew I's deposition lasted from the summer of 1402 until June 1403; see Talbot, "Matthew I," p. 1316.
23. Subsequent to Matthew I's restoration by Manuel II Palaiologos in 1403.
24. *exampelon*: old or abandoned vineyard. See Demetrakos, *Lexikon*, s.v. [AMT]
25. Read *metapoieisthe*? [AMT]
26. Cf. the language of (22) *Evergetis* [37].
27. John Klimakos, *Scala paradisi* 4, PG 88, col. 685A.
28. Neilos Kerameus; see Trapp, *PLP*, fasc. 5, no. 11648, p. 173.
29. Read *prosapollyein*. [AMT]
30. Read *alazon*. [AMT]
31. Read *tes touton*. [AMT]
32. *adelphata*; for which see E. Herman, "Die Regelung der Armut in den byzantinischen Klöstern," *OCP* 7 (1941), 406–60, esp. 444–49, and Paul Magdalino, "Adelphaton," *ODB*, p. 19.
33. Cf. Leutsch and Schneidenwin, *Corpus paroemiographorum graecorum*, vol. 2, p. 362. [AMT]
34. Palladius, *Historia Lausiaca* 32, ed. C. Butler (Cambridge, 1898; repr. Hildesheim, 1967), pp. 88–96.
35. Cf. John Klimakos, *Scala paradisi*, Schol. 20, PG 88, col. 877B.
36. Read *proeremenous*. [AMT]
37. Unidentified. Not in the works of the Cappadocian fathers.
38. Unidentified. Not in the works of the Cappadocian fathers.
39. That is, the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos [B].
40. Matthew I's *Subsequent Chapters* [C].
41. The week preceding the fourth Sunday before the beginning of Lent when the parable of the tax collector and the pharisee (Luke 18:10–14) is read. See *Catechesis Chronica Monasterii Studii*, 8, PG 99, col. 1697D.
42. Gregory Nazianzen, *Oratio* 19, *De suis sermonibus et ad Julianum exaequatorem*, PG 35, col. 1053C. [AMT]
43. Feast of the Dormition of the Mother of God, August 15.
44. Feast of St. Demetrios, October 26.
45. Possible lacuna in the manuscript here.
46. Fast of the Holy Apostles, from Monday after the feast of All Saints (Sunday after Pentecost) through the vigil of the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, June 28; fast of the Mother of God, August 1–14, for which see (20) *Black Mountain* [87], [88] and (30) *Phoberos* [31].
47. A space for the name has been left blank in the manuscript.

Document Notes

1. Autobiography [A]

Summary titles of the chapters are listed to facilitate reference.

[A1] Excursus on the value of the cenobitic life.

[A2] Matthew's monastic vocation.

[A3] His reception as a disciple by Mark.

[A4] His acceptance of monastic discipline.

[A5] Neilos succeeds Mark as superior, becomes patriarch (1379); Matthew appointed superior; his labors on the monastery's behalf.

[A6] Foundation history; role of the founder John Charsianeites.

[A7] Recruitment of Mark as superior; Charsianeites' disgrace (1354).

[A8] Subsequent additions to the endowment; residence of the ex-emperor John VI Kantakouzenos.

[A9] The monastery left without a protector after Neilos; Matthew's benefactions; destruction of properties by the Turks.

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[A10] Matthew elected patriarch (1397); his deposition by John VII Palaiologos (1402).

[A11] Restoration of devastated estates; imperial tax concessions; commemoration of the emperor.

[A12] Summary of Matthew's personal contributions; purpose of the *typikon*.

2. *Rule* of Mark and Neilos [B]

[B1] Authority for issuance of this *Rule*. See similar discussions in (52) *Choumnos* [B1] and (58) *Menoikeion* [2].

[B2] Discussion of alternative forms of monastic life. See also (24) *Christodoulos* [A24], (34) *Machairas* [152], (37) *Auxentios* [11], (42) *Sabas* [7], (54) *Neilos Damilas* [6], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [149].

[B3] Advantages of the cenobitic way of life. See also (47) *Philanthropos* [1] and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [47].

[B4] Care for physical and spiritual health of the monks. See also (22) *Evergetis* [41] and related documents, (39) *Lips* [33] ff., (56) *Kellibara II* [5], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [90].

[B5] Maintenance of all possessions in common. See also [B21], [B22] below and (22) *Evergetis* [22] and related documents, (37) *Auxentios* [5], (52) *Choumnos* [B19], (55) *Athanasios I* [5], (56) *Kellibara II* [3], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [46], [154].

[B6] Expulsion of quarrelsome monks. See also (22) *Evergetis* [9] and related documents, (42) *Sabas* [5], and (45) *Neophytos* [CB9].

[B7] Prohibition of private associations and friendships. See also (22) *Evergetis* [42] and related documents, (37) *Auxentios* [5], (55) *Athanasios I* [4], (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [46], and (58) *Menoikeion* [22].

[B8] Importance of obedience to the superior. See also (22) *Evergetis* [16] and related documents, (39) *Lips* [9], and (52) *Choumnos* [B4], (55) *Athanasios I* [1], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [9].

[B9] Exhortation to the superior; not to govern despotically. For the principle, see (37) *Auxentios* [9] and (38) *Kellibara I* [18]; for consultative government elsewhere, see (22) *Evergetis* [14] and related documents; (39) *Lips* [21], [23], [32], [38], [39]; (55) *Athanasios I* [5]; (58) *Menoikeion* [22]; and (59) *Manuel II* [6].

[B10] Designation and qualifications of the next superior; future succession to the superiorship. For the use of a testament to designate a successor, see [C18] below and (1) *Apa Abraham* [1]; (10) *Eleousa* [11]; (24) *Christodoulos* [B3], [B5], [C1]; (25) *Fragala* [A7], [B7]; (41) *Docheiariou* [4]; (45) *Neophytos* [16]; (49) *Geromeri* [14]; (50) *Gerasimos* [3]; and (52) *Choumnos* [A3]. The discussion of qualifications echoes (22) *Evergetis* [14] and related documents.

[B11] Monks from outside the community eligible for the superiorship. See also (32) *Mamas* [1], (33) *Heliou Bomon* [1], (35) *Skoteine* [17], (37) *Auxentios* [3], cf. (34) *Machairas* [148].

[B12] Qualities of postulants and how they should be received. See also (52) *Choumnos* [B9], [B17] and (54) *Neilos Damilas* [5], [6].

[B13] Requirements for tonsure. See also (39) *Lips* [17], [18]; (52) *Choumnos* [B11], [B17]; and (54) *Neilos Damilas* [7].

[B14] Required renunciation of secular relations; no visits or visitors. See also (39) *Lips* [15], [16]; (52) *Choumnos* [A21]; (54) *Neilos Damilas* [7]; and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [75], [76].

[B15] Examination and trial of postulants. See also (37) *Auxentios* [12]; (39) *Lips* [17], [18]; and (52) *Choumnos* [B6].

[B16] Entrance fees not allowed; distribution of worldly goods to others on entrance; monastery to welcome penniless monks. For similar views, see (13) *Ath. Typikon* [49], (52) *Choumnos* [B6], [B7], and (55) *Athanasios I* [7]; cf. (59) *Manuel II* [12].

[B17] Prohibition of fellowships. See also [C2], [C18] below, and (34) *Machairas* [153].

[B18] Kelliotic monks not to be admitted. See also [B8] and [B13] above, and (53) *Meteora* [1], (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [149], and (58) *Menoikeion* [11].

[B19] Limitation on hospitality. See also [C4] below and (21) *Roidion* [B2] and (42) *Sabas* [8]; cf. (34) *Machairas* [118].

[B20] Diet, clothing, manual labor, and punishments left to superior's discretion. (53) *Meteora* [8] permits differences in clothing; (52) *Choumnos* [B21] also leaves manual labor to the superior's discretion.

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- [B21] Summary of injunctions. See also (22) *Evergetis* [42] and related documents, which serve the same function.
- [B22] Warning against violators of the *Rule*. See also [C18] below and the sanctions in other Palaiologan documents: (37) *Auxentios* [2]; (39) *Lips* [2]; (48) *Prodromos* [16]; (49) *Geromeri* [16]; (50) *Gerasimos* [5]; (51) *Koutloumousi* [A15], [B20]; and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [17].
3. *Subsequent Chapters* [C]
- [C1] Code of conduct for the superior; admission of laymen only for tonsure. For the former, see (22) *Evergetis* [17] and related documents; for the latter, see bans on fellowships in [B17] above and [C2] and [C18] below, and for length of the novitiate, see [B15] above.
- [C2] No women, youths, or female animals; no burials of women in the monastery; only one gateway; no fellowships. For the ban on women, see (22) *Evergetis* [39] and related documents, (37) *Auxentios* [12], (45) *Neophytos* [19], [C18], (53) *Meteora* [7], and (58) *Menoikeion* [14]. For the ban on youths, see also (12) *Tzimiskes* [16], (13) *Ath. Typikon* [48], (15) *Constantine IX* [1], cf. [15], (29) *Kosmosoteira* [49], (42) *Sabas* [1], (58) *Menoikeion* [14], and (59) *Manuel II* [13]. For the ban on female animals, see also (12) *Tzimiskes* [22], [23]; (13) *Ath. Typikon* [31], [53]; (15) *Constantine IX* [3], [4]; (45) *Neophytos* [19]; and (59) *Manuel II* [14]. For other bans on burials, see (27) *Kecharitomene* [70], (29) *Kosmosoteira* [86], and (37) *Auxentios* [13]. For other physical restrictions on access and observation, see (27) *Kecharitomene* [74], [80]. For fellowships, see also [B17] above and [C18] below.
- [C3] No secret eating; equal portions of food; no correspondence with outsiders. For the ban on secret eating, see also (22) *Evergetis* [9], [22] and related documents, (39) *Lips* [29], (47) *Philanthropos* [2], (56) *Kellibara II* [3], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [84]. For dietary equality, see also (22) *Evergetis* [26] and related documents, (37) *Auxentios* [7], (52) *Choumnos* [B20], (53) *Meteora* [3], and (56) *Kellibara II* [2]. For the ban on correspondence, see also (22) *Evergetis* [22] and related documents, (34) *Machairas* [131], and (45) *Neophytos* [CB5].
- [C4] Guidelines for the entertainment of visitors. See also [B19] above and (3) *Theodore Studites* [20], [23]; (13) *Ath. Typikon* [33], [35]; (21) *Roidion* [B5], [B7]; (34) *Machairas* [116], [117]; (52) *Choumnos* [B15] and (54) *Neilos Damilas* [20].
- [C5] Restriction on access to the monastery. Cf. (45) *Neophytos* [C17].
- [C6] Exclusive confession to the superior. See also (22) *Evergetis* [7], [15] and related documents, and (52) *Choumnos* [B10]. (52) *Choumnos* [A17] and (58) *Menoikeion* [13] are more indulgent.
- [C7] Monks not to engage in litigation except if falsely accused. See [C9] below and also the discussion of litigation in (15) *Constantine IX*, Introduction, [8]; (19) *Attaleiates* [34], [43]; (23) *Pakourianos* [18]; and (47) *Philanthropos* [4].
- [C8] Obligation to pay taxes on annual harvests. For the monastery's tax-exempt properties, see [A11] above. For fiscal obligations of the properties of other monasteries, see (19) *Attaleiates* [INV 10], [INV 11]; (27) *Kecharitomene*, Appendix A; and (31) *Areia* [M10], [T6].
- [C9] Monks not to serve as guardians, protectors, or advocates. See also (3) *Theodore Studites* [8], (12) *Tzimiskes* [14], (13) *Ath. Typikon* [30], and (59) *Manuel II* [10].
- [C10] Daily reading of Basil's *Ascetic Treatises*; monthly reading of the *Rule* of Mark and Neilos and the author's *Subsequent Chapters*. For use of Basil, see also (24) *Christodoulos* [A26]; for reading of the *typikon* in other Palaiologan monasteries, see also (37) *Auxentios* [13], (39) *Lips* [8], (55) *Athanasios I* [8], (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [120], and (58) *Menoikeion* [9].
- [C11] No private possessions in the cells; superior to conduct monthly inspections. For the former, see also (22) *Evergetis* [22] and related documents, (47) *Philanthropos* [2], and (53) *Meteora* [10]; for the latter, see (22) *Evergetis* [27] and related documents, (34) *Machairas* [120], and (45) *Neophytos* [C11].
- [C12] Monks to abstain from services at Hagia Sophia; superior to visit the patriarch twice a year. For the treatment of patriarchal rights in other Palaiologan documents, see (38) *Kellibara I* [15], (39) *Lips* [1], (50) *Gerasimos* [4], (55) *Athanasios I* [9], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [26].
- [C13] Commemorations of departed monks. See also (22) *Evergetis* [36] and related documents; for provi-

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- sions in other Palaiologan monasteries, see (37) *Auxentios* [13] and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [149], [150], [151].
- [C14] Prescriptions for feasts of the Dormition and of St. Demetrios. For the former feast, see also (20) *Roidion* [B9], (22) *Evergetis* [11], (23) *Pakourianos* [11], (27) *Kecharitomene* [59], (29) *Kosmosoteira* [10], (34) *Machairas* [29], (39) *Lips* [38], and (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [112].
- [C15] Annual commemorations of Neilos and Mark. See also the commemorations of past superiors in (22) *Evergetis* [35], Appendix, and, in Palaiologan times, in (48) *Prodromos* [9].
- [C16] Superior not answerable to monks for finances; condemnation of idle gossip and visitation of cells. For the former, see (22) *Evergetis* [18] and related documents. For the latter, see (22) *Evergetis* [9] and related documents; (34) *Machairas* [128], [130]; and (45) *Neophytos* [CB6].
- [C17] Dietary and liturgical regulations. See also provisions for other Palaiologan monasteries in (37) *Auxentios* [8], [10]; (39) *Lips* [29], [30], [31], [32], [33]; (53) *Meteora* [11]; (52) *Choumnos* [A16], [B14]; (54) *Neilos Damilas* [10], [12]; (55) *Athanasios I* [4]; (56) *Kellibara II* [1]; (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [59], [78], [80]; and (58) *Menoikeion* [4], [16].
- [C18] Recapitulation of provisions; institutional independence; designation of a successor. For institutional independence, see also (37) *Auxentios* [2], (38) *Kellibara I* [15], (39) *Lips* [1], (40) *Anargyroi* [3], (57) *Bebaia Elpis* [14], [15]; and (58) *Menoikeion* [3], [11], [22]. For the ban on fellowships, see also [B17] and [C2] above. For a prior designation of a successor, see [B10] above, with cross-references.