

When Naked Does Not Mean Totally Naked

By Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

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Introduction

Beware of the perverts who calumniate the modesty of holy men by taking the teachings contained in the Bible and extra-biblical sources out of context to make it seem that some holy men voluntarily went around naked in public, that recipients of baptism were totally naked when baptized, and that Jesus was totally naked on the Cross.

The word naked does not always mean totally naked. It can mean either dressed only with undergarments or swimsuits or not sufficiently dressed for the occasion, such as a king not wearing his royal garb when he is expected to. In all cases modesty is still preserved. Men who work in hot weather or play sports without shirts and wearing only shorts are still modestly dressed. They are not exposing their private parts. However, if they were to enter a church or attend a formal affair in only undergarments, they would be considered naked. But they still would not be immodestly dressed although they would be *inappropriately* dressed for the occasion. Just picture a man at the beach in a swimsuit, which is appropriate. And then picture him in a swimsuit in a church, a court of a king, or a business meeting, which would be inappropriate and disrespectful. It would appear as if he were naked.

Bible

Adam, Eve, Noe, and God’s command against total nakedness in public

Before they sinned, Adam and Eve were totally naked in the Garden of Eden. And they were not ashamed. And their nakedness and the nakedness of others would not have been a temptation.

“And they [Adam and Eve] were both naked, to wit, Adam and his wife, and were not ashamed.” (Gen. 2:25)

However, after they sinned, total nakedness became shameful and a temptation. Hence God covered their private parts so that they would be modestly dressed.

“And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.” (Gen. 3:21)

It is God himself, then, who, since the fall of Adam and Eve, commands people to modestly cover their private parts when in public, under pain of sin.

God cursed Cham's son Chanaan and Chanaan's posterity because Cham and Chanaan did not cover up their father Noe's nakedness but instead looked upon it. Whereas, Noe's other sons covered their father's nakedness while not even looking upon his nakedness:

“Which when Cham the father of Chanaan had seen, to wit, that his father's nakedness was uncovered, he told it to his two brethren without. But Sem and Japheth put a cloak upon their shoulders, and going backward, covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were turned away, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noe awaking from the wine, when he had learned what his younger son had done to him, he said: Cursed be Chanaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.” (Gen. 9:22-25)

Therefore, God would never command his chosen people to *voluntarily* go about in public totally naked.

However, at times, God allows people to be *involuntarily* stripped totally naked in public by evildoers either as a punishment for their sins or as a trial for his chosen people in which they obtain grace for being persecuted for the faith.

Bible verses in which naked does not mean totally naked

When the Bible says that St. Peter was naked, it means that he was wearing only a swimsuit because he was fishing. It says that he was naked since he was not appropriately dressed for the occasion of being in the presence of Jesus Christ. Hence St. Peter put a coat about himself:

“That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved, said to Peter: It is the Lord. Simon Peter, when he heard that it was the Lord, girt his coat about him (for he was naked) and cast himself into the sea.” (Jn. 21:7)

Catholic Commentary on John 21:7: “**Girt his coat:** Greek τὸν ἐπενδύτην διεξώσατο, he put on his tunic over his clothes. Whence it is plain that he was not before wholly naked but only after the fashion of a workman, stripped of his outer garments.”

When the Bible says that St. John was naked, it means that he was clothed only in his undergarments:

“Then his disciples, leaving him, all fled away. And a certain young man followed him, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and they laid hold on him. But he, casting off the linen cloth, fled from them naked.” (Mk. 14:50-52)

Hence when St. John was stripped of his outer garment, he was only clothed in his undergarments and could be said to be naked. And even if St. John had been totally naked, he would not have been voluntarily naked.

When the Bible says that King David was naked, it means stripped of his regal garments while wearing other garments:

“And David returned to bless his own house; and Michol the daughter of Saul, coming out to meet David, said: How glorious was the king of Israel to day, uncovering himself before the handmaids of his servants, and was naked, as if one of the buffoons should be naked.” (2 Ki. 6:20)

The parallel verses in 1 Paralipomenon 15:27-29 state that David was wearing garments when he danced before the Ark, even though he did not wear his regal garments:

“And David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, and all the Levites that carried the ark, and the singing men, and Chonenias the ruler of the prophecy among the singers; and David also had on him an ephod of linen. And all Israel brought the ark of the covenant of the Lord with joyful shouting, and sounding with the sound of the

cornet, and with trumpets, and cymbals, and psalteries, and harps. And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord was come to the city of David, Michol the daughter of Saul, looking out at a window, saw king David dancing and playing; and she despised him in her heart.” (1 Par. 15:27-29)

Michol expected David to be dressed in regal garments on this occasion and thus looked upon him as if he were naked, as a king would look if he appeared at court in his pajamas:

Catholic Commentary on 1 Par. 15:29: “**Despised him in her heart:** Michol reproached David for appearing without his regal ornaments (2 Ki. 6:20), as if he had been naked. We see David had on a robe of byssus with the ephod.”

When the Bible says that King Saul was naked, it means he was stripped of his outer garments:

“And he stripped himself also of his garments, and prophesied with the rest before Samuel, and lay down naked all that day and night. This gave occasion to a proverb: What! is Saul too among the prophets?” (1 Ki. 19:24)

Catholic Commentary on 1 Ki. 19:24: “**Naked:** Divested of his regal ornaments though not immodest or in an indecent posture. People are said to be undressed when they have not such clothes on as might be expected.”

When the nakedness of priests was exposed when they went up the steps to the altar, it means that their undergarments were exposed:

“Thou shalt not go up by steps unto my altar, lest thy nakedness be discovered.” (Ex. 20:26)

We read in other verses that the priests were to wear special undergarments made of linen so as to not produce sweat:

“[Moreover the sons of Aaron] shalt make also linen breeches, to cover the flesh of their nakedness from the reins to the thighs. (Ex. 28:42) He shall be vested with a linen tunic, he shall cover his nakedness with linen breeches, he shall be girded with a linen girdle... (Lev. 16:4)”

Hence the word “nakedness” in Exodus 20:26 means the exposure of the priests’ undergarments: “*Thou shalt not go up by steps unto my altar, lest thy nakedness be discovered.*”

When the Bible says that the holy Prophet Isaias went naked, it means without his outer garment and thus only with his undergarments:

Septuagint: “At that same time the Lord spoke by the hand of Isaias the son of Amos, saying: Go, and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and take off thy shoes from thy feet. And he did so, and went naked and barefoot. And the Lord said: As my servant Isaias hath walked, naked and barefoot, it shall be a sign and a wonder of three years upon Egypt, and upon Ethiopia, so shall the king of the Assyrians lead away the prisoners of Egypt, and the captivity of Ethiopia, young and old, naked and barefoot, having the shame of Egypt exposed.” (Isa. 20:2-4)

These verses say that Isaias took off his sackcloth and shoes and thus do not say that he took off his undergarments, which all men wore:

Catholic Commentary on Isa. 20:2: “**Naked:** Only without his upper garment. People are said to be naked when they are almost so.”

Hence Isaias was clothed in his undergarments and thus appeared in public as if he were naked and in extreme poverty, which was the punishment the Egyptians and Ethiopians were to expect.

When the holy Prophet Micheas said that he would go stripped naked, he meant insufficiently and poorly clothed in order to show the impending poverty that was to come upon the evil Jews:

“Therefore will I lament and howl: I will go stripped and naked: I will make a wailing like the dragons and a mourning like the ostriches.” (Mich. 1:8)

Catholic Commentary on Mich. 1:8: “**Naked:** Ill clothed to shew the approaching calamity of the Israelites.”

The corporal work of mercy of clothing the naked means not only those who are totally or immodestly naked but also those who are modestly but insufficiently clothed, such as for the weather. Hence when God commands his followers to clothe the naked, he means men who are either totally naked or insufficiently clothed, such as for cold weather:

“Eat thy bread with the hungry and the needy, and with thy garments cover the naked.” (Tob. 4:17)

“And [he] hath not grieved any man, nor withholden the pledge, nor taken away with violence, but hath given his bread to the hungry, and covered the naked with a garment.” (Ez. 18:16)

“Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and the harbourless into thy house; when thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh.” (Isa. 58:7)

“For I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; naked, and you covered me; sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me.” (Mt. 25:35-36)

Hence to give a scantily clothed man a warm cloak on a cold day is to clothe the naked. And it can also mean to give a totally naked or otherwise immodestly dressed man sufficient clothing so that he could dress modestly.

In the *Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*, we read that Brother Juniper stripped off his outer garments and went about in public with only his inner garments. But in this case, it says that he was half-naked instead of naked:

Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi: “Chapter 8 (How Brother Juniper Made Himself Contemptible for the Love of God) Brother Juniper, desiring to make himself despicable in the sight of men, stripped himself one day of all but his inner garment; and, making a bundle of his habit and other clothes, he entered the city of Viterbo, and went half-naked into the market place...”

Recipients of baptism were not totally naked when baptized

In the early days of the Church, candidates for baptism were baptized by immersion into a body of water or by water flowing over the head of the recipient into the body of water. Therefore, the baptisteries contained pools of water:

Nominal *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Baptismal Font: “ARCHAEOLOGY: In the Apostolic Age, as in Jewish times (John, iii, 23), baptism was administered without special fonts, at the seaside or in streams or pools of water (Acts, viii, 38); Tertullian refers to St. Peter’s baptizing in the Tiber (De bapt., iv); similarly, in later periods of evangelization, missionaries baptized in rivers as is narrated of St. Paulinus in England by Bede (Hist. Eccl., II, xiv-xvi). Indoor baptism, however, was not uncommon (Acts, ix, 18; xvi, 33) and, for the sake of both privacy and solemnity, came to be the rule; while reverence for the rite itself and for the water, which came in time to receive a special consecration, gave rise to the use of a special basin or font for the baptismal ceremony and, at a later period, for the preservation of the water. With the establishment of distinctively Christian places of worship, this font became one of their important adjuncts. In the East it took the form of a pool or cistern, similar to those of the baths, often larger, and deep enough to permit total immersion. Whence it was called *kalymbethra* (swimming-bath), a name which in its Latin equivalent, *natatorium*, was also used in the West, as was the term *piscina* with its apt allusion to birth and life in the waters (Tertullian, De bapt., i; St. Augustine, De schis. Donat., III, ii). The name *fons* (a spring of water) was also in early use and came to prevail.

“The oldest western fonts are found in the Roman catacombs, cisterns hewn from the tufa in the floor of baptismal chapels. (See BAPTISTERY.) Examples are to be found in the Ostrian Cemetery, where in a small shallow basin in the floor a spring wells up in the Cemetery of Pontianus, where an oblong reservoir about eighteen square feet in surface area and three feet in depth, is yet filled with water (Marucchi, *Archéologie Chrétienne*, II, 63); that of St. Felicitas (*ibid.*, 304); and of St. Priscilla, where in 1901 was found a basin of particular interest on account of its presumably high antiquity as a baptismal center (Marucchi in *Nuovo Bullettino*, 1901, 73). Besides these actual specimens, the font is also depicted in the remains of early Christian art. In nearly every instance it is a shallow pool or basin in which the neophyte stands with feet immersed, while water is poured on him from an overhead stream or from a vase held by the person baptizing. That this was the ordinary mode of baptizing during the early centuries is a view the acceptance of which is compelled by all recent study in the archaeology of baptismal fonts (de Rossi, *Bullettino di Archeol.*, 1876, 8-15; Duchesne, *Les Eglises séparées*, Paris, 1905, 89-96). With the church-building activity of the fourth century, the font was reverently enshrined in the magnificent baptisteries which date from that period. It took the form of a basin which was either entirely below the level of the baptistery floor or was partially raised above it by a low curb of masonry, over which the neophytes passed by steps, in going down into the water; to the ascent and descent, as well as to the number of steps this involved, there was often attached a mystical significance (Isidore of Seville, *De divin. off.*, II, xxv). These fonts were either circular or octagonal in form and rarely hexagonal or square; a few were in the form of a cross (Gregory of Tours, *Mirac.*, I, xxiv), a type more common in the East than in the West, while an occasional sarcophagus-shaped font was suggested, perhaps by the allusion to baptism in Romans, vi, 4.

“In size fonts varied, but as a rule they were large enough for the simultaneous baptism of a few catechumens. Their average depth of less than three feet points to the continued prevalence of but partial immersion down to the eighth century. Water was provided either by natural springs or by pipes leading into the basins, though there are many examples of its being poured in from above the font, over the heads of the neophytes. Drain pipes conducted the water into the earth or into a nearby stream after the ceremony... With the thirteenth century, however, simple infusion came by degrees to be adopted, and with its general use, the font became smaller and more shallow, and was raised from the floor on piers or columns. The older type of font continued to find favor in Italy, but in the Northern countries the winter chill of the waters hastened the general use of infusion, and as this rite required for each person baptized but a small quantity of water, the font generally took the simple form and small dimensions it has today.”

Because the whole body of baptismal recipients would be soaked with water, they removed their outer garments and only wore undergarments. Some Church Fathers and others referred to them as naked but did not mean they were totally naked. They also used the naked theme to represent being born again and dying to sin. As men are born naked into the physical world, hence they are born naked (but not totally naked) into the spiritual world, the kingdom of God, by baptism. And as Christ died naked (but not totally naked) on the Cross to remit sins, so men die naked (but not totally naked) to their sins by baptism. The Old Man dies, the New Man rises:

‘Naked’ Baptism in the Early Church: The Rhetoric and the Reality, by Laurie Guy, 2003: “Baptism was a radical, initiatory, life-changing rite of passage in the early church. Although candidates for baptism may have had a long lead-up to the point of baptism — extensive association with Christians, resolution to be a Christian, and the receiving of catechetical instruction — it was the rite of baptism that was the Rubicon. The point within the complex process of initiation at which the line from death to life was passed was the point of immersion in water. There the person became a Christian. Salvation was through water: there one was ‘born again’; there was the place where Christian life began. Baptism was a tomb, the place where one died, and a womb, the place where one was reborn. It was a radical life-changing

rite. No wonder then that John Chrysostom could wax lyrically over baptism as ‘sacred nuptials.’

“Baptism was a new creation, paralleling the creation of Adam. As John Chrysostom said of baptism: ‘It creates and fashions us anew, not forming us again out of earth, but creating us out of another element, namely of the nature of water.’ A feature of both death and birth is the phenomenon of nakedness. Job’s anguished cry affirmed this: ‘Naked we come from our mother’s womb, naked shall we return.’ (Job 1:21) As the church developed an increasingly elaborate ritual dramatizing the radical implications of the rite, it is not surprising that baptism was, or came to be, dramatically expressed in the nakedness of the immersed.

“The fact of nakedness is repeatedly declared in patristic texts. [However, the] assumption that it was standard practice for baptismal candidates, including women candidates, to be stark naked at the point of their baptism cannot be upheld... The depth of concern about the need to use male clergy in the baptismal process and the deep sense of wrongness of male viewing of female nakedness, will have stopped any widespread practice of total stripping. However, baptism was in the category of the most profound of human experiences, alongside that of birth and death itself. Only the language of nakedness came to be deemed adequate to match the dramatic ritual of baptism and to express the radicalism of the change depicted in that ritual.”¹

Beware, then, of the heretical perverts who take some of the Church Fathers’ and others’ use of the word “naked” out of context to teach the heresy and immorality that recipients of baptism were totally naked when baptized.

When some of the Church Fathers and others teach that recipients of baptism were naked when they got baptized, they mean stripped of their outer garments. Hence they would still have their undergarments on and not be immodestly naked, although they would not be dressed for attending Mass or going about in public. Men would have worn either a loincloth (like boxer shorts or swimsuits) or a light undergarment that covers their upper and lower body (such as a chiton, a type of tunic) and thus their private parts were modestly covered. And women would have worn a chiton.



An ancient loincloth, similar to modern boxer shorts



A man wearing a tunic or chiton



A woman wearing a chiton

Natural law and common sense

First I appeal to the natural law and common sense to prove that baptismal recipients were not totally naked. If they were totally naked, then grandparents, fathers, mothers, husbands, wives, virgins, sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters would be totally naked when baptized. And, in the very least, the ministers, sponsors, and family members would be gazing upon their total

¹ *The Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 27, No. 2. June 2003.

nakedness. That also would mean that Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary were totally naked when they were baptized. Who would not cringe at the mere thought, let alone reality, of such an immoral, scandalous, offensive, and disgusting thing!

Church Fathers and others

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that baptismal candidates will put off their tunic and be stripped naked. But he does not mean totally naked because he does not say that they must be stripped of their undergarments. He compares their nakedness to Jesus' nakedness on the holy Cross. Hence they are not totally naked because Jesus was not totally naked on the Cross. Jesus had on a loincloth to cover his private parts. And when he compares their nakedness to the nakedness of Adam before he fell into sin, he does not mean total nakedness, as Adam was but a lesser nakedness:

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, Lecture 20 (Mystagogical Lecture 2), 4th century: "As soon, then, as ye entered, ye put off your tunic; and this was an image of putting off the old man with his deeds. Having stripped yourselves, ye were naked; in this also imitating Christ, who was stripped naked on the Cross, and by his nakedness put off from himself the principalities and powers, and openly triumphed over them on the tree. For since the adverse powers made their lair in your members, ye may no longer wear that old garment; I do not at all mean this visible one, but the old man, which waxeth corrupt in the lusts of deceit. May the soul which has once put him off, never again put him on, but say with the Spouse of Christ in the Song of Songs, I have put off my garment, how shall I put it on? O wondrous thing! ye were naked in the sight of all and were not ashamed; for truly ye bore the likeness of the first-formed Adam, who was naked in the garden and was not ashamed."

St. Cyril was in the Eastern part of the Catholic Church and so was the heretic John Chrysostom. And both lived in the 4th century. Hence the baptism ritual would have been the same for both. John gives us additional information which proves that the recipients of baptism were not totally naked but had on undergarments:

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Instructions to Catechumens*, c. 388: "First Instruction: ...2. For he who is about to approach these holy and dread mysteries must be awake and alert, must be clean from all cares of this life, full of much self-restraint, much readiness... I wished to say this first of all, why in the world our fathers, passing by the whole year, settled that the children of the Church should be initiated at this season; and for what reason, after the instruction from us, removing your shoes and raiment, unclad and unshod, with but one garment on, they conduct you to hear the words of the exorcisers. For it is not thoughtlessly and rashly that they have planned this dress and this season for us. But both these things have a certain mystic and secret reason."

'Naked' Baptism in the Early Church: The Rhetoric and the Reality, by Laurie Guy, 2003: "A text found in John Chrysostom's writings may in fact be the best pointer to the situation that most commonly prevailed. In his *Instructions to Catechumens*, John refers to the about-to-be-baptized as disrobing after catechetical instruction and then being conducted to the exorcisers (the final major process prior to baptism) as follows: 'removing your shoes and raiment, unclad and unshod, with but one garment on.' Candidates were *gymnos* but still retained their *chiton*. This indicates that in Chrysostom's experience, the about-to-be-baptized, though 'naked,' still had a basic covering. For modesty's sake they retained this covering for their final exorcism and likely also for the immediately succeeding baptism."

If one did not have access to the above teaching from Chrysostom (where he says that baptismal recipients had on an undergarment) but only had access to his following teachings, they

could take his use of the word “naked” out of context to mean baptismal recipients were totally naked when baptized:

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Homilies on Colossians*, Homily 6: “...God arrives, and here is nakedness, and there was nakedness; there, however, one that had sinned was made naked, because he sinned, but here one is made naked that he may be set free. Then, man put off the glory which he had; now, he puts off the old man; and before going up (to the contest), puts him off as easily, as it were his garments.”

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Letter to Innocent*: “How can I tell you what followed, a tale more harrowing than any tragedy? What words can express it? What ears can hear it without a shudder? While we were pressing the requests I have mentioned, a strong body of soldiers invaded the church, on the Great Sabbath, when evening was fast closing in, forcibly expelled all the clergy who were with us, and surrounded the chancel with arms. Women who were in the houses of prayer, unrobed in readiness for baptism on that day, fled naked in face of this savage attack, not even allowed to clothe themselves as womanly decency requires. Many of these were even thrown outside injured, and the fonts were filled with blood, and the holy water dyed red from their wounds.”²

When Chrysostom says that women who were about to be baptized fled naked and were not clothed as decency requires, he means in view of the general public. This could be taken to mean that they were either totally naked or had on undergarments and thus were modest but not modest enough to go about in public:

Footnote 34: “Chrysostom’s ‘Letter to Innocent’ 1.3, quoted in Palladius, *Dialogue on the Life of Saint John Chrysostom* 2, refers to women unrobed for baptism when a disturbance forced them to flee naked without being allowed to clothe themselves as womanly decency requires. The text is somewhat ambiguous, for the ‘unrobed for baptism’ and ‘clothe themselves as womanly decency requires’ could mean that some undergarments were worn: Guy, ‘“Naked” Baptism,’ p. 140, argues that such was meant by ‘naked.’ ”

From Chrysostom’s teachings in his *Instructions to Catechumens*, we know for certain that his above teaching meant that they had on an undergarment and thus were not totally naked when he says the following:

Heretic John Chrysostom, *Instructions to Catechumens*, c. 388: “First Instruction: 2. ...after the instruction from us, removing your shoes and raiment, unclad and unshod, **with but one garment on**, they conduct you to hear the words of the exorcisers. For it is not thoughtlessly and rashly that they have planned this dress and this season for us. But both these things have a certain mystic and secret reason.”

Hence we also know that in his Homily 6 on Colossians his reference to baptismal recipients does not mean totally naked. And we also know that this was the practice in the East; and thus when St. Cyril of Jerusalem says that baptismal recipients were naked, he also does not mean that they were totally naked.

The same, then, applies to some of the Western Church Fathers’ use of the word “naked” in reference to baptismal recipients. They, too, do not mean that they were totally naked.

For example, St. Hippolytus says that not only the recipients for baptism were naked but also the bishop and deacon who were in the water with the recipients. Hence if his use of the word “naked” means totally naked, then the bishop also and the deacon were totally naked. Any sane-minded person who is not a pervert would cringe at the mere thought, let alone reality, of such an immoral, scandalous, offensive, and disgusting thing. Therefore, St. Hippolytus’ use of the word “naked,” in this case, does not mean totally naked:

St. Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition*, c. 215: “At the hour in which the cock crows, they shall first pray over the water. When they come to the water, the water shall be

² Quoted by Palladius in *The Dialogue of Palladius* concerning the Life of John Chrysostom.

pure and flowing, that is, the water of a spring or a flowing body of water. Then they shall take off all their clothes. The children shall be baptized first. All of the children who can answer for themselves, let them answer. If there are any children who cannot answer for themselves, let their parents answer for them, or someone else from their family. After this, the men will be baptized. Finally, the women, after they have unbound their hair, and removed their jewelry. No one shall take any foreign object with themselves down into the water. When the presbyter takes hold of each of them who are to receive baptism, he shall tell each of them to renounce, saying, 'I renounce you, Satan, all your service and all your works.' After he has said this, he shall anoint each with the Oil of Exorcism, saying, 'Let every evil spirit depart from you.' Then, after these things, the presbyter passes each of them on to the bishop who stands at the water. They shall stand in the water naked. A deacon, likewise, will go down with them into the water."³

Bishops, judges, and elders, were forbidden under pain of mortal sin to command their subjects to get totally naked and then look upon their total nakedness. For example, two elder judges in Israel lusted after Susanna. They spied upon her total nakedness while she was bathing and then tried to rape her. And when they were found guilty by the holy Prophet Daniel, they were killed:

"Now there was a man that dwelt in Babylon, and his name was Joakim; and he took a wife whose name was Susanna, the daughter of Helcias, a very beautiful woman and one that feared God... And there were two of the ancients of the people appointed judges that year, of whom the Lord said: Iniquity came out from Babylon from the ancient judges that seemed to govern the people... These men frequented the house of Joakim, and all that had any matters of judgment came to them. And when the people departed away at noon, Susanna went in and walked in her husband's orchard. And the old men saw her going in every day and walking, and they were inflamed with lust towards her; and they perverted their own mind and turned away their eyes that they might not look unto heaven nor remember just judgments... And it fell out, as they watched a fit day, she went in on a time, as yesterday and the day before, with two maids only, and was desirous to wash herself in the orchard, for it was hot weather. And there was nobody there, but the two old men that had hid themselves and were beholding her. So she said to the maids: Bring me oil, and washing balls, and shut the doors of the orchard, that I may wash me. And they did as she bade them; and they shut the doors of the orchard and went out by a back door to fetch what she had commanded them, and they knew not that the elders were hid within. Now when the maids were gone forth, the two elders arose and ran to her, and said: Behold the doors of the orchard are shut and nobody seeth us, and we are in love with thee; wherefore consent to us, and lie with us. But if thou wilt not, we will bear witness against thee, that a young man was with thee, and therefore thou didst send away thy maids from thee." (Dan. 13)

Why, then, would God ever authorize bishops to command baptismal recipients to get totally naked while he and others present look upon their total nakedness. And, even worse, why would God command the bishop and deacons or deaconesses to be totally naked also! If God did command this, then God is a liar and the author of sin.

With all these things considered, we also know that St. Ambrose's use of the word "naked" in reference to baptismal recipients does not mean that they were totally naked; and thus a minimum of modesty was preserved. Some say that the following teaching was not from St. Ambrose and thus label it Pseudo-Ambrose.⁴ Either way, "naked" in reference to baptismal recipients does not mean totally naked even though it is compared to the total nakedness in which we were born:

St. Ambrose, *Sermon 20*: "Naked were we born into the world; naked came we to the baptismal font... How absurd, then, that he whom his mother brought forth naked, the church received naked, should enter heaven with riches."

³ 21, 3-11.

⁴ Pseudo-Ambrose, tom. ii. Col. 403.

Latin, *Sermon 20*: “Nudi in saeculo nascimur, nudi etiam accedimus ad lavacrum. Quain autem in congruum ac absurdum est, ut quem nudum mater genuit, nudum suscipit ecclesia.”

In St. Ambrose’s work titled *Concerning Virgins*, he teaches that it is a sin to look upon a naked virgin:

St. Ambrose, *Concerning Virgins*, to Marcellina, his sister, 4th century: “20. ...Fearing through modesty..., [that] any male, even a beast, should see the virgin naked...⁵

“27. ...Is anything so conducive to lust as...to expose in nakedness those parts of the body which either nature has hidden or custom has veiled...?”⁶”

How, then, can anyone believe for an instant that St. Ambrose baptized totally naked virgins! And if St. Hippolytus’ statement, that bishops and deacons were naked when they baptized, is taken out of context to mean totally naked, then that would mean that St. Ambrose was also totally naked when he baptized totally naked virgins.

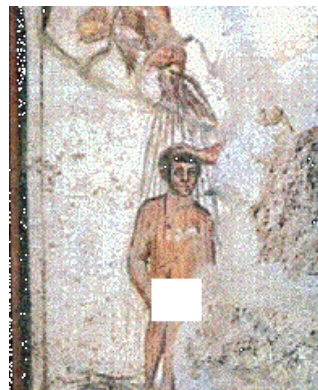
Every or almost every image before the 12th century shows baptismal recipients not totally naked

Before the 12th century every, or almost every, image that depicts baptism shows the recipients not totally naked. Only a handful of images supposedly from before the 12th century show them totally naked. I say *supposedly* because some immoral, idolatrous, or heretical images are purposely mis-dated to before the 12th century when they are actually from the 12th century onward. They do this in order to have a precedence and an excuse to justify the many immoral, idolatrous, or heretical images in Catholic places from the 12th century onward.

But if the dating is correct (that is, before the 12th century), only a very, very few immoral, idolatrous, or heretical images existed and thus they were aberrations and abuses. It is possible but not probable that some of the Gentile converts, such as Romans and Greeks, who were used to being naked in front of other people, such as in bath houses, were baptized totally naked in isolated cases, as some images depict in the catacombs.



Drawing of a baptism from the catacomb of St. Callixtus, Rome, 3rd Century



Drawing of a baptism from the catacomb of Ss. Marcellinus and Peter, Rome, 4th Century

⁵ b. 2, c. 1.

⁶ b. 3, c. 1.

And in the Catholic Baptistry of Neon at Ravenna, which was in construction from 460 to 510, there is one image of a totally naked Jesus getting baptized:



The Orthodox Baptistery of Ravenna, aka the “Neon Baptistery,” built AD 460-510



Image of the naked baptism of Jesus from the Neon Baptistery, suspiciously dated AD 460-510

It is said that this immoral image was in the baptistery when it was constructed. But the date of this immoral image is highly suspect of originating at a much later date when all the evidence is considered.

But if the dates are correct regarding these very, very few exceptions, they would have been aberrations and abuses and not an accepted practice of the Catholic Church’s bishops and priests at that time. Hence it would have been quickly stopped, as there is a great mass of evidence that affirms that baptismal recipients were not totally naked when baptized. This is also affirmed by the natural law:

‘Naked’ Baptism in the Early Church: The Rhetoric and the Reality, by Laurie Guy, 2003: “Conclusion: This article has shown that the assumption that it was standard practice for baptismal candidates, including women candidates, to be stark naked at the point of their baptism cannot be upheld. Such practice of totally naked baptism may have occurred from time to time and in the odd location. Normally, however, the depth of concern about the need to use male clergy in the baptismal process and the deep sense of wrongness of male viewing of female nakedness, will have stopped any widespread practice of total stripping. However, baptism was in the category of the most profound of human experiences, alongside that of birth and death itself. Only the language of nakedness came to be deemed adequate to match the dramatic ritual of baptism and to express the radicalism of the change depicted in that ritual.”

However, from the beginning of the Great Apostasy, which began in the 12th century, totally naked images progressively appeared in churches, other holy places, tombs, and religious books, which included images of totally naked baptismal recipients, and were promoted or at least allowed by most bishops and priests.

Jesus was not totally naked on the holy Cross

Even if Jesus had been totally naked on the holy Cross, this would not have violated God’s commandment to not go about in public totally naked voluntarily because Jesus would have been involuntarily stripped of his garments. However, it is greatly improbable that Jesus was totally naked on the holy Cross and thus in full view of everyone and hence even of his mother, the other holy women, and children.

The Bible says that Jesus was stripped of his garments but does not say *all* of his garments nor that he was naked:

“Then the soldiers of the governor, taking Jesus into the hall, gathered together unto him the whole band; and stripping him, they put a scarlet cloak about him. And plating a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand. And bowing the knee before him, they mocked him, saying: Hail, king of the Jews. And spitting upon him, they took the reed and struck his head. And after they had mocked him, they took off the cloak from him, and put on him his own garments, and led him away to crucify him. And going out, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon, him they forced to take up his cross. And they came to the place that is called Golgotha, which is the place of Calvary. And they gave him wine to drink mingled with gall. And when he had tasted, he would not drink. And after they had crucified him, they divided his garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: They divided my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast lots.” (Mt. 27:27-35)

“The soldiers, therefore, when they had crucified him, took his garments (and they made four parts, to every soldier a part) and also his coat. Now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said then one to another: Let us not cut it, but let us cast lots for it, whose it shall be, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saying: They have parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they have cast lot. And the soldiers indeed did these things.” (Jn. 19:23-24)

Even if the Bible did say that Jesus was naked on the Cross, it would not mean that he was totally naked, as when the Bible says that St. Peter and other holy men were naked.⁷

And when the Church Fathers and others say that Jesus was naked on the Cross, they do not mean totally naked, just as when they refer to baptismal recipients as being naked but not totally naked. For example,

St. Ambrose, *On Luke*, 4th century: “110. So it is important to consider what manner of Man ascends. I see him naked [cf. Saint John 19:23]; let him who prepares to conquer this age so ascend that he does not seek the help of the age. Adam who desired clothing was conquered [cf. Genesis 3:7]. He who laid down his garments conquered. He ascended in like manner as nature formed us with God as Creator. In like manner as the first Adam had dwelt in Paradise, the Second Adam entered Paradise [cf. 1 Corinthians 15:47]. And in order to conquer not for himself alone, but for all, he held out his hands [cf. Esaias 65:2; Romans 10:21], so as to draw all things to himself, and having wrested them from the bonds of death and hung them on the yoke of faith, to join to the heavenly those who before were earthly [cf. 1 Corinthians 15:48-49].”⁸

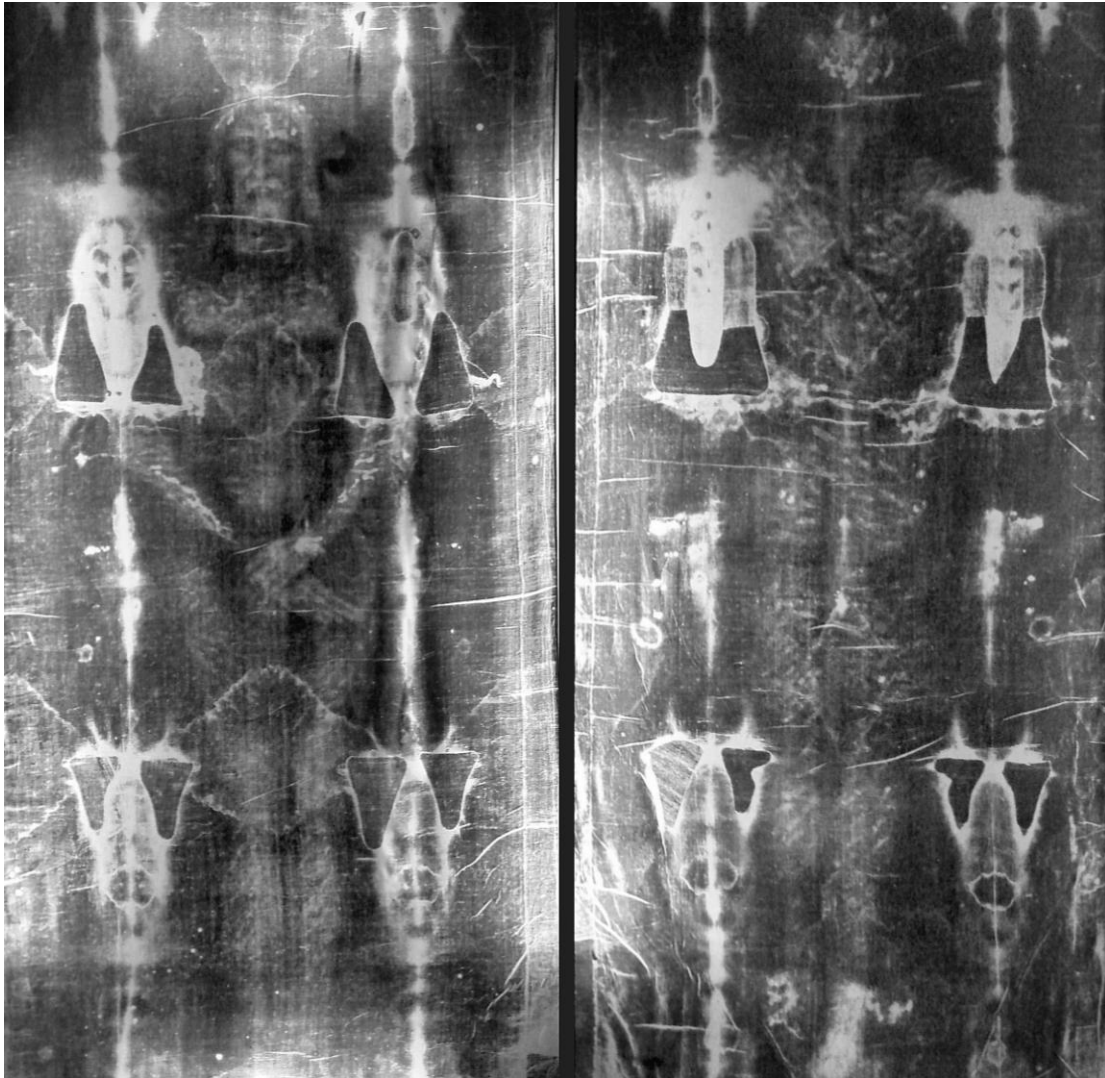
Jesus wears a loincloth on every depiction of the crucifixion before the 15th century

From the information I have, the first image of a crucifixion that shows Jesus totally naked was produced during the Great Apostasy in the 15th century by the apostate, immoral, pervert, homosexual, and blasphemous Michelangelo. And it caused a big uproar! From that point forward, other images of a totally naked Jesus on the Cross began to appear.

⁷ See in this article [Bible verses in which naked does not mean totally naked](#), p. 2.

⁸ b. 10, secs. 107-112, on Luke 23:38.

Picture of front and back of the shroud



The Shroud of Turin, located at the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, Turin, Italy.

Jesus' loincloth and the shroud

Some may say that Jesus was totally naked when he was on the Cross because the image of Jesus on the Shroud of Turin shows Jesus totally naked and thus does not show him wearing a loincloth. But this does not hold true when all the evidence is considered.

After Jesus was taken down from the Cross, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapped Jesus' dead body with fine linens:

“And after these things, Joseph of Arimathea (because he was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave leave. He came therefore and took away the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus also came (he who at the first came to Jesus by night), bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. They took therefore the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury. Now there was in the place where he was crucified a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre wherein no man yet had been laid. There, therefore,

because of the parascave of the Jews, they laid Jesus because the sepulchre was nigh at hand.” (Jn. 19:38-42)

“And when he had understood it by the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And Joseph buying fine linen, and taking him down, wrapped him up in the fine linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewed out of a rock. And he rolled a stone to the door of the sepulchre. And Mary Magdalen, and Mary the mother of Joseph, beheld where he was laid.” (Mk. 15:45-47)

“He went to Pilate and asked the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded that the body should be delivered. And Joseph, taking the body, wrapped it up in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new monument, which he had hewed out in a rock. And he rolled a great stone to the door of the monument and went his way.” (Mt. 27:58-60)

What follows is according to Jewish burial laws:⁹

- Because Jesus died a violent death and blood flowed from him at and after the time of his death and stained his body, his body was not washed. Hence the shroud shows Jesus’ blood-stained body. If the only blood on Jesus’ body was shed when he was alive, such as when he was scourged, then his body would have been washed.
- Any clothing that was stained with blood that was shed at or after death was not to be removed from the body and thus buried with it. However, if the only blood that stained the clothing was blood that was shed when Jesus was alive, such as when he was scourged, then that clothing was to be removed and not buried with the body.

Hence it is certain that Jesus’ body was not washed because it was stained with blood that was shed at or after Jesus’ death. However, there are two possibilities regarding Jesus’ loincloth:

1. Jesus’ loincloth was not stained with blood that was shed at or after Jesus’ death. Hence his loincloth would have been removed and washed. And it was probably given to his mother, Mary. Even if an insufficient amount of blood at or after his death stained his loincloth as compared to what stained it when he was alive, it would have still been removed and washed.
2. Jesus’ loincloth was stained with a sufficient amount of blood that was shed at or after his death and hence his loincloth would have remained on his body and would have been buried with it.

The consequences of each opinion regarding the shroud which shows a totally naked Jesus are as follows:

1. Jesus’ loincloth was removed from his body and not buried with it. However, according to Jewish law, his private parts would have been covered for modesty by a linen cloth.
2. Jesus’ loincloth was not removed and was buried with his body.

In either case, Jesus’ private parts were covered for modesty, either by a loincloth or a linen cloth. And in either case, his face was covered with a linen cloth according to Jewish law. Some may ask, “If that is true, how come the shroud shows a totally naked Jesus and no loin cloth or linen cloths? The cloth that covered Jesus’ private parts and the cloth that covered his face do not show on the shroud because the image on the shroud is similar to an x-ray that does not show flesh but only bone. But in the case of the shroud, the image does not show any clothing but only the flesh and hair of Jesus’ body. Hence the shroud shows a totally naked Jesus because these

⁹ See in this article [On Jewish burial laws](#), p. 15.

cloths did not show up on the image. It was like Jesus' divine body emitted a divine radiation that penetrated the under cloths and imprinted his image on the outer cloth.

The fact that Jesus' body was covered with more than one cloth is proved by the Bible. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus wrapped Jesus' body in more than one linen cloth:

“And after these things, Joseph of Arimathea (because he was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus. And Pilate gave leave. He came therefore, and took away the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus also came (he who at the first came to Jesus by night), bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. They took therefore the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths, with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.” (Jn. 19:38-40)

And in the empty tomb Sts. Peter and John saw the linen cloths that Jesus had been wrapped in and also saw the napkin that had covered Jesus' head:

“Peter therefore went out, and that other disciple, and they came to the sepulchre. And they both ran together, and that other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And when he stooped down, he saw the linen cloths lying; but yet he went not in.” (Jn. 20:3-5)

“Then cometh Simon Peter, following him, and went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen cloths lying, and the napkin that had been about his head, not lying with the linen cloths, but apart, wrapped up into one place.” (Jn. 20:6-7)

Hence under the outer linen cloth (the shroud), there was a napkin that covered Jesus' head and at least one linen cloth that covered a part of his body. Yet these do not show up on the shroud. Therefore, even though the image on the shroud shows a totally naked Jesus, Jesus was not totally naked.

On Jewish burial laws

In Accordance with Jewish Burial Custom, the Body of Jesus Was Not Washed, by Bonnie B. Lavoie, Gilbert R. Lavoie, Rev. Daniel Klutstein, John Regan:

“Lamm's work basically paraphrases the laws found in the *Code of Jewish Law* from the 16th Century; the following quotes are from the more recent abridged version of the Code:

‘9. One who fell and died instantly, if his body was bruised and blood flowed from the wound, and there is apprehension that the blood of the soul was absorbed in his clothes, he should not be cleansed, but they should inter him in his garments and boots, but above his garments they should wrap a sheet which is called Sobeb...

‘10. Even if blood flowed from his body but it had ceased, and they had undressed him, after which he revived and lived for a few days and then died, whereupon he should be cleansed and shrouds be prepared for him, although he be stained by his blood still he should be cleansed, for the blood which he had lost in his lifetime does not matter, as we are only concerned with the blood which one loses at death, perhaps this is the blood of the soul, or perhaps the blood of the soul became mixed therewith.’

“This section is very specific and is an exception to the normal custom of simply washing the dead. In this case, if death is by violence and blood flows at the time of death, the victim does not undergo the ritual of washing. Therefore, with regard to the burial of Christ, it can be inferred in John 19:40 that the body of Christ was not washed prior to his burial but that it was simply placed in ‘linen cloths’ and buried according to this specific Jewish custom.

“As for the definition of life-blood mentioned in the Old Testament, a note in the Mishnah defines this term by referring directly to Leviticus 7:11. From this passage,

‘...it is inferred that the blood which issues at the moment of death (which is what the Mishnah means by ‘life-blood’) is the blood that makes atonement.’...

“Further reference to mingled blood is seen in the Talmud, which is a commentary on the Mishnah. It states:

‘...What then is meant by “mingled blood”? If a quarter of a log of blood issued from a slain man both while he was still alive and when he was dead and the flow had not yet ceased and it is doubtful whether the greater part issued while he was alive and the lesser part when he was dead or whether the lesser part issued while he was alive and the greater part when he was dead, such is mingled blood... R. Simeon ruled: If the blood of a man crucified upon the beam was flowing slowly to the ground, and a quarter of a log of blood was found under him, it is unclean. R. Judah declared it clean, since it might be held that the drop of death remained on the beam...’

“So, in summary, the Bible, the Mishnah, the Talmud and later the *Code of Jewish Law* enlighten our thinking with regard to Jewish customs by expanding our understanding of their concern with lifeblood. The Mishnah and Talmud specifically quantitate the minimum amount of blood which is necessary to become unclean (a quarter-log of blood) and the period at which it becomes unclean (at the time of death). This blood is described as an uncleanness of the first order and should be buried with the corpse. In the case of Jesus who died a violent death, it can be stated that there was blood on his body that flowed during life and after death. Furthermore, as to the quantity of blood that flowed after death, an accumulation of at least a quarter-log of blood can be easily inferred by John’s description of Christ’s wounds, especially when considering the wound on the side. The blood on his body was, therefore, mingled blood which could not have been washed off the body because it had to be buried with the corpse in order to comply with Jewish custom.”

Jesus’ behind is exposed on the shroud

Although Jesus allowed his behind to be exposed on the shroud, he did not allow his private part to be exposed, as his hands cover his private part. These facts indicate some important things:

1. If Jesus did not allow his private part to be exposed when buried in the shroud, he would not have allowed it to be exposed on the Cross. Hence, when on the Cross, a loincloth covered Jesus’ private part and, as a result, covered his behind.
2. Because Jesus allowed his behind to be exposed on the shroud but not his private part, the viewing of a behind is not as immodest as the viewing of a private part. This is known to all men by the natural law.
3. Because the shroud is first-hand evidence of the image of Jesus, a negative (a photo) and not a painting, the accuracy must be preserved. Hence Jesus’ behind had to be shown because it could not have been covered by his hands as his private part was. But the back side of the shroud should not be shown in a religious place when religious services are being conducted unless Jesus’ behind is covered, as some parents may not want their children to look upon the behind of Jesus.

The only exception, then, when a behind can be shown in images in a religious place is the behind of Jesus as shown on the Shroud of Turin. And the back side of the shroud must not be displayed in open public places for everyone to view unless Jesus’ behind is covered. But Jesus’ behind could be viewed in private places like museums where children can be banned from viewing if parents so desire. The Shroud was moved to Turin in 1578 where it remains today and is rarely exhibited.

Surely, God does not want public places, especially holy places, to have images of behinds all over the walls and on statues. The so-called holy place would be more like a place of shame and debauchery than a holy place. A place of human asses instead of holy people! Therefore, the

exception of Jesus' naked behind on the shroud must not be used as an excuse to desecrate holy places with naked behinds. When religious services are not being conducted, Jesus' naked behind on the shroud does not desecrate a church.

The many crucifixes are another proof that Jesus was not totally naked on the Cross

The crucifixion and death of Jesus is the most important event in the history of fallen mankind. Hence there are many images of the crucifixion to remind people of the great agony and death Jesus suffered to redeem mankind. As such, God would not want these images to be extremely immodest by showing the private part and behind of Jesus, especially his private part. Therefore, if Jesus' private part and behind were exposed on the Cross, then either no images of the crucifixion could be viewed by the general public or every image would have to be censored by covering the private parts. And this would not be so easy without obscuring the full view of the crucifixion, such as by placing wings of angels or a cloud to cover his private part and behind.

Immodest things mentioned in stories must not be shown in images

Even when the word "naked" is used in the Bible or other written sources to mean totally or otherwise immodestly naked, such images must not be copied in art without censoring the immodest parts. For example, even though the Bible teaches that Adam and Eve were created totally naked and that Noe when drunk was totally naked, images of such must not be made unless the immodest parts are censored. An artist can use a tree branch to block the private parts of Adam and Eve, or a piece of furniture to block the private parts of Noe. The same applies to rapes. Even though the Bible teaches that Jacob's daughter Dina was raped, images of such must not be made unless the immodest parts are censored. One does not need to see all the immodest and pornographic details but just enough to know that a rape occurred. The same applies to crimes of sodomy mentioned in the Bible. The same also applies to Bible verses that refer to men by saying those who piss against the wall:

"Therefore behold I will bring evils upon the house of Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall..." (3 Ki. 14:10)

One does not need to see an image of a man pissing on the wall.

The only exception when a totally naked behind may be viewed in public is Jesus' totally naked behind on the Shroud of Turin.¹⁰

Perverts who glorified nakedness

Beware, then, of lust-filled perverts who were obsessed with and glorified total nakedness. They have the blasphemous audacity to teach that some holy men voluntarily went about naked in public. These perverts formulated a perverted theology to defend the naked and immodest art that was prevalent in their days. For example, the immoral, false prophetess, and apostate Bridget of Sweden supposedly received messages from heaven, which were actually messages from hell. Her messages from the Devil supported and confirmed the naked and otherwise immodest art of her day. She glorified nakedness. In her book of Revelations, she writes that the Blessed Virgin told her that Jesus was completely naked twice during his Passion, and moreover, that he had taken off his clothes himself. She also writes that Jesus himself told her that he was totally naked during his Passion:

The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden, 14th century, Book 1: "[Chapter 10, 'Blessed Virgin' to Bridget:] When the time of my Son's passion arrived, his enemies seized him. ...When he was led to the pillar, he took off his clothes himself and placed his own hands on the pillar...without any kind of covering, just as he

¹⁰ See in this article [Jesus' behind is exposed on the shroud](#), p. 16.

had been born, he stood there and suffered the embarrassment of being naked... When I reached the place of the passion with him, I saw all the instruments of his death ready. When my Son got there, he took off his clothes himself... My Son was standing there, naked as he had been born.

“[Chapter 27, ‘Blessed Virgin’ to Bridget:] The first lance was his shameful and blameworthy nakedness, for I saw my most chaste and mighty Son stand naked at the pillar without any covering on him at all.

“[Chapter 59, ‘Jesus’ to Bridget:] I did not blush to die a contemptible death for them, but stood there just as I had been born, naked before the eyes of my enemies.”

In another place in her book, Bridget also makes mention of being able to “clearly discern” the Blessed Virgin Mary’s “virginal flesh” through her clothing during the Nativity of Jesus. She also goes on to say that when Jesus was born the shepherds arrived to see the newborn Baby and that the Blessed Virgin uncovered his nakedness to show the shepherds:

The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden, 14th century, Book 7: “[Chapter 21, the ‘Blessed Virgin’ showing Bridget a vision of the Nativity of Jesus:] When I was at the manger of the Lord in Bethlehem, I saw a Virgin, pregnant and most very beautiful, clothed in a white mantle and a finely woven tunic through which from without I could clearly discern her virginal flesh.

“[Chapter 23, the ‘Blessed Virgin’ showing Bridget a vision of the Nativity of Jesus:] Shepherds and guardians of the flock then came to see and adore the infant [Jesus]. ...They first wished to inquire whether it were male or female... Therefore the Virgin Mother then showed to them the infant’s natural parts and male sex.”

Bridget also says that St. John the Evangelist appeared to her completely naked and covered with oil. It is understood from his statements at the end of the vision that the vision was supposed to be the Apostle St. John:

The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden, 14th century, Book 4: “[Chapter 1, ‘St. John the Evangelist’ apparition to Bridget:] A male person appeared... His hair seemed as if shorn with reproach; his body was drenched in oil and completely naked, though he was in no way ashamed. He said to the bride [Bridget]: ‘...I am he who fully understood the golden scripture and in my understanding added to it. ...I was made the guardian of the Mother of God, I left the world in the easiest of deaths after her own, and my body is now in a place of the greatest rest and security.’ ”

She also said that the Blessed Virgin Mary said that it was hateful and abominable for the Levitical priests to get married during the Old Covenant era and thus condemns God by implication for instituting and allowing it and condemns St. Aaron, the holy Prophet Samuel, St. Zachary (who married St. Elizabeth, Mary’s cousin), and all the other Levitical priests who were married:

The Revelations of St. Bridget of Sweden, 14th century, Book 7: “[Chapter 10: ‘Blessed Virgin’ to Bridget:] For after he [Jesus] instituted in the world this new sacrament of the Eucharist...the ancient law was then still kept; namely, that Christian priests lived in carnal matrimony...just as, in the ancient times of the Jews... But that observance and ancient custom seemed very abominable and hateful to all the heavenly court and to me.”

For the glory of God; in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Michael, St. Joseph, Ss. Joachim and Anne, St. John the Baptist, the other angels and saints; and for the salvation of men

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Mary’s Little Remnant

302 East Joffre St.

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico 87901-2878, USA

Website: www.JohnTheBaptist.us