

Anonymous
The Collected Life of Nicholas of Myra
(Vita Compilata)
BHG 1348c

Introduction

The *Vita Compilata* (=Collected Life) is the modern name for a Byzantine life of St Nicholas of Myra, which is almost entirely compiled from other literary sources, containing almost no original content. It was edited by G. Anrich, *Hagios Nikolaos*, vol 1, 1913, pp.210-233, although the BHG suggests that he has “omitted not a little” (p.140: *omissis non paucis*). Anrich dates the work to the 9-10th century. The sources used by the author were the *Vita per Michaelem* and the *Encomium Methodii*, plus – confusingly – the Life of Nicholas of Sion, an unrelated saint. Possibly the Encomium of Georgios Chartophylax was also used, which, if rightly named, must date from before 860 AD.

The work is preserved in a single manuscript in Vienna, shelfmark Vindobonensis theol. Graec. 60, (=W), 12th century, f. 291-306, parchment, written in two columns. Unfortunately the top of the manuscript has been damaged by damp, which has made the first lines of the outer column unreadable for the last 60% of the text. This problem increases towards the back of the manuscript. Extracts from the same work are found in four other manuscripts, and also in an Armenian translation.

This translation was commissioned by Roger Pearse in 2017 and Anrich’s text was kindly translated for us by “Fr. Alban Justinus”, the pen-name of an Orthodox monk. Fr Justinus also wrote the footnotes, except where indicated.

The translation is placed in the public domain. The section numbers, the paragraphing and the page numbers have been inserted from Anrich, but are not original.

RP

IX. VITA COMPILATA

The birth, education, religious conduct and life of a friend of God; and a partial narrative of the miracles of the great among the hierarchs of God and far-famed in miracles Nicholas, Archbishop of the province of Myra and Lycia.

1. It is naturally right for the saints and chosen worshippers of God to be praised and honored by all, and for their memories to be *celebrated*¹ with eulogies, according to the divine forefather, prophet and king David; especially those exceedingly eminent in word and deeds beyond others, even now shining forth by means of great signs and wonders through miracles; and moreover to those providers and helpers given by God *who are* more distinguished and more radiant than others with respect to human aid and protection. Just such a one is Nicholas, both first and unique above others, the greatest light in the hierarchy of God, notorious for miracles and famous for protection. In truth the great and far-famed name, being invoked from one end of Christendom² to the other for fervent aid is always being exalted and glorified. So then all people of the world, to speak angelically, afterwards have come into possession of this one's great protection and benefits, by having access to his oversight and compassion for all. For indeed, every tribe and tongue, every age and every race of man lays claim to this one as an aid in troubles and a deliverer in trying circumstances. 2. Is there anyone among mortal man upon the earth, when found in need or being oppressed by dangers at sea, who has not fled to the supreme Nicholas, and, while laying hold of this mediator before God and protection as like unto a savior, does not immediately receive an appropriate fulfillment of the requests? Who, being shut up in prison or falling into the hands of the oppression of wicked men, by invoking the name of Nicholas, has not received the solution for his sorrows as quickly as possible? [p.212] This one, by God's help, meets with each one in distresses for the safety of those calling upon him. By many ways and means he does not cease distributing his benefactions to them continuously. But, if he has been represented in an icon, if he has received a prayer, if he has been called upon with simplicity, he arrives everywhere, he performs miracles continuously, on each occasion he acts altogether without ceasing, healing those in illnesses, supporting those in need, raising up those in afflictions, being all things to all people, so that he might save all; and no one calling upon his swift aid will depart saddened.

3. So, from those unhesitatingly bearing witness throughout the whole world that every type of benefaction has been performed through him, it is fitting to rouse everyone wise in word and deed, and skilled in knowledge and truth to the praise³ of this common protector; and to set in motion *their* tongues toward the beginning of odes of praise, and, as much as each one is able, to praise the man, the jubilation⁴ and pride of all the world.

¹ γίνεσθαι - would more generally mean just to happen or occur.

² οἰκουμένης - The extent of the civilized Christian world, or Roman/Byzantine empire; hence Christendom.

³ εὐφημίαν - more precisely, a good use of words, hence the English word *euphemism* for a clever saying.

⁴ περιήχημα - more literally, a sound that resonates out in all directions; a circumsonance.

Let them set out in detail⁵ these things from the very beginning, his most auspicious conception according to promise and his renunciation⁶, education and his devotion to a resplendent and sublime life. Yet still more his great and marvelous miracles, which he manifested by being superior to the flesh, through struggling in the body against incorporeal beings, while yet carrying on in this very life, consistently exposing them⁷, in order that those praiseworthy and miraculous mighty works might be performed by him after his venerable transferal from this place and departure to the Lord - or should I say more colloquially 'indwelling'?⁸ At the same time, continuing in this way until the end, and also the things being done by him until the present, for each and to all, and in no way are the strange prodigies ceasing but are always striking wonder to the ears. And in this way, by means of words, let them consistently link together, into one harmony and order, the distinguished deeds from the long years to the glory of God; who always glorifies those saints glorifying him, to the praise and honor of his greatest healer Nicholas, and as an aid to the zeal and god-inspired imitation of those listening with love of piety; **4.** *just* as the truly immortal far-famed and great shepherd Athanasius has caused to shine forth in the life and miracles of our holy father Anthony the great and first ascetic. [p.213] Gregory⁹, the truly watchful mind¹⁰, the ruler of the church of Nyssa, did likewise in writing the life of Gregory the Wonderworker of the same name and way of life as him, and the truly strange signs and marvel of Moses himself¹¹, as did many other authors and historians by setting out the lives and miracles of many saints and miraculous men in the manner of authors, just as vivid icons, as a representation, benefit the soul of those petitioning them and are displayed to the honor of those being praised.¹² **5.** This very same thing has not yet seen to have been done by anyone of those present¹³, neither by those later, nor since, and unto this very moment by those men proclaimed for wisdom and beauty in speech concerning the angelic and exceedingly miraculous life of the far-famed victor Nicholas. Thus, I am continuing in faintheartedness and afflictions *in writing* the life of such a great and distinguished man, surpassing all of the saints in visions and actions and miracles, *which has been* neglected for so many years, and not set forth suitably in an ordered explanation by anyone at all familiar with the matter, even

⁵ διηγουμένων - A participle referring back to the 'wise ones'. As is often the case for ornate introductions, grammatically, the sentence which starts at the beginning of the paragraph continues on through a series of extended participial clauses, a style referred to by some as peritaxis. For simplicity's sake, we have broken them up into smaller complete sentences. This does make the text generally more 'readable', yet by doing this the meaning of the latter clauses, which are built upon the former, is often convoluted.

⁶ ἀπόταξις - renunciation, either of the devil in baptism, or of the world upon entering a monastery.

⁷ Referring to the incorporeal beings, i.e. demons.

⁸ A play on words for which, as always, it is difficult to capture both the semantic meaning and the lexical play in translation. The words ἐκδημίαν and ἐνδημίαν share the same root, but have opposite prepositional prefixes. The latter has been used to describe the incarnate presence of Christ; thus the pun could alternatively be rendered 'departure to the Lord - or should I say more colloquially presence *with the Lord?*'

⁹ He is referring to St. Gregory of Nyssa; a bishop, prolific author, younger brother of St. Basil the Great, and along with his older brother and St. Gregory the Theologian is referred to as one of the Cappadocian Fathers.

¹⁰ A play on words; the name Gregory (Γρηγόριος) and the word watchful (γρήγορος) have a common root.

¹¹ St. Gregory authored a work called *The Life of Moses* in which he gives an extraordinary exegesis of the hidden meaning behind various events in the life of the shepherd of Israel.

¹² This specific passage is referring to the veneration of icons, stylized paintings of saints the veneration of which plays a role in both liturgical and private worship.

¹³ I.e. eyewitnesses to the life of St. Nicholas.

until now. For indeed, there are many men both of old and present, honoring this famed and great protector Nicholas in encomiastic speeches, making an explanation of some part of the life and of his miracles. Others make mention plainly of a miraculous work of his which he performed extraordinarily for three innocent men in the Eparchy of Lycia; and also, in the great city of Byzantium for Nepotian¹⁴, one of the blameless generals, he acted miraculously with angelic quickness through his God-inspired protection.¹⁵ Nevertheless, not one of them, as I was saying before, is found to have set in order these things, from the very beginning of his miraculous life until the end of that one's blessed existence, much less those miracles surpassing belief following after his repose.

6. For I myself have enjoyed the fruits of¹⁶ the help and fervent protection of this great one, having encountered *them* many times by experience in pressing circumstances, and have become a debtor with everyone, and I am in bondage to his lifesaving aid. [p.214] Indeed, being poor in speech and having no share in knowledge, excluded from every excellent work, on the contrary rather being weighed down with a measureless deposit of every kind of evil, never having set to work at such a great thing, yet now being urged forward by Christ-loving men, with all *my* soul I have devoted myself with all strength and goodwill to this undertaking. This desire of mine, which I have long been eager to satisfy,¹⁷ being cleansed of guilt as much as possible, even being made joyful together with those persuaded¹⁸, and before everyone pledging a few meager gifts instead of many great ones¹⁹ to the common protector and savior of all, after God, contriving to do homage to so great a man in these small things. 7. And may no one present cast blame or laugh at me on account of this speech, O most venerable and piety-loving audience, as being incapable of the undertaking and entering upon things beyond my strength. For indeed, not from my own proposal, as one declaring something in haste, did I dedicate myself to these things, but being urged by others, as I said before, I delayed for as long as possible, very many times declining the suggestion, since I do not have the ability. Then, being severely constrained by others, and shrinking back from becoming an object of reproach through indifference, in danger of being called disobedient, and of the destruction that comes from burying a talent in the earth, my mind was divided in two by fear and desire; so I turned over many considerations in my mind, with respect to these contesting forces, so that, being moved more by desire than persuaded by fear, I thoroughly considered myself to be completely blameless in every way. For indeed even a worthy speech that has come to an end does not completely enchant the audience, preparing them to become imitators by means of a good description, even should one excessively exalt the glory and magnificence of the one being commemorated with worthy praise. Yet, if it should fall short of the purpose and expectation being hoped for – which inevitably will always happen – and the grateful audience of lovers of piety does too, noticing those things which are only our opinion, as is the case with every speech and encomium, an object of human thought and language; and yet they still exceedingly

¹⁴ Νεπωτιανὸν – This is a reference to Nepotian, one of the Three Generals who feature in the standard episode, *De Stratelatis*. Ursus and Herpylion are the others, mentioned below. [RP]

¹⁵ These are two references to miracles which had already been put in writing, and with which our author was clearly familiar.

¹⁶ παραπλήρωσα - though not in the early sources, clearly this is a later Byzantine form of παραπολάω.

¹⁷ More literally - in which I am in travail from of old.

¹⁸ I.e. that he should go about writing the life of St. Nicholas.

¹⁹ I.e. his capability to write such a work.

glorify the amount of grace in the saint, *then* the saint himself will be seen all the more resplendent and glorious as having exceeding worthiness beyond compare.

8. Since in this way I have blessedly expelled the censure of those finding fault, come let us return to the appointed speech, proceeding hereafter to complete at once the praise for the saint, [p.215] for fear that, expounding at length upon the introduction, we seem to greatly annoy the minds of our listeners. And indeed, we perceive that many of those present avid listeners are already hung up and yawning at the speaker, striving to hear as quickly as possible the proposition hoped for in the words, and censuring our delay so that we might change our struggle with this speech, making use of a shorter form²⁰; but lingering outside of the phraseology of the forefathers²¹, we will not walk straight into the heavenly chambers. This we surely will not do, even if a small introductory word *came down* from above, in which lay an explanation of these things, dragging out the business; we might be accused by most as guilty of delaying, as is probable. **9.** But now, beloved, there is a need of prayer for you desiring to focus in on the matter at hand, through which everyone "who asks receives and he who seeks will find and to him who knocks it will be opened," according to the voice of the Lord. Now indeed may this saying be judged suitable for the present undertaking. For the divinely sweet and famous shepherd Nicholas himself was the offspring and product of prayer, and it is not unreasonable for the first fruit of the narration of his life be from a prayer and to have this supplication to God narrated to us. Therefore, may the divine Word Himself, the hypostatic wisdom and power of the father, guide this present speech²², the coeternal, equal in honor, contemporaneous²³ Lord, reigning together eternally with the Father and the Spirit. **10.** From here I will make a beginning, nor will I hold back the words which I have put together concerning the great archpriest, further putting off and delaying the undertaking. And now engage *your* mind toward hearing me, I beg, as many as desire to feast sumptuously on such exalted things, since for a truly great and divine man the speech is innately great and divine, so that you depart enriched with non-diminishable wealth of a spiritual benefit. If the speech about to be said is simple and unadorned, as explained, no one should marvel. Since the weaving and beauty of Attic words for an encomium does not contribute to the present explanation, but by means of history it has been set out by us in simple and unadorned words for those willingly present and those particular audience members considering irresistibly that which is being said.

[p.216] **11.** So this far-famed among the saints and ever-hymned worshiper of God was blessed from *his* mother's womb and chosen by God before *his* conception, and, in the same manner as the holy Samuel *came forth* from the womb, so too he was brought

²⁰ The author is referring here to Atticism, the elaborate manner of constructing sentences used in the introduction up until this point in the speech, which often times would be difficult for some listeners to follow.

²¹ Atticism as a style of written composition sought to imitate the writings of early Greek authors, particularly 4th century B.C. Athens, which was considered the height of ancient Greek prose and poetry. Often this form of writing, and thus giving speeches, was drastically different from the common spoken vernacular.

²² Wordplay using *λόγος* for both 'word' and 'speech'.

²³ *ὁμόχρονος* - A literal definition would be 'having the same time', and transliterated it is 'contemporaneous' with the understanding that he is referring to the existence of the Son with the Father and the Holy Spirit before time and creation proper.

into the world by promise. *His* father Epiphanius and mother Nonna, as they were called according to their proper names, hailed from the Eparchy of Lycia and the city of Myra, and were altogether wealthy and born of nobility, but were groomed in piety according to Christ, and in this rather was their pride and boast.²⁴ And so, feeling a loathing for the emptiness of worldly honor, they turned aside from such harmful and senseless things, and in true faith were concerned with works according to God. For they were well acquainted with miracles, walking on coals of fire and touching burning pitch, while being able to keep *their* feet unburned and *their* hands unsoiled.²⁵

12. They were always instructed by these things, and they wanted a child as a successor to their material abundance and piety, and they were distressed, grieving, and wailing on account of unfruitfulness, being obstructed by the barrenness of nature, and they endured this *barrenness* day by day in hope of fertility. As the expanse of time was torturing them, nature finally announced childbearing to them. The wedding already seemed unprofitable; and so they fled for refuge in God, Who is able to make the childless fertile if He so desires, to create many children from the childless, and even beautiful children at that, whenever this might seem and appear to be more profitable to Him. Therefore, they earnestly entreated Him for beneficence with prayers, and at once they received the swift and even more incredible request of *their* hopes. When the indissoluble bonds of barrenness were undone, according to the will of God at that time in the lawful and pure union of an honorable marriage with one another as a product of righteousness, they conceived as a result Nicholas, the lover of purity and keeper of virginity and administrator of sound-mindedness, the great protector of Christendom. [p.217] It was fitting for him, as I think, to be born into life, not only because of blood, or the will of man, or the will of the flesh²⁶, but to be shown forth as being begotten from a divine gift, as though virtue was owed to him from the beginning as a suggestion following closely from the origin of these things or rather nobility.²⁷ And truly they were made to be happy and it turned out well, from a divine revelation to the parents of this very saint which was given, and having been begotten in them divinely, he was raised illustriously and with much admiration.

13. And so He performed miracles, both in his auspicious birth and rearing; some wonder-worthy signs connected with him and others with she who bore him. For at once, then when he was born, he was seen standing upright upon his feet inside the cradle within nearly two hours. And all who saw this were amazed, greatly glorifying God on his behalf. His blessed mother, as a truly new sacred mother Anna²⁸, while taking care of the product of prayer by way of promise, suffered again from barrenness after this²⁹,

²⁴ I.e. Whereas as more frequently nobility boast of its origin and ancestors, they prided themselves on Christian piety.

²⁵ This may mean, either that they were miracle workers, or equally that they avoided such trickery. [RP]

²⁶ Cf. John 1:13.

²⁷ Continuing the line of thought from above that St. Nicholas' conception and birth was not due solely to human will, but divine intervention, here, with the word *σπάργανον* the author is alluding to the trope in ancient Greek tragedy of abandoned infants of semi-divine lineage having symbols and tokens of their divine ancestry together with them in their swaddling clothes. Thus, from its literal meaning of swaddling clothes comes the metaphorical meaning of origins and particularly in tragedy some type of insignia authenticating their noble lineage.

²⁸ Referring to the mother of the virgin Mary, Ann.

²⁹ ἐξ ἐκείνου - literally 'from him/it', but both the sense and intended referent is slightly ambiguous; whether it is to God with a sense of origin, and thus a return to barrenness according to divine providence,

remaining without further children³⁰ all the years of her life in order that the great Nicholas being both the first and only born of his parents might be born as a representation of the forerunner and baptist of the Savior, John, the greatest of those born of women³¹ according to the witness of Christ Himself, as most magnificent introductions into life. For just as that one in a manner transcending nature when being born undid the suffering of the maternal womb, so in like manner did this Nicholas when he opened *the womb* and was born, once again bringing joy to the maternal womb. Whereas the mother bearing him was childless according to the flesh, in spirit she had many children, since she was ceaselessly multiplying the virtues through being an example in the Holy Spirit, day by day giving increase to the spiritual seed along with carefully nursing and suckling the new Samuel sanctified by grace from the womb.

[p.218] **14.** The ever-miracle-working Lord, as usual, reveals by these things his foreknown worshipper, who would become in life after these things the great Nicholas. For just as later he would be shown a stranger to evil and accursed works, in this manner, when being nurtured with milk as is suitable for a child, he was always purposefully having no share of the left breast. Just as most certainly he was to become in life after these things a dwelling place of right and virtuous actions, in like manner he appeared to partake only of the right breast, and of this once a day. On Wednesday and Friday at the prescribed hour of the ninth he partook of milk, and thus this blessed one was nursing according to the holy canon even before the completion of infancy, being shown to be a dwelling place of the blessed life and free from harm from infancy, and in every situation, to speak angelically, advancing in wisdom and age and understanding and grace and in bringing about signs and wonders through himself from the auspicious beginnings to length of days and old age and of course at the end *of life*.

15. Therefore, his respectable parents were astonished because of the spectacles being performed in an incredible manner on account of him, and as grateful servants sent up thanksgiving to the dispenser of these things, God. After going up to greet the true uncle³² of the child, the most holy man Nicholas, in the monastery of the Akalissos,³³ they proclaimed the incredible miracles surrounding his conception and raising. He, hearing of these things and becoming astounded, gave thanks with them to God, rejoicing and being glad, and already informed in detail about everything through the vision of an angel, which made known to him concerning the advancement and perfections in Christ of this most holy child Nicholas. Therefore, being blessed by him and returning with joy, they raised the offspring given them by God honorably with appropriate carefulness, attentively nurturing good hopes in him and delighting in the spectacles occurring on account of him. And so they loved, yearned for, and with piety looked after the virtue of the child as though they were maintaining their own *virtue*. It was nothing at all for those who were taking care of him, kissing the child and caressing his hands, boasting of him and rejoicing³⁴ as the happiest of all men.

or Nicholas, perhaps inferring that given the birth of such a great child she was to be deprived of further children; or temporal and simply referring to the matter at hand. I have opted for the latter temporal sense.

³⁰ ἄτεκνος τοῦ λοιποῦ - literally, "childless with respect to others".

³¹ cf. Mat. 11:11; Luke 7:28.

³² I.e. according to the flesh.

³³ The monastery of St Sion at Akalissos, somewhere in the Lycian mountains north of Myra.

³⁴ γηθόμενοι - most probably a later Byzantine form of γηθέω, whose present middle participle in classical Greek would be γηθούμενοι.

[p.219] **16.** As the fifth year of the child was already coming to an end, and he also had increased in himself the graces of virtues, they provided him education from the priests, being stationed beside a certain teacher not having a great deal of experience in this kind of teaching. Since this man was dominated by ignorance and complete boorishness, having more experience in farming rather than education, the most holy child Nicholas, being inspired by the Holy Spirit, [wrote]³⁵ to his unknown teacher indicated the names, presuming to write this to him by tracing them out syllabically although being unacquainted with such things, and by this thing he was miraculously greater than him and all those watching.³⁶

17. On one occasion, anyway, while he was walking to the school for letters³⁷ he met a certain woman from a nearby village, Nonna by name, who had a half-withered foot, and who asked him how she might obtain a cure. And so the most holy child of God Nicholas, by praying and sealing her with the sign of the cross, by the power and energy of the spirit restored her to health. And he released her in freedom and rejoicing to proceed on foot like the others, glorifying and magnifying the Lord.

18. Not a great deal of time passed from the classes, as his god-loving parents saw him sufficiently being filled with³⁸ being brought to perfection by the grace of the Holy Spirit both in common knowledge and in lofty counsel in the most holy archimandrite Nicholas as they saw,³⁹ having been dedicated to God as a holy first fruits offering in the Church, they put forth this cleric at that time for ordination to the episcopate. **19.** And Nicholas was seen to be loved and praised by all both with respect to ethics and as an example of virtues. As, for example, anyone new in practicing an art yearns for a great deal of study and to make progress; while he makes provision in part for the flesh, yet he takes heed entirely for the soul, and by activity is furnished with access to spiritual contemplation, yet through contemplation is capable as a teacher of activity.⁴⁰ And thus the movements of the passions were put in order easily by him, and the vision of the soul was cleansed, and he brought its three parts⁴¹ to a state of

³⁵ This is the first place at which the damage to manuscript W appears.

³⁶ We can only presume that St. Nicholas wrote something to his teacher by divine inspiration before having learned the letters of the alphabet or to read.

³⁷ γραμμάτων σχολήν - i.e. for reading and writing. The phrase a 'man of letters' is equivalent to the literal use here.

³⁸ A general deduction based on the context would be something like, "saw him sufficiently filled with knowledge and wisdom, being brought to completion..."

³⁹ On account of the gap in the text, the context here is lost. Nevertheless, this archimandrite Nicholas is the uncle of St Nicholas, confusingly of the same name (whom fortunately the author mentions later).

⁴⁰ A concise example of the relationship, with respect to works of repentance, of the body with praxis (πράξις - rendered as 'activity'), and of the soul with theoria (θεωρία - rendered as 'spiritual contemplation'). In this example, they mutually support one another; though this is not necessarily the rule in Byzantine theological thought where most Church fathers gave weightier consideration and value to theoria. Furthermore, whereas praxis may also refer to work of the soul, theoria is never considered a bodily activity, strictly speaking.

⁴¹ Byzantine theology divides the soul into three 'parts', though it is more accurate to think of them as powers or faculties; the incensive, desirous, and discursive reasoning (that is the heart/senses, will, and intellect). It is a large theme with a long history, and often misinterpreted. Neither the soul, nor its activity should be considered as fragmented, rather, these are innate constituents of all forms of activity. Many fathers use this as a primary example of man being in the image of the all holy Trinity, which though comprised of three persons, has a single divine will and activity; in like manner, the soul, though comprised

dispassion. The discursive intellect had charge over things for him, and guided every movement towards God; [p.220] the incensive part was activated by him only against the serpent through whom the first man was destroyed; the desirous part was completely devoted to God by him in everything. Therefore, being shown courageous and wise he passed through his life in righteousness and discretion, like an excellent charioteer riding upon the chariot of virtues and through this speeding and making haste to the heavenly finishing line.

20. In this way he was persevering and already becoming famous to everyone, in no way lacking anything from the heavenly courts. Indeed, passing the nineteenth year of his age, he was ordained presbyter by his divine uncle, the previously mentioned archimandrite of the same name as him, and accepted the care and charge of the all glorious temple of Holy Zion recently built by him (i.e, the uncle), and with himself he had Artemis and Hermaios as co-warriors⁴² and a support in the service of that glorious temple, as both were brothers of the most holy archimandrite Nicholas, and placed by him in that clerical service. He was about to sail away toward the venerable places of the holy city Jerusalem, aiming *to fulfill* a divine longing to pay homage to the holy and life-giving wood of the Master's cross. **21.** But even while heading down to the metropolis of Myra, by chance or rather, to say it better, by the economy of God – all things working for the good for those that love God – he found in that place a ship from Ascalon being prepared by a certain captain by the name of Mena. Anyone who was coming out he pressed upon to meet him, thinking to depart himself on that very ship and set sail with him for veneration of the holy places. This plan was confirmed also by the archimandrite Nicholas who received a divine revelation from ardent prayer, in the form of a favorable wind blowing, and he came to Jerusalem in a few days altogether. And in this way after fulfilling completely his spiritual desire, he arranged a return journey to his native land more direct than the arrival.

22. And since these things ought to be said at a length sufficiently more detailed to you who are accustomed to the language of the services, so then we have for an explanation an orderly arrangement of the following matters, through a recitation⁴³ of the speech for the life of the great Nicholas, and delivering the remainder of those things mentioned.

23. And so, this great priest was entrusted to the care of the holy church; he estranged his mind in a pious minded manner from every worldly confusion and disorder, and had concern for God alone and the various things of God.....
[p.221] Persevering in these things, and getting older according to *the providence of God*, those who bore him were set free from this life, and gave up their spirit joyfully into His hands, and presently believed through hope in Him that they were not about to die, but as though being stored up by his glory for the age to come. Although by them he came to be, through him they have boldness before God unto eternity and *their* memory is preserved by men as ever-blessed. Whereas for others the passing of parents causes a

of three 'parts', has a single activity. The rest of this passage makes use of a more technical theological terminology with respect to these 'parts'.

⁴² συνασπισμόν - literally, one who hold the shield together with someone else; 'co-shield holder'; deriving from the phalanx form of doing battle in antiquity.

⁴³ ῥυθμίσαντες - more literally it is used to refer to rehearsing or reciting poetry or song in time, from which we derive the word rhythm. Here, rather, it insinuates delivering a speech in a composed and timely manner.

beginning of concerns to come forth through taking care of the inheritance left behind and by hastening to arrange order for the things of the house, yet for Nicholas it was not so great a concern, but such an occurrence became rather a pretext for silence⁴⁴, hastily taking leave of both things and the concern. For, he distributed the money to those in want and poverty, to store up these things in the inviolate treasuries of heaven in order to be paid on account of the poor, and without anxiety concerning these things he completely discerned one thing from another, considering this alone, and taking care of his business with haste, as was said above, that he might be pleasing to God and be filled with His good things. For which an increase of virtue and an imparting of beneficence happened as a result.

24. Since I have called to mind the almsgiving of the man and *his* sympathy towards kinsmen, come now, come and I will make known to all the beneficent activity of that ever-memorable and far famed man. Indeed, just one of the many merciful acts *done* by him is enough for you to understand him.

25. A certain man among the noble and wealthy was driven to absolute poverty, and on account of this he believed that his nobility had been utterly destroyed; but this great helper of the oppressed, becoming a savior contrary to expectation, released him from the dejection of poverty; he constrained that man who at that time was considering an unlawful act, and even *arranged* that it would be deemed blessed on account of the necessity of poverty. How and in what way, I will explain hereafter.

26. This father, having three daughters fair of shape and being altogether beautiful in form, and having been driven from prosperity to the uttermost poverty, wanted to set them before the public in a brothel⁴⁵ to obtain from there the necessities of life for himself and for them. [p.222] Indeed, naturally, none of those men eligible *for marriage* were willing to take them away as wives on account of their poverty. Yet he, as an aristocratic man, was ashamed to marry them out in poverty, and because he was negligent toward God he was completely persuaded and gave himself over to carry out the matter, by which certainly he would be sustained continually. Thus he became thoroughly convicted in this misplaced daring, and he decided to hand over his own daughters to the depths of destruction. And most certainly this extremely illicit desire would have come to pass were God not one Who loves mankind, Who in no way allows it to happen that a beloved creation be given to sin; and so He sent out to him the good angel Nicholas as an imitator of Himself, redeeming him and his entire household from poverty and destruction and at the same time leading them back skillfully to their former good fortune. For Nicholas, being a faithful steward of Christ, learned this about the man, and exhibited in himself one who carries out that instruction of Solomon, saying, “God loves a cheerful giver” and “He who is merciful to the poor shall be sustained” and most especially befitting is the following; “deliver those being drawn away to death”, and became to them in reality a ready help and delivered those already being drawn away to the death of prodigality and of the destruction of their souls, through bestowing a lavish dowry from his own money.

⁴⁴ ἡσυχίας - Literally 'silence', but it infers the practice of unceasing prayer in an atmosphere with an absolute minimum of worldly distractions and cares; hence his dispensing of the things along with the concern. The practice of hesychasm, as it is referred to in the East, is considered the most honorable and perfect of all modes of being, the perfection of which takes absolute dedication to God.

⁴⁵ εἰς πορνείας ἐργαστήριον – literally: a “workshop of fornication”.

27. And so, in secret at night he threw through a window to him sufficient money for the wedding of the first daughter; and then he left the house, for two main reasons, in order that the thing being done would not to be known by him or anyone else, and that the man would remain free from shame and, exercising self-control most piously, would not divulge and trumpet the almsgiving itself according to the Lord's saying. Day having dawned, the man upon rising from bed found the bag of money inside, and in joy with tears falling gave thanks to God with amazement and surprise, immediately considering in himself how it could be possible that such a good thing should happen to him. Accepting this gift as being provided by God, the father of the young girls also supposed it to be a capable contribution for a dowry, [p.223] and without delay procured wedding arrangements⁴⁶ for his first daughter. The man of God himself learning he departed in peace.

28. These few things out of many others must suffice for so great a man, for we have adequately presented all the zeal of the blessed Nicholas concerning those being in need and *his* providence and *his* most generous joyful distribution with the proposition, without desire to make himself known and in humility, and *we have presented* his virtuous conduct with respect to the divine commandments as truly genuine. Come, let us speak at length on his other miracle stories and let us proclaim that the majesty of the grace of God was found in him as much as is possible.

29. There was some other man, who dwelled in the region called Plynios in the local dialect, and had a son called Hermes who was tempted by a savage demon, who, after learning of him, had recourse to this far famed wonderworker and savior; and falling before him, he begged him to pray for the suffering child. And he was quickly obedient to the salvation of those in need, and completed the customary prayer, and restored him to health through being fortified with that imperial weapon. And after fifteen days he returned homeward, rejoicing and preaching the greatness of God in all things.

30. In these things then, by the greatest signs and astounding miracles being performed by the all blessed Nicholas, and through shining forth splendidly in all possible forms of virtue, God, managing all things wisely and performing everything for the salvation of men, was well pleased to lift him up to the highest hierarchical throne, since, by mixing just actions with authority, he was able to hinder and terrify those desiring to do injustice, and to speedily protect those being unjustly treated from the plotting of enemies. 31. A certain power of the Holy Spirit was revealed to him by a divine dream, and he was shown the glorious throne and honorable schema of the archiepiscopacy, beseeching him to sit upon the throne which he saw there in the altar of glory. Upon waking from sleep, the blessed man was contemplating the awesome vision, and interpreting the vision on his own, saying nothing at all to anyone, until the time when those things predicted by God were manifestly accomplished in him. Not in dream only, but also in reality, as it needs to be said, the Lord Jesus Christ with the ever-virgin and God-bearing Mary, His mother, appeared to him; [p.224] after the holy gospel was handed over to him, she also presented the archiepiscopal omophorion⁴⁷. Just as for a

⁴⁶ νυμφικὴν παστάδα – literally: “he arranged a bridal chamber”.

⁴⁷ ὀμοφόριον - a compound word, literally meaning 'the thing worn around the neck'; an article of clothing worn by a bishop of the Orthodox Church when he is celebrating the liturgy, which in appearance is like a raised collar.

long time and up to that moment he inquired from the reverential ones in His venerable and worshipful icons⁴⁸, from the right hand side of the engravings the Lord held the gospel and handed it over to him, from the left the immaculate Theotokos offered him the omophorion⁴⁹. **32.** And so, not very long after this divine vision and revelation of the Lord, he was handed by God through a customary vote the helm of government of the far-famed metropolis of Myra. Since, at that time to the throne of the archiepiscopacy.

33. And he became an excellent shepherd of the logical creatures of Christ of the rational and godly-minded creation. And so, nurturing the flock with the living word of sound faith, and providing the heavenly food from his own person, neither neglecting perceptible nourishment, but by taking precaution he was also serving this nourishment.

34. When a famine was occurring in Asia and the metropolis of Myra was at a loss he was watching closely for the ship owner.

35. In this way the blessed man, since he discerned things exactly, was being marveled at and praised by all, yet he was meek towards those at fault, as soon as they returned from evils to repentance and were proclaiming their own defeat. But to those sinning a great deal, contemptuously and without pause, he was most strict, according to the prophetic voice and word saying, "the righteous shall be made bold like a lion."⁵⁰

36. For at the time when Eustathius the general of Asia was stationed in the metropolis of Myra, and, through being bribed with a fair sum of money by Eudoxius and Simonides, the eminent citizens of that city, without cause he subjected three men to murder by the sword, [p.225] without masks, so that nothing would be discovered by the shepherd (i.e. the bishop Nicholas), since this vote was carried out unjustly. They prepared the act of murder secretly from hiding⁵¹, while the shepherd was absent, and they dared to persuade the blameless sheep openly and in public, an unrighteous mammon having thrust out the fear of God, in order to accomplish the murder. But although that which was done was clear to the saint, he went forth from the city for the salvation of others, in order to make peace by means of the generals sent by the great king Constantine against the Taifals⁵² stationed in Phrygia. At the moment when they were bringing a ship to shore into the harbor of the port of Andriake⁵³, one of the unsettled inhabitants went to him quickly, and he was

⁴⁸ Referring to praying to Christ and the Mother of God before an icon of them.

⁴⁹ Usually, there is a certain order to the placement of the icons with respect to the iconostasis; this passage is making a clear reference to that order.

⁵⁰ Prov. 28:1.

⁵¹ A literal translation would be "from the left", stemming from the general Greco-Roman understanding of left and right. Anything from the right is done openly, without guile or deceit, and with goodwill. Anything from the left is done maliciously, in secret, and to the detriment of others. References to this are particularly strong in ancient omens. This cultural notion predated Christianity in the Roman empire, but was further reinforced by the gospel passage where Christ, in judgment, will place the sheep on His right and the goats on His left.

⁵² The Taifals were a Germanic group associated with the Goths and settled in the Balkans. They were defeated by Constantine in 328, who settled a large number in Phrygia as a source of man-power for the army.

⁵³ Andriake was the port of the city of Myra.

informed of the act by him at length. And so, learning this thing by ear, he fully armed his spirit against those committing injustice, making himself ready in defense of those suffering injustice. And so he made haste, running at full speed to the place at which the slaughter of the innocent men had been arranged.

37. All those meeting with Nicholas urged him on, saying such things as these to him, “Make haste, guardian of our salvation, make haste, in imitation of the good shepherd Christ who lays down his life for the sheep. For if you were present, the bloodthirsty hand would not be extended against the innocent; if you were here, guiltless blood would not be shed by falsehood; the murderer would not carry out murder. Come now, do not take leave off making provision for the least of our misfortunes among many; how could you look upon an unjust death? Anticipate the indignation of the murderers; save the blameless from punishment. For their life is in your presence, and death will be dispensed in your absence.” Since he knew the place, he found the men already being bent over for slaughter – O piteous sight – accepting dismemberment by the sword as the only freedom from misfortune. He beheld this public execution and displayed disgust at the sight; the sword was being drawn in both hands, and on the brink of slaughter. The blameless death was being lamented by the assembled masses, as was the unholy judgment of those being accused, citing charges of slander. As it was happening with all speed, orders for the sword were being given to the public executioner. He saw all these things there, [p.226] and he was not able to endure the undertakings; but after tearing away the sword violently from the public executioner he threw it down to the ground. Then he released the men who were held fast by bonds, he astounded those around by his boldness, he caused alarm in the public executioners with threats, and, standing beside the leader with equal courage he threatened to accuse him of the most heinous illegal actions against God and royal decree. And he brought the illegal act to a halt and restrained it, saying “I am ready to die in the place of these innocent men”, since he had come forward to speak these things not by himself alone, but with the generals Nepotian, Ursus and Herpylion, who, as was said above, at that time had been sent by the great king Constantine and were being stationed near the Taifals, but had been delayed at the port of Andriake, which is the harbor of the metropolis of Myra.

38. But he summoned them to produce an explanation at that very time by characterizing them *as* against the laws.⁵⁴ And so in this way, for those petitioning God and lamenting the sinister form of death, and in invocations for themselves wailing that some remembrance might intervene before God, Nicholas was perceived as mediator of the prayer.

39. And so in tears each of them cried out to him saying, “St. Nicholas, even if you are far away from us, yet may our prayer draw near to your hearing. And having heard our distressing words and becoming a spectator of the circumstance, make haste to refute our unrighteous persecution. The counsel by which the deed can be accomplished will come to you, if you would bring our prayer before God. May you look upon these travesties, bringing comfort to such distressing trials, may you see the extreme bitterness

⁵⁴ I.e. that their actions were illegal. The context is blurred by the gap and it is made slightly more difficult by the absence of the verb ἀντιπεριγράφω from the classical corpus. Its constituents are clear enough; the prefix αντί being joined to Περιγράφω which means generally 'to describe'. It seems, given the context, that there might be a technical legal usage, but what exactly this may be cannot be determined.

of the circumstance, may you bestow the appeal, O most zealous one. Hearing now of the unjust death of those three men, hinder the bloodthirsty hand from human slaughter. Hear now our groaning, most compassionate one. Come, having heard of souls in distress, raise up help; come, being seen in an invisible way by us, seek into the injustice. Behold the innocent ones being led away to death and paying the sentence of death in place of someone else's intentional wrong [p.227], behold the changed countenances and the fallen faces and the whole person disappearing into sadness; behold everything good has been rendered useless and the enfeebled knees do not have strength to be leaned upon; see the broken hearts, the solidity of hope being discarded; hear the lifting of voices, children and friends crying out and separated from those being heard⁵⁵. Hear the faintheartedness of voices being cut off and the discordant murmurs of those given up for loss; behold cold lips and tongues devoid of moisture, and intelligibility of speech departing on account of distress. Gaze upon eyes pouring forth tears, not discerning the translucence of light. Do not allow an unjust death to occur, *you who are a stranger* to injustice. Do not give support to the false circumstances against those being accused. Do not allow murder to be perpetrated by the murderer. Do not delay *granting* grace, O *you who are* quick to help. Through working together with God you have the ability. We are inviolate witnesses for them, for we do not regard doubtful stories but the circumstance undeceived. We know that on account of these men you will make active the sea of your compassion. We know the tender mercies of your love for man have been incited. Your advocacy, acceptable to God, is being anticipated by those crying out. Even if you do not perceive the circumstances through *your* body, but, since you are being summoned, answer in a bodiless manner. You have the power of God acting invisibly in you by imitation. You have, through him O all blessed one, the power of miracles. Grant comfort to those in distress, salvation to the hopeless; only desire it, and the ability will follow. The king is pious, very ready to obey and just; only present yourself and teach, for he is acting unjustly through ignorance. And undergoing a change of mind, he will set aright righteously these things which have been determined evilly.

40. Such things were being said and more whoever is being cared for by the saint and is blessed by him has returned to that which is proper, and at that time there were more being honored in the palace.

41. These are the wondrous works of Nicholas for us, these are the best stories. Having the ability by God who always desires what is best and in all places performs marvels.

42. Being strengthened by Him and being incited by divine zeal, being enlightened by the grace of the Holy Spirit dwelling in his soul, he was roused like a lion against the destructions of the demons, [p.228] all the abominations of deceit and their altars, and so being in the metropolis of Myra, after descending from the throne, he handed them over to complete destruction. With Whom he also razed to the ground the temple of unclean Artemis from *its* foundations and laid it waste completely; since the heights and size of the building projected manifestations of wicked demons, he drove

⁵⁵ Since the victims are now being held under arrest, an alternate translation, which perhaps exacts a little more meaning, is 'separated from those being heard about', i.e. the children and friends are separated from those to whom this whole narrative refers.

away the demons nesting in it. Who being driven out invisibly by the active power of the master of all, were openly admitting that they themselves were being banished by him.⁵⁶

43. On account of these things and from such great virtuous actions and his good works, his name has spread out, his protection and holiness is proclaimed in nearly all of Christendom and is on the lips of all as truly exhibiting

Some sailor being in danger on the sea

.....
44. Listen again to another worthy miracle performed by him.

When grain was lacking in the land of the Lysians, they arranged for an Alexandrian ship full of grain on deferred payment to *be delivered* to the port of Andriake. When the great Nicholas learned this, he set about in haste from the Metropolis of Myra to Andriake, and he urged the owners of the ships, just as a little while earlier through His servant Nicholas.

45. Some years after he was enthroned on the sacred throne of the metropolis of Myra, the glorious Virgin and mother of Christ, the Theotokos⁵⁷ Mary, was seen by him, showing him a certain place and building measurements, urging a temple to be built in her name. So, arising and coming to the place shown him, he gave shape to the plan of construction in him through measuring it exactly. The lords of the place and the builders, being aware of *his intentions*, were strongly resisting and hindering him, not allowing the work of construction to advance. Since the saint was being blocked in this undertaking for a long time, he was forced to announce *publically* the holy place shown to him by God. And in this way he brought the construction to completion by leading the way, when he raised a glorified and all beautiful temple in the name of the living and eternal temple of Christ God, [p.229] the holy and ever-virgin and Theotokos Mary. And after reckoning the cost of the expenses for the construction, he found it to be four hundred gold coins.

46. Returning from there, some woman from a village called Kyparrisos⁵⁸, having a son troubled by an unclean and extremely cruel spirit, who was being tortured greatly by casting away his clothing and eating his own flesh, after carrying him she set him before the servant of God, imploring him with tears for the health of her only child. The chosen of God after laying hold of him, blew into his mouth, and he was cleansed on the spot, and remained thereafter clothed and in his right mind⁵⁹, having been completely set free from the influence of that tyrannical⁶⁰ and most harsh demon.

47. Another woman from the village called Kanomos, being herself possessed by an unclean spirit and paralyzed in her entire body, was in a state of being withered and immobile. That woman was carried away to the blessed one by the very same man mentioned before, who, being moved by zealous faith and being confident with an unbreakable hope in God, cast her at the feet of the saint, begging him to pray for her. He, showing compassion on her as on all, with a whip of prayer banished from her the devil, who is a fugitive from God, and after a few days he sent them away to travel to

⁵⁶ I.e. St Nicholas.

⁵⁷ θεοτόκος - lit. "God-bearer", or "Mother of God": the virgin Mary. The introduction of the term in the 5th century brought on the Nestorian schism.

⁵⁸ Κυπαρισσός - lit. Cypress tree.

⁵⁹ Cf. Mk 5:15.

⁶⁰ μανιώδους - lit. mania inducing, crazy making.

their own dwellings on foot being in good health and healed, glorifying and giving thanks to the Lord.

48. A certain man named Nicholas, coming from the village called Ziboinos, was half withered and paralyzed bodily; so he was carried forth, by those venerating him in order to live⁶¹, and brought before the common doctor. Falling down before him, they pleaded that health be granted to him by a prayer. Being swift for the salvation of all those calling upon him while in distress, he made a prayer for him according to the customary rites while anointing him with holy oil, and after a few days he sent him away in health to his own place, walking on foot to his dwelling and magnifying the Lord.

49. And after a few days, two men had recourse to the servant of God and wonderworker Nicholas, being disturbed by [p.230] unclean spirits. One was called Leo, from the village of Arnavandon, and was held down by three men and always discarding his clothing on account of the tyranny whereas the other was called Timothy, from the village of Kendimon, who, from the exceeding ferocity and affliction being caused in him by the wild spirited demon, which having been established in the head and fond of dwelling in his tent⁶², also caused worms to crawl forth from his bowel movements; the demon was continually causing him without sense to strike stones and wood mercilessly, on account of the derangement being caused in him from demonic energy. Therefore, those nearby them were begging on behalf of each of them that healing might be obtained. He who had received authority in like manner with the apostles over unclean spirits, to cast them out and to heal all diseases and all weaknesses, to speak evangelically⁶³, making the prayer according to custom upon each one of them while anointing them with holy oil, being signed with the seal of the sign of the master⁶⁴, after a few days the spirits influencing them departed, and he sent each of them to proceed to his dwelling, being healthy and sound minded.

50. He had authority not only over spirits, as has been proven, but also against all sorts of passions, of the body and of the soul, he accomplished healing. Through whom also the bonds of barrenness were loosed, in the same manner in which he was born of his own mother, because of the entreaty of another woman, being barren for twenty eight years, after coming and pleading to him. So, this barren woman after setting out from the village of Edrassa, with her husband being together with her, for the servant of God Nicholas, and after each of them fell down and pleaded with him to pray for them, that a child might be provided to them. He being filled with all holiness and adorned with prophetic grace, after sealing them with the Lord's seal, sent them away saying, "Go forth in peace, children, being established with hope and faith in God. And He will fulfill your request, and in the coming year a fruit of the womb, a boy, will be given to you, and I will become his sponsor in divine baptism. In this manner, believing in the prophetic word of the saint and taking courage in hope toward God, they were sent home by him. After one calendar year, on the day of the light-bearing resurrection of [p.231] divine Pascha, both came to the blessed man, carrying a male child according to his divine

⁶¹ This clause was inserted by G. Anrich. Presumably the sense is that his dependents carried him to St Nicholas. [RP]

⁶² Here, the word tent is in the same manner as the Apostle Paul would use the word, i.e. in a metaphorical sense to mean the body.

⁶³ Cf. Mt 4:23.

⁶⁴ I.e. the cross, meaning the oil was applied in the form of the cross.

prediction; who after receiving and being enlightened by divine baptism, was taken into his own embrace, and after a few days when he blessed them he sent them to their own place rejoicing.

51. This great shepherd and seer of the beloved rational flock, was shown to be a healer not only of bodily passions moreover in many of the souls, guiding to the road of salvation not only by warnings and good exhortations, but even his keeping silent from an unfailing foresight alone was an exhortation. Indeed, from the tradition he brought to us a word from above, having in truth proof, that such a one was a saint; sacred and angelic to behold, being full of sanctification and sending forth a sweet aroma, those being near him were improved only by the sight of him, moved and thrust toward the betterment of salvation. If anyone was heretical, meeting him on a by-road, straightway the illness of impiety in which he had been mixed up for many years would be dispelled and he would become a fearless initiate of the faith of the righteous.

52. He also said such things in the first great synod in Nicaea to those being assembled against Arius the impious according to the faith and preaching of the great and all-famed apostles.

53. Another truthful word is proclaimed among us, from the tradition and he himself being proof; not only in ascetic feats and by sweat in works of piety did that great struggler for truth and warrior for the pious faith Nicholas prevail against the hostile enemy, but also he endured martyric contests and endangerment for the faith and underwent persecutions; he suffered bonds and scourges and imprisonments for the true confession in Christ by those persecuting the faith at that time. After the light of piety had been diminished, in the time of the public proclamation of Constantine [p.232] the great divinely crowned and first Christian king, recalling all the divine bishops and confessors in prison and exile, then by divine providence and by the prayers of this most pious king with all the rest of the martyrs the great Nicholas also obtained freedom from chains and imprisonment, and again that seer and defender of the city was handed over to the Church.

54. In this way, the well cultured servant of God and great archpriest Nicholas, the ally of those in distress and ever watchful help of those in need, who is ever fragrant with sweetest smelling and most holy life and priesthood, about to travel on to the Lord, had been seized by some bodily illness. While he was lying down on a bed, a certain woman named Eugenia from a village called Soklon fell down before him, being an epileptic on account of a wicked spirit and suffering horribly. Sealing her with the sign of the cross and praying for her, immediately she was healed. Then she saw the holy angels coming to him in order to receive his angel-like soul, as soon as he raised his holy head a little from the bed, and completely sealing his entire body with his own hand, he prostrated before them, beginning to chant the thirtieth psalm, "In you, oh Lord, I hope, let me never be put to shame," and the rest. In this way, then, blessing and hymning the Lord in peace and joy he delivered into the hands of the holy angels his honorable soul on the sixth of the month December. And leaving this present life he was translated into eternal rest, rejoicing together with the choirs of angels, and keeping company with the assembly of patriarchs, and praying ceaselessly for those calling upon him with faith and love, and indeed those in misfortunes and undergoing confiscation of property and being

tried. **55.** His honorable body, fragrant with the aroma of virtues was placed in the church by him, immediately gushed forth sweet smelling myrrh, continuously gushing forth as though from a spring until this day being an aversion of evil against every hostile and destructive power, providing saving and evil thwarting healing, to the glory of the one being glorified by him, Christ, our true God.

[p.233] **56.** From that time until our own, the grace of his miracles is active according to the will of God, and this source of good works is unceasing to those praying to him. For there is no one, no one of the sons of men eminent in piety and on account of falling into some surprise encounters and seeking refuge in him through prayer, who did not receive experience of his most active help and support. Since, from his boundless⁶⁵ miracles which if an author should desire to hand over some word. An exact grasp of these things or even a partial narrative is not possible, since ineffable miracles are happening everywhere one from one place and another from another, and they are being reported each to the other and explained in different ways.

57. For this reason we too shall narrate to those eager to hear and Christ-loving souls some little bits and few in number among the colossal, truly innumerable and altogether multitudinous occurrences after his death, joining them together with those already mentioned. For indeed this Nicholas, our far famed father, famous among the saints and all praiseworthy hierarch of Christ, after passing on to God by performing magnificently different miraculous actions to those worthy as though still living even after his repose, he stirred up the ranks of the pious from all the earth and every fatherland toward his honor and veneration.

58. Among whom also were some belonging to foreign lands and far away countries, being attracted by love for the holy one salvation wrought with his one hand.

59. A certain priest coming from Mytilene - this city is situated on Lesbos, one of the Cyclades islands, which are surrounded by deep water - this man had as a custom for the memory of the saint being encouraged by the thrice blessed Nicholas to proceed toward his home.

60. Who is able worthily to describe this miracle? What cleverness of the orators or machination of the philosophers is able to explain simply ... ⁶⁶

⁶⁵ πείραν...ἀπείρων -This is a play on words, ἀπείρων is both the antonym of the former, but with alternate meaning of boundless or infinite.

⁶⁶ The text of manuscript W breaks off at this point.