

Catholic Exorcism

History, Discipline, and Pastoral Practice

“And one other thing: no curses. Not within my hearing. I happen to credit the efficacy of the powers to whom they’re addressed even though I question the efficiency of what’s said.”

—The Abbé, *The Devil in a Forest* by Gene Wolfe

“The first rule of exorcist club is that you do not talk about exorcist club.”

—Anonymous¹

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1 The first rule is about the person

Catholic exorcism did not develop as a secret technology for specialists. It developed where several obligations meet: proclaim Christ's victory, distinguish kinds of prayer and authority, test historical claims against their witnesses, separate spiritual judgment from medical diagnosis, and protect a suffering person from credulity as well as disbelief.

The first epigraph is fiction, not a technical account of curses, evidence that they work, or permission to experiment with them. Its distinction between the powers invoked and the reliability of an operator's words instead refuses the fantasy that hostile spiritual agency would be a mechanism mastered by a formula. Catholic teaching neither makes the devil an equal opposite of God nor turns evil into an occult technology.

The second epigraph adapts a familiar fictional rule in order to redirect it: confidentiality is not theatrical mystique. A person seeking help is not evidence for someone else's argument, material for a recording, or a character in a horror story. Curiosity becomes harmful when it invites imitation, fixes attention on lurid details, rewards confident amateurs, or turns illness and trauma into spectacle. A reader who fears immediate danger should use emergency services; one who is ill should continue medical and mental-health care; one seeking the Church's pastoral help should begin with a parish or diocese, not an internet ritual.

That boundary directs attention away from spectacle and toward the historical question: how did Christians move from biblical narratives and diverse early practices to rites whose use, minister, and interpretation the Church increasingly disciplined? The answer is not a single unbroken ceremony. Apologetic claims, baptismal preparation, clerical offices, prayers over afflicted persons, ritual books, canon law, and modern safeguarding overlap, but they are not interchangeable.

1.1 Continuity without identity

The governing argument of this study is continuity without identity. The New Testament's proclamation of Christ's authority is indispensable to the Christian history, but a Gospel narrative is not a later ritual book. An ancient apologist's public challenge is evidence for the claim he made, not a statistical report. An exorcism connected with Christian initiation is not on that account a judgment that a candidate is possessed. The presence of exorcists in a clergy list does not reveal all their duties, and a medieval formula does not establish how often it was used. The Roman book of 1614 consolidated and disciplined an inherited practice; it did not create the whole Christian history that preceded it. Modern canon law, ritual revision, clinical consultation, and safeguarding likewise do not erase the past. They identify responsibilities that historical romanticism can obscure.

This distinction permits two errors to be refused together. A history can flatten every witness into one changeless ceremony and thereby make later rules appear already complete in the earliest texts. Or it can treat every difference as a rupture and miss the recurring Christian convictions that give the history coherence: Christ's victory, prayer in and through the Church, the creaturely limits of evil, the need for discernment, and the dignity of the afflicted person. Neither an unbroken-script story nor a succession of unrelated curiosities can account for the evidence.

The sources also differ in what they are competent to establish. Scripture, ancient literature, catechesis, liturgical books, conciliar and canonical acts, school theology, official pastoral guidance, clinical classification, and safeguarding records answer different questions. They can illuminate one another, but one cannot silently do another's work. A legal text can identify a minister and permission without diagnosing a person. A clinical classification can organize a differential assessment without deciding a theological cause. A narrative can show how an event was understood without becoming a neutral medical file. Much of the apparent confusion surrounding exorcism begins when these authorities are asked to say more than they say.

1.2 The subject and the limits of the inquiry

The subject is therefore larger than the solemn rite and narrower than every claim ever made about spirits. It includes the biblical and theological horizon within which Christians spoke about liberation from evil; the initiatory, ministerial, and ritual settings in which exorcistic language was used; the consolidation and revision of Roman books; the law governing the Latin Church; and the pastoral disciplines that protect persons today. It does not require a catalog of sensational cases, a taxonomy of alleged signs, or speculation about names and ranks that the governing authorities do not teach as dogma.

Some evidence remains unavailable, disputed, or too weak for the claim readers might expect it to bear. That absence is part of the history. It is better to identify an uncontrolled church order, an uncollated medieval formulary, a territorial legal boundary, or a case without a sufficient documentary chain than to bridge the gap with a familiar story. The account that follows marks those ceilings where they arise and reserves its fuller statement of corpus, method, jurisdiction, and currentness for the terminal scope appendix.

Three distinctions matter from the outset. Ordinary Christian prayer for deliverance from evil is not the reserved major rite. Minor exorcisms belong especially to authorized Christian initiation and do not declare a catechumen possessed. Major exorcism is an ecclesial liturgical sacramental, ordinarily celebrated with strict confidentiality, whose lawful use in the Latin Church requires the authority identified by canon 1172; it is neither a sacrament nor medical treatment.

Those distinctions protect ordinary Christian life from being absorbed into an extraordinary category. Temptation is not possession. Sin is not a clinical syndrome. Illness is not evidence of spiritual guilt. Prayer for deliverance does not create permission to perform a reserved rite. Nor does recognizing natural causes imply that Christian teaching has nothing to say about evil, suffering, freedom, or hope. The responsible account keeps theological, juridical, historical, and clinical judgments distinct while allowing each to contribute within its proper competence.

A safety boundary

This is historical, theological, and canonical study, not diagnosis or a field manual. It does not provide the prayers, alleged signs, interview prompts, commands, names, or sequence of a major exorcism. No reader is authorized by reading it. Nothing here warrants stopping medication or therapy, confronting a distressed person, testing a supernatural hypothesis, or attempting self-exorcism.

2 Before the Christian Rite: Ancient Contexts

Christian exorcism did not arise in a world without discourse about hostile spiritual agency, affliction, healing, protection, or divine aid. Yet an inventory of resemblances is not a history. The evidence considered here includes biblical narrative, rewritten Scripture, Jewish historiography, fragmentary hymnic and protective texts, medical polemic, philosophical dialogue, satire, literary biography, and a technical magical text. Those genres do different work. They address different audiences, assign agency in different ways, and make different kinds of claim. This section therefore compares narrator, agent, means, audience, and literary purpose before asking what any resemblance can bear.

One ceiling governs the whole comparison. The checked witnesses establish their own wording or bounded architecture at the cited loci; they do not collectively supply one ancient rite, an exhaustive corpus, a modern diagnosis, verified efficacy, a recoverable line of influence into Christianity, or permission to reconstruct or practise their actions. No project translation, restored lacuna, or operative formula is supplied. Qualifications peculiar to one witness remain beside that witness rather than being repeated as a disclaimer after every paragraph.

2.1 How genre changes the historical question

A narrative may tell what happened within its represented world without offering a procedure to readers. A hymn may praise divine power or seek protection without reporting an event. A polemic may expose what an author rejects while caricaturing or compressing an opponent. A philosophical dialogue may deploy religious vocabulary to explain mediation without cataloging popular belief. Historiography may present inherited tradition and an eyewitness claim together. Satire can preserve recognizable motifs while making credulity itself the object of scrutiny. Literary biography arranges episodes to disclose the character and authority of its subject. A technical text is closer to an instruction-bearing artifact, but possession of its written architecture still says little by itself about frequency, users, performance, or success.

These distinctions prevent a common circular argument. If every ancient reference to a spirit, command, herb, prayer, divine name, bodily symptom, or departure is first labeled “exorcism,” the resulting survey will seem to prove that one stable practice existed everywhere. But the stability was introduced by the label. A sounder comparison begins with each document’s own scene and communicative action. Who speaks? Who acts decisively? What does the narrator ask the audience to believe? Are material means, speech, petition, praise, command, or spectacle present, and how are they related? Is the text explaining affliction, contesting an explanation, praising God, authenticating a wise figure, entertaining a skeptical audience, or directing a technical act?

The distinction between a story’s layers matters as well. A represented event, the narrator’s interpretation of it, the surviving textual witness, and a modern historian’s comparison are not the same evidence. Josephus can narrate Eleazar and place the scene under Solomonic wisdom; that proves what this passage of Josephus presents, not all details of the event or their claimed antiquity. A Qumran transcription can preserve readable lexical sequences without preserving a complete composition. Lucian can make a character tell a marvel and another character answer skeptically; neither voice may simply be identified with a documentary deposition. The layers must remain visible if the eventual Christian material is to be read historically rather than assembled from detached motifs.

Five questions provide a repeatable comparison without pretending that every text answers all five equally.

Narrator and voice. A first-person claim to have witnessed a scene, a character’s report inside satire, an omniscient sacred narrator, a hymnic speaker, and an imperative technical text create different relations between statement and reader. The grammatical speaker is not always the work’s author, and neither one is automatically an eyewitness.

Agent and authority. Relief may be attributed chiefly to God, an angel, a petitioner, a named practitioner, a sage, a biographical hero, or a coordinated set of written and material acts. Listing what a human figure does without asking who authorizes or completes the action can reverse a source’s own theology.

Means and sequence. Prayer, praise, music, material substances, written signs, commands, attributed names, and observable signs may appear alone or in combination. Their position within a narrative or argument matters. A means that displays authority to spectators does different literary work from one embedded in a marriage story or framed by praise.

Audience. The audience may be an afflicted household, a ruler and soldiers inside the story, initiates, imagined technical users, or readers being invited to admire, doubt, worship, or understand. The same narrated action can carry a different historical meaning when its audience function changes.

Result claimed. Some texts report bodily relief, some explain the persistence of affliction, some promise protection, some attack rival explanations, and some characterize a powerful person. “Departure” is not a sufficient common denominator if the documents disagree about what the scene is for.

The questions also discipline silence. If a fragment does not preserve its audience or complete sequence, comparison should mark the missing coordinate instead of importing one from a fuller analogue. If a narrative says nothing about repetition, its vividness does not establish frequency. If a technical text contains directions, the presence of those directions does not establish that they were enacted. This is not skepticism applied selectively to unfamiliar material; it is the ordinary difference between what an artifact contains and the larger social history one might wish to recover from it.

2.2 Israel’s Scriptures: affliction inside providential narrative

The Hebrew Bible resists being flattened into a handbook. The harmful spirit in 1 Samuel 16 belongs to a narrative of kingship and judgment; David’s music gives Saul relief, but the narrator supplies neither adjuration nor ministerial office. Tobit 6–8 joins Raphael’s direction, Tobias and Sarah’s prayer, marriage, material means, healing, and angelic action under providence. Its Greek recensions and Latin reception do not always arrange or phrase the episode identically. The history must therefore identify its textual form. Neither narrative is a primitive Roman rite or a general authorization to imitate its material action.

The contrast between the two narratives is as important as their shared language of hostile agency. Exact page-image controls distinguish the Hebrew chapter in Kittel’s 1909 first edition, Swete’s Greek *1 Kingdoms*, and Hetzenauer’s 1914 Clementine Latin *1 Regum*; the tracked Douay–Rheims/Challoner reception numbers the book *1 Kings*. Across those distinct witnesses Saul’s affliction remains inside the transfer of kingship: the Lord’s spirit departs from Saul, hostile spiritual agency troubles him, his servants propose music, and David’s playing brings relief. Their wording is not interchangeable. Kittel’s base is the second Rabbinic Bible rather than Codex Leningradensis; Swete prints a Vaticanus base with a foot apparatus rather than a reconstructed modern critical Septuagint; and the Clementine text is received Latin, not Jerome’s recoverable autograph. None has been harmonized or used to settle priority.

The allocation of action in the Saul narrative is especially instructive. Saul’s servants recognize the condition in the narrative’s own terms and propose a skilled musician. David is selected for musical competence and courtly service. The narrator reports relief when he plays. David does not interrogate the spirit, transmit a verbal form, claim an office, or teach the court a repeatable discipline. Music is therefore part of the narrated means of relief, but the episode’s controlling concerns remain Saul’s loss and David’s rise. Extracting a therapeutic or ritual protocol would invert the story’s hierarchy of interests.

Tobit is more explicitly ritualized but no less resistant to extraction from its plot. Raphael’s instruction concerning the fish, Tobias and Sarah’s entry into marriage, their prayer for mercy, the burning of the fish’s heart and liver, the demon’s flight, and Raphael’s binding action form one narrated sequence. Agency is distributed: the angel instructs and acts, the couple prays, material means are used, and deliverance belongs to a providential story that also includes healing Tobit’s blindness. Selecting the smoke while discarding prayer, marriage, angelic commission, and the book’s textual history would turn narrative into a technique.

Swete’s 1896 edition gives exact page-verified controls for both its Vatican and materially different Sinaitic Greek forms. Hetzenauer’s 1914 Clementine *Tobias* supplies a separate received-Latin control: its extended angelic instruction, three-night arrangement, prayer, and binding narration are not silently mapped onto either Greek form. The variation matters historically because later readers did not encounter an abstract, editionless “Tobit episode.” They encountered particular forms whose sequence and detail could shape reception differently. The comparison establishes a shared providential architecture amid material textual variation; it does not decide recension priority or turn any one form into a general account of Israelite practice.

2.3 Explanatory rivalry: the Hippocratic polemic

The first chapter of the Hippocratic *On the Sacred Disease*, controlled here through Francis Adams's 1849 English translation at printed pages 843–845, changes the question from “what action appears?” to “who may explain an affliction?” The writer contests the claim that the disease is uniquely divine and attacks people who present themselves as unusually pious or knowledgeable while using purifications, incantations, prohibitions, and other observances. His alternative explanation assigns the disease a natural cause. The polemic thus witnesses an ancient rivalry over causation, expertise, and persuasive authority.

That rivalry is historically more revealing than a triumphalist contrast between superstition and medicine. The author does not merely set out a neutral case history and then add a physiological conclusion. He constructs opponents, criticizes their appeal to divinity, and argues that their claims are impious because they make divine action capricious or vulnerable to human measures. Religious reasoning is part of the polemic even as the writer rejects his opponents' explanation. The passage therefore shows competing ways of organizing observed suffering, responsibility, and expertise within Greek intellectual culture.

Nor does the passage establish that one intellectual program displaced every ritual, devotional, or spiritual interpretation. A polemic proves coexistence and contest more readily than victory. Its list of rejected activities is filtered through an adversarial purpose, not a statistical survey of practice. The writer's disease category is ancient and cannot be mapped mechanically onto a current diagnosis. For the history of Christian exorcism, the proper lesson is methodological: causal accounts and claims to expertise were already contested, so a later narrative's vocabulary of affliction must not be treated as though all ancient observers shared one explanatory system.

This ancient dispute also guards against an anachronistic two-stage history in which spiritual explanation simply precedes medicine and medicine later replaces it. The checked source instead places disagreement within antiquity itself. Medical argument, ritual action, religious interpretation, and social judgment could overlap and compete. Later Christian sources will need to be read within their own theological and pastoral frames, while modern clinical discernment belongs to a much later institutional and scientific setting. Neither can be projected backward into this polemic.

2.4 Lexical caution: Plato's *daimon* is not a Christian demon

Plato's *Symposium* 202d–203a, read here in Fowler's 1925 English translation, supplies a different kind of evidence. In Diotima's speech, *daimon* names an intermediate reality between divine and mortal. The speech associates this mediation with sacrifice, ritual, incantation, divination, and magic, and it situates Love within the same broad explanatory account. The passage is philosophical dialogue: a reported teacher's speech inside a conversation about love, wisdom, and desire.

The lexical warning is simple but consequential. Greek words built on *daimon* do not carry one unchanging Christian meaning across authors, centuries, and genres. In this Platonic locus the term does not by itself name a hostile fallen angel, a possessing spirit, or the object of expulsion. Translating or paraphrasing it automatically as “demon” can import later Christian associations and make the dialogue appear to describe a theology it does not state. Conversely, the term's broader Platonic range does not govern every later Jewish, pagan, or Christian use. Context, syntax, speaker, and genre must decide.

Diotima's list of mediated activities is also not a composite ritual manual. The activities illustrate a philosophical account of communication between divine and human realms. They do not establish that every practitioner understood mediation as the dialogue does, or that one ordinary ceremony combined the listed arts. The passage widens the ancient semantic field and demonstrates why vocabulary alone cannot define an exorcistic corpus. It belongs in this history as a control against false equivalence, not as a missing stage in ritual development.

Read beside the Hippocratic polemic, Plato clarifies the plurality of ancient classification. One author contests claims about a disease and attacks purificatory expertise; one literary-philosophical speech assigns religious and divinatory activities to mediation by a *daimon*. The documents do not answer the same question. Placing both under a generic heading such as “ancient demonology” would erase the explanatory contest in one and the metaphysical-literary function in the other.

2.5 Second Temple plurality: petition and attributed performance

Two comparatively complete literary witnesses, *Jubilees* 10.1–11 and Josephus’s *Antiquities* 8.45–49, show why “the Jewish background” is too singular. They differ in narrator, principal agent, means, represented audience, and purpose. Those differences are historical data rather than noise to be harmonized.

In R. H. Charles’s 1913 English translation, *Jubilees* depicts destructive spirits afflicting Noah’s descendants and leading them astray. Noah petitions God for mercy and asks that the spirits be bound. Mastema then requests that a portion remain under his authority. God’s disposition leaves one tenth and consigns nine tenths to condemnation, after which angelic agents teach medicinal knowledge against the diseases attributed to the spirits. The episode explains both the persistence and limitation of hostile activity inside a rewritten scriptural history.

Noah’s role is petitionary. He appeals to the sovereign God; he is not presented as the inventor or proprietor of a portable rite. The represented audience is first the world of Noah’s descendants and, at the literary level, readers being shown how post-flood affliction fits within the work’s account of angelic rebellion, judgment, mercy, and transmitted knowledge. The means are likewise layered: petition, divine decision, angelic restraint, and instruction concerning remedies all belong to the explanatory sequence. To isolate a single action and call it the work’s exorcistic technique would miss the narrative’s distribution of authority.

Josephus organizes his account differently. He first attributes to Solomon knowledge and skill concerning demons and says that forms of expulsion continued to be useful. He then presents himself as having seen Eleazar perform before Vespasian, his sons, officers, soldiers, and a wider military audience. In the scene, a named practitioner uses a ring containing a root, recites words attributed to Solomon, commands departure and non-return, and asks for an observable sign involving a vessel of water. The exact Perseus Niese Greek digital text controls wording and section boundaries at 8.45–49; Whiston’s VIII.2.5 remains an identified English reception witness.

The represented audience matters. The scene is not private relief narrated only for the sufferer. It is a demonstration before imperial and military observers, and the visible sign functions within that demonstrative setting. Josephus joins antiquarian interest in Solomon, a claim of continuing Jewish wisdom, and first-person eyewitness posture. The account’s apologetic and historiographic force depends on that arrangement. It does not become stronger history by detaching the ring, root, words, or sign from the narrator’s Solomonic frame; those are precisely the elements whose meaning the narrator coordinates.

Question	<i>Jubilees</i> 10.1–11	Josephus, <i>Antiquities</i> 8.45–49
Narrative set- ting	Rewritten scriptural history after the flood	Jewish antiquities joined to a first-person performance report
Principal human agent	Noah as petitioner	Eleazar as practitioner
Decisive author- ity	God’s judgment, with angelic execution and instruction	Solomonic knowledge as Josephus frames the performance
Means repre- sented	Petition, divine disposition, angelic restraint, and medicinal instruction	Ring and root, attributed words and command, and a visible test
Audience func- tion	Explains affliction and providential limitation to the work’s readers	Demonstrates inherited Jewish wisdom before elite and military witnesses
Historical yield	One rewritten-Scripture account of hostile spirits	One historiographic and apologetic report with an eyewitness claim

The matrix shows both overlap and discontinuity without forcing a verdict on the narrated events. Both texts connect hostile spirits with a larger account of divinely ordered history. But petition is not attributed technique; an explanation of continuing affliction is not a public demonstration; angelic instruction is not Eleazar’s performed sign. A route from one text to the other, or from either text to a Gospel, would require evidence of transmission or explicit dependence beyond shared subject matter.

2.6 Qumran witnesses: four textual situations, not one rite

The Qumran materials require an even stricter separation of document, fragment, transcription, and reconstructed composition. The present controls are exact bounded transcriptions: CAL for the Aramaic Genesis Apocryphon and 4Q560, and Qumran-Digital for the Hebrew 4Q510/511 and 11Q11 passages. They make readable architecture available while preserving lacunae and uncertainty. They do not place every fragment on the same evidentiary level.

2.6.1 Manuscript identity before reconstructed composition

The Israel Antiquities Authority’s Leon Levy catalog adds a material control that a transcription alone cannot supply. It identifies 4Q510 and 4Q511 as two distinct Hebrew manuscripts from Qumran Cave 4, written in square script on parchment and assigned broadly to the Herodian period. Within the catalog’s nomenclature they are respectively copy *a* and copy *b* of the Songs of the Maskil. The catalog directs the reader to Baillet’s separate edition ranges in *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* 7: pages 215–219 for 4Q510 and pages 219–262 for 4Q511. This is more than bibliographical housekeeping. Two copies provide evidence for two physical witnesses to a related composition; they do not provide two interchangeable containers from which an editor may select an undifferentiated continuous text.

The asymmetry of the catalog records reinforces that point. The 4Q510 record is associated with one scientific-number or plate group, 280, while the 4Q511 record lists twelve groups, 403–404, 407–409, and 411–417. The digital image inventory is therefore organized around physical plates and separately imaged pieces, not around the line sequence of a modern reconstructed composition. Plate 280’s itemized fragment views enumerate fragments 2–13; they do not expose a view cataloged there as textual fragment 1. Conversely, the image search for 4Q511 applies fragment numbers within multiple plate groups. A repeated display label such as “fragment 10” cannot be assumed, without a checked concordance, to mean Baillet’s or a later editor’s textual fragment 10 in every result. The images may eventually control readings, joins, and placements, but only after exact image-to-edition mapping. Their mere availability does not complete that work.

The 11Q11 record establishes a third and materially different object. It identifies a Hebrew, square-script parchment manuscript from Cave 11, again assigned to the Herodian period, under the title Apocryphal Psalms. Its scientific-number or plate groups are 61, 612, 619, and 1032, and its official publication is García Martínez, Tigchelaar, and van der Woude, *Discoveries in the Judaean Desert* 23, pages 181–205. Thus the protective address controlled below belongs neither to one of the two Cave 4 copies nor to their reconstructed Songs of the Maskil. Similar hostile-being, praise, or protective language can support comparison across these witnesses; the distinct cave, manuscript, catalog identity, and publication history block their collapse into one artifact or one recoverable ceremony.

This material layer also clarifies what “image control” means. The IAA catalog offers color, full-spectrum, infrared, and scanned historical images. Those modes can answer questions different from the ones answered by a licensed diplomatic transcription: where a break is physical, whether ink is visible under another spectrum, which piece occupies a plate, or whether an editorial join is materially plausible. But the catalog does not itself identify the exact image region corresponding to every cited line, publish a new translation, or adjudicate competing reconstructions. The present study therefore links the official records as restricted finding aids and retains no IAA image. Its actual wording claims remain controlled by the separate, dated Qumran-Digital transcriptions, with their lacunae and alternatives visible.

Three levels must consequently remain explicit. The physical manuscript is the parchment object and its surviving pieces. A catalog record supplies identity, material description, broad dating, image access, and publication coordinates. A transcription or critical edition supplies a scholarly representation whose readings, joins, numbering, and restorations still require identification. Keeping those levels apart produces a modest but important historical result: the corpus includes two Cave 4 copies of one related hymnic work and a separate Cave 11 psalmic manuscript, all materially fragmentary and transmitted through distinguishable editorial systems. It does not establish a standardized Qumran rite, the frequency or setting of performance, a common institutional owner, or a continuous line of influence into Christian exorcism.

2.6.2 Genesis Apocryphon 1Q20 XX.14–29: expanded narrative

The Genesis Apocryphon is an Aramaic retelling. In column XX.14–29 its line sequence keeps Pharaoh’s affliction, the failure of healers, a request concerning Abram, prayer, the restoration of Sarai, and recovery inside the expanded Abram-and-Pharaoh story. The CAL transcription permits the sequence and readable lexical architecture to be checked without pretending that an English publication translation or manuscript-image collation has been completed.

Genre governs the inference. Like the scriptural narratives considered above, the passage embeds hostile agency and relief within the fortunes of named figures. Abram’s action cannot be detached from the story’s conflict over Sarai, Pharaoh’s household, divine judgment, and restoration. The failed healers create a narrative contrast, but they do not supply a controlled survey of Egyptian medicine or ritual. The sequence can be compared with petitionary and command elements elsewhere because those features are readable; it cannot be promoted into a representative community ceremony.

2.6.3 4Q560 fragments 1–2: lexical evidence under material loss

The two Aramaic sequences cataloged as 4Q560 present a different evidentiary problem. They are heavily lacunose. Readable portions preserve categories associated with harmful beings, bodily affliction, spirits, and adjuratory speech, but the breaks obstruct the recovery of a continuous composition. The exact CAL delivery identifies its textual bases and keeps uncertainty visible. That makes the fragments genuine textual evidence without making them a complete text.

The difference between “words survive” and “a procedure survives” is decisive. A cluster of imperatives

or affliction terms may identify the kind of discourse present in a fragment. It cannot establish the missing transitions, the original extent of an item, the relation between its parts, its speaker and addressee throughout, or its intended setting. Supplying those elements from analogy would conceal the very fragmentation the witness contributes to the history. Here the absence of continuity is not an inconvenience to be repaired; it is part of the evidence.

2.6.4 4Q510 fragment 1 and 4Q511 fragment 10: hymnic parallels

The Hebrew witnesses 4Q510 fragment 1 and 4Q511 fragment 10 preserve a broken parallel associated with the Songs of the Sage. Praise and divine-power language frame references to the Maskil, hostile beings, affliction, bounded wicked dominion, and renewed praise. Qumran-Digital records each fragment separately, retaining alternate readings, breaks, and uncertainty. The parallel helps identify a shared textual architecture; it does not authorize silently filling one manuscript from the other.

Calling the material hymnic changes how its actions are understood. Praise is not ornamental packaging around a recoverable technique. It locates hostile beings and affliction within an act of proclaiming divine majesty and ordered power. The speaker's role, the force of the language, and any social setting must be inferred cautiously from what actually survives. A reconstructed performance assembled from both fragments would exceed the separate controls and suppress the textual difference that makes two manuscripts worth citing.

2.6.5 11Q11 V.4–14: a bounded protective psalmic address

The controlled portion of 11Q11 column V is psalmic and protective. A Davidic attribution and divine-name frame accompany direct address to a hostile nocturnal figure, a darkness-and-light contrast, and confinement imagery that places the figure away from the righteous. The exact Qumran-Digital transcription preserves corrections, alternatives, and breaks across lines 4–14.

Direct address can look superficially closer to later commanding speech than petition or praise does. Yet grammar alone cannot carry a history of influence. The address belongs to this psalmic composition and its Davidic frame. Adjacent material cannot be imported to make the bounded passage whole, and missing words cannot be supplied from a later ritual. The proper historical result is that one Qumran witness preserves this protective, direct-address architecture. Whether, where, and by whom the text was performed remains a separate question.

Witness	Genre or textual state	Readable architecture	Controlling limit
1Q20 XX.14–29	Aramaic narrative	expanded Affliction, failed healers, petitionary action, restoration, and recovery within Abram's story	A continuous story sequence is not a representative rite
4Q560 1–2	Heavily lacunose Aramaic fragments	Harmful-being, bodily, spirit, and adjuratory lexical fields	Breaks prevent a continuous composition or complete act
4Q510 1 / 4Q511 10	Separate Hebrew hymnic parallels	Praise and divine power frame hostile-being and affliction language	The manuscripts remain separate; no conflated reconstruction
11Q11 V.4–14	Fragmentary Hebrew protective psalm	Davidic and divine-name framing, direct address, darkness and light, confinement	The bounded column does not supply a full performance or continuous ritual

This compact comparison changes the historical picture without manufacturing uniformity. Qumran preserves narrative, fragmentary adjuratory, hymnic, and psalmic materials. Their diversity is positive evidence against speaking of “the Qumran exorcism” as a single object. At the same time, their presence

prevents an equally simplistic claim that Second Temple Jewish literature had only petitionary stories or no directed protective discourse. The responsible synthesis is plurality under sharply different levels of textual survival.

2.7 Lucian and Philostratus: similar motifs, different literary work

Lucian's *Philopseudes* 16 and Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius* 4.20 contain motifs that can be placed beside possession narratives: unusual speech or behavior, a knowledgeable figure, direct engagement with a spirit, departure, and signs of changed condition. The similarities are real at that level of description. Their literary frames, however, make them evidence of different kinds.

In Lucian, a character tells of a Syrian from Palestine said to deal with people afflicted by hostile spiritual agency. The story attributes dramatic knowledge and action to the practitioner. But it occurs in a dialogue organized around marvelous tales and credulity, and the skeptical interlocutor answers within the same scene. Fowler's 1905 English translation at printed pages 238–239 controls this bounded literary unit. The skepticism is not an external modern objection pasted onto the story; it is part of the ancient composition's own framing.

That frame makes a historical difference. The passage shows that a possession story and claims about a remarkable practitioner could be intelligible material for satire. It also shows an ancient author staging resistance to such claims. The narrative cannot be treated as a transparent ethnographic report after the skeptical exchange has been removed. Nor does the practitioner's description establish Christian identity merely because the geographic phrase "from Palestine" and familiar motifs may invite that association. The text as controlled does not make the identification.

Philostratus writes literary biography rather than satirical dialogue. In *Life of Apollonius* 4.20, Apollonius identifies and addresses the agency afflicting a young man, demands departure and a sign, and the narrative reports both a sign and changed behavior. The episode contributes to the biography's portrayal of Apollonius's insight and authority. Conybeare's 1912 facing-text edition at printed pages 390–392 controls the narrated sequence.

Here the narrator does not place an immediate skeptical rejoinder beside the marvel. The episode functions affirmatively within the accumulation of deeds that characterize the biographical subject. That does not turn literary biography into an unmediated case record. The selection, pacing, response of onlookers, and reported sign all serve the work's representation of Apollonius. The difference from Lucian is therefore not "false story" versus "true story." It is satire testing marvelous testimony versus biography using a marvel to disclose its subject.

These frames also block an easy dependence claim. A command, departure, and sign are motifs broad enough to recur without textual borrowing. To establish that Philostratus borrowed from a Gospel, that a Gospel borrowed from a pagan holy-man tradition, or that Lucian documented a Christian ritual would require textual, chronological, and transmission evidence not supplied by motif comparison. The checked passages instead demonstrate a shared ancient repertoire of intelligible claims deployed for distinct literary ends.

2.8 The Greek magical papyri: a technical-text evidence class

The item conventionally cited as PGM IV.3007–3086 belongs to a technical magical-text setting. Preisendanz's 1928 first-edition Greek text and German translation at printed pages 170–173 establish the item's boundaries, *daimon*-vocabulary, and the coexistence of material, written, spoken, and adjuratory elements. Those architectural observations are sufficient for comparison here; the operative content is deliberately not reproduced.

A technical text differs from narrative because it presents action-bearing material rather than merely telling a story about a practitioner. That difference raises the evidentiary ceiling in one narrow respect: the checked edition proves that a late-antique manuscript collection transmits such an item. It does not show how often anyone used it, whether the compilation reflects one author or community, how its parts were assembled, or what outcome followed. Written prescription is evidence of textual availability, not a performance log.

The modern label “Greek magical papyri” can also conceal several layers. The manuscript, the date and origin of its constituent material, the modern edition, and the modern corpus designation are distinct. Preisendanz’s edition is an exact historical control for this project, not a replacement for manuscript inspection or later critical work. The item’s mixture of modes cannot be generalized into a universal pagan rite, and religious vocabulary within it cannot establish Jewish or Christian authorship.

The comparison is nevertheless useful. The PGM witness shows that material, inscribed, and spoken components could be coordinated explicitly in a technical artifact. Josephus narrates a performance with material and spoken elements for an audience. The Qumran witnesses preserve narrative, hymnic, psalmic, and fragmentary adjuratory architectures. Lucian and Philostratus deploy practitioner scenes in literary works. Keeping these evidence classes separate allows genuine similarity to remain visible without giving any one text the documentary force of all the others.

2.9 What the comparison can and cannot periodize

These sources do not form a neat chronological staircase. Some works represent times much earlier than their surviving forms or editions; some manuscripts preserve compositions whose constituent dating is a separate scholarly question; all are accessed here through particular ancient witnesses or modern editions. A history that sorts them only by the date of the scene represented would place literary time where documentary time belongs. A history that sorts them only by the date of the modern edition would be equally unhelpful.

The useful periodization is therefore modest. Israelite and deuterocanonical narratives furnish scriptural worlds later Jewish and Christian readers received in differing textual forms. Second Temple works and Qumran manuscripts attest several Jewish literary architectures around hostile agency, petition, protection, and attributed action. Greek medical and philosophical texts show older and continuing disputes about causation, mediation, and expertise. Josephus, Lucian, and Philostratus show that performed authority and marvelous deliverance could be narrated for historiographic, skeptical, and biographical purposes in the Roman imperial world. The PGM item witnesses a late-antique technical compilation. These are overlapping strata, not stages through which one rite necessarily passed.

Reception complicates the picture further. A Christian writer could know a scriptural narrative through a Greek or Latin form without knowing the specific Qumran manuscript now used for comparison. A modern reader can place Josephus beside Lucian in a way neither author arranged. A manuscript discovered in the twentieth century may transform modern knowledge of Second Temple plurality while supplying no evidence that an early Christian author read that manuscript. The history of ancient production, ancient transmission, and modern discovery must not be collapsed into one timeline of influence.

This bounded periodization still advances the paper. It replaces the vague phrase “ancient peoples practised exorcism” with a documented set of different textual claims. It also identifies what a stronger influence thesis would need: shared distinctive wording rather than generic motifs, plausible chronology, a route of transmission, evidence that the compared units had the relevant function, and ideally an ancient notice of reception or dependence. None of those requirements denies cultural contact. They distinguish contact as a historical environment from borrowing as a specific claim.

2.10 Toward the Gospel narratives

The ancient comparison has yielded a field of contested explanations, different spirit vocabularies, petitionary and providential stories, attributed techniques, protective praise, fragmentary direct address, literary demonstrations of authority, satire about marvels, and a technical written item. It has not yielded a single ceremony waiting to be inherited. That negative conclusion is not a claim that Christianity developed without historical surroundings. It is a claim about what the checked evidence can show: surroundings are plural, and historical relation cannot be inferred from resemblance alone.

The Gospel narratives must therefore be read first as Gospel narratives. Their controlling questions include Jesus' authority, the arrival of God's kingdom, conflict over the source of Jesus' power, restoration of afflicted persons, the formation and failure of disciples, and the relation between mission and prayer. Their Greek vocabulary must be read within those plots and arguments rather than assigned Plato's semantic field or the PGM item's technical function. Their scenes may be compared with Josephus, Qumran, or Greco-Roman literary witnesses, but the comparison begins only after each Gospel pericope has been established in its own textual and narrative setting.

This method avoids two symmetrical mistakes. A uniqueness thesis can ignore the widespread ancient intelligibility of hostile-spirit and deliverance language. A borrowed-rite thesis can reduce the Gospels to motifs already found elsewhere and overlook their distinctive narrators, Christological claims, controversies, and ecclesial reception. Historical comparison is strongest when it neither isolates Christian texts from antiquity nor dissolves them into a constructed background.

The next section accordingly moves from contexts to canonical witness. It will distinguish the individual Synoptic scenes and Acts rather than build a harmonized procedure. Textual variants, especially the prayer-and-fasting variant in Mark 9, will remain textual questions. Claims about authority will remain claims made by and within the canonical narratives. The later history of baptismal exorcism, apologetic challenge, ordained office, ritual books, canon law, and contemporary safeguarding will be traced in their own evidence classes rather than projected backward into the first-century scenes.

3 The Biblical Witness

Scripture gives a theological history of hostile spiritual agency, divine judgment, Christ's authority, restored persons, apostolic mission, worship, and moral allegiance. It does not give one continuous ritual history. The books differ in genre, textual history, and narrative purpose: Saul's court is not Tobias's wedding chamber; a Gospel conflict is not an apostolic mission summary; a Pauline exhortation is not a narrated encounter. Those differences are evidence, not obstacles to be harmonized.

One ceiling governs this section. The passages can support claims about what their identified witnesses say and how their narratives or arguments work. They cannot, by themselves, establish a genealogy for a later rite, reproduce a formula, diagnose a person, authorize a minister, demonstrate efficacy, or turn an ancient symptom into a modern inference. With that ceiling stated once, the positive canonical claims can carry the account.

3.1 Saul's affliction belongs to the transfer of kingship

First Samuel 16 makes Saul's affliction part of a royal judgment narrative. The chapter first recounts Samuel's mission to anoint David and the coming of the Lord's spirit upon him. Only then does it report the departure of the Lord's spirit from Saul and the hostile spiritual agency that troubles him. The juxtaposition controls the episode. Saul's distress is not an isolated case inserted to teach a technique; it is one consequence within the narrative transfer from the rejected king to the newly anointed one.

The court responds through ordinary royal service. Saul's servants name the trouble in the story's own theological terms and recommend finding a skilled player. One servant recommends David not only as a musician but as a man described through courage, competence, appearance, and the Lord's presence. Saul sends for him, takes him into service, and asks Jesse that David remain. When the hostile agency comes upon Saul, David plays; Saul experiences relief, and the troubling agency departs. The scene therefore advances David's entry into Saul's court at the same time that it narrates relief.

That allocation of action matters. David neither questions the spirit nor delivers a speech to it. The servants do not seek a bearer of a distinct exorcistic office. No verbal form is transmitted, no set of signs is cataloged, and no sequence is detached from court service for repetition. Music is a real narrated means of relief, but it is embedded in the larger irony that the rejected king receives relief through the anointed successor whose rise he does not yet understand. Reading the episode chiefly as a technical precedent would displace the chapter's royal and providential center.

The textual controls also prevent an editionless retelling. The repository has exact page-image controls for Kittel and Beer's 1909 Hebrew *Biblia Hebraica*, Swete's 1909 Greek *1 Kingdoms*, and Hetzenauer's 1914 Clementine Latin *1 Regum*. The Catholic English reception control numbers the book *1 Kings*. These are not four labels for one silently reconstructed text. Kittel's base follows the second Rabbinic Bible rather than Codex Leningradensis; Swete prints a Vaticanus base with a foot apparatus; and the Clementine text is a received Latin edition. Their distinct names and wording belong to the history of reception. They agree sufficiently for the bounded narrative architecture just described, but the present controls do not adjudicate textual priority.

The reception effect is significant even without tracing a later ritual lineage. A Hebrew reader encounters the chapter within Samuel; Greek and Latin Christian readers encountered book titles and diction belonging to their own scriptural corpora; English Catholic readers inherited the older *1 Kings* numbering. Citations that merely say "Saul" can therefore conceal which textual and bibliographic world carried the story. Historical accounting begins by naming that world, especially when later authors use the episode to discuss music, spiritual conflict, divine judgment, or Davidic typology.

The sequence of causation must also remain the narrator's rather than the historian's invention. The chapter connects the Lord's spirit, hostile spiritual agency, Saul's experience, the servants' counsel, David's playing, and relief. It does not explain the relation among those elements through a general theory. A later reader may place the music within an account of natural consolation, providential instrumentality, spiritual warfare, or Davidic prefiguration, but each such placement belongs to reception or theological interpretation and needs its own witness. The ancient narrative itself supplies the ordered events and its royal frame.

This distinction protects the episode from opposite reductions. Calling the music "merely natural" would add a causal exclusion the narrator does not state. Calling it a self-sufficient spiritual technique would detach it from David's person and the transfer of divine favor that the chapter emphasizes. The source-first conclusion is more exact: in this narrative, David's skilled playing brings Saul relief when the troubling agency is upon him, and that relief advances David's place in the court. The controlled editions warrant that claim even though they do not warrant a universal explanation of music's effects.

3.2 Tobit makes deliverance one movement of providence

Tobit 6–8 distributes agency across angelic instruction, human obedience, prayer, marriage, material action, and divine protection. Raphael directs Tobias concerning the fish and accompanies the journey. Tobias enters his marriage with Sarah under that direction. The couple pray, the prescribed material is burned, the demon flees, and Raphael binds it. The episode belongs to a story in which the same journey also leads to the healing of Tobit's blindness and the disclosure of Raphael's mission. Its controlling frame is providential rather than mechanical.

The marriage setting is indispensable. Sarah's earlier losses make the wedding a place of fear, while the narrative answers fear through fidelity, kinship, prayer, and angelic guardianship. Tobias does not enter the chamber as an independent specialist confronting a case. He enters as a bridegroom who has received instruction from his companion, and his prayer with Sarah places their union before the God of their ancestors. Deliverance occurs inside that appeal and inside the angel's commission. The story's human center is the couple's protected marriage, not mastery of hidden forces.

The material action consequently cannot bear the whole explanation. Isolating the fish's heart and liver from Raphael's direction, the couple's prayer, the marriage plot, and the angel's binding action would rewrite the distribution of agency. The narrative does not present an anonymous operator discovering a universally available property. It presents a named journey under providential guidance. The same fish supplies material later used in Tobit's healing, further joining the wedding episode to the book's larger movement from affliction toward restored households.

Textual plurality makes that narrative restraint historically necessary. Swete's 1896 Greek edition prints both the Vatican form and a materially different Sinaitic form across the exact pages inspected for chapters 6–8. Hetzenauer's 1914 Clementine *Tobias* supplies a third, received-Latin control. Its extended angelic instruction, three-night arrangement, prayer, and sequence of action differ materially from the two Greek forms. The forms share a providential architecture, but they do not authorize a composite account assembled from whichever detail is fullest in each witness.

The recension plurality also changes what "the Tobit precedent" can mean in reception history. Readers formed by the Clementine sequence received a more extended arrangement than readers of either Greek form printed by Swete. Readers of the two Greek forms did not receive identical narration. A later allusion may therefore depend on a particular textual form rather than on an abstract common episode. Before treating a detail as ancient evidence, the historian must ask whether that detail belongs to the Vatican form, the Sinaitic form, the received Latin, or a later translation based on one of them.

The present comparison supports two conclusions together. First, all three controlled forms refuse to separate deliverance from providence, prayer, marriage, and angelic agency. Second, their differences prevent a claim that one recovered sequence can stand without qualification for the whole book's textual history. The controls do not settle Semitic reconstruction, recension priority, or modern critical adjudication. What they do settle is already substantial: Tobit is neither a duplicate of Saul's musical relief nor a freestanding manual awaiting extraction.

3.3 The Synoptics place authority inside the arrival of the kingdom

The Synoptic Gospels make Jesus' authority the center of their conflict narratives. Their vocabulary varies, and the same designation can serve different plots. Forms commonly rendered "unclean spirit" appear in scenes of public teaching, isolation, restoration, controversy, and mission. Forms of *daimonizomai*, often rendered "possessed" or more transparently "demonized," identify persons inside narration. The words are narrative designations, not a freestanding taxonomy whose entries can be transferred to modern cases.

The evangelists can also distinguish categories while placing them beneath one divine authority. Matthew 4:24 lists the demonized, epileptics, and paralytics separately. Mark 1:32–34 places the sick and demonized side by side. Those summaries do not map ancient terms onto modern classifications, but they do show that the evangelists did not treat every illness or disability as interchangeable with hostile spiritual agency. Their positive claim is Christological: diverse forms of affliction come within Jesus' restoring mission.

3.3.1 Mark: command, conflict, and the restored witness

Mark begins public ministry by joining teaching and command. In the synagogue at 1:21–28, Jesus teaches with authority and commands an unclean spirit. The crowd’s question concerns the authority displayed in both word and deed. There is no preparatory apparatus and no attempt to establish standing through a longer verbal pedigree. The scene presses the reader to ask who Jesus is.

Mark 3:22–27 supplies the narrative interpretation. When scribes explain the expulsions through Beelzebul, Jesus answers with the divided kingdom and the strong man’s house. Satan cannot coherently expel Satan; the strong man’s goods can be plundered only when the strong man is bound. Particular scenes therefore belong to a larger invasion of hostile dominion. Mark does not offer the image as a later sequence of ritual acts. It explains the eschatological conflict enacted by Jesus’ ministry.

The Gerasene account in Mark 5:1–20 intensifies that architecture. The man is among the tombs, beyond successful restraint, crying out and harming himself. The encounter includes command, contested speech, the name “Legion,” pleas about destination, the destruction of the herd, and the region’s fearful response. Yet the narrative’s human destination is the man seen clothed and composed, then sent home to tell his own people what the Lord has done for him. Restoration and witness outlast the hostile voices.

That movement governs the naming exchange. Mark reports Jesus’ question and the answer “Legion,” but he does not turn the answer into a reliable demonological dossier. The spirits speak as participants in conflict: they recognize, resist, plead, and seek an outcome. The narrative grants them no teaching authority. The reader’s attention finally moves from their self-presentation to the restored man’s commission. Later fascination with obtaining names reverses Mark’s center of gravity if it treats hostile speech as the episode’s chief deposit.

Mark 9:14–29 shifts the pressure from public recognition to failed discipleship. A father brings his suffering child after the disciples have failed. The scene joins the child’s danger, the father’s anguished appeal, Jesus’ rebuke of unbelief, the father’s confession of mixed belief, Jesus’ command, and the disciples’ later private question. The answer directs them to prayerful dependence. It does not reward their failure with a more elaborate technique.

The last saying is also a textual-history hinge. Three modern edition controls make the hinge exact without collapsing it into a verdict about an autograph. Holmes’s SBL Greek New Testament ends the saying with “prayer.” Its edition-comparison apparatus places Westcott–Hort and Nestle–Aland 28 with that reading, while Tregelles and Robinson–Pierpont add “and fasting.” Robinson–Pierpont’s own tracked text accordingly prints the longer reading, and the Douay–Rheims/Challoner English witness receives “prayer and fasting” at Mark 9:28 in its numbering. The SBL apparatus compares editorial texts, not manuscripts. It proves disagreement among named editions and nothing more about the age, geography, or relative value of their underlying witnesses.

The *Editio Critica Maior* of Mark supplies the manuscript-apparatus control that the edition comparison cannot. At its word address 9:29/29 the guiding line is split: reading *a* omits the two-word addition, while reading *b* has *kai nesteia*, “and fasting,” and is marked as Byzantine. The accompanying INTF commentary describes the attestation for the omission as small—Greek witnesses 01, 03, and 0274—and describes the longer reading as coherent and supported by the rest of the Greek witnesses collated there. This is a more precise result than saying either that “ancient manuscripts omit fasting” or that “the manuscripts include it.” Both readings have manuscript support; their distribution is unequal; and a critical edition’s reconstruction is an editorial judgment made from that evidence rather than another manuscript.

The apparatus also has a correction history worth preserving because it shows why a source-first account names its dated control. The initial digital apparatus and commentary assigned minuscule 706 to the omission. A contributor checked the manuscript image and reported that 706 instead contains the addition. INTF acknowledged the error in 2022, corrected the transcription, and undertook to update the digital

ECM; a later forum notice again confirmed that 706 belongs with the longer reading. The corrected result therefore leaves 01, 03, and 0274 as the named Greek support for omission in this bounded control. The episode does not discredit the edition. It distinguishes the manuscript image, transcription, apparatus, and subsequent correction as separate historical layers, each of which can be checked and revised.

Nor does the ECM evidence reduce to a unanimous editorial explanation. The majority editorial preference was for omission, while the published split guiding line preserves both readings as alternatives of equal weight. The commentary reports the familiar proposal that growing early-Christian emphasis on fasting encouraged an addition, but it also records a minority judgment by Holger Strutwolf and Klaus Wachtel in favor of the longer reading. They point to the regular association of prayer and fasting and judge that no viable reason for the omission is apparent. The present history need not choose between those accounts. The apparatus establishes readings and attestation; the commentary preserves competing assessments of how the variation arose. Neither supplies a secure date for the change, the wording of an autograph, or a license to convert an editorial preference into doctrine.

What can be said historically is already substantial. Prayer alone is the reading printed by SBLGNT, Westcott–Hort, and Nestle–Aland 28, and is reading *a* in the ECM split line. Prayer with fasting is the reading printed by Tregelles and Robinson–Pierpont, is reading *b* in that split line, is broadly attested in the ECM collation, and entered the controlled Catholic English reception. An ascetical history that invokes fasting must therefore name the textual or reception stream carrying it, rather than treating every form of Mark as verbally identical.

The variant does not overturn the narrative claim shared by the controls. The disciples ask why they were unable, and the answer locates ability in dependence rather than possession. Whether an identified witness reads “prayer” or “prayer and fasting,” the scene does not append materials, diagnostic signs, a guaranteed technique, or a transferable office. Textual history can explain what the witnesses and editions transmit; it cannot make the saying an operational rule or demonstrate efficacy.

3.3.2 Matthew and Luke interpret the conflict differently

Matthew and Luke both answer the Beelzebul accusation by making expulsion a sign that God’s reign has arrived, but their formulations are not identical. Matthew 12:22–32 speaks of the Spirit of God; Luke 11:14–22 speaks of the finger of God. Both employ the divided-house argument and the image of a stronger victor, yet each phrase belongs to its evangelist’s scriptural and theological rhetoric. A comparison should preserve the convergence without replacing either wording with a harmonized formula.

Matthew’s placement gives the conflict a judgment edge. The kingdom saying stands with the controversy over attribution: the same work is read either as evidence of God’s Spirit or as an act of hostile power. Jesus exposes the incoherence of the accusation and warns about speech against the Spirit. The scene is therefore not only about power over an affliction; it is about judgment in the presence of God’s arriving reign and the culpability of misnaming its work.

Luke’s “finger of God” formulation evokes divine action while keeping the episode inside Luke’s ordered journey narrative. The stronger one overcomes the armed strong man and distributes his spoils. The following demand is allegiance: whoever is not with Jesus is against him. Luke’s version thus joins victory to the impossibility of neutrality. It does not invite the reader to abstract an independent method from the command scenes.

The return-of-the-spirit sayings in Matthew 12:43–45 and Luke 11:24–26 add a moral warning. An unclean spirit departs, wanders, returns to a house found empty and ordered, and brings worse companions. Matthew explicitly turns the image toward the generation being addressed; Luke places it in the sequence of conflict and allegiance. In neither form is the point a follow-up schedule for a contemporary case. An emptied and uncommitted life is unsafe; the kingdom’s arrival requires a response.

Luke 10:17–20 imposes a further restraint on the meaning of successful mission. The returning disciples rejoice that spirits are subject to them in Jesus’ name. Jesus affirms the defeat of hostile power and the authority given them, but redirects their joy toward their names being written in heaven. Extraordinary success is subordinated to belonging to God. Luke thereby resists making mastery over spirits a minister’s identity, spiritual rank, or ground of celebrity.

Luke 13:10–17 broadens restoration beyond the usual command scenes. The narrator speaks of a spirit of weakness; the woman is physically bent and unable to straighten herself. Jesus addresses her freedom, lays hands on her, and she stands upright and glorifies God. In the Sabbath controversy he describes her as a daughter of Abraham whom Satan had bound. Bodily incapacity, theological causation, covenant identity, healing, praise, and Sabbath argument remain one literary whole. Luke’s narration cannot be reduced either to a modern diagnosis or to an interchangeable exorcism scene.

3.3.3 Name, outsiders, and final judgment

Mark 9:38–41 and Luke 9:49–50 preserve related but distinct reports about an unnamed person acting in Jesus’ name outside the disciples’ company. John reports that the disciples tried to stop him because he was not following with them. Jesus refuses the prohibition. The exact SBLGNT running texts and edition-comparison apparatus retain local differences in wording and pronouns; the two accounts therefore should not be silently fused.

Both accounts rebuke possessiveness by the recognized disciples. Neither makes the name of Jesus an automatically effective verbal object, because the scenes concern the disciples’ attempt to monopolize action rather than a theory of how words operate. Mark develops the saying through the difficulty of speaking evil immediately after a mighty work and through the broad principle that one not against “us” is for “us.” Luke gives the more compact reversal that one not against “you” is for “you.” The pronoun difference belongs to each account’s rhetoric.

Matthew 7:22–23 supplies the canonical counterweight to any claim that a reported extraordinary act authenticates its actor. Within the Sermon on the Mount, speakers appeal at final judgment to prophecy, expulsions, and mighty works done in Jesus’ name. Their appeal is rejected. The surrounding argument turns on doing the Father’s will and on the difference between hearing Jesus’ words and acting on them. Matthew therefore places obedience and communion above claimed performance.

The three witnesses together create a productive tension rather than a contradiction to be dissolved. Mark and Luke prevent the disciples’ group boundary from becoming a monopoly on every work done in Jesus’ name. Matthew prevents the reported use of that name and extraordinary deeds from becoming self-authentication. The canonical synthesis is not “outsiders are authorized” or “results prove approval.” It is that neither institutional possessiveness nor spectacular claims can replace allegiance, obedience, and judgment.

3.3.4 Parallel restorations retain each evangelist’s judgment

The Synoptic parallels about the men among the tombs show why comparison must work at the level of whole narratives. Mark 5:1–20 and Luke 8:26–39 narrate one man, while Matthew 8:28–34 narrates two. The regional designations also vary across the textual traditions represented by the available Greek controls. Those differences are not details to be suppressed in order to produce one maximally full incident. Each evangelist has selected and ordered the episode within a particular Gospel.

Mark gives the longest treatment of the man’s prior condition. The failed attempts to bind him anticipate Jesus’ authority over the hostile “Legion,” but the verbal echo does not make human restraint and Jesus’ command the same kind of act. The story’s first binding belongs to the community’s inability to contain

the man; its final human image is not stronger restraint but restored presence and a commission home. Mark's geography then makes that commission an extension of Jesus' work in a region that has asked Jesus to depart.

Luke retains the restored posture and the request to accompany Jesus, then frames the commission as a return home to recount what God has done. The man proclaims throughout the city what Jesus has done. That narrative sequence places Jesus' work inside Luke's theology of divine action without turning the restored man into a ritual specialist. His commission is testimony. Luke's version also stands near the restoration of Jairus's daughter and the woman with the flow of blood, so the episode participates in a wider sequence of Jesus restoring people across social, bodily, and cultic boundaries.

Matthew compresses the scene and doubles the afflicted figures. His account does not reproduce Mark's extended description of isolation, the name "Legion," or the restored man's mission. It presses instead toward the recognition of Jesus as Son of God, the question of premature judgment, the request concerning the herd, and the city's plea that Jesus leave the region. Importing Mark's final commission into Matthew would mute Matthew's sharper, more abrupt ending.

The shared elements still matter. In every form, hostile agency recognizes Jesus, cannot dictate the final outcome, and is followed by the destruction of the herd and the fearful response of local people. But shared plot does not yield one neutral transcript behind the Gospels. The historian may compare their theological emphases—Mark's restoration and witness, Luke's return home and proclamation, Matthew's authority and judgment—without deciding that one evangelist's omission is a defect to be repaired from another.

The synagogue scenes make a related point. Mark 1:21–28 and Luke 4:31–37 both join authoritative teaching, hostile recognition, command, departure, and spreading report. Luke's placement follows the Nazareth rejection and begins a Capernaum sequence that moves from synagogue to household and then to many healings. Mark uses the scene to inaugurate the public impression of Jesus' authority. The same broad event pattern therefore performs distinct literary work in each Gospel.

3.3.5 Restoration is personal, social, and doxological

Across the Synoptics, restoration is not exhausted by the cessation of an episode. Mark's Gerasene man returns to human company, clothing, composure, home, and speech. Luke's bent woman stands upright, praises God, and is named as a daughter of Abraham before the assembly. The child in Mark 9 is raised by Jesus after bystanders think him dead and is returned to the narrative world in which his father sought help. These endings restore relationship and agency rather than displaying only victory over an antagonist.

Public response, however, is divided. Crowds can marvel at authority; leaders can attribute the same works to Beelzebul; residents can fear a restored man and ask Jesus to depart; adversaries can be put to shame while the crowd rejoices at the bent woman's healing. The narratives do not permit visible change to settle every theological question automatically. They interpret the change through Jesus' identity, his teaching, the kingdom, covenant belonging, and the responses of witnesses.

That is why the Gospels cannot be reduced to case collections. A case collection would group scenes by symptom or intervention and seek recurrent features. The evangelists group and sequence them to disclose who Jesus is and what response his ministry demands. Their people are characters with families, homes, communities, histories, and futures, not carriers of signs for later classification. The strong-man controversy, the outsider sayings, and Matthew's judgment scene then interpret extraordinary works within the larger demands of allegiance and obedience.

3.4 Acts distinguishes mission from the manipulation of a name

Acts carries the Gospel conflict into apostolic mission while sharply distinguishing its settings. At Acts 8:4–8, Philip proclaims Christ in a Samaritan city, crowds attend to his message, unclean spirits depart, and persons with other afflictions are healed. The result is joy in the city. Departure belongs to reception of the Gospel; Luke does not isolate it as Philip's specialist trade.

Acts 16:16–18 presents a different conflict. A slave girl associated with a divining spirit repeatedly follows Paul and his companions while announcing their relation to salvation. Paul eventually turns and commands the spirit to leave in the name of Jesus Christ. It leaves, and the narrative immediately turns to the owners' recognition that their hope of profit has gone. The episode belongs as much to economic exploitation and the ensuing persecution as to the command itself.

That setting complicates a simple test based on the content of speech. The girl's repeated announcement sounds favorable to the missionaries, yet Paul does not accept the spirit as an authorized herald. Luke judges the scene through apostolic mission and the girl's exploitation, not through a rule that apparently accurate religious language validates its source. The command ends the owners' income and leads to public violence against Paul and Silas. Liberation has civic and economic consequences.

Acts 19:11–20 makes the boundary around Jesus' name explicit. Extraordinary deeds occur through Paul, while itinerant Jewish exorcists attempt to adjure hostile spirits by "the Jesus whom Paul preaches." The sons of Sceva's attempt fails violently. Luke does not explain their failure by the absence of a longer wording. The hostile reply distinguishes knowing Jesus and recognizing Paul from the would-be users' lack of standing.

The episode then widens from failed appropriation to conversion. Fear falls upon the inhabitants, Jesus' name is magnified, believers confess practices, and costly books associated with magic are destroyed. Luke's conclusion is the growth and strengthening of the word. The center is not discovery of a more successful incantation but repudiation of magical possession and renewed allegiance to the proclaimed Lord.

These three Acts scenes form a compact narrative matrix:

- Samaria joins proclamation, departures, healings, and civic joy;
- Philippi joins command, a woman's exploitation, lost profit, and persecution;
- Ephesus joins apostolic signs, attempted secondhand adjuration, failure, confession, and abandonment of magical books.

Their shared reference to hostile agency does not erase their different missionary functions.

Acts consequently permits historical comparison without equivalence. The word "exorcists" at Acts 19 identifies itinerant actors, and their adjuration by a powerful name makes comparison with some ancient Jewish and Mediterranean reports intelligible. Luke's narrative judgment, however, denies that outward resemblance establishes shared authority or theology. Christian mission is not represented as ownership of an especially potent name. It belongs to proclamation, conversion, communion, and the work of the Spirit across the whole narrative.

3.5 Paul locates conflict in worship, communion, and a formed life

The Pauline passages change genre. They do not narrate afflicted persons or commands of departure. They address churches about participation, holiness, and endurance. Reading them as encounter reports would miss their positive ecclesial claims.

3.5.1 First Corinthians: tables disclose communion

First Corinthians 10:14–22 addresses idolatry through sacrificial participation. Paul reasons from the cup and bread of the Christian assembly to Israel’s participation at the altar and then to Gentile sacrifices. His contrast between the Lord’s table and a table associated with demons concerns incompatible communion. The controlling verbs are those of sharing and participating, not diagnosing and expelling.

The argument preserves two truths without collapsing them. An idol is not a god that rivals the Lord, yet participation in sacrificial worship is not therefore religiously empty. Paul refuses divided allegiance and asks whether the Corinthians would provoke the Lord to jealousy. The passage makes cultic belonging morally consequential while denying a dualism of equal divine powers.

Its immediate purpose is corporate formation. The Corinthians must understand their common cup and loaf as communion and must flee idolatry. The passage does not identify a demonized individual, describe symptoms, or address a hostile being. Its contribution to the canonical witness is instead the claim that spiritual conflict can concern the church’s worship and shared table before it concerns any extraordinary episode.

3.5.2 Second Corinthians: holiness is an ecclesial boundary

Second Corinthians 6:14–7:1 constructs a chain of antitheses: righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, Christ and Beliar, believer and unbeliever, God’s temple and idols. The cumulative force is ecclesial and moral. The church is addressed as the temple of the living God and called to separation from defilement and to the perfection of holiness.

“Beliar” therefore appears inside an argument about incompatible partnerships and covenant identity. Paul does not pause to define a rank, narrate an encounter, or give an address to a hostile power. The sequence moves toward God’s promise to dwell among and receive his people, then toward their purification in response. The name performs one member of an antithetical series whose destination is a holy community.

The passage also shows why demonological vocabulary cannot be detached from genre. In a Gospel narrative, hostile speech and departure may advance a plot of restoration. Here a name sharpens the opposition between allegiances in an apostolic exhortation. Treating both uses as entries in one procedural lexicon would erase what Paul is asking the Corinthians to become.

3.5.3 Ephesians: the armor is a corporate pattern of fidelity

Ephesians 6:10–20 names rulers, authorities, cosmic powers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness. The density of those terms can attract attempts to construct a hierarchy. The paragraph’s grammar and imagery direct attention elsewhere: believers are to be strengthened in the Lord, put on God’s armor, stand, and pray.

Every principal item of armor interprets resistance through a Christian virtue or divine gift: truth, righteousness, readiness belonging to the Gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the word of God. The imagery culminates not in a private contest but in prayer “for all the saints” and for Paul’s bold proclamation. The combat is communal, ethical, evangelical, and dependent.

The exact SBLGNT running text and edition-comparison apparatus record local variation within the bounded passage without changing that architecture. The apparatus compares editions rather than collating manuscripts, so it cannot prove exhaustive agreement. It is sufficient for the present claim that the paragraph’s named hostile powers are framed by divine armor, corporate standing, and persevering prayer.

Ephesians thus gives the broadest Pauline vocabulary and the strongest restraint on sensational use of it.

The church resists by becoming a truthful, righteous, peace-bearing, faithful, saved, scripturally formed, and praying people. Hostile powers are real within the letter's exhortation, but curiosity about their arrangement is not the exhortation's goal. The paragraph forms a community for fidelity and witness.

3.5.4 The three letters define a common ecclesial field

Read together, the three Pauline passages move from the church's table, through the church's identity as temple, to the church's standing in divine armor. The movement is not a reconstructed sequence intended by a single letter. It is a canonical comparison of three distinct arguments. First Corinthians asks what communion a shared meal enacts. Second Corinthians asks what partnership accords with God's indwelling people. Ephesians asks how that people stands amid conflict.

Their images mutually clarify the scale of the conflict. The cup and loaf are shared; the temple is a people among whom God dwells; the armor is addressed to a community and culminates in prayer for all the saints. Even when the grammar addresses hearers directly, the argument does not imagine an isolated expert. Participation, holiness, and resistance are corporate practices of the baptized community.

The moral field is equally concrete. Idolatry concerns acts of communion. Holiness concerns the loves and partnerships by which a people embodies its identity. Armor names truthfulness, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the word, and prayer. Paul does not make spiritual conflict a rival sphere detached from ordinary Christian life. He locates it in how a church worships, whom it belongs to, what it refuses, and how it endures.

This Pauline field also limits retrospective use of Gospel scenes. Paul does not take the commands and departures familiar from the Gospel tradition and convert them into congregational instructions. His demonological terms serve arguments about the church. Any later history that moves from Scripture to liturgical institutions must therefore account for a change in genre and documented ecclesial development, not claim that a Pauline armor list already contains a ritual book in compressed form.

3.6 The canonical pattern is christological before it is procedural

Across these genres, hostile agency never becomes the Bible's organizing center. First Samuel subordinates Saul's relief to judgment and the rise of David. Tobit subordinates deliverance to providence, marriage, prayer, and angelic commission. Mark places commands within the identity and authority of Jesus; Matthew and Luke interpret them through kingdom, Spirit, allegiance, and judgment. Acts tests the use of Jesus' name by its relation to apostolic mission and conversion. Paul relocates conflict within worship, communion, holiness, truth, peace, faith, and prayer.

The evangelists' differences strengthen that account. Mark emphasizes authority, strong-man conflict, restoration, witness, and dependent discipleship. Matthew binds the kingdom sign to attribution, obedience, and final judgment. Luke repeatedly joins restoration to praise, mission to belonging, and authority to a refusal of spiritual self-importance. Acts extends Luke's theology into cities where proclamation meets exploitation, magic, commerce, opposition, and conversion. None is improved by making it sound exactly like the others.

The result is a positive historical boundary. Scripture supplies the confession that God's reign confronts evil and that Christ's authority restores persons and gathers a faithful people. It supplies narratives and exhortations that later Christians received in multiple textual forms and languages. It does not itself specify the reserved minister, legal permission, discernment process, or formulary of a later Roman liturgical book. Those later developments must be established from their own evidence.

4 Patristic Reception: Apology, Initiation, and Office

The early Christian evidence does not disclose one undifferentiated practice waiting to be given a fixed Roman form. The verified passages considered here belong to three different settings: apologetic claims about extraordinary affliction, catechesis for Christian initiation, and a list of ecclesiastical personnel. Each setting gives the word “exorcism” a different historical work to do. A shared word cannot establish that the same subject, minister, action, authority, or expected result is present in all three.

That distinction is more than a safeguard against anachronism. It is the substance of the history. Justin, Tertullian, and Origen argue before non-Christian audiences. The Jerusalem catecheses address or recall candidates passing into the Church. Eusebius preserves a third-century Roman bishop’s personnel list inside a later ecclesiastical history. These sources differ in author, audience, region, date, genre, and purpose. They can be placed beside one another to show the range of early Christian reception, but they cannot be stacked into a reconstructed ceremony.

The controls are deliberately narrow. Exact historical English witnesses support the published paraphrases; old-edition Latin or Greek controls also cover Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, and the *Apostolic Constitutions*. This is locus-level control rather than an author-wide concordance or a universal census. One ceiling governs every comparison below: a local witness is not universal practice, a title is not a complete duty, resemblance is not descent, and an ancient description is not present authorization. The comparisons are historical and non-operational.

4.1 Apology is public argument, not a case dossier

Christian apologetic writing addresses accusation, disbelief, rivalry, and the public intelligibility of Christian claims. Its authors select examples and formulate challenges in order to persuade. Their testimony matters historically: it shows what Christian advocates were prepared to claim before their audiences and how they distinguished Christian action from rejected alternatives. Yet an advocate’s appeal does not become an independently corroborated event merely because the appeal is confident or concrete.

For the history of exorcism, this genre boundary prevents two opposite errors. The first dismisses apology as useless because it is partisan. The second treats its rhetoric as if it were a clinical chart, judicial transcript, or statistical report. Neither approach reads the source according to its kind. Apology supplies evidence for the public claim, its theological framing, and the contrast its author wanted an audience to recognize. It normally does not supply the afflicted person’s identity, a controlled observation, a modern differential assessment, or an outcome independently recorded by another witness.

Justin, Tertullian, and Origen are especially useful together because their arguments are related without being interchangeable. All three represent Christian action as different from arts they reject. Tertullian presents a dramatic forensic challenge. Origen answers a learned critic and makes distinctions within his own account of names, prayer, and adjuration. Justin appeals to expulsions performed in Jesus Christ’s name and contrasts them with other exorcists, incantations, and drugs. Their convergence is therefore bounded: Christians could argue publicly that deliverance associated with Christ was real and that it was not simply another instance of magic. The passages do not yield one technique, one formula, or one institutional office.

4.1.1 Justin’s appeal to public observation

In *Second Apology* 6, Justin places the claim inside a larger account of Christ, demons, and Christian witness. He addresses his readers as though the matter could be learned from what lay under their observation, then appeals to Christians acting in the name of Jesus Christ and contrasts their claimed results with other

exorcists and with incantations and drugs. The comparison is part of his apology's argument about Christ's power; it is not a surviving record made by a disinterested observer.

The exact repository passage was checked first in the bounded OCR and then collated against printed page 190 of the exact 1887 facsimile. That check establishes the edition, locus, chapter boundary, and direction of Justin's claim. It does not independently identify the persons concerned, measure frequency or outcomes, establish the original Greek wording, or disclose a repeatable formulary. The source can therefore enlarge the history of public Christian advocacy without becoming a case file or an operational guide.

4.1.2 Tertullian's forensic challenge

In *Apology* 23, Tertullian does not narrate a pastoral encounter from beginning to end. He imagines a public test in which beings worshipped as gods would be confronted before a tribunal and made to disclose what they are. The scene belongs to a larger apologetic attack on Roman religious claims. Its forensic shape gives the passage rhetorical force: Tertullian presents the Christian claim as one that could withstand public exposure rather than one dependent upon secrecy.

The checked passage establishes that this challenge formed part of Tertullian's Christian advocacy. It also establishes the structure of his argument. The proposed confrontation is meant to reverse the accusation against Christians and to expose the beings honored by their opponents as inferior to the authority invoked by Christians. Exorcistic language here serves an apologetic contest over worship, truth, and public credibility. The English witness was checked against the Latin in the Oehler–Mayor–Souter Cambridge edition of 1917, printed pages 79–83. That old-edition control confirms the bounded literary architecture; it is not a current critical text or a manuscript collation.

It does not follow that the passage records an actual tribunal session. The text supplies no court record against which its proposed scene can be collated, no named afflicted person whose history can be reconstructed, and no series of observed cases from which frequency or outcome could be calculated. The literary vividness of the challenge cannot replace those missing evidence classes. Tertullian's confidence is itself historical evidence; it is not a modern verification of every event to which his rhetoric gestures.

The passage also cannot be treated as a serviceable ritual summary. A reader cannot infer from its polemical scene the full preparation of a minister, the discernment of a subject's condition, the authorization governing an act, or the sequence of a liturgical book. Those are questions the apology was not written to answer. Nor can a modern reader turn Tertullian's directness into permission for amateur confrontation. The historical source establishes a claim made in controversy, not a present competence or mandate.

This evidentiary restraint leaves the source more, not less, informative. Tertullian shows that extraordinary deliverance could function in Latin Christian public argument near the end of the second century. He also shows that such argument could be cast in juridical and confrontational imagery. That is a reception fact about Christian rhetoric. Whether, how often, and under what ecclesiastical discipline comparable acts occurred requires different records.

4.1.3 Origen's reply to Celsus

Origen's *Against Celsus* belongs to another apologetic situation. He answers a critic at sustained length, and his several references to Christian action must be read within their separate argumentative contexts. The three verified loci used here—1.6, 1.25, and 7.4—do not repeat one proposition. Their difference is one of the most valuable controls in the early evidence.

At 1.6, Origen contrasts the means he associates with Christian action against demons with magical arts and elaborate apparatus. The passage contributes a negative boundary as well as a positive claim. Origen wants the reader to understand Christian invocation as grounded in Jesus rather than in the specialized

equipment, spells, or learning he attributes to magic. The historical point is not that every contemporary observer accepted this distinction. It is that Origen made the distinction central to his defense.

At 7.4, a related contrast appears in Origen's account of prayer and simple adjuration. Again, simplicity is apologetically significant. It supports his claim that Christian efficacy does not arise from the apparatus of the magical specialist. Read with 1.6, the passage identifies a recurring line in Origen's argument: Christian dependence upon Christ and prayer is not reducible, in his account, to mastery of an occult technology.

Section 1.25 complicates any attempt to summarize Origen in one slogan. There he offers a broader theory about the efficacy of names. That discussion cannot silently be assimilated to the simple contrast drawn from 1.6 and 7.4. It raises questions about language, proper names, and efficacy that extend beyond a narrow opposition between Christian prayer and magical apparatus. The verified English witness controls the presence and direction of that argument; it does not authorize a freestanding theory assembled from isolated phrases. Koetschau's 1899 Greek was checked at 1.6, printed pages 59–60; 1.25, pages 75–77; and 7.4, pages 156–157. The control is historical rather than current-critical. It verifies those differentiated arguments in an exact Greek edition, not the events, frequency, efficacy, or a prescription.

Keeping these loci distinct prevents a false reconstruction. If 1.6, 1.25, and 7.4 were compressed into a single "Origenic method," the resulting method would be an editorial artifact. Origen's apologetic distinctions would have been erased in the act of claiming to recover them. The responsible historical synthesis is more modest: Origen defends Christian prayer and adjuration against the charge that they are magical, while elsewhere in the same work advancing a wider account of efficacious names that requires its own context.

The three loci therefore establish an intellectual argument, not a protocol or diagnostic instrument. Nor are Tertullian and Origen two independent measurements of success. They are two Christian advocates writing in different settings. Their agreement that Christian deliverance should be distinguished from magic is important reception evidence. It does not establish a rate, an unchanged formula, or a single early-Christian institution. Their disagreement in argumentative form is equally important: Tertullian's imagined tribunal and Origen's learned reply show how one Christian claim could be deployed through quite different literary strategies.

4.1.4 Three apologetic settings, not three votes

The geographical and literary differences sharpen the comparison. Justin writes in Greek to an imperial-facing audience at Rome in the middle of the second century. Tertullian writes a Latin defense from North Africa near the century's end. Origen, formed in Alexandria and writing at Caesarea in the third century, answers a book-length philosophical critic. Their passages therefore do not constitute three samples drawn from one documentary archive. They are three acts of Christian self-presentation produced under different intellectual and political conditions.

Justin's short appeal works by compression. It embeds an assertion about deliverance in a rapid defense of the name and authority of Christ. The contrast with other exorcists, incantations, and drugs creates a public boundary: Justin wants the reader to see Christian action as both observable and unlike rival arts. Because the passage is brief, it says little about the social organization behind the persons whom it calls Christians. It does not identify an office, distinguish clergy from laity, or connect the claim to baptismal preparation. Its value lies precisely in what it does identify: deliverance could be presented as public evidence for Christ in a second-century Roman apologetic address.

Tertullian's scene belongs to another rhetorical world. A Roman legal imagination supplies its architecture: accusation, appearance, interrogation, confession, and judgment. The challenge does not merely add detail to Justin. It translates Christian polemic into the forensic idiom of a Latin author who wants the claims of Roman religion placed under hostile examination. The prospective and dramatic form matters. It lets Tertullian picture a reversal in which the accused Christians become the agents through whom deceptive

powers are exposed. That reversal explains the passage's intensity better than a hypothesis that it preserves a normal pastoral transcript.

Origen's reply differs again because Celsus's objections require sustained intellectual discrimination. Origen argues about what makes one kind of religious speech different from another. His contrast between prayer or simple adjuration and magical apparatus belongs to a defense of Christian reasonableness and dependence upon Christ. His separate discussion of names at 1.25 prevents the historian from turning that contrast into the maxim that words have no conceptual place in his account. The several loci preserve the complexity of a learned apologetic answer: Origen rejects one classification of Christian action while explaining why language and invocation matter in another part of the argument.

The shared apologetic interest is thus a claim about classification. Each author refuses to let Christian action be classified as merely another rival art, and each relates its intelligibility to Christ. The divergence is a claim about rhetoric. Justin appeals tersely to public knowledge, Tertullian stages a forensic ordeal, and Origen distinguishes categories in an extended rebuttal. Agreement at the first level should not erase difference at the second. The sources become historically flatter, not fuller, when converted into a cumulative list of alleged successes.

4.1.5 What apologetic confidence can establish

Apologetic confidence is itself part of the history of reception. These authors evidently judged the claim usable before outsiders. They did not reserve it to an esoteric Christian audience or present it only as a remote memory from the apostolic age. Their readiness to appeal to it indicates that deliverance had become one way Christians articulated Christ's superiority over hostile powers and rival religious expertise.

That observation is stronger than the vague statement that early Christians "believed in exorcism," because it identifies speaker, audience, argument, and function. It is also narrower than a claim about common frequency or institutional regularity. A rhetorically available claim need not have been experienced uniformly by every church, described with the same vocabulary, or governed by one ministerial arrangement. The apologetic record establishes public intelligibility and theological contrast; other genres must answer questions about initiation and office.

4.2 Jerusalem: exorcism within initiation

The verified Jerusalem witnesses move from public defense to the formation of candidates. *Procatechesis* 9 addresses persons preparing for initiation and speaks of exorcisms through refining imagery. The setting governs the meaning of the act. The candidates are not introduced as a collection of extraordinary possession cases. They are being prepared for Baptism within an ecclesial process of instruction, examination, renunciation, confession, and incorporation.

The refining comparison explains the catechetical purpose of the passage. Preparation is represented as a work that exposes and removes impediments so that the candidate may receive what follows. This imagery belongs to a theology of conversion and initiation. It must not be turned into a claim that every candidate had received an individual judgment of possession or that the same pastoral question was being answered for every person present.

The first *Mystagogical Catechesis*, 1.4–9, recalls a more articulated sequence: the candidate turns westward in renunciation of Satan and then eastward toward Christ, joining rejection of an old allegiance to confession of a new one. Direction, speech, and bodily orientation interpret transition. The sequence is intelligible as initiation because its acts belong together. Extracting only the renunciation would conceal the movement toward confession and incorporation that gives it its catechetical meaning.

These passages thus enlarge the history beyond extraordinary affliction. Exorcistic and renunciatory

language could belong to the ordinary preparation of candidates without implying that all candidates were treated as possessed. The same vocabulary could interpret conversion, allegiance, and entry into Christian life. That is a genuine continuity with the broader Christian language of liberation, but it is not identity with the later solemn rite governed by Latin law for exorcism over the possessed.

The distinction has consequences for historical chronology. A baptismal sequence does not become an early major-exorcism formulary simply because later books also contain exorcistic speech. To establish textual descent, revision, or institutional continuity, a historian would need edition-identified comparison across the intervening witnesses. The two verified Jerusalem passages establish their own sequence and interpretation. They do not fill the gaps between fourth-century initiation and later Western ritual books.

They also remain local and edition-specific. *Procatechesis* 9 is transmitted with Cyril's catechetical works. Authorship of the *Mystagogical Catecheses* is disputed, including scholarly attribution to John of Jerusalem. The checked Gifford English passages therefore control a Jerusalem catechetical sequence, not an unqualified claim that Cyril personally wrote every sentence. The transmitted collection and the disputed authorship must both remain visible.

Local clarity is not universality. The Jerusalem evidence cannot establish that Antioch, Alexandria, Rome, North Africa, Syriac-speaking communities, or every fourth-century church used the same actions or interpreted them in the same way. No silence in those unexamined corpora can be inferred from the presence of a vivid Jerusalem account. Regional comparison awaits verified edition-level witnesses for the other traditions.

The Jerusalem texts are therefore strongest when allowed to answer their own question. They show how exorcism and renunciation could be integrated into a candidate's passage from one allegiance to another. They show the ecclesial and catechetical framing of that passage. They do not provide an extraordinary case dossier, an authorization for private ministry, or evidence that the initiatory sequence was designed as a test for hidden preternatural causes.

4.2.1 The Jerusalem sequence as catechesis

The two Jerusalem witnesses also differ from one another in instructional moment. The *Procatechesis* speaks prospectively to candidates entering a course of preparation. Its refining image explains why an extended process should be endured: the candidate is being readied for the gift toward which the lectures lead. The first *Mystagogical Catechesis*, by contrast, addresses the initiated through recollection. It interprets actions already performed by placing the westward renunciation and eastward confession within the candidate's transfer of allegiance.

That temporal difference is historically useful. The first witness shows exorcism explained before Baptism; the second shows ritual actions interpreted afterward. Together they disclose a pedagogy that surrounds the initiatory event. Preparation and retrospective interpretation are related but not identical literary acts. The catechist can exhort the candidate to submit to formation and can later unfold the meaning of bodily direction, speech, and confession. Neither text is simply a set of rubrics detached from teaching.

The architecture of the remembered sequence is also relational. Turning away is ordered to turning toward; renunciation is ordered to confession; the candidate's action is ordered to entry into the worshipping community. Exorcistic language is not left as a free-standing confrontation. It belongs within a larger movement from an old allegiance to Christ. Reading the sequence this way respects its catechetical genre and avoids extracting an isolated fragment that could be mistaken for a self-sufficient practice.

4.2.2 Cappadocia: Gregory's baptismal exhortation

Gregory of Nazianzus supplies a second fourth-century initiatory witness from a different eastern setting and a different genre. In *Oration* 40.27, his baptismal exhortation tells candidates not to reject a lengthy exorcism and places that preparation on the way toward Baptism and grace. The exact Browne–Swallow English section controls this bounded claim; its Greek and print forms have not been collated for this project.

Gregory's witness matters because it prevents Jerusalem from standing alone as the only positive initiatory comparison. A Cappadocian theologian could also speak of exorcism as part of preparation for Baptism. Yet the difference in evidence class remains decisive. Gregory gives an orator's exhortation, not a recoverable service book. His reference to duration explains why a candidate should persevere; it does not supply the number of occasions, the minister, the words used, or a complete order of actions.

The comparison with Jerusalem is therefore regional and functional rather than reconstructive. In both witnesses exorcism is intelligible within initiation rather than as an isolated response to an extraordinary case. In Jerusalem the checked texts provide refining imagery and a remembered renunciation-confession sequence. Gregory's checked section offers an exhortation not to resist a prolonged preparation. The convergence supports a broad fourth-century association between exorcistic preparation and Baptism in more than one eastern setting. It does not produce a composite "eastern rite" assembled from their different details.

This comparison also changes the chronology of the reader's question. Instead of asking when one supposedly complete rite first appears, it asks which functions are visible in each dated source. Jerusalem makes preparation and remembered allegiance visible; Gregory makes pastoral exhortation to persevere visible. The shift from rite-hunting to function does not weaken the history. It prevents a short oration from being judged incomplete merely because it was never intended to preserve ceremonial detail.

Nor should the comparison be made asymmetrical. Jerusalem's greater descriptive detail does not make it the template from which Gregory's shorter remark descended. Gregory's shorter remark does not prove that Jerusalem's actions were shared in Cappadocia. Each source answers a local pastoral and theological need in its own literary form. The common function becomes visible only after the distinct evidence has been preserved.

4.2.3 The *Apostolic Tradition* reconstruction

The church-order complex conventionally called the *Apostolic Tradition* raises a different problem: not merely regional variation, but the identity of the text being cited. Easton's 1934 English reconstruction presents scrutiny and pre-baptismal actions in chapters 20–21. It is an exact, identified historical witness to what Easton reconstructed. His own introduction, however, describes the versional basis and judges accurate restoration impossible.

The witness base has since changed. Bradshaw's 2023 introduction identifies the Ethiopic E1 text published in 2011 as an early translation made directly from Greek and substantially close to the Latin, while other oriental versions represent a different, already expanded textual tradition. The publisher's preview establishes that reconstruction history, but it does not include chapters 20–21. Easton therefore remains the exact English text consulted here; he is no longer an adequate sole guide to the versional problem.

That admission sets the proper source status. The Easton chapters may be used to study the history of twentieth-century reconstruction and to identify a church-order comparison requiring further critical work. They cannot be quoted as though a single surviving Greek archetype, securely authored by Hippolytus at Rome, lay behind the English page. Questions of unity, attribution, date, provenance, constituent order, and correspondence among editions remain open.

This status is especially important in an account of initiation. A smooth English sequence can conceal the labor by which dispersed versional witnesses were aligned and supplied with chapter numbers. Once that reconstruction is treated as transparent ancient text, later historical claims can acquire a false precision: “Rome did this,” “Hippolytus prescribed that,” or “the third-century rite contained” a particular sequence. The present evidence does not sustain those formulations.

The responsible comparison is consequently asymmetric. Jerusalem and Gregory are used as positive, locus-controlled witnesses to their transmitted catechetical and oratorical claims. Easton is used as an edition-identified reconstruction whose limitations themselves matter to reception method. It shows why church orders cannot be made to fill geographical and chronological gaps merely because a modern editor has rendered a coherent sequence.

4.3 A Roman personnel list is not a complete office history

The third setting is institutional but extremely compressed. In *Ecclesiastical History* 6.43.11, Eusebius quotes a letter of Cornelius of Rome that enumerates Roman church personnel. Exorcists appear in that list with readers and door-keepers. The number fifty-two applies to those three groups together. The passage does not state how many of the fifty-two were exorcists. Schwartz–Mommesen’s 1908 Greek, printed page 618, confirms that single combined syntax. The old critical control does not supply a separate count or establish continuity of role.

This small grammatical point carries substantial historical weight. Repeating the number as “fifty-two exorcists at Rome” would convert a combined total into a separate count the source does not give. The verified passage supports a narrower and useful claim: in the mid-third-century Roman setting represented by Cornelius’s letter, exorcists were a recognizable category among the church’s personnel. That is evidence of institutional naming, even though the distribution within the combined number remains unknown.

The list is also not a job description. It does not enumerate ordinary duties, training, appointment procedure, liturgical competence, frequency of service, or the persons over whom exorcists acted. It cannot show that everyone bearing the title performed extraordinary exorcism over the possessed. It cannot show that the category corresponded exactly to a later minor order or to a priest acting under the discipline of a much later ritual and canon.

Nor does one Roman list establish a universal arrangement. The passage says something about Rome in a defined controversy and period. Other churches may have named, ordered, or distributed ministries differently. A historical account would need additional local records before generalizing from the Roman category to Greek, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, or other Latin communities.

The transmission also requires care. The third-century letter is preserved in Eusebius’s fourth-century history and read here in McGiffert’s nineteenth-century English translation. Those layers do not nullify the evidence, but they identify it. The checked English passage controls the quoted enumeration as delivered in that edition. It is not a facsimile of Cornelius’s letter, an autograph, or an original-language critical collation.

Even within those limits, the passage marks a development distinct from both apology and initiation. Tertullian and Origen make public intellectual claims. The Jerusalem catecheses form candidates. Cornelius’s list names personnel. The presence of an exorcist category shows that exorcistic terminology could be attached to institutional differentiation. What the officeholders habitually did remains a further question, not an answer hidden inside their title.

4.3.1 Rome and the documentary force of enumeration

Cornelius's enumeration has a documentary force unlike the apologetic and catechetical witnesses. It names categories in order to describe the scale and order of the Roman church during a controversy. Because the list is embedded in an argument, it is not a neutral administrative return; nevertheless, its persuasive function depends upon presenting recognizable personnel. The title "exorcists" therefore has institutional weight even when its duties are not stated.

This combination of strength and silence should govern its use. The list is strong evidence that the category could be named at Rome around the middle of the third century. It is silent about the relation between that category and the charismatic activity defended in apology, the formation of catechumens, or later ordination formularies. Filling the silence from any of those other genres would exchange documentary restraint for an attractive but unverified office history.

The combined number illustrates the same point at the grammatical level. Exorcists, readers, and door-keepers together total fifty-two in the quoted letter. The number indicates a substantial combined group but does not reveal the ratio among its parts. Neither a high nor a low exorcist count can be reconstructed from it. The document supplies category and aggregate, not distribution. That distinction matters wherever later summaries turn a memorable numeral into a census of one office.

4.3.2 North Africa: a title inside correspondence

A mid-third-century letter written by Carthaginian confessors and transmitted among Cyprian's correspondence offers another Latin institutional glimpse. The body of the letter identifies an exorcist and a reader among the clergy present. The exact Wallis English witness controls that identification and the letter's authorship; Latin and print controls remain uncollated.

The Carthaginian notice does not enlarge the duty description. It does, however, broaden the map. A personnel title found in Cornelius's Roman list also appears in North African correspondence of roughly the same century. The two sources have different documentary purposes: Cornelius enumerates Roman personnel as part of an ecclesiastical controversy, while the Carthaginian letter notes persons present in a local clerical setting. Their agreement establishes the title's occurrence in two Latin regions, not a common job description or appointment process.

The notice is also a warning about authorship and archival labels. Because the letter survives in a Cyprianic collection, it can easily be summarized as "Cyprian says." The immediate writers are the confessors, and the research record identifies Lucianus's role. Preserving that distinction is not pedantry. It keeps a documentary witness from being converted into a bishop's normative teaching and demonstrates how collection history can change the apparent authority of a passing title.

4.3.3 Two regions, two documentary acts

The Roman and Carthaginian notices become more informative when their documentary acts are compared instead of being combined into a reconstructed office description. Cornelius's letter, as quoted by Eusebius, counts categories in order to characterize the Roman church during a dispute. The Carthaginian confessors' letter identifies clergy present around the making of a communication. One witness enumerates; the other attests a setting. Neither sets out to explain the title that both happen to preserve.

That difference controls what each silence means. Cornelius names exorcists inside a combined total with readers and door-keepers, but gives no distribution among the three categories. The confessors name an exorcist and a reader, but do not say that these were the only persons who held either title in Carthage. The Roman aggregate cannot yield a separate census; the Carthaginian occurrence cannot yield a local

total. Joining them does not repair either silence. It supplies two differently situated attestations and nothing resembling a personnel survey of the Latin churches.

Their routes of survival are also part of the evidence. Cornelius's notice is preserved because Eusebius quoted the letter in an ecclesiastical history. The Carthaginian notice survives within the correspondence associated with Cyprian, although the immediate writers are the confessors. In both cases a later documentary container can encourage an incautious attribution: Eusebius may be made to sound like the originator of the Roman list, and Cyprian like the author of the Carthaginian letter. Identifying quotation and collection history preserves the earlier act without pretending to possess its original documentary setting in full.

The comparison therefore yields a geographical result of deliberately small scale. The translated title occurs in a Roman episcopal letter and in a North African confessors' letter written in the presence of named clergy during the middle decades of the third century. This is stronger than an inference drawn from a single region and weaker than a claim of uniform Latin organization. It establishes neither a common rite nor a common method of appointment. Even the juxtaposition with readers has different force: at Rome readers form part of the combined enumeration; in the Carthaginian letter a reader is one of the persons named as present.

The documents also assign different argumentative weight to the persons they name. Cornelius's enumeration helps present the order and scale of a contested Roman community; its categories contribute directly to the letter's case. The Carthaginian names identify the setting in which the confessors' communication was produced and conveyed. Thus the Roman title is part of an institutional inventory, whereas the African title is incidental attestation. Agreement between an inventory and an incidental notice is useful precisely because the witnesses are not copies of the same documentary act. It confirms occurrence without turning either source into evidence for duties.

Nor may later evidence supply the missing duties retroactively. A subsequent ordination book can show how a later compiler represented admission to an exorcist grade. A baptismal source can show exorcistic action toward catechumens. A disciplinary canon can restrict an activity to persons with an episcopally recognized status. None of those sources converts either third-century notice into an account of daily work. Occurrence of the translated title in two roughly contemporary Latin settings shows broader institutional recognizability; continuity of function remains unproved.

This result is positive rather than merely cautious. It shows that exorcistic language had entered more than one kind of ecclesial document. Apologists used related language to defend Christian allegiance; catecheses used it in formation; the two letters allow a title to appear among named church personnel. The documentary shift matters even though the practical content remains unknown. A category can become recognizable enough to count or name before the surviving record explains how its bearers were selected or what they ordinarily did.

Read in this way, Rome and Carthage prevent opposite distortions. One would inflate two attestations into a universal minor-order system. The other would dismiss passing titles because they lack a surviving constitution. The sources support neither move. They witness an institutional designation in two Latin settings, preserve different acts of enumeration and attestation, and leave the relationship between designation, appointment, charism, initiation, and extraordinary intervention for other documents to establish.

4.4 Discipline and church order: authorization is not one category

The fourth-century witnesses do not yield a single answer to the question "Who may exorcise?" They pose different questions about episcopal promotion, charismatic manifestation, and ordination. Reading them together is valuable only if those categories remain separate.

4.4.1 Laodicea 26: a bounded disciplinary restriction

Percival's 1900 English text of Laodicea 26 restricts action in churches or private houses to persons promoted by the bishop. Joannou's 1962 Greek, Latin, and French collection now supplies an exact modern control at printed page 141: the Greek predicates the restriction of persons not promoted by bishops and names churches and houses. Joannou's introduction treats the collection as local Phrygian canonical tradition in summary form, possibly codified in two stages. The canon therefore supports a bounded disciplinary claim, not a universal office or reception history.

What the witness positively contributes is an episcopal boundary. It links legitimate action in the named spaces to a prior ecclesiastical status conferred or recognized by the bishop. This is more than a passing title in a personnel list, because the canon states a restriction. It is less than a complete office constitution, because it does not provide formation, appointment rites, ordinary duties, or the relation of this action to every kind of exorcistic language elsewhere in the early Church.

The spatial phrase also belongs to the canon's disciplinary scope. Churches and houses are named together, indicating that the restriction is not confined to a formal church building. It remains unsafe to translate that local historical boundary into modern canonical categories: the canon gives no appointment rite, complete office constitution, universal scope, or evidence of wider reception.

4.4.2 *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII.26: charism and ordination

The late-fourth-century Syrian compilation called the *Apostolic Constitutions* organizes the problem differently. Funk's Greek with facing Latin and apparatus at VIII.22–26 provides the exact old-edition control; Donaldson supplies a historical English aid. VIII.22 gives an ordination prayer for a reader. The following units distinguish confessors, virgins, widows, and exorcists from persons ordained merely because they belong to those categories.

For the exorcist, VIII.26 relates recognition to a manifested healing charism. If the person is needed as a bishop, presbyter, or deacon, ordination is to that other office. The compiler thus refuses a simple equation between the designation "exorcist" and ordination qua exorcist. Charism and ordained office are related but analytically distinct. A person associated with the former may later receive the latter for a separate ecclesial need.

This structure clarifies why "authorization," "charism," "title," and "ordination" cannot serve as synonyms. Laodicea's transmitted canon speaks in terms of episcopal promotion and restriction. Cornelius names a Roman personnel category without explaining appointment. The Syrian compiler speaks of manifested gift and denies ordination merely on account of the category, while allowing ordination to bishop, presbyter, or deacon on another ground. Each arrangement produces a different relation between recognition and action.

The differences are historical evidence, not defects to be harmonized. They show that late-ancient Christians could frame ministerial order through more than one institutional grammar. An episcopal restriction need not imply that every relevant category was constituted by an ordination rite. Recognition of a charism need not imply unregulated private action. A personnel title need not tell the historian whether its bearer was ordained, promoted, appointed, or simply listed according to local usage.

The pseudapostolic form of the *Apostolic Constitutions* requires its own qualification. The compilation speaks under apostolic names, but its historical value belongs to its late-fourth-century Syrian setting and reception, not to original apostolic authorship. Calling its prescription "apostolic" without that distinction would move the evidence several centuries and convert literary authority into historical provenance.

Funk's 1905 edition is also a historical control rather than the last word in critical editing. Metzger's later *Sources Chrétiennes* edition was not acquired for this project. The present account therefore relies upon the visually inspected Funk pages for the bounded structure of VIII.22–26 and does not claim a fresh apparatus

review or manuscript collation. That edition-level limit does not erase the contrast visible in the controlled text; it sets the boundary for how precisely the contrast can be stated.

4.4.3 No straight ladder from charism to minor order

Placed in date and region, the office witnesses resist a familiar ladder: apostolic charism, then universal exorcist office, then minor order, then modern major exorcist. The checked record contains no such uninterrupted sequence. It contains a mid-third-century Roman category, a roughly contemporary North African title, a fourth-century conciliar restriction, and a late-fourth-century Syrian church-order distinction between charism and ordination.

Later western ordinals genuinely belong to the history, but they must be established from their own texts. Their ordination units cannot be read back into Cornelius's noun or the Syrian compiler's charismatic category. Nor can the older evidence be used to bypass the different juridical and liturgical questions posed by later Roman books. Institutional history is made clearer when changes in category are treated as events requiring evidence rather than as stages assumed in advance.

4.5 Reception method: continuity without collapse

The verified witnesses support a history of differentiation. In apology, deliverance serves an argument about Christ, worship, and the difference between Christian action and magic. In initiation, exorcism and renunciation interpret conversion and incorporation. In the Roman personnel list, "exorcists" names a category without describing its work. These uses can belong to one Christian history without being manifestations of one unchanged rite.

Several continuities are real. The apologetic authors place authority in relation to Christ rather than autonomous technique. The initiatory witnesses understand Christian formation as a transfer of allegiance and preparation for grace. The institutional sources locate titles, boundaries, or recognition within ecclesial communities. Those recurring features help explain why later Catholic reception could recognize the earlier evidence as part of its history.

The sequence among the witnesses is consequently thematic rather than a claim of direct textual dependence. The checked Tertullian passage does not prove that the Jerusalem catechist borrowed its categories, and the Jerusalem sequence does not explain how Cornelius's Roman personnel category arose. Even chronological proximity would not supply a missing transmission record. The sources can illuminate different dimensions of early Christian reception while the routes between them remain unrecovered. A source-first history must resist converting a plausible relationship into a documented genealogy.

4.5.1 A four-question reception test

Later reception should be tested through four separate questions. First, what exactly does the earlier witness say in its controlled edition? Second, what function does that statement serve in its own genre? Third, is there evidence that a later community knew, cited, adapted, or institutionally received it? Fourth, what does the later witness itself claim? Skipping the third question is how resemblance becomes an invented genealogy; skipping the fourth is how the later source becomes a mere echo rather than evidence in its own right.

This method permits thematic continuity without manufacturing textual dependence. Christological authority, renunciation of hostile allegiance, ecclesial ordering, and distinctions from rival arts can recur across centuries. Such recurrence may help explain later recognizability. It does not by itself identify a

copied phrase, a transmitted formulary, or an unchanged legal competence. Those stronger claims require intermediate evidence of reception.

The method also makes absences precise. The missing item is not “proof that nothing happened.” It may be a controlled Greek text, a versional relationship, a local ordination witness, a citation chain, or a reception history. Naming the missing evidence prevents silence from becoming either a negative conclusion or permission for speculation. Easton’s reconstruction and Joannou’s now-controlled Greek Laodicea text are useful examples: the former still identifies a versional question, while the latter closes a wording question without supplying universal reception.

Vocabulary should be tested in the same way. “Exorcist,” “exorcism,” renunciation, prayer, adjuration, and deliverance occur within arguments and institutions whose setting controls their force. A shared English rendering can conceal different Greek or Latin terms, different grammatical relations, and different editorial choices. Even an exact lexical match establishes neither the identity of the surrounding act nor a continuous institution.

4.5.2 Regional comparison without a universal narrative

The checked map now includes Rome-facing Greek apology, Latin North African apology and correspondence, Alexandrian-Caesarean learned polemic, Jerusalem catechesis, Cappadocian oratory, Roman personnel enumeration, an Asia Minor conciliar witness, and a Syrian church order. That breadth is enough to show why a single undifferentiated narrative is inadequate. It is not enough to claim exhaustive coverage of Greek, Latin, Syriac, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopic, or other Christian traditions.

Some contrasts are already secure. Apology argues before outsiders, while catechesis forms candidates. A personnel list establishes a named category, while a canon restricts action. An oration exhorts, while a church order classifies categories and ordination. These genre differences are not merely editorial labels; they determine which historical questions each passage can answer.

Other comparisons remain prospective. The research matrix identifies Syriac and Coptic church-order families whose constituent works and recensions must be edition-mapped before use. Their present absence cannot be converted into a claim that they lacked comparable language or institutions. A genuinely broader history would add those witnesses as regional evidence, not recruit them as missing links in a predetermined Roman sequence.

Nor is “East” a sufficient region. Jerusalem, Cappadocia, Asia Minor, Syria, Alexandria, and Caesarea represent different literary and ecclesial settings. The same is true of Latin Christianity: Rome and Carthage are not duplicate samples, and Tertullian’s apology is not interchangeable with a clerical letter preserved in Cyprian’s collection. Regional labels aid orientation only when they do not suppress the local document.

4.5.3 Source status belongs inside the narrative

The witnesses also occupy different positions in transmission. Justin is read in a public-domain English facsimile collated at the exact page. Tertullian, Origen, and Eusebius have bounded old-edition Latin or Greek controls alongside historical English. Gregory and the Carthaginian letter presently rely on exact English deliveries without original-language collation. Laodicea has both a verified historical English text and Joannou’s restricted modern Greek control. The *Apostolic Tradition* reaches the account through Easton’s declared reconstruction, with Bradshaw’s preview controlling only the later change in its versional basis.

These are not interchangeable grades on one ladder from “weak” to “strong.” They are descriptions of what has been controlled. An English witness may securely establish the direction of a modest claim while leaving Greek wording open. An old Greek edition may control syntax while remaining superseded for

current critical purposes. A reconstruction may be exact as a modern artifact while remaining uncertain as a recovery of ancient text.

Putting source status beside the historical claim prevents two distortions. The first treats every citation as though it rests on the same textual basis. The second refuses any bounded historical use until a complete modern critical apparatus is available. Source-first history instead states what the identified witness can establish and what further control would change.

4.5.4 From ancient language to modern reading

Modern readers bring categories that the sources do not share. Apologetic accounts are not psychiatric case reports; catechetical scrutiny is not a modern diagnostic screen; and Cornelius's list does not use the competence categories of the 1983 Latin code. Historical interpretation should neither force ancient texts into modern clinical vocabulary nor use ancient vocabulary to evade competent modern care.

The same restraint applies to institutional terms. A later reader may know "exorcist" as a minor order in a western ordinal or "exorcism over the possessed" through modern canon law. Those later meanings are real within their own sources. They cannot silently supply the missing duties in a third-century Roman list or determine what a fourth-century Syrian compiler meant by manifested charism.

The result is not skepticism about continuity but a more exact account of it. Catholic reception can recognize Scripture, patristic confession, catechumenal formation, ministerial order, and later ritual discipline as belonging to one history while still acknowledging change in text, institution, and law. Historical unity is not the same thing as documentary identity.

Two further exact English witnesses clarify the relation between common faith and local discipline. In *Against Heresies* 1.10.1–3, Irenaeus describes one received faith confessed across churches and languages. The bounded ANF facsimile controls that ecclesial claim, not an exorcistic formulary or proof that local practices were uniform. It therefore warns against moving from shared confession to an undocumented universal ceremony.

Irenaeus's claim is important because universality can otherwise be asserted at the wrong level. A writer may confess one faith across languages without claiming that every church has identical personnel lists, catechumenal sequences, or disciplinary canons. Unity of faith and diversity of local practice are not opposites requiring one to be denied. They answer different historical questions. The former cannot serve as indirect evidence for the latter.

This distinction also disciplines later Catholic reception. A later church may receive early testimony as consonant with its confession of Christ's authority while organizing ministry through institutions not described in the earlier passage. Conversely, institutional change does not prove a change of faith. The historian must demonstrate the textual or juridical continuity claimed rather than using doctrinal unity as a shortcut around missing documents.

4.5.5 A dated and genre-indexed synthesis

Read chronologically, the controlled record does not move in a straight line. The second-century apologies make deliverance publicly arguable before outsiders. Third-century texts add both learned apologetic discrimination and personnel titles in Rome and North Africa. Fourth-century catechesis and oratory place exorcistic preparation within initiation in Jerusalem and Cappadocia, while conciliar and church-order texts articulate unlike relations among episcopal promotion, charism, and ordination.

Read by genre, the same record forms a matrix rather than a ladder. The apologist's claim, the catechist's explanation, the orator's exhortation, the letter's enumeration, the canon's restriction, and the compiler's

classification are six distinct kinds of evidence. Each adds a dimension that the others lack. None can be promoted to a complete account merely because it is the most vivid witness in its class.

Read by institutional question, the matrix is equally differentiated. Cornelius and the Carthaginian correspondents attest names; Laodicea regulates who may act in named spaces; the Syrian compiler distinguishes a manifested gift from ordination to other offices. A title, boundary, and classification may later interact, but no checked passage supplies the missing links among them. Their juxtaposition defines the problem more accurately than a harmonized answer would.

That matrix explains both the real breadth and the remaining gaps. It shows that exorcistic language was available for Christian public argument, initiation, and institutional ordering across several regions. It does not establish how common any act was, whether the same words were used, or how one local arrangement influenced another. The open Syriac and Coptic church-order families, wider reception of Laodicea, and the chapter-level versional history behind the *Apostolic Tradition* reconstruction are therefore substantive research routes, not ornamental caveats.

The controlled distinctions prevent gaps from being filled by reputation. A familiar attribution to Hippolytus cannot substitute for reconstruction history; a verified historical translation of a canon does not establish universal reception; and a facsimile controls its passage rather than an entire institution.

The bounded conclusion is therefore firm. From the second through fourth centuries, the checked record displays distinct Christian settings for exorcistic language: public apologetic claims, baptismal formation, personnel titles, local discipline, and church-order reflection on charism and ordination. It does not display an apostolic script, a universal office description, or a continuous formulary leading without interruption to the Roman Ritual of 1614. That later history must be established from its own books, witnesses, and acts.

Witness family	Secure contribution	Evidentiary ceiling
Justin, Tertullian, and Origen	Distinct public arguments about Christian deliverance, Christ, prayer, and rejected magical alternatives	Literary claims in identified English witnesses, not case verification, measured outcomes, or one formulary
Jerusalem and Gregory Nazianzen	Exorcism and renunciation situated within baptismal preparation, allegiance to Christ, and perseverance toward grace	Two eastern settings and different genres, not one composite rite
Cornelius through Eusebius and the Carthaginian letter	Exorcists named among third-century Roman and North African church personnel	Category occurrence, not a shared duty description, ordination status, or separate Roman count
Irenaeus, Laodicea, and Easton's church-order reconstruction	One-faith confession distinguished from local practice; one conciliar episcopal boundary; one identified reconstruction of an initiatory sequence	Different evidence classes; Laodicea's wider reception and the reconstruction's chapter-level textual history remain open
<i>Apostolic Constitutions</i> VIII.22–26	Reader ordained; adjacent confessor, virgin, widow, and exorcist categories distinguished from ordination qua category; exorcist related to healing charism	One late-fourth-century pseudapostolic compiler, not universal practice, an exorcistic formula, office continuity, direct descent, or a permission rule supplied by VIII.26

5 Late-Antique Offices and Medieval Plurality

5.1 Several histories travel under one word

The medieval evidence becomes clearer when it is not forced into a history of one supposedly continuous rite. At least four histories intersect. One is the history of an ecclesial office called the exorcist. Another is the history of prayers and actions used in preparing catechumens for Baptism. A third is the history of rites addressed to people whom a book describes as afflicted, possessed, or demoniac. A fourth is the history of theological explanations offered for those inherited rites. A personnel list, a canonical collection, a sacramentary, a pontifical ordinal, and a scholastic question may illuminate one or more of these histories, but they are not interchangeable records.

The earliest office control used here is local and spare. In *Ecclesiastical History* 6.43, Eusebius preserves a letter in which Cornelius of Rome enumerates the clergy of the Roman church in the middle of the third century. Exorcists appear in a combined total with readers and doorkeepers. That list establishes an identifiable ministerial category at Rome. It does not separate the numbers belonging to each grade, itemize their work, or say that holders of the title were specialists in the later solemn rite. It also cannot make the Roman arrangement universal.

The documents that follow are separated by date, region, and purpose. The collection conventionally called the *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua* preserves an ordination rule through later canonical compilations. The late-eighth-century Gellone Sacramentary is a manuscript ritual book whose sequence distinguishes kinds of recipients. The tenth-century compilation known as the *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum* is available here through a modern critical edition. Parker MS 79 is a particular English pontifical made in stages around 1400 and 1410. The 1895 *Pontificale Romanum* is a much later printed normative book. Aquinas's *Summa theologiae* is theological argument rather than an ordinal or parish register. Their differences are not noise surrounding one story. They are the historical evidence.

This section therefore compares the witnesses by five questions: what kind of source is it; when and where does it belong; where does the material stand within the book; who is named as minister or recipient; and what object or action structures the unit? The comparison is typological. Similar book placement or book-delivery architecture does not prove direct descent. Survival in a normative or ritual book does not prove performance, frequency, or efficacy. Those limits apply to the comparison as a whole and need not be repeated after every witness.

5.2 A late-antique rule known through medieval collections

The *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua* is a useful starting point precisely because its transmission complicates any simple origin story. The older text checked for this study is the Ballerini editorial witness reprinted in *Patrologia Latina* 56, columns 887–888. Within a recapitulation of ordination offices, item 7/XCV places the exorcist after the acolyte and before the lector. The bishop gives the candidate a booklet containing exorcisms. The checked locus thus joins three elements: an episcopal ordaining minister, a candidate for an ecclesial office, and a book as the object by which the office is ritually signified.

That compact scene has often invited a long backward or forward projection. Backward, the later title of the collection can make the rule appear to be a transparent act of one ancient council. Forward, the combination of “exorcist” and “exorcisms” can make the office appear identical with the priestly exercise regulated in modern major-exorcism law. Neither projection follows from the locus. The passage is an ordination rule. It says where the candidate stands in a sequence and what the bishop gives him. It is not a schedule of duties, a report of cases, or an account of how a local church distinguished baptismal ministry from care of an afflicted baptized person.

Friedrich Maassen’s 1870 history of canonical sources supplies the necessary transmission context. Across his discussion at printed pages 382–394, the material associated with the *Statuta* appears under materially different titles, orders, and locations in the Hispana and in Gallic, systematic, and Italian collections. The variation concerns the documentary home in which later readers encountered the material, not merely the spelling of a stable title. A rule that appears as part of one conciliar or canonical arrangement in one collection may be reordered or embedded differently in another. Consequently, “the *Statuta* says” is only a first-level citation. A historical account must also ask which collection, arrangement, and editorial witness carries the rule.

The current MGH *Clavis canonum* notice sharpens the point. It identifies the *Statuta* as a mid-fifth-century Gallic collection that is not extant independently but must be recovered from later compilers. The historical object available to the editor is therefore a dispersed transmission, not an untouched freestanding archetype waiting to be read. The Ballerini text controls the narrow rule used here, while Maassen and the MGH notice control the ceiling on what that rule’s apparent unity can mean.

This distinction matters for chronology. “Mid-fifth-century Gallic collection” describes the modern identification of the collected material; the exact Ballerini pages are an older modern editorial witness; the surviving canonical homes are later than the posited collection. These dates answer different questions. The date assigned to the collection is not the date of the manuscript or print inspected. The age of the material does not remove the need to account for the channels through which it survives.

It also matters for authorship. The protected reconstruction by Charles Munier in CCSL 148 was not acquired for this study. Its critical text, apparatus, numbering, versional decisions, stemma, and the reported attribution to Gennadius of Marseille remain outside the verified corpus. The older Ballerini witness can establish the architecture of its own rule; it cannot silently stand in for Munier’s reconstruction. Thus the account can say that an older edited witness preserves episcopal delivery of a book within an ordination sequence, and that modern source scholarship locates the collection within a varied later transmission. It cannot claim to have settled the rule’s earliest recoverable wording or author.

The form of the rule nevertheless permits a bounded comparison. The office is represented through a book rather than through a narrative of confronting an afflicted person. The recipient of the ritual action is the candidate for office; the bishop is the acting minister; the booklet is the delivered object; the surrounding units are other ordinations. That configuration will reappear in later pontifical witnesses. Its recurrence is historically significant as ordinal architecture even when textual descent has not been demonstrated.

5.3 Gellone: one book, differentiated recipients

The Gellone Sacramentary provides a different kind of evidence. Paris, BnF, Latin 12048 is a late-eighth-century manuscript, not a reconstructed canonical collection or a later reset of an ordinal. The exact Gallica images inspected for this study run from folio 194v through folio 199v. They permit claims about visible rubrics, sequence, page position, and recipient language in this one book.

At folio 194v the manuscript opens a unit headed *Impositio manuum in energumenum*. Folio 195r then marks further items with differentiated recipient language, and successive rubricated material continues through the following folios. At folio 199v, relic deposition and church dedication begin. The transition supplies a real book boundary: the preceding recipient-related sequence ends before a different pontifical subject starts. The BnF catalog, whose numbering follows Dumas, anchors no. 2406 at folio 197r, no. 2412 at folio 198r, and section 355 at folio 199v. The study does not fill the spaces between those anchors with invented numbers.

This manuscript arrangement prevents two opposite simplifications. The first would reduce every medieval use of exorcistic language to baptismal scrutiny. Gellone’s visible sequence includes headings differentiated by the condition or description of the recipient. Those units deserve to be counted as separate evidence

rather than absorbed into the history of catechumens. The second simplification would gather every item in the run into a single fully-defined “rite for possession.” The book’s rubrics distinguish recipients, and the modern categories by which pastoral practice is divided cannot simply replace the manuscript’s own language.

Book position is especially informative here. The Gellone material belongs to a continuous ritual-book environment and is followed by rites concerning relics and a church. This is different from the *Statuta*’s place within a series of ordination offices. The acting subject in the *Statuta* locus is a bishop ordaining a candidate and delivering an object. Gellone instead organizes actions around described recipients. It therefore contributes to the history of rites for persons, not merely to the history of admission to a ministerial grade.

The inspected images do not answer every question the rubrics raise. A rubric may identify an action or recipient without supplying a modern taxonomy of the person’s condition. A text in a sacramentary may prescribe or preserve a form without recording who actually used it, under what local delegation, or how often a corresponding case occurred. The visual run also has not been collated against the protected Dumas–Deshusses CCSL edition. The manuscript therefore controls its visible architecture; it does not by itself establish the critical text, the earliest occurrence of each item, or a geographic norm.

Those limits do not make the evidence thin. Gellone contributes a fact that a history centered only on the exorcist’s office would miss: one early medieval book preserves several recipient-oriented items in a differentiated sequence. It also contributes a fact that a history centered only on later major exorcism might miss: recipient distinctions occur within a broader sacramentary and pontifical world, not within a book devoted exclusively to one modern category. The structure is plural before any theory is imposed upon it.

The contrast with the printed *Gelasian Sacramentary* makes that plurality more visible. In H. A. Wilson’s 1894 edition, the heading *Exorcismi super electos* stands within a continuous sequence of scrutinies and other rites for the elect at pages 45–50. The prayers at pages 48–49 repeatedly orient the action toward baptismal grace. Wilson’s witness thus controls one pre-baptismal setting. Gellone controls a separate manuscript run with differentiated recipient language. Neither should be made the template that erases the other.

5.4 Kraków MS 2057: separated units in one pontifical

Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, MS 2057 adds a second manuscript text without turning resemblance into descent. The holding institution catalogs this Latin book as an eleventh- or twelfth-century pontifical. Its official public-domain scan permits a narrow comparison of two separated locations. Usuarium’s index to the Obertyński edition served only as a finding aid; the coordinates and category headings were checked in the manuscript images.

The first location begins at folio 68v and ends within folio 77v. Its headings organize a recipient-oriented dossier: a combined energumen and catechumen opening is followed by categories for a child described as an energumen, a baptized energumen, and an anointing unit naming an energumen or sick person. A major salt-and-water blessing begins lower on folio 77v and supplies the visible boundary. The point is architectural rather than operational. This book places several differentiated recipient categories in one continuous dossier; the headings do not supply a modern diagnosis or prove that the preserved material was performed locally.

The second location is materially later in the same codex. At folio 125r a separately headed oil-exorcism unit begins, with its associated blessing continuing through folio 126r amid a broader sequence concerning oils. Its distance from folios 68v–77v matters: recipient-oriented material and an object-oriented oil unit coexist in one pontifical without forming one unbroken rite. Conversely, their coexistence in one book does not establish independent origins.

Kraków therefore reinforces Gellone’s warning against flattening medieval evidence, while sharpening it through internal book placement. Gellone’s checked run differentiates recipients before a church-dedication boundary; Kraków preserves one differentiated recipient dossier and, much later, a separate oil unit. This is evidence for plurality of categories and locations, not for textual dependence between the manuscripts, membership in a single PRG family, local normativity, performance, frequency, efficacy, or continuity with the modern major exorcism.

5.5 The PRG ordinal: grades, units, and editorial form

The compilation conventionally called the *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum* brings the history back to ordination. The exact source used here is the Vogel–Elze critical edition, volume I. At printed page 14, Ordo XV.7 invites candidates by grades. At printed page 17, XV.17–19 forms a separately titled exorcist unit. The unit associates the office with a book containing exorcisms and distinguishes baptized persons from catechumens.

Several dimensions are present at once. The material is an ordinal: candidates move through named grades under episcopal presidency. The exorcist material is not a stray formula but a bounded unit. A book again serves as the significant object. And the language attached to the office recognizes more than one class of person toward whom its stated power or charge is directed. In book architecture, the PRG therefore joins the office-history represented by the *Statuta* with a recipient distinction that should not be flattened into one generic activity.

The modern edition also needs to remain visible as an edition. “The PRG” is a conventional name for an editorially presented compilation, not a guarantee that every constituent unit formed one uncomplicated local book in the tenth century. The exact pages secure the bounded edited architecture: invitation by grade, distinct exorcist unit, book association, and recipient distinction. A selected manuscript comparison now tests part of that architecture, but it does not show how every manuscript arranged or worded the unit.

This is where the *Statuta* comparison is most useful. Both checked witnesses place the exorcist among other ecclesial grades, associate the ordination with episcopal action, and make a book the emblematic object. Those shared features define an ordinal type. They justify asking how a ministerial identity was represented across canonical and pontifical traditions. They do not yet demonstrate that the PRG compiler copied the exact Ballerini form, that a single textual line connects the witnesses, or that the duties implied by one book were exercised in the same way in another century.

The recipient distinction in Ordo XV is equally important and equally bounded. It prevents the office from being described as if its textual horizon were exclusively post-baptismal, because catechumens are named. It also prevents the office from being reduced to baptismal scrutinies, because baptized persons are distinguished. What the edition does not supply is a case history showing when a holder acted toward either group. A statement of office in an ordination unit defines a ritualized competence or charge within that book; it is not a count of actual interventions.

5.6 Vendôme MS 14: a named manuscript comparison

Vendôme, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 14 supplies one early-eleventh-century manuscript check on the edited ordinal. The institutional catalog describes it as a parchment *Pontificale ad usum Salisburgensis ecclesiae* from the first half of the eleventh century. That cataloged title does not establish its place of production or its textual relationship to the edited PRG. On folio 3v, the rubricated exorcist unit follows the reader blessing and precedes acolyte ordination. The bishop gives the candidate a booklet containing exorcisms; a spoken commission and prayer complete the bounded unit.

This agreement with Vogel–Elze XV makes the comparison more exact than a bibliographic cross-reference:

grade sequence, episcopal action, and book delivery are visible in a named manuscript. It does not make MS 14 the archetype, prove direct descent between witnesses, or establish documented local performance. The result is a manuscript control for ordinal architecture, not a history of use.

5.7 Parker MS 79: a local manuscript comparison

Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library MS 79 tests the ordinal type against one much later and geographically distinct manuscript. The Stanford manifest identifies it as an English pontifical made in stages around 1400 and 1410. The exact images at folios 43r–43v place the ordination of exorcists between the ordinations of readers and acolytes. The rubric summons the candidates, and the bishop is shown and directed to deliver a book.

Because this is a manuscript image rather than solely an edited text, its material layout can be observed directly. The reader, exorcist, and acolyte units have visible boundaries. The exorcist candidates occupy a defined place in that sequence. The bishop and book-delivery action are not supplied by a modern narrative summary; they belong to the imaged witness. Parker MS 79 therefore confirms that the ordinal architecture was not confined to the modern presentation of the PRG.

At the same time, locality must do real work in the account. The catalog describes London as the probable place of production and proposes successive patrons or owners on heraldic and codicological grounds. Those are catalog inferences, not facts independently proved here. More fundamentally, one English pontifical is one English pontifical. Its agreement with features in the *Statuta* and PRG does not make it representative of England, much less of medieval Western practice as a whole.

The witness is also later by several centuries. Similarity across that distance may reflect transmission, common inheritance, independent retention of an ordinal convention, or a combination of channels. Choosing among those possibilities requires manuscript genealogy and textual collation that the present corpus does not contain. The correct historical gain is narrower but substantial: around the beginning of the fifteenth century, this particular English pontifical still represented the exorcist as a grade between adjacent minor orders and represented ordination through episcopal delivery of a book.

Parker's object is especially revealing when compared with Gellone. In Parker, the book passes to the candidate and identifies an office. In Gellone, the manuscript itself organizes rites by recipients. The physical word "book" thus belongs at two levels: as an object inside an ordination ceremony and as the surviving artifact through which modern readers encounter a ritual sequence. Confusing those levels can turn the survival of a text into imagined evidence of its use. Keeping them distinct makes both kinds of evidence more precise.

5.8 The 1895 Roman Pontifical as a late comparison

The Leonine-recognized 1895 *Pontificale Romanum* extends the typology well beyond the medieval period. Its exact electronic reset places *De Ordinatione Exorcistarum* at PDF pages 38–39 as a distinct ordinal section. The comparison belongs here not because a nineteenth-century book can explain medieval practice, but because it shows the later life of the ordinal category in a printed Roman normative book.

The 1895 witness preserves the same broad configuration: a named grade, episcopal ordination, and a book-bearing ordinal action within a larger sequence. Yet its date and authority differ radically from the earlier evidence. The *Statuta* material is reconstructed through canonical transmission; the PRG is encountered through a modern critical edition of a medieval compilation; Parker is a local manuscript; the 1895 Pontifical is a printed Roman edition recognized under Leo XIII. Calling all four "pontifical tradition" without those distinctions would conceal rather than describe their history.

The late book therefore functions as an endpoint for comparison, not as proof of an unbroken chain. It

confirms that the exorcist ordination remained textually and ritually representable in the Roman Pontifical at that date. It cannot tell how often the order was conferred, what ordinary work its holders actually performed, or whether an intervening local book derived directly from the PRG. It also cannot be read as current Latin law. The postconciliar reform of instituted ministries and the present discipline are separate later stages treated elsewhere in this study.

This endpoint prevents another anachronism. The title *De Ordinatione Exorcistarum* concerns admission to an order. It is not the title of the major rite for an afflicted person. The ordination unit's recipient is the ordinand; the extraordinary rite's recipient would be the person for whom pastoral intervention is undertaken. A history that counts both under the same English noun must still keep their ritual subjects apart.

5.9 What the ordinal comparison establishes

Placed side by side, the five ordinal controls produce a structured historical account. The Ballerini *Statuta* witness supplies a late-antique canonical rule as carried by later transmission. The Vogel–Elze PRG supplies a tenth-century ordinal unit in a critical edition. Vendôme MS 14 supplies a named early-eleventh-century manuscript comparison for part of that architecture. Parker MS 79 supplies a specific late-medieval English manuscript realization. The 1895 Roman Pontifical supplies a printed modern Roman endpoint. In each, the exorcist is located among grades and the bishop's relation to the candidate is made visible through a book.

That common architecture is more informative than a bare list of dates. The source genre changes from canonical collection to compiled pontifical, particular manuscript, and printed normative edition. The book position remains ordinal rather than therapeutic or narrative. The immediate recipient remains the candidate for office. The minister remains episcopal. The significant object remains a book associated with exorcisms. These recurrent coordinates explain why historians may reasonably compare the witnesses even when they cannot yet assert a textual stemma.

The variation is equally informative. The *Statuta* survives only through later compilers and under changing documentary arrangements. The PRG edition articulates recipient classes within the exorcist unit. Vendôme checks a bounded part of that ordinal architecture in one named manuscript. Parker supplies a later local manuscript layout but not a representative survey. The 1895 book belongs to a centralized printed Roman horizon unavailable to the earlier witnesses. A history faithful to these differences describes transmission as repeated recontextualization of an ordinal type, not as the mechanical survival of one unchanged script.

The comparison also narrows the meaning of “office.” An office can be stable enough to receive a name and an ordination unit while the evidence for its daily exercise remains sparse. Ordinal books state how a church ritualizes admission and describes a charge. They do not operate as personnel files, visitation reports, or case registers. The recurring book delivery therefore establishes institutional representation, not workload.

5.10 Reading the witnesses across their coordinates

A cross-section of the evidence shows why no single date line is adequate. Read by source genre, the *Statuta* is canonical material, Gellone is a sacramentary manuscript, the PRG and Parker are pontifical witnesses, the 1895 book is a printed Roman Pontifical, and Aquinas is scholastic theology. Each genre creates a different relation between text and reader. Canonical material directs or organizes; a ritual book preserves forms; an ordinal stages admission to ministry; theology explains distinctions. The genres can be compared, but their statements do not possess the same historical reach.

Read by book position, three separate clusters emerge. The *Statuta*, PRG, Parker, and 1895 units sit among

ordinations. Wilson's Gelasian material sits among scrutinies for the elect. Gellone's recipient-oriented run occupies a pontifical portion before the manuscript moves to relic deposition and church dedication. Book position is not merely a librarian's coordinate. It identifies the action's documentary neighbors and therefore tests what kind of historical event the compiler or copyist represented.

Read by minister, the ordinal witnesses foreground the bishop in relation to candidates. Aquinas places inferior ministers in assistance to the priest within baptismal preparation. The manuscript evidence for Gellone does not, on the checked rubrics alone, supply a complete institutional map for every item in its run. It would be an error to import the ordinal bishop into every recipient rite, or to make Aquinas's account of ministerial assistance a transcript of Gellone's local performance.

Read by recipient, the contrast becomes sharper. In an ordination, the immediate recipient is a candidate who receives an office. In baptismal preparation, the recipient is one of the elect or a catechumen. In Gellone, the rubrics differentiate persons described by the manuscript's own affliction language. In the PRG unit, baptized persons and catechumens appear as distinct classes within the charge associated with the office. The same Latin word family can therefore occur while the ritual subject changes.

Read by object, the ordinal book is both practical and symbolic. It is given to the candidate as the material correlate of a textual charge. In the surviving evidence, however, the manuscript or printed volume is also the modern historian's object. The first book belongs inside the represented rite; the second is the witness from which the representation is known. Neither level proves habitual use. A candidate's book might signify a capacity described by the ordinal, while the survival of the containing pontifical proves only that the unit was copied or printed.

Finally, read by date, the witnesses show repeated reframing rather than a single institutional moment. A mid-fifth-century Gallic collection is recoverable through later compilers; a late-eighth-century manuscript preserves recipient rites; a tenth-century compilation gives an ordinal unit; a thirteenth-century theologian explains baptismal preparation; an English pontifical around 1400–1410 repeats book-delivery architecture; and a Roman Pontifical prints a corresponding order in 1895. The sequence is broad enough to disprove an account confined to one century, but not dense enough to fill every interval or every region.

This coordinate method produces a more comprehensive history without pretending to a more comprehensive corpus. It states every positive relation the checked sources support: recurrence of an office, persistence of an ordinal type, coexistence of recipient categories, and theological reception of baptismal preparations. At the same time, it makes the missing evidence diagnostic. A claim about textual descent needs collation; a claim about regional prevalence needs representative local witnesses; a claim about ordinary duties needs records of exercise; and a claim about outcomes needs evidence that normative books were never designed to provide.

5.11 Aquinas and the theological reception of baptismal rites

Thomas Aquinas offers a different reception history. In *Summa theologiae* III, question 71, he does not edit the *Statuta*, describe Parker MS 79, or narrate an intervention with an afflicted person. He asks systematic questions about the preparations accompanying Baptism. Articles 2–4 explain where exorcistic preparations stand in relation to the sacrament, what kind of effect they have, and how the ministers who perform them relate to the priest.

In article 2, the exorcistic preparation is ordered before Baptism and understood as removing impediments to reception. Article 3 distinguishes that preparatory removal from the effects proper to Baptism, especially grace and the remission of guilt. This is not merely a terminological distinction. It prevents the preparatory rite from being treated as if it conferred the sacrament's effect. It also shows how a thirteenth-century theologian could take inherited exorcistic rites seriously without collapsing every effect associated with them into sacramental causality.

Article 4 places exorcists among inferior ministers who assist the priest in baptismal preparation. Aquinas thus provides an interpretive bridge between office and initiation: the minor ministerial category is intelligible within the preparation of a person for Baptism. But his account is theological ordering, not an empirical survey. It cannot show that every holder of the order exercised the role regularly or that the officeholder's principal work concerned alleged possession.

Aquinas's source genre changes the questions that may be asked. From a pontifical one can ask how candidates and objects are arranged in an ordination. From the *Summa* one can ask how a learned theologian distinguishes ritual preparation, sacramental effect, and ministerial assistance. One cannot use the *Summa* as a record of how often a parish celebrated a rite, just as one cannot use Parker's picture of book delivery as a complete theology of Baptism.

His analysis also helps separate the Gellone paths. Aquinas's question is explicitly baptismal. It illuminates the initiatory history represented by Wilson's sequence for the elect and the catechumenal dimension visible in the PRG. It does not absorb Gellone's separately described afflicted recipients into that explanation. Those manuscript units remain evidence of another ritual path unless exact comparison demonstrates otherwise.

This reception is historical in a second sense. Aquinas did not create the rites he explains. His argument witnesses to a learned effort to place received practices within a systematic account of sacrament, preparation, cause, and ministry. That theological coherence is itself part of the history, but it is not evidence that every earlier compiler or later local minister understood the rites in precisely his terms.

5.12 Two recipient histories that must not be merged

The controlled evidence now permits a firmer distinction between initiatory and afflicted-recipient material. Wilson's printed Gelasian sequence concerns the elect and orders its prayers toward Baptism. Aquinas explains preparations for the sacrament. The PRG's ordinal language includes catechumens among the persons named in relation to the exorcist's office. Together these witnesses show a substantial Western history in which exorcistic language belongs to Christian initiation.

Gellone, however, preserves an *Impositio manuum in energumenum* and a run of further recipient-differentiated items before the book turns to relic deposition and church dedication. The exact manuscript images therefore prevent the afflicted-recipient history from disappearing into the catechumenal one. A baptized person named separately in the PRG likewise cannot simply be treated as an elect person under another title.

The distinction is not a modern diagnosis. Terms such as *energumenus* and the other recipient rubrics belong to their manuscript contexts. They do not authorize retrospective clinical conclusions, nor do they establish that every person so described would meet the later canonical or pastoral category associated with major exorcism. The historical claim is about differentiation within books: the sources do not address one undifferentiated recipient population.

Nor does distinction imply institutional separation at every place and date. The same cleric might have encountered several ritual settings; a book might place diverse items near one another; a later compiler might reorganize earlier material. Demonstrating those relations requires local evidence. What can already be said is that the surviving genres frame recipients differently, and any synthesis must preserve those frames rather than infer a single use from shared vocabulary.

5.13 Office and recipient move on separate historical axes

The checked witnesses can be ordered along two axes without forcing them into one line of descent. The office axis asks how a church document names or ritually admits a minister. The recipient axis asks whom

a ritual book or theological account places before that ministerial world. These questions intersect, but the same witness does not always answer both. Treating the axes separately makes the historical change visible while preventing a later office from becoming the assumed operator in every earlier rite.

The *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua* witness is strongest on the office axis. In the Ballerini form, the bishop delivers a booklet containing exorcisms to a candidate within a sequence of ecclesiastical grades. Maassen and the MGH notice show why the textual vehicle must remain qualified: the collection is recovered through later compilations rather than preserved as one independent book. The locus can establish an ordinal action and object within that transmitted form. It does not identify recipients of any later exercise, and it cannot show what a holder subsequently did.

Gellone shifts the evidentiary weight toward the recipient axis. Its exact folio run distinguishes items by recipient language and places them within the manuscript's pontifical portion before the transition to relic deposition and church dedication. The visible sequence proves differentiated book organization. It does not name a complete personnel structure for those items. Importing the bishop and candidate from an ordinal into this sequence would answer a question the checked rubrics do not answer. The manuscript shows whom its headings distinguish more clearly than it shows the local career or authorization of every actor.

Wilson's Gelasian edition and Aquinas's third-part question define a specifically initiatory lane on the recipient axis. The former places exorcistic material among rites for the elect; the latter explains preparations for Baptism, their subordinate effect, and the assistance of inferior ministers to the priest. Aquinas therefore connects recipient and office conceptually, but only within his baptismal argument. His explanation cannot serve as the missing institutional commentary for Gellone's other recipient rubrics or as a report of local medieval practice.

The PRG is the checked witness in which the two axes most clearly meet. Ordo XV places the exorcist in an ordination sequence, associates the grade with a book, and names baptized persons and catechumens distinctly within the charge represented by the unit. This conjunction is historically important: an office-bearing text recognizes more than one recipient class. Its value is not that it resolves every earlier distinction. The critical edition controls the unit's architecture, not a selected manuscript's reading, a local event, or a universal distribution of duties.

Parker MS 79 and the 1895 Roman Pontifical extend the office axis without supplying corresponding recipient histories. Parker gives a local late-medieval realization of episcopal book delivery between adjacent ordination units. The 1895 printed Roman book retains a named ordination section in a very different institutional and editorial setting. Their shared architecture warrants typological comparison. Because neither bounded locus is a register of later activity, the comparison cannot show that the represented office carried an unchanged recipient field from the PRG or from the older *Statuta* witness.

The date span therefore measures recurrence of representation, not continuity of exercise. A copied or printed ordination unit is evidence that an editor, copyist, or issuing authority retained a place for the grade in that book. It is not evidence that the surrounding ecclesial setting supplied the same cases, assigned the same practical responsibilities, or understood the book delivery through an identical theology. The office axis is diachronic only at the level each witness actually records: title, ordinal position, minister, candidate, and object.

The asymmetry across these sources is itself a historical result. Office evidence can persist in ordinals even where practice records are absent. Recipient distinctions can persist in ritual books even where the actors' institutional status is not fully stated. Scholastic theology can explain one intersection without cataloging all others. These are not fragments of a single missing table whose blank cells may be filled by analogy. They are different documentary decisions about what a compiler, copyist, theologian, or printer considered necessary to represent.

This two-axis account also sharpens the transition into Roman consolidation. The later Roman ritual places an afflicted recipient within a bounded printed documentary setting, while the Roman Pontifical continues

to carry the ordination of an exorcist as a distinct subject. The coexistence of those book types warns against identifying the office unit with the recipient rite merely because both use the same word family. A candidate receiving a book and a person addressed by a ritual are different immediate subjects of different documentary acts.

Consequently, three claims remain available and three remain outside the evidence. The checked witnesses establish that an exorcist grade was repeatedly represented in the selected Western ordination materials; that baptismal and afflicted-recipient settings were textually distinguishable; and that at least one checked ordinal unit related its office to both baptized persons and catechumens. They do not establish a continuous line of copying among all the witnesses, the ordinary duties or workload of officeholders, or a stable distribution of recipient categories across regions. The diachronic gain is differentiation across books, not a reconstructed practice history.

5.14 Normative books and the missing history of practice

The medieval account is richest where it names exactly what books can and cannot do. A canonical collection preserves norms and their transmission. A sacramentary or pontifical preserves ritual forms and their book arrangement. An ordinal establishes how admission to a grade is represented. A scholastic treatise explains conceptual relations. None is designed to count events in a diocese or record the outcome of a particular pastoral encounter.

Actual practice would require other kinds of evidence: local records of performance, institutional accounts, visitation material, biographies or narratives handled with genre controls, or manuscript features that can be shown to bear on use. Even then, a record of one event would not establish prevalence. The present corpus contains no representative body of such evidence for the medieval West.

The absence matters because normative survival is visually persuasive. A carefully written rubric can look like a transcript of something routinely done. A stable ordinal unit can look like a stable occupation. A sequence copied across books can look like a continuous institution. Yet prescription, copying, and performance are different events. The source controls assembled here secure the first two in bounded instances. They do not secure the third on a representative scale.

Efficacy lies beyond the books in another way. A ritual text states or presupposes claims about what an action seeks. Aquinas offers a theological analysis of preparatory effects. Neither kind of witness supplies a modern clinical trial, and a historical study cannot adjudicate a supernatural cause from manuscript survival. The evidence can show what a source prescribed, represented, or taught; it cannot convert those claims into an independently measured outcome.

5.15 A nonlinear Western transmission

The resulting history is neither a story of disappearance nor a story of one unchanged rite. A ministerial name is visible at third-century Rome. A late-antique canonical rule survives through varied later compilations. An early medieval sacramentary preserves differentiated recipient rites. A tenth-century ordinal compilation gives the exorcist a distinct unit. A late-medieval English manuscript realizes a comparable ordinal architecture. A thirteenth-century theologian interprets baptismal preparations and ministerial assistance. A nineteenth-century Roman Pontifical still contains an ordination section for exorcists.

Chronology alone cannot turn that sequence into descent. The sources pass through different channels: historical quotation, canonical compilation, ritual manuscript, critical edition, local pontifical, scholastic synthesis, and official print. The recurrent features are real, but the routes connecting them have not all been demonstrated. “Transmission” here therefore means that related categories and structures are preserved, reorganized, and received across witnesses. It does not mean that every later text was copied

from the immediately earlier item in this account.

The strongest synthesis is consequently plural. The office history explains why an exorcist could be named and ordained. The initiatory history explains why exorcistic rites could accompany preparation for Baptism. The afflicted-recipient history explains why separate items appear for persons described by other rubrics. The theological history explains how a medieval schoolman distinguished preparatory effects from sacramental grace. The histories intersect, but none can serve as a complete proxy for the others.

This plural account also clarifies the transition to the early modern period. The *Rituale Romanum* of 1614 did not emerge into a documentary vacuum, but neither should its major-exorcism title and sequence be read backward as the organizing key for every ancient and medieval witness. It belongs to a later stage in which a particular Roman ritual book gives the subject a different documentary setting. The next section treats that stage on its own exact controls.

5.16 Adjacent genres: medicine, exemplum, penance, and synodal order

The liturgical witnesses do not exhaust the ways medieval writers classified affliction, agency, responsibility, or prayer. Four bounded controls now permit a first comparison with adjacent genres. They do not form a representative sample of the medieval West. They differ in century, purpose, place, and transmission: a medical work, a Cistercian dialogue of miracle exempla, a nineteenth-century edition of several penitential collections, and a synodal compiler's inventory for examining priests. Their value lies precisely in that difference. Each asks a question that a sacramentary or pontifical does not ask. None can be made to confirm the others merely because words for demons, affliction, exorcism, prayer, or healing appear in more than one.

5.16.1 A medical distinction inside a theological cosmos

In Paul Kaiser's 1903 edition of Hildegard of Bingen's *Causae et curae*, book II moves through ailments of the head under such headings as vertigo, *amentia*, and the brain. At printed page 91, the paragraph *De amentia* gives an account in terms of interacting bodily disorders. When those disorders converge and rage in the head, the text says, they overturn the person's knowledge and judgment. It then marks an interpretive error: many think that such a person is possessed by a demon, "which is not so." The paragraph does not therefore treat every disturbed presentation as a transparent sign of possession. It proposes a bodily explanation within the work's own humoral physiology.

The same passage does not become secular medicine in the modern sense. After denying possession in the described condition, it says that demons may attend the sickness and lay snares, and it separately describes what the author takes actual possession to be. Bodily explanation, moral-spiritual danger, and a theological category of possession can therefore remain distinct while coexisting in one conceptual world. The important historical finding is not that medieval medicine had discovered a modern differential diagnosis. It is that this medical writer explicitly resisted one collapse: observers could misclassify a condition described through bodily causes as possession.

That distinction has strict limits. Kaiser's edition represents one work through one manuscript basis; it is not a census of learned medicine, pastoral judgment, or popular belief. Its terms cannot be translated into a modern diagnostic code, and the bodily mechanism it proposes is not accepted merely because the text distinguishes it from possession. Nor does the residual category become empirically established when the author withholds it from this one condition. The passage supports a history of classification: a medieval medical text could place bodily disorder and possession in different categories without erasing either from its cosmology.

5.16.2 A miracle narrative as constructed testimony

Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum* asks a different question. Distinction VII, chapter 24, in Joseph Strange's 1851 edition, printed pages 52–53, tells of a person described as *obsessus* who was received at a monastery in hope of a cure. The narrative says that relics and the monks' prayers had not produced the desired result. A brother responsible for guests repeatedly visited him, read Marian prayers and verse over his head, showed sacred pictures, adjured the demon to depart, and on one occasion placed a psalter over him. The subject cried out, raged, collapsed, later arose, and reported himself freed. The chapter then narrates his return to give thanks.

Those details disclose a devotional repertoire, but they do not constitute a rubric. No heading presents the actions as a rite to be repeated; no competent authority is shown granting permission; no sequence is supplied for lawful performance. The chapter belongs to a dialogue designed to teach through exempla. It selects a failed-before-success pattern, associates the outcome with Marian devotion and a reputedly holy religious, and continues immediately into another illustration of that religious's sanctity. The reported cure serves the literary and devotional argument of its host collection.

The chapter also tells the reader how the story reached its narrator. Caesarius says that a conversus who attended the cure and guarded the distressed person recounted the events to him. That attribution is historically valuable: it is not an anonymous modern legend detached from any stated chain of report. But a named chain of testimony does not turn the account into a clinical record, liturgical dossier, or independent corroboration. The narrator controls the selection and form in which the testimony survives. The proper synthesis is therefore about evidence genres. The chapter witnesses what its author chose to present as a Marian miracle and how he authorized that presentation. It does not measure frequency, establish efficacy, diagnose the subject, or prove that the actions were normal monastic practice.

5.16.3 Penitential categories and the warning of the apparatus

The materials edited by Hermann Joseph Wasserschleben in 1851 shift attention from narrated cure to culpability, commemoration, and prohibited means. One short item, *Capitula Dacheriana* 151 at printed pages 158–159, permits a person who “suffers a demon” to have stones and herbs without incantation. A related unit printed at pages 211–212 under the heading *De vexatis a diabulo* places that proposition after four distinctions concerning self-killing. It differentiates a person represented as diabolically vexed and unaware, death through despair, fear, or unknown causes, deliberate self-killing, and a person who loses his mind under sudden temptation or insanity. Its questions concern whether prayer, Masses, and almsgiving may follow, not how to identify a demon or conduct an exorcism.

Read at that scale, the unit does not simply oppose a supernatural and a natural explanation. It sorts agency and knowledge because those differences bear upon responsibility and posthumous intercession. The item about stones and herbs likewise draws its line at incantation; it does not supply a pharmacology or approve every treatment performed without words. A penitential collection can therefore preserve categories that touch affliction, mental loss, devotional response, and forbidden practice without becoming either a medical treatise or a ritual book.

Wasserschleben's apparatus makes the transmission boundary visible. The heading's number and wording vary among the manuscripts reported by the editor. Notes state that portions are absent from some witnesses, and the fifth item—the stones-and-herbs provision—is absent from all but three of the sigla named there. That apparatus prevents a loose reference to “the penitential” from becoming a claim about a uniform medieval code. The printed unit is evidence that these classifications circulated in the textual traditions represented by the edition. Without a manuscript-by-manuscript study, it does not establish their date in every form, geographical reach, enforcement, frequency of the acts regulated, or acceptance by every local church.

5.16.4 Exorcisms within a priestly competence inventory

Regino of Prüm's *Libri duo de synodalibus causis*, inspected in Wasserschleben's 1840 edition, returns to liturgical language but places it in an administrative frame. Book I's *Notitia*, printed pages 51–52, lists questions to be put to a priest by a bishop or his deputy. The sequence asks about status and ordination, then about the priest's command of the creed and Lord's Prayer, Mass prayers and canon, Epistle and Gospel, psalmody, and the Athanasian profession. Question 87 asks whether he can pronounce distinctly and reasonably the exorcisms and prayers used in making a catechumen, those for consecrating the font, and the other prayers in the required grammatical forms.

The inventory continues through emergency baptism, reconciliation, anointing of the sick, funerals, and, at question 91, exorcisms and blessings of water and salt. Chant, computus, martyrology, and homilies follow. Exorcistic language thus appears twice within a much wider examination of parochial competence. The setting matters: these are catechumenal and material-blessing contexts, not a personal major-exorcism chapter. The questions show how Regino's collection organized expected knowledge. They do not show how often any priest performed an item, whether examiners used the list unchanged, or whether the person examined held the minor order of exorcist.

This witness sharpens a distinction already required by the sacramentaries and ordinals. An inventory of priestly knowledge is not an officeholder's job description. Knowing exorcisms attached to catechumens, water, and salt does not establish a caseload of afflicted persons. Conversely, the appearance of those texts amid ordinary ministerial competencies shows why the bare word "exorcism" cannot identify major exorcism without its recipient and documentary setting.

5.16.5 What the comparison establishes

The four controls establish differentiated questions, not a single medieval system. Hildegard's medical paragraph asks how an apparent condition should be classified within a bodily and theological account. Caesarius constructs testimony as a miracle exemplum ordered to devotional meaning. The penitential materials classify responsibility, commemoration, and incantation through a text whose manuscript variation remains visible. Regino inventories a priest's liturgical competence across catechumenal, sacramental, funerary, calendrical, and instructional duties. Each witness supplies evidence for its own discursive practice.

Placed beside the sacramentaries and pontificals, these genres make the medieval picture broader without making it smoother. They show that language about demons and exorcisms could meet bodily explanation, miracle narration, penitential judgment, and synodal administration. They do not show a contest in which medicine displaced ritual, a universal pastoral algorithm, a stable rate of alleged possession, or a common procedure shared across monasteries and dioceses. They offer no basis for retrospective diagnosis and no proof that a reported cure followed from a narrated act.

The comparison also changes what counts as a responsible historical connection. A connection is strongest when a witness itself places categories in relation: Hildegard sets an observer's possession attribution against her bodily explanation; the penitential unit puts mental loss, responsibility, intercession, and incantation within one transmitted sequence; Regino places several kinds of exorcism inside one ministerial examination. Caesarius, by contrast, relates devotional action and reported cure through the narrative logic of an exemplum. These are source-internal relations. A modern historian may compare them, but cannot promote that comparison into contact, borrowing, institutional coordination, or controversy without a further historical bridge.

The dates and editions impose a second discipline. The medieval works survive here through nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century print controls. Those editions make exact loci inspectable, and Wasserschleben's penitential apparatus preserves consequential variation, but they do not eliminate the need for modern critical texts and manuscript work where wording or transmission becomes decisive. Accordingly, the present

account paraphrases bounded architecture and classification. It does not offer newly made translations as source text, reconstruct missing archetypes, or treat an editor's arrangement as the unqualified arrangement of every medieval witness.

Substantial adjacent fields remain open. This first tranche does not control a representative corpus of saints' lives, sermons, legal commentaries, learned demonology, magic prohibitions, or trial records. It does not trace the four texts' reception in particular communities. Those questions require their own edition-specific corpora and transmission histories. The gain here is a firmer method and a positive, bounded result: medieval differentiation is visible not only among liturgical books, offices, recipients, and theological effects, but also among the questions that neighboring genres were built to answer. That result is historical rather than operational, diagnostic, or probabilistic, and every later extension must preserve the same boundary.

6 Eastern Christian transmission: several books, not one rite

The history becomes geographically broader when Greek, Armenian, West-Syriac, and Coptic witnesses are placed beside the Latin books. It also becomes less linear. These witnesses do not disclose an undifferentiated "Eastern exorcism." They preserve different kinds of textual objects: prayers gathered in a Byzantine euchologion, catechumenal material embedded in baptismal orders, and later editions that compare several manuscript families. Their value lies first in the architecture of the books and in the distinctions that architecture requires.

This section is historical, not juridical or operational. It does not state the present law of an Eastern Catholic Church or an Orthodox Church, identify a currently authorized minister, reproduce a formula, or offer a sequence for use. The words *Byzantine*, *Armenian*, *West-Syriac*, and *Coptic* identify bounded textual and manuscript settings here. They do not erase differences of communion, jurisdiction, recension, language, territory, or date. In particular, a historical Armenian or Syriac witness cannot be assigned retrospectively to one present Catholic or Orthodox body without evidence of its provenance and reception.

6.1 A Byzantine prayer-book stream

The Byzantine evidence includes prayers transmitted as units in euchologia. That location differs from a clergy list, an ordination form, a baptismal scrutiny, and the later Latin section for persons described as afflicted. The euchologion is a service book containing many kinds of ecclesial prayer. The coexistence of material inside it establishes a book environment; it does not by itself establish how commonly each item was used, by whom, or under what local authorization.

The Barberini Greek manuscript now numbered Vatican, Barberini gr. 336 supplies an especially important control. André Jacob's codicological description maps a group at folios 84r–95r. Within that span he identifies a Basil-attributed unit at folios 84r–88v, a Chrysostom-attributed unit at folios 88v–91r, additional prayers at folios 91r–95r, and a lacuna within the sequence. The physical map matters more than the famous names. Two prayers later printed under an attribution to John Chrysostom occur anonymously in this early witness. Modern editors Stefano Parenti and Elena Velkovska print the bounded Barberini material at pages 225–227 of their 1995 edition; Miguel Arranz gives a further Constantinopolitan euchologion control at pages 371–372 of his 1996 edition. These protected modern editions are bibliographic controls only here; their text is neither retained nor reproduced.

This evidence imposes a strict authorship ceiling. A prayer attributed in later transmission to Basil or Chrysostom is not thereby proved to have been composed by that Father. The manuscript heading, the presence or absence of a name, the date of the physical witness, and the date of composition are separate facts. Even the oldest controlled witness supplies a terminus before which the item was copied, not a biography of its author or a complete history of its earlier forms.

Jacques Goar's *Euchologion sive rituale Graecorum* makes the later printed collection directly visible. The public-domain seventeenth-century edition and the expanded 1730 printing place the relevant units together; the latter's printed pages 578–584 became a common reference point for later cataloguers and editors. Goar is valuable as evidence for early-modern editorial consolidation and for locating the units that later scholarship compares. He is not a substitute for the manuscript. His arrangement cannot be projected backward unchanged into the eighth century, and his headings cannot settle the authorship of anonymous or variably attributed material.

Dionysios Stathakopoulos's manuscript-history control sharpens this point. He distinguishes the Barberini witness from an eleventh-century Zürich booklet, an Athenian manuscript dated 1710, and an Athonite manuscript dated 1735. Those books transmit different combinations of attributed and anonymous material. The Zürich witness includes units attributed to several Fathers; the later Athenian and Athonite books add other names and forms. Their plurality is not noise to be harmonized away. It is positive evidence that the corpus was open to selection, attribution, rearrangement, and local transmission.

The safe Byzantine claim is therefore modest but consequential. Identified Greek euchologia preserve bounded prayer units concerning persons described as troubled by unclean spirits, and some of those units entered an influential early-modern printed collection. The manuscript tradition is older and more varied than Goar's arrangement. It does not establish patristic authorship, uniform performance, ordinary frequency, efficacy, a single Byzantine procedure, or a present Orthodox rule.

The survival pattern also warns against treating the most accessible edition as the most representative witness. Goar's large printed volume is easier to consult than a manuscript folio and later became a standard bibliographic coordinate. That practical prominence can conceal the asymmetry of the evidence. One manuscript may preserve only part of a later group; a heading may be absent; a codex may have lost leaves; and a later copy may join material that circulated separately. Historical synthesis must retain those asymmetries. A table that lists seven later-attributed prayers, for example, would describe one collected state. It would not prove that every earlier euchologion contained seven, that all seven had the same history, or that one community used them as a fixed set.

Nor does the label *euchologion* solve the question of use. It identifies a class of book, not an attendance register or pastoral report. A copied item may have been intended for use, preserved for reference, reproduced from a model, or transmitted because the compiler valued completeness. Without independent evidence, the manuscript cannot decide among those possibilities. This is why the present account speaks of transmission and placement rather than incidence or outcome.

6.2 Armenian initiation in identified manuscripts

The Armenian comparison changes the type of evidence. Frederick Cornwallis Conybeare's 1905 *Rituale Armenorum* prints and translates a baptismal order from identified Armenian manuscripts, chiefly Barberini Oriental vii.44 and Vienna Mechitarist codex 68, while recording variants and omissions in other witnesses. The relevant unit occupies printed pages 86–93. It moves from rites associated with the catechumenate into the canon of baptism, with prayers over the candidate, a renunciation-and-profession boundary, and entry into the baptismal sequence.

The editorial notes are essential evidence. Conybeare repeatedly indicates that one manuscript excludes a rite, another changes a rubric, and other witnesses expand or abbreviate the sequence. The printed text is therefore not a transparent photograph of "the Armenian rite." It is an old scholarly edition of a manuscript family whose agreements and differences are exposed on the page. Its English translation provides lawful access to the architecture, but it remains Conybeare's translation and editorial construction.

This witness also protects a distinction already visible in Jerusalem and Western initiatory sources. Exorcistic and renunciatory language may belong to preparation for Christian initiation. Its recipient and purpose are

not therefore identical with the recipient and purpose of a later rite directed toward a person alleged to be possessed. In Conybeare’s bounded pages, the material is ordered toward baptismal incorporation. To extract one expression from that setting and label it an Armenian major exorcism would destroy the book’s own category.

The historical coordinate “Armenian” requires another restraint. The manuscripts witness an Armenian liturgical tradition, but this section has not established their use as present law in the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Catholic Church, or any eparchy. Nor does manuscript agreement prove actual frequency. The safe claim is that identified Armenian manuscripts, known through a public-domain edition, transmit differentiated catechumenal and baptismal preparation. They broaden the history of Christian exorcistic language while refusing the fiction of one Eastern procedure.

6.3 West-Syriac orders and the problem of names

Heinrich Denzinger’s *Ritus Orientalium*, volume I, offers a further nineteenth-century window. It gathers Latin translations and editorial notes for Coptic, Syriac, and Armenian sacramental orders from earlier collections and manuscripts. Its age and derivative character lower its authority for exact original-language wording, but its explicit source notes and parallel orders make it useful for bounded historical comparison.

One West-Syriac baptismal order begins at printed page 266 and places its exorcistic and renunciatory preparation at pages 272–273. Another order, printed under the name of Jacob of Sarug, begins at page 334 and places comparable preparatory material from page 337 onward. Elsewhere Denzinger discusses orders associated in the received tradition with Jacob of Edessa, Severus of Antioch, and Basil. His own prolegomena expose uncertainty about relationships among those orders and about the labels assigned by compilers.

The names must consequently be treated as transmission labels, not as authenticated signatures. “Of Jacob,” “of Severus,” or “of Basil” may record an attribution, an association, an editorial title, or a claim received from a source used by Denzinger. It does not establish composition by that person. The same restraint applied to the Greek Fathers applies here with greater force because the consulted edition mediates Syriac material through Latin and through earlier editors.

What the pages do establish is structural. More than one identified West-Syriac baptismal order places exorcistic material within preparation for initiation. Their internal differences prevent a single composite text from being reconstructed by taking whatever is fullest from each. They also prevent an argument from silence: omission in one abbreviated order does not prove absence from a whole community, while presence in one manuscript does not prove universal use.

The ecclesial boundary remains equally important. The historical descriptor “West-Syriac” does not decide whether a specific witness belongs to the ancestry or use of the Syriac Orthodox Church, a Syriac Catholic Church, the Maronite Church, or another community at every point in its transmission. Denzinger sometimes writes with nineteenth-century confessional terminology that must itself be historicized. A present-law claim would require a named Church, its competent authority, an approved book, an exact edition and language, a territory, and a date. None is supplied by this old comparative edition.

6.4 A Coptic initiatory comparison

Denzinger’s second Coptic baptismal order supplies a fourth regional control at printed pages 215–219. The unit places prayers over catechumens and preparatory anointing before a renunciation-and-profession boundary at page 217, then continues into baptism. As with the Armenian and West-Syriac witnesses, the governing architecture is initiatory. The material belongs to the making of a catechumen and the approach to the font, not to a free-standing manual for testing an afflicted person.

This control is deliberately narrower than the word “Coptic” might suggest. Denzinger prints Latin translations and cites earlier learned collections. His edition does not give this study a newly checked Coptic text, a manuscript apparatus, or a secure recension history. The separate 1848 Tattam collection previously probed by this project combines Coptic and Arabic church-order material whose constituent boundaries and relationships have not been resolved. It remains a lead rather than independent support for a generic claim about Coptic practice.

The Denzinger pages can nevertheless support one useful conclusion. Coptic initiatory evidence cannot simply be replaced by the Greek euchologion or by a Latin ritual. It has its own editorially transmitted order and must be studied through its own languages, manuscripts, and ecclesial history. The current Coptic Orthodox and Coptic Catholic Churches are not interchangeable authorities, and neither one’s present discipline is established by an 1863 Latin compilation.

6.5 Three editorial layers

The controls themselves belong to three different scholarly moments. Seventeenth-century Goar presents a Greek–Latin service-book collection. Nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Denzinger and Conybeare organize and translate eastern sacramental material for learned readers. Jacob, Stathakopoulos, and the modern critical editors return attention to the codices, their foliation, lacunae, anonymous headings, and changing combinations. These layers cannot be treated as interchangeable quotations from an abstract tradition.

For this study the public-domain editions supply reproducible page-level controls. Their exact scans or text layers were identified and hashed, and the reader claims stay at the level that those editions can carry. Modern scholarship supplies the correction that old editorial titles and attributions require manuscript-level testing. Because the modern works remain copyrighted, this project records their bibliographic identity and bounded loci without retaining or reproducing their protected text.

The layered method leaves genuine work open. A full account would collate original Greek, Armenian, Syriac, Coptic, and Arabic witnesses; distinguish recensions; test dates and provenance; and investigate reception in named communities. It would also separate historical book use from current approved books and particular law. The absence of that larger project is not repaired by silently promoting an old Latin translation into an original-language critical edition. Instead, each present claim stops at the exact artifact that was inspected.

6.6 What comparison can and cannot show

Placed together, the four streams produce a map of differences:

Witness family	What the checked control shows	Claim ceiling
Byzantine Greek	Stand-alone or grouped prayer units in identified euchologia; variable anonymity and attribution; later consolidation in Goar.	No secure patristic authorship, uniform rite, frequency, efficacy, or present Orthodox law.
Armenian	Catechumenal and baptismal architecture in identified manuscripts printed with variants by Conybeare.	No composite Armenian procedure or present Armenian Apostolic or Catholic rule.
West-Syriac	Several baptismal orders in Denzinger’s comparative edition, with inherited personal attributions and visible variation.	No authenticated eponymous authorship, original-language critical text, universal practice, or current Syriac or Maronite rule.

Witness family	What the checked control shows	Claim ceiling
Coptic	Catechumenal preparation and renunciation within one bounded baptismal order in Denzinger.	No complete Coptic corpus, recension history, generic practice, or present Coptic Orthodox or Catholic rule.

The comparison does not yield a common denominator that can be performed. It yields historical categories. First, exorcistic vocabulary circulated both in initiatory settings and in separately gathered prayers. Second, a famous name in a heading is evidence of attribution, not automatically of authorship. Third, a printed service book is a stage in transmission rather than the origin of every item it contains. Fourth, textual survival is not a statistic of use. Fifth, resemblance across languages does not by itself prove borrowing, common descent, or equal juridical status.

This broader map corrects two opposite distortions. A Latin-only history might mistake the development of the Roman office and ritual book for the whole Christian history of exorcistic language. A flattened East–West comparison might then repair that omission by inventing one timeless “Eastern rite.” The witnesses support neither account. They show several communities receiving, editing, and locating related language in materially different books.

The result also clarifies the relationship between historical and present claims. An Eastern Catholic Church shares Catholic faith and communion while retaining its own legal and liturgical identity. An Orthodox Church is not governed by the Latin Code or by a Catholic dicastery. Historical texts shared or revered across these boundaries do not erase them. CCEO canons 1–2 prevent the Latin canon from being treated as Eastern Catholic law; they do not fill the resulting research gap with a universal Eastern rule. Historical euchologia likewise cannot legislate for a present Orthodox jurisdiction.

For the purposes of this study, the positive conclusion is therefore one of plural transmission. Greek prayer books, Armenian manuscript orders, West-Syriac baptismal families, and a Coptic baptismal order all enlarge the documented geography. They also strengthen the non-operational method: name the book, language, witness, date, recipient, and purpose before comparing a text. Where those coordinates are missing, restraint is not a failure to synthesize. It is the historical conclusion demanded by the evidence. That conclusion remains revisable when a better critical edition, a newly catalogued manuscript, or an identified Church’s authoritative present book supplies evidence that the currently controlled artifacts cannot provide.

7 Roman Consolidation and the History of the Book

7.1 A Roman book did not create a Roman monopoly

The *Rituale Romanum* issued under Paul V in 1614 belongs to the post-Tridentine effort to provide a dependable Roman pastoral book amid continuing local diversity. Its appearance is therefore a history of consolidation, not an origin story for Christian exorcism. Baptismal exorcisms, prayers over afflicted persons, episcopal regulation, ordination traditions, and regional formularies all preceded it. Nor did publication instantly abolish diocesan custom. Reception depended upon local authority, printing, clerical formation, possession of books, and decisions about approved usages. A Roman book and a Roman monopoly are not the same historical claim.

That distinction also changes what “the rite of 1614” can mean. It may denote the section printed in one identified first-edition witness, a textual family descended from that book, a later typical edition carrying inherited material, or—too loosely—every older Roman form before the postconciliar revision. These senses are not interchangeable. A sentence about a page in 1614 does not automatically describe a 1925 title; a

twentieth-century chapter division does not prove the architecture of the princeps; and the existence of a historical edition does not answer the current legal question whether anyone may use it.

7.2 Edition history begins by naming the state

This study treats each controlled book as an edition-state: an identified artifact or bounded bibliographic witness at a date, with a stated authority, architecture, and evidentiary ceiling. Four states presently permit a useful comparison.

Edition-state	What the control establishes	What remains beyond it
Rome 1614	The title of one exorcism section and its outer span, printed pp. 198–219; exact remote artifacts cover every page, and the complete run has claim-level visual control for category-level internal architecture.	Page 220 remains a secondary boundary; complete wording, formula or action transcription, and textual comparison remain uncollated.
Regensburg 1872	An exact facsimile shows one continuous, unnumbered unit on pp. 281–301 and the next unit at p. 302.	The edition’s approval claims are not an independent collation; use and reception are not proved.
1925 typical state	An exact electronic reset shows title XI divided into three chapters, including a preliminary chapter, the rite proper, and a distinct third chapter.	It is not a Vatican-print facsimile or a record of practice; formulas and procedure are not reproduced here.
1952 typical state	Exact scholarly controls identify the sixth typical edition, twelve-title architecture, title XII at pp. 847–886, and marginal items 2115–2174.	The complete book and decree were not inspected; internal divisions and wording remain uncontrolled.

The matrix is intentionally asymmetrical. A direct facsimile can establish what is visible in that copy. An electronic reset can establish its encoded headings and boundaries while leaving typography and physical collation outside the claim. A scholarly introduction can establish only what was checked in that introduction. Edition history is not improved by pretending that all four controls reach the same depth.

This method also separates four questions often compressed into a single claim of “change.” First, did the material occupy a different place or receive a different division in the book? Second, did its wording or rubrics change? Third, did competent authority alter its juridical or liturgical status? Fourth, did communities and ministers alter their practice? The present controls answer the first question in part and the third only at specified points. They do not yet supply a line-by-line textual stemma or a reception history.

7.3 The 1614 state: a continuous unit with visible internal articulation

The edition identified here is the Rome printing of 1614 from the press of the Apostolic Camera, represented by the Biblioteca Universitaria Alessandrina copy Y c 49. Petar Bašić’s independent modern collation reports the terminal starting pages: *De exorcizandis* at 198, *Formulae* at 220, the index at 225, and the errata at 227. Exact remote page images are registered and hash-matched for every printed page from 198 through 219. Each page has now been visually inspected at claim level for category and architecture. Page 198 controls the section heading and opening; page 219 retains the running heading, gives the final prayer heading, and ends with a terminal ornament. Bašić’s report of the next unit beginning at p. 220 supplies the other side of the outer boundary, though that page remains a secondary rather than direct control.

The complete run permits a more exact description than endpoint inspection alone. It does not, however, warrant a transcription or a practical digest. The result is a map of kinds of material and visible divisions in a book:

Printed pages	Visible architecture	Claim boundary
198	Section heading and opening of the continuous unit.	Heading, placement, and opening only.
199–200	Preliminary prose directions continue across the two pages.	Category and prose layout, not a checklist of directions.
201	The typography visibly turns from preliminary prose to laid-out liturgical material.	Transition in book design, not a sequence for performance.
202–207	Prayer and lection material, dialogue, rubrics, and separately headed formula and exorcism units form a differentiated complex; several units continue across page boundaries.	Named literary and typographical categories only; neither their words nor their associated actions are reproduced.
208–213	The preceding unit closes and the book moves through separately headed canticle, creed, cross-reference, and psalm material, including the Athanasian Creed and the beginning of an extended psalmic block.	Contents and transitions as book architecture, not an order for use.
214–218	Continuous psalmody carries successive psalm transitions without a visible new chapter boundary.	Continuity and named textual categories only.
219	The unit reaches its final prayer heading and terminal ornament.	Visible ending; the prayer is not transcribed.

This architecture qualifies two overly simple descriptions. The section is not an undifferentiated block merely because the princeps lacks the later three numbered chapters. Prose, typographical transition, rubrics, recurring headings, lectionary and creedal material, cross-references, and sustained psalmody visibly articulate its interior. Yet internal articulation is not the same thing as chaptering. No new chapter boundary is visible in the controlled run, and the continuous psalmody on pp. 214–218 especially resists the projection of a later editorial division backward into the first-edition witness. The safest description is therefore one continuous unnumbered section with differentiated internal units.

The new control depth also sharpens comparison without completing a textual history. The 1614 witness can now be compared architecturally with the continuous 1872 unit and the explicitly three-chapter 1925 title. Such a comparison can ask where prose gives way to laid-out material, where headings differentiate literary units, and where a later editor makes divisions explicit. It still cannot establish that the wording or rubrics are identical across editions. A title, heading, or psalm visible in more than one state does not prove that every intervening line, placement, or instruction remained unchanged. Formula-level identity would require a separate line-by-line collation under lawful source controls.

The safety boundary is equally substantive. Nothing in this architectural account supplies the words of a formula, the content of a direction, the order of actions, a list of alleged signs, or a method for deciding a case. The table is organized around pages and textual genres so that it cannot function as a substitute ritual. Nor does inspection of a normative book show how many copies circulated, which dioceses adopted it, whether a particular minister possessed it, how frequently it was used, or what outcomes were reported. Those are reception questions requiring local rituals and statutes, inventories, visitation evidence, clerical manuals, correspondence, or case-specific records. The princeps now supports a claim-level history of its

internal architecture; it does not supply a performance history, an efficacy claim, or present authorization. That bounded distinction is the central historical result.

7.4 The 1872 state: continuity without later chaptering

The first Regensburg edition printed by Friedrich Pustet in 1872 supplies the strongest direct physical comparison presently available. Its title and approval leaves and the relevant page run were inspected in an exact Internet Archive facsimile. In this copy, *De exorcizandis obsessis a daemonio* remains one continuous, unnumbered unit on printed pp. 281–301; the next unit begins on printed p. 302.

The result matters because it prevents a false binary in which the 1614 princeps is imagined to have acquired the fully visible 1925 architecture immediately. At least in the controlled 1872 state, the unit remained continuous. The finding does not prove that no intermediate printing divided the material differently, and it does not establish textual identity with 1614. It establishes one dated architectural state between the princeps and the twentieth-century three-chapter reset.

The approval leaf must be read with the same care. Its statements about concordance and submission to the Sacred Congregation of Rites identify the represented approval state of this printing. They do not provide an independent modern collation of every line, convert the book into a 1752 printing, or make it the later 1884 typical state sometimes confused with the Pustet sequence. Bibliographic identity precedes theological or liturgical interpretation.

7.5 The 1925 state: architecture becomes explicit

The exact 1925 electronic reset presents title XI in three chapters. The bindings separately control the preliminary chapter, the chapter containing the rite, and a distinct third chapter with its own bounded authorization sentence. This permits a structural observation that neither the 1614 boundary control nor the 1872 facsimile supports: by this state, editorial division makes different kinds of material visibly distinct.

The importance of that division is methodological rather than operational. A preliminary chapter can state norms and cautions without being confused with a formulary; a separately bounded rite can be identified without being reproduced; and a third chapter can be treated as a distinct textual and juridical object. The study therefore does not flatten all three into a single “formula,” nor does it turn the preliminary material into a public diagnostic checklist. It reports architecture while withholding proprietary or readily imitable content.

The reset is exact for the encoded chapter boundaries used here, but it is not a Vatican-print facsimile. It cannot establish the typography, paper state, or every feature that a physical copy would permit a bibliographer to inspect. It is also normative textual evidence, not an observation of actual use. Nothing in the reset reports prevalence, compliance, or efficacy. Those limits need not be repeated after every sentence once the source class has been made clear.

7.6 The 1952 state: a typical edition at a lower control depth

The 1952 *Rituale Romanum* is identified by Sodi and Toniolo’s introduction to the protected 2008 anastatic edition as the sixth typical edition after the 1614 princeps. Their account reports the Sacred Congregation of Rites decree *Cum denuo*, signed by its pro-prefect on 25 January 1952, and describes a book distributed across twelve titles. Sodi’s separate course notes locate the final title, *De exorcizandis obsessis a daemonio*, at pp. 847–886 and marginal items 2115–2174.

These controls place the exorcism material inside the last comprehensive typical *Rituale Romanum* state before the postconciliar revision. They also show a changed top-level label: the unit appears as title XII,

not as the one unnumbered end-section presently controlled for 1614, nor as title XI in the 1925 reset. But the complete 1952 facsimile and the complete official decree have not been inspected. It would therefore be false precision to assert an internal three-chapter division or exact wording on the strength of outer coordinates and a modern introduction.

This lower control depth is not repaired by appealing to copyright or availability. The official principles governing typical editions explain why protected liturgical text is not casually copied into a public study; they do not authenticate the unseen internal pages. The correct result is a conservative one: edition identity, reported decree, twelve-title architecture, and title-XII extent are secure at the stated level; internal collation remains open.

7.7 Authority, architecture, text, and reception form separate ledgers

A comprehensive edition history needs four parallel ledgers. The authority ledger identifies the issuing or approving act and the claim made for the edition. The architecture ledger records titles, chapters, page boundaries, and neighboring units. The textual ledger collates wording and rubrics at identified loci. The reception ledger records where a book was obtained, adopted, taught, cited, or used. The present evidence fills different cells in each ledger; it does not justify a single undifferentiated line called “development of the rite.”

Ledger	Question answered	Present Part IV result
Authority	What act or edition statement identifies the book’s normative status?	The 1872 approval leaves and the reported 1952 <i>Cum denuo</i> state are bounded controls; the complete 1952 decree remains uninspected.
Architecture	Where is the unit and how is it divided?	Outer structure is controlled for all four states, at different depths; the 1925 three-chapter state is the fullest internal control.
Text	What wording or rubric changed between states?	A complete line-by-line collation has not been made and is not inferred from chapter boundaries.
Reception	Where, when, and by whom was the book actually used?	No universal reception or frequency claim follows from the controlled edition artifacts.

The ledgers prevent several familiar errors. A title change can be recorded without claiming a formula changed. An approval statement can be reported without claiming universal adoption. A textual continuity, once collated, would not prove unchanged interpretation or practice. Conversely, evidence of local use could not by itself establish what an official edition prescribed. These are the different historical objects from which a defensible account is built.

The distinction is especially valuable for the long interval between 1614 and 1952. A short narrative can make three and a half centuries look like the unchanged repetition of one book. The controlled 1872 and 1925 states already show why that picture is inadequate. They supply two actual intermediate forms: a continuous unit in one and a three-chapter title in the other. The gaps between them are invitations to further collation, not blank spaces in which an editor may assume either total stability or continuous innovation.

7.8 Four artifacts, four unequal views

The four controlled edition states do not offer four equally deep windows onto the same object. They form an asymmetrical series. The 1614 witness has exact remote artifacts and category-level architectural

controls for every page from 198 through 219, while its p. 220 boundary remains independently collated in a modern article. The 1872 witness is an exact facsimile whose title page, represented approval statement, complete unit, and following boundary can be inspected. The 1925 reset permits a still more explicit architectural description because title XI is visibly divided into three chapters. The 1952 state is identified through modern scholarly controls that establish typical-edition identity, twelve-title extent, and the outer coordinates of title XII, while leaving its interior unavailable. Historical comparison has to preserve those unequal sight lines.

This asymmetry changes the form of the questions that can be asked. At 1614, the secure direct questions now include category-level internal articulation across pp. 198–219, while complete wording and the next unit’s p. 220 start remain outside direct control. At 1872, the question can extend to whether the unit is continuous in that facsimile and what printed pages contain it. At 1925, chapter-level organization becomes available for comparison. At 1952, the reliable question retreats to edition identity and outer architecture. A table that gave every row the same columns would create an illusion that every cell had been inspected at the same depth.

Edition state	Artifact-level result	Claim ceiling
1614	Exact remote artifacts and verified category-level architecture for every page from 198 through 219, with an independently collated p. 220 boundary.	No complete wording, formula or action transcription, operational sequence, or direct p. 220 control.
1872	Exact facsimile, identified printing, approval leaves, continuous unit, and following boundary.	No inference from represented approval to fresh collation, universal reception, use, or textual identity with another edition.
1925	Exact reset with title XI divided into three chapters.	Chaptering controls architecture, not the history of every line, local use, or present authorization.
1952	Reported sixth typical edition, twelve-title structure, and outer title-XII coordinates.	No internal division, wording, typography, formula, performance, or current-use claim.

The comparison consequently proceeds by intersections rather than by a single full collation. The 1614 and 1872 states intersect at the level of a bounded or continuous unit. The 1872 and 1925 states intersect at the level of identifiable printed architecture, where continuity gives way to explicit chaptering. The 1925 and 1952 controls identify successive title locations, but only the former supports a chapter-level description in this study. These intersections are historically useful because they identify where a claim is reproducible. Artifact availability is not a substitute for claim-local review and collation of the interiors.

The authority evidence is uneven in a different way. The 1872 approval leaf records what that printing represents about concordance and submission. It is evidence for that leaf and edition state, not an independent verification of every comparison it invokes. The 1952 controls report the act *Cum denuo* and the edition’s place in a series, but the complete decree has not been directly inspected. The 1614 book is identified with Paul V’s Roman consolidation; direct endpoint inspection and a later collation together control its outer sequence at different depths. An issuing authority, a printed claim about approval, and a modern scholarly report are three different evidentiary relations to authority.

That distinction prevents a circular argument. One cannot infer an unchanged text because a later edition presents itself within an authorized Roman succession and then use the supposed unchanged text to prove that the succession involved no material editorial history. Normative continuity and textual identity are different propositions. The former may be represented by official or edition-level acts; the latter requires comparison of the actual wording at controlled loci. The current corpus supports a history of identified normative and architectural states, not a formula-level stemma.

The same restraint applies in the opposite direction. Visible chaptering in 1925 is real editorial differentiation, but it does not prove that every word inside the unit changed or that a new pastoral practice immediately followed. A later title number in 1952 is likewise a bibliographic fact before it is anything else. Reorganization may assist use, reflect revision, follow the growth of the book, or answer an editorial decision; choosing among those explanations requires evidence not supplied by the title boundaries alone.

The four artifacts therefore yield a precise historical narrative without yielding an operational one. A reader can follow the movement from bounded princeps unit, to exact continuous nineteenth-century unit, to an explicitly chaptered twentieth-century title, to a later typical-edition location known at lower depth. Nothing in that sequence requires reproducing a formula, describing an alleged sign, or reconstructing what a minister did. The objects being compared are books and their documentary states.

This artifact-level account also identifies the next research action without pretending it has already occurred. Direct control of p. 220 and formula-withholding textual collation at selected loci would deepen the princeps row. A lawful complete 1952 witness would deepen the final row. Collation across those and the intermediate states would create a textual ledger. Local inventories, directives, or contemporaneous records would begin a reception ledger. Each addition would answer a different question; none can be anticipated by expanding the claims of the artifacts already controlled.

7.9 Normative reach is not practical saturation

The Roman Ritual's consolidation had consequences even where direct local-use evidence has not yet been assembled. It established a Roman textual reference point that later printers, authorities, and editors could reproduce, divide, supplement, or revise. That is an institutional fact about the history of the book. It does not mean that every parish possessed the same edition or that every reported intervention followed its rubrics.

A reception history would need to work at several scales. At the Roman level, decrees, typical-edition statements, and official revision records establish normative action. At the regional and diocesan levels, approved rituals, synodal legislation, seminary teaching, and episcopal directives could show how the Roman material entered local governance. At the ministerial level, inventories, correspondence, faculties, and contemporaneous records could show access and authorization. At the case level, a dated dossier would be needed before one could describe what was done or attribute an outcome.

No level can be supplied by a more convenient neighbor. A decree does not prove the contents of a priest's library. Ownership of a book does not prove permission. Permission does not prove that an event occurred as narrated. A case account does not rewrite the normative book. This hierarchy of evidence is why famous stories and memoir-derived claims are unnecessary to the present edition history: they cannot close the bibliographic and juridical questions that Part IV is asking.

The approach also explains why comprehensiveness does not mean reproducing the rite. A complete historical account can identify every relevant edition, authority transition, structural state, translation act, and jurisdictional boundary while omitting operative words and actions. Indeed, that omission forces attention toward the institutional history that formula-centered accounts often neglect.

7.10 What the four states actually show

Read together, the four controls establish differentiation in the history of the book. The 1614 princeps has one bounded section. The 1872 facsimile still shows one continuous unit. The 1925 reset has three chapters within title XI. The 1952 scholarly controls identify title XII within a twelve-title typical edition but do not reach its internal divisions. That is enough to refute the image of one motionless "1614 rite" copied without editorial history until 1998. It is not enough to describe every textual alteration.

The sequence also clarifies the relation between structure and authority. Chaptering can organize material without itself creating new law. A decree can establish a typical edition without proving how a particular local minister used it. A later supplement can possess its own authority without belonging to the princeps. Conversely, age does not confer current authorization. Each claim must be attached to the right object: book, act, office, translation, or local permission.

One statement of the recurring limits

An identified formulary establishes available normative text, not frequency, diagnosis, or efficacy. A ritual book does not confer its own current authorization upon a reader. This study compares titles, boundaries, authority states, and official rationales; it does not reproduce formulas, alleged signs, or a usable procedure.

7.11 The Leonine material is a separate documentary history

The blessing of persons or places and the text associated with Leo XIII cannot be folded backward into the 1614 section merely because later books placed material near one another or because popular accounts call both “exorcism.” The documentary questions are separate: the authority and wording of the original act, subsequent revision, placement in identified editions, and later restriction of use. A formula directed against Satan and the apostate angels is not silently identical with the section concerning an allegedly possessed person.

That distinction becomes juridically consequential in 1985, when the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith addressed unauthorized use of the Leonine formula and assemblies that directly addressed demons. The later act does not rewrite the nineteenth-century textual history; it governs a disciplinary problem in its own time. Documentary sequence thus matters at both ends: a later restriction cannot be projected into 1614, and an older text’s availability cannot be projected into present permission.

The durable historical result is therefore more substantial than a title notice but more modest than a textual genealogy. Roman consolidation placed a distinct section within an official pastoral book. Later controlled states show changes in placement and architecture. Their wording, reception, and current use require their own sources. The history moves forward not by calling everything “the old rite,” but by identifying which book, which act, which structure, and which authority is actually under discussion.

8 Codification, Ministry, and Modern Reform

8.1 Three kinds of norm after codification

The twentieth-century history cannot be told from the ritual book alone. A code governs juridical authorization; a liturgical book supplies an edition and its norms; an act concerning offices or instituted ministries determines who holds those categories. These documents may refer to related activity without answering the same question.

The distinction matters because the word *exorcist* survives across all three settings. It can name a former minor order, a person entrusted with a regionally approved instituted ministry, or a priest given particular and express permission to perform major exorcism. Similar vocabulary does not make the offices legally identical. The historical task is to ask what the identified act did, for whom, and at what date.

8.2 The 1917 Code: an expanded cluster of controls

The 1917 *Codex Iuris Canonici* brought several related matters into universal Latin codification. Canon 1151 required a person exercising exorcistic power received through ordination not to proceed against the possessed without the ordinary's express and particular permission. The ordinary was to grant it only to a priest distinguished by piety, prudence, and integrity of life. The canon also required diligent and prudent investigation before proceeding.

Two adjacent canons prevent canon 1151 from being mistaken for the entire law of exorcism. Canon 1152 concerned the persons over whom legitimate ministers could lawfully use exorcisms, extending beyond Catholics and catechumens. Canon 1153 treated exorcisms embedded in baptism, consecrations, and blessings by referring their ministers to the governing approved rites. The code thus distinguished the extraordinary case governed by particular permission from exorcistic elements already situated within other liturgical acts.

The codified investigation requirement did not turn permission into a diagnosis. It placed a duty of prudent inquiry before the authorized act. Nor did ordination alone satisfy the rule. Canon 1151's reference to a power received through ordination and its separate requirement of particular permission belong together: capacity attached to an ecclesiastical state did not eliminate the ordinary's governance of its licit exercise in this case.

Codification consequently changed the historian's source burden. A ritual edition could no longer be read as though its text exhausted the legal setting. The relevant account needed both the governing code and the identified ritual book. A formula could be present in a book while its use was restricted by law; a canon could reserve an act without supplying its liturgical words. Law and rite interacted without becoming one document.

8.3 From 1917 to 1983: continuity is specific, not total

The 1983 Code, promulgated by John Paul II on 25 January and in force from 27 November 1983, restates the central authorization rule more concisely. Canon 1 limits this code to the Latin Church. Canon 1172 provides that no one may legitimately perform exorcisms over the possessed without particular and express permission from the local ordinary; that permission is to be given only to a priest distinguished by piety, knowledge, prudence, and integrity of life.

Question	1917 controls	1983 control
Permission	Canon 1151 requires express and particular permission from the ordinary.	Canon 1172 requires particular and express permission from the local ordinary.
Qualified recipient	Canon 1151 limits the grant to a priest distinguished by piety, prudence, and integrity of life.	Canon 1172 retains those qualities and expressly adds knowledge.
Investigation	Canon 1151 expressly requires diligent and prudent investigation before proceeding.	Canon 1172 does not reproduce that sentence; discernment is addressed through the ritual and official pastoral controls.
Other subjects and embedded exorcisms	Canons 1152–1153 separately address eligible subjects and exorcisms within other rites.	Canon 1172 is more compressed; other sacramental and liturgical distinctions must be read in their own current sources.

The continuity is therefore real but bounded. Both codes reserve legitimate major exorcism to a suitably qualified priest with a particular grant from competent local authority. They do not use identical verbal

architecture or carry every adjacent 1917 provision into canon 1172. It would be as misleading to claim complete identity as to claim that the reservation disappeared.

The 1983 wording also requires attention to canon 134. Paragraphs 1 and 2 define the generic categories “ordinary” and “local ordinary” and include, within their proper competence, vicars general and episcopal vicars. Paragraph 3 establishes a different rule where a canon expressly assigns executive power to the diocesan bishop: in that case those vicars do not exercise it without a special mandate. Canon 1172 uses the generic term *local ordinary*; it does not name the diocesan bishop in the manner addressed by canon 134 §3.

That is a category-level conclusion, not a decision about an individual case. Territorial or personal competence, the terms, duration, and revocation of a particular grant, and any applicable particular or proper law remain fact-specific. The distinction matters because popular summaries often say “the bishop” as a safe pastoral shorthand. The authentic legal text is more precise about the category of competent authority, while a concrete person should still proceed only through accountable diocesan channels.

As of 27 July 2026, the official Latin web text retained canon 1172’s wording, and the Holy See’s published compilation of authentic interpretations contained no entry for canons 134 or 1172. This is a bounded text-and-register check, not proof that every possible amendment, special law, delegation, or local act has been exhaustively inventoried. It supports the universal rule stated here and no broader fact-specific opinion.

8.4 The two codes compared by legal function

The comparison becomes clearer when organized by function rather than by isolated phrases. Both codes answer who may proceed and whose permission is needed. The 1917 cluster additionally states an investigation duty, treats eligible subjects, and distinguishes exorcisms embedded in other rites. The 1983 canon concentrates the reservation in one provision and leaves the broader liturgical and pastoral framework to the code’s law of sacramentals, the revised ritual, and subsequent official guidance.

This is a change in legal economy. It does not follow that every element not repeated in canon 1172 was repudiated, nor that an older canonical sentence remains independently operative after the new code took force. Historical continuity must instead be traced through the current sources that now bear the relevant function. The current ritual and catechetical guidance preserve careful discernment; canon 1166 situates sacramentals in the Church’s intercession; canon 1172 governs the reserved minister and permission. The functions remain related while their documentary distribution changes.

The difference between validity, liceity, suitability, and diagnosis is also important. Canon 1172 expressly governs legitimate performance and the qualities of the priest to whom permission is given. It is not a medical classification and does not define a test for possession. Nor does the historical comparison in this study adjudicate what would happen in a hypothetical irregular celebration. The source supports the positive legal rule; speculative edge cases would require facts and authorities not present here.

The word “permission” likewise should not be inflated into an office. A particular grant may authorize a qualified priest without creating a permanent ecclesiastical office called diocesan exorcist in every case. The code does not state a universal tenure, job description, territorial title, or public roster. Where a diocese establishes an office, appoints a person, or defines procedures, that is an additional local act whose terms must be checked. Universal law supplies the baseline, not every administrative detail.

Four legal propositions, kept distinct

Canon 1172 identifies a reserved act, a qualified priest, a competent category of local authority, and a particular express grant. It does not by itself create a universal office, prescribe the rite’s words, diagnose a person, or publish the terms of any concrete permission.

8.5 The 1972 break in office history

Paul VI's *Ministeria quaedam*, issued on 15 August 1972 and effective 1 January 1973, marks a decisive break in the institutional history of the Latin minor orders. Its introduction recalls porter, lector, exorcist, and acolyte among the grades formerly called minor orders. Its norms then connect entry into the clerical state with the diaconate, direct that the former minor orders be called ministries, permit ministries to be entrusted to lay faithful, and retain lector and acolyte throughout the Latin Church.

The act separately permits an episcopal conference to request from the Apostolic See other ministries judged necessary or useful in its region, giving porter, exorcist, and catechist as examples. The grammar is important. It provides a route for a conference request; it does not establish all three ministries everywhere, record that any named conference made the request, or show that the Apostolic See approved one. A possibility in universal law is not a completed local act.

The office history and the major-exorcism rule therefore diverge. A person historically ordained to the minor order of exorcist cannot be presumed to have exercised major exorcism. A person entrusted with a hypothetical or approved regional ministry called exorcist would not, by that title alone, receive the priesthood or the particular permission required by canon 1172. And a priest authorized under canon 1172 need not hold a separate instituted ministry by that name. The categories answer different questions.

Francis's *Spiritus Domini* confirms rather than erases this break. The apostolic letter took effect on 10 January 2021 and replaced canon 230 §1 with sex-neutral wording. It retained lector and acolyte as the only instituted ministries named in that paragraph. It did not restore exorcist to the universal list, create a new ministry, or amend canon 1172.

The same title across different institutions

“Exorcist” in an ancient clergy list, a medieval ordinal, the former Latin minor orders, a possible regional instituted ministry, and current major exorcism does not denote one unchanged office. Office-title, ritual function, ordination or institution, and particular authorization must each be proved from the act governing that period.

8.6 The 1998, 1999, and 2004 sequence

The postconciliar revision produced a new documentary sequence rather than a single undifferentiated “1999 event.” The decree dated 22 November 1998 promulgated *De Exorcismis et Supplicationibus Quibusdam*. The Latin typical edition was issued in 1999. The dicastery publicly presented the new rite on 26 January 1999. An emended reprint followed in 2004.

Each date belongs to a different claim. The 1998 date identifies the promulgating decree. The 1999 date identifies the material typical edition. The January presentation supplies the dicastery's public theological and pastoral explanation. The 2004 date identifies an emended reprint with technical-typographical corrections. The sources do not call it a second typical edition. Combining the sequence into “the 1999 rite” may be convenient in casual speech, but it conceals the difference between juridical act, issued volume, public explanation, and textual correction.

The revised volume also differs bibliographically from the comprehensive 1952 *Rituale Romanum*. It is a distinct postconciliar ritual book, not simply a replacement chapter inserted into title XII. That fact makes two opposite claims unsafe. Structural revision does not prove theological rejection of all earlier teaching, while continuity of ecclesial purpose does not prove verbal or rubrical identity.

The exact official presentation situates the revision in Christ's ministry, Scripture, ecclesial prayer, episcopal governance, and prudent discernment. It can establish the dicastery's stated rationale and public description. It cannot establish how often major exorcism occurred, validate a retrospective case narrative, or serve as

the promulgating decree. Documentary genre limits the inference.

The present study does not reproduce the proprietary formularies, list alleged signs, or reduce the book to a sequence that could be imitated. Historical comparison does not require operational disclosure. Promulgation, edition identity, structure, ministerial authority, and stated rationale are enough to explain the institutional transition.

8.7 Reform changed the documentary center of gravity

Before the postconciliar revision, an account could point to the exorcism material within a comprehensive Roman Ritual and then add the governing code. After reform, the documentary center of gravity is distributed across a distinct ritual volume, the 1983 Code, acts governing translation and adaptation, curial competence, territorial editions, and local permissions. The history becomes confused only if those documents are expected to perform one another’s work.

This distribution reveals several kinds of continuity. Juridical continuity appears in the reservation to a qualified priest under local authority. Liturgical continuity appears in the Church’s continued provision of an official rite. Theological continuity appears in the Christological and scriptural account supplied by the official presentation. Pastoral continuity appears in prudent discernment and care for the afflicted person. None of these requires a claim that the 1999 volume reproduces the 1952 title word for word.

Reform also creates several kinds of change. The postconciliar work is a distinct volume rather than the final title of the comprehensive 1952 book. The public documentary sequence distinguishes promulgation, issue, presentation, and emendation. Later universal acts clarify how conferences prepare translations and propose adaptations and which dicastery exercises the Apostolic See’s competence. Territorial implementation produces approved vernacular books with their own dates.

These changes should be described at their own level. “The Church changed the rite” is too coarse if it leaves the reader unable to distinguish a new typical volume from a corrected reprint or a revised preliminary norm. “Nothing changed” is equally inaccurate because continuity of purpose does not erase new architecture, governance, or textual states. Historical accounting improves when the verb names its object: promulgated, issued, presented, emended, translated, approved, confirmed, implemented, or authorized.

8.8 Current governance is a ladder, not one permission

The post-reform framework is easiest to understand as a ladder of actors and acts. At the upper levels, universal law and the Apostolic See govern the rite’s general juridical and liturgical setting. Episcopal conferences prepare and approve territorial translations and proposed adaptations within the applicable norms. Local authority grants the particular permission required for a priest to act. These levels cooperate; none is a substitute for the others.

Actor or instrument	Relevant act	What it does not do
Universal law: CIC 1172, read with 134	Identifies the qualified priest and the local ordinary’s particular and express permission.	It does not publish a formulary, approve a translation, or decide a presented case.
Latin typical book and praenotanda	Supplies the normative liturgical edition and preliminary norms for the Roman Rite.	Possession of the book does not authorize its use or establish a diagnosis.

Actor or instrument	Relevant act	What it does not do
Apostolic See / competent dicastery	Regulates matters reserved to the Apostolic See, prepares or revises typical books, confirms translations, recognizes legitimate adaptations, and oversees sacramental discipline.	It does not replace the conference's approval or issue the local canon 1172 grant merely by exercising institutional competence.
Episcopal conference	Prepares and approves a complete faithful translation; proposes culturally warranted adaptations under the governing norm.	A conference edition or pastoral FAQ is not universal law and does not appoint an exorcist for a diocese.
Local ordinary	Gives the particular and express permission to a suitably qualified priest under canon 1172.	The grant does not authenticate every alleged cause or supersede clinical and safeguarding duties.
Authorized priest and local collaborators	Act only within the book, law, grant, competence, and safeguarding framework applicable to the case.	Office, reputation, possession of a text, or informal request is not the required permission.

Canon 838 belongs to the general law of liturgical competence. The exact 2021 general executory decree implementing its amended form changes the exorcism book's preliminary norm 37. Under the controlled text, an episcopal conference prepares and approves a complete translation faithful to the authentic original and submits it to the Apostolic See for confirmation. If the conference judges adaptations of signs and gestures necessary or useful for the culture and character of the people, those adaptations require the consent and recognition of the Apostolic See.

This norm distinguishes translation from adaptation. It also distinguishes conference approval from Apostolic-See confirmation or recognition. The 2021 decree adjusted the preliminary norm; it did not promulgate a new typical edition, create a new minister, or amend canon 1172. Those negative boundaries follow from the different objects of the acts, not from a claim that the acts are unrelated.

Francis's *Praedicate Evangelium*, effective 5 June 2022, identifies the present institutional competence of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. Articles 88–90 encompass matters reserved to the Apostolic See in regulating and promoting the liturgy, preparing or revising typical books, confirming conference-approved translations, granting recognition to legitimate adaptations, and overseeing sacramental and sacramental discipline.

That curial competence occupies a different rung from local authorization. The dicastery's work on a typical book or translation does not itself appoint a priest in a diocese. Conversely, a local ordinary's permission does not create a typical edition, approve a national translation, or exercise the conference's function. Keeping these acts separate prevents "Church approval" from becoming an imprecise label for legally distinct decisions.

8.9 How a territorial edition comes into view

The governance ladder has both a textual path and a ministerial path. On the textual path, the Apostolic See issues the Latin typical book. A conference prepares and approves a complete translation faithful to the authentic original. The translation is submitted for confirmation. Proposed adaptations of signs and gestures follow the distinct consent-and-recognition route specified in preliminary norm 37. After the requisite acts, a territorial implementation date identifies when the approved edition enters use.

On the ministerial path, universal law identifies the qualified recipient of permission and the competent category of local authority. The local authority then makes a particular act. The authorized priest acts

within the terms of that grant, the governing liturgical book, and the applicable pastoral, safeguarding, civil, and professional boundaries. The two paths converge in practice, but neither produces the other.

Path	Sequence of acts	Historical question answered
Text and edition	Latin typical book → conference preparation and approval → Apostolic-See confirmation; adaptations follow consent and recognition → territorial implementation	Which ecclesial edition governs in this territory, and from when?
Minister and act	Universal reservation → competent local authority → particular express permission to a qualified priest	Who may perform the reserved act in the relevant jurisdiction?
Discernment and care	Diocesan protocol and referral → competent medical, mental-health, pastoral, and safeguarding work → accountable decision and continuing care	How are the person's welfare and the distinct professional and ecclesial questions responsibly addressed?

This schema is explanatory, not procedural. It identifies authorities and documentary relations without giving a reader actions by which to imitate the rite or test a person. It also shows why the phrase “approved exorcism” can mislead. The adjective may refer to the Latin book, a translation, an adaptation, a local minister, or a particular act. Historical prose should say which approval occurred.

8.10 Territorial implementation: the United States example

The United States supplies one controlled example of how the ladder reaches a territorial book. The USCCB reports that the Latin Church bishops approved the English translation of *Exorcisms and Related Supplications* in November 2014, the final text received Holy See confirmation in December 2016, and the edition was implemented on 29 June 2017.

The chronology matters. Conference approval, Holy See confirmation, and territorial implementation are separate acts at separate dates. None is the 1998 promulgation of the Latin rite, and none is the 2004 emended reprint. Together they identify the U.S. English edition's path into use. They do not establish when another territory approved or implemented its own book.

The same USCCB page supplies official U.S. pastoral guidance about diocesan protocol, referral, medical and mental-health consultation, moral-certitude framing, consent where possible, confidentiality, non-solitary ministry, and bounded lay participation. It is authoritative conference guidance for the identified territory. It is not universal legislation, a clinical diagnostic instrument, or a public version of the proprietary rite.

Conference guidance also cannot supply the local permission. A national edition may be duly approved, confirmed, and implemented while canon 1172 still requires a particular decision by competent local authority concerning the priest who may act. The book answers “which territorial liturgical text?”; the local grant answers “which qualified priest may perform the reserved act?”; neither answers the medical question “what condition does this person have?”

The U.S. example makes the division of labor concrete. The bishops' November 2014 vote belongs to conference approval of a translation. The December 2016 act belongs to Holy See confirmation. The June 2017 date belongs to territorial implementation. The FAQ's account of diocesan protocol belongs to pastoral explanation. None of those dates should be substituted for the date of a local permission, and the public page does not disclose the terms of any such grant.

It also illustrates the proper use of conference evidence in a universal history. One territory can show how the general architecture operates without being treated as the template for every country. Its medical

consultation, consent, confidentiality, and participation statements are valuable safeguarding controls in their own setting. They do not prove that every conference uses identical language or that conference guidance has the same juridical character as the code.

8.11 Unauthorized imitation remains outside the ladder

Two doctrinal interventions close a recurrent attempt to bypass these distinctions. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s letter of 29 September 1985 required observance of canon 1172, prohibited the faithful’s use of the Leonine formula against Satan and the apostate angels, and directed ordinaries to prevent assemblies in which persons lacking the requisite power directly addressed demons and sought their identity. The official page URL contains “19850924,” but the Latin heading and *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* citation control the date used here.

The *Instruction on Prayers for Healing* of 2000, article 8, again distinguishes liturgical exorcism from healing services and places the matter under the diocesan bishop. Renaming an event a prayer meeting, deliverance session, or healing ministry does not erase the nature of what participants do. The governing boundary concerns the reserved liturgical act and direct imitation, not the promotional label attached to an assembly.

The 1985 letter also explains why textual access is not authority. A person may possess, translate, copy, or find an old formula without acquiring the power and permission whose absence the letter addresses. Publication history and authorization history meet here but remain distinct: the survival of words explains availability; competent law governs use.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1673, supplies doctrinal and catechetical orientation, not another grant. It distinguishes simple exorcism in baptism from solemn or major exorcism, identifies the authorized priest and episcopal permission, and insists that illness—especially psychological illness—belongs to medical science. Its warning to ascertain that the matter concerns the Evil One rather than illness is a differential caution. It is not a clinical test, an alleged-sign checklist, or a substitute for the ritual norms and canon 1172.

8.12 Synthesis: five objects that must not collapse

The Roman history becomes coherent when five objects remain differentiated. The **book** supplies an edition, text, structure, and preliminary norms. The **law** establishes jurisdiction, competence, and conditions for legitimate action. The **office or ministry** identifies an ecclesial status but does not by itself prove a particular function across centuries. The **translation** is an ecclesially authorized territorial edition produced through its own approval and confirmation path. The **local act** gives a qualified priest the particular permission required in the concrete jurisdiction.

These five objects provide a test for every historical sentence in this part. If the subject is an edition, the evidence should identify the book-state and its controlled structure. If the subject is legitimacy, the evidence should identify the governing law and jurisdiction. If the subject is an office, the evidence should identify the act that created, retained, transformed, or suppressed that category. If the subject is vernacular text, the evidence should identify approval, confirmation, and implementation. If the subject is a named minister, the evidence should identify the competent local act rather than infer authority from reputation or title.

Object	Stable historical identifier	Typical category error
Book	Edition, decree, printing or reprint state, title and controlled locus.	Treating every older Roman book as “the 1614 rite.”

Object	Stable historical identifier	Typical category error
Law	Code, canon, jurisdiction, effective date, and relevant currentness control.	Treating a ritual rubric or conference summary as the whole universal law.
Office or ministry	Instituting, ordaining, retaining, or transforming act in its period.	Assuming that the title <i>exorcist</i> always denotes present major-exorcism authority.
Translation	Conference approval, Apostolic-See confirmation or recognition as applicable, and implementation date.	Treating a vernacular rendering as authorized because it is accurate or publicly available.
Local act	Competent authority, qualified recipient, particular grant, and applicable terms.	Treating possession of a book or a general policy as personal permission.

The matrix also marks where the present public evidence stops. It identifies universal categories and one U.S. territorial chronology, but it does not publish any concrete grant or conclude that one applies to a hypothetical person. It identifies the current dicastery’s institutional competence, but does not infer an unrecorded confirmation or recognition. It identifies the possibility of a conference-requested ministry under *Ministeria quaedam*, but records no request or approval. The gaps remain attached to the specific object rather than becoming a repetitive disclaimer about the whole subject.

This object-by-object approach makes historical accounting cumulative. Acquiring the 1614 page images would deepen the book ledger without altering canon 1172. Locating a particular-law act could deepen one jurisdiction’s law or office ledger without changing the Latin typical edition. A new translation act could change a territorial book’s chronology without rewriting the 1998 decree. Research can therefore expand precisely, preserving what is already controlled while avoiding a wholesale narrative reset.

It also yields a compact rule for current claims: identify the act closest to the proposition. The typical edition controls its own text and structure. Canon law controls universal juridical reservation. The curial constitution controls institutional competence. Conference and Apostolic-See acts control the territorial edition. The local grant controls the named priest’s permission. Official pastoral guidance controls only the process and territory it addresses. Moving outward to a more general document usually loses the precision needed for the claim; moving sideways to a different kind of act changes the question.

8.13 Actor, act, and artifact across the reform sequence

The modern sequence becomes more historically legible when each transition is stated as a relation among an actor, an act, and an artifact. The actor is the authority or body competent for the identified decision. The act is what that actor actually promulgates, issues, approves, confirms, recognizes, implements, or grants. The artifact is the code, typical book, translation, decree, constitution, or local instrument in which the result can be identified. These three terms do not exhaust ecclesial life, but they prevent several distinct histories from being narrated as one anonymous action by “the Church.”

The 1917 codification supplies an initial legal relation. The promulgating authority enacted a universal Latin code, and the 1918 Vatican Polyglot book provides the exact controlled artifact for canons 1151–1153. Within that identified state, canon 1151 joins particular permission, priestly qualification, and prudent investigation; canon 1152 addresses the persons over whom legitimate ministers could employ exorcisms; canon 1153 refers exorcisms embedded in baptism, consecrations, and blessings to the ministers of those rites. The cluster gives the historian a differentiated legal architecture. It does not disclose an individual grant, prove how often the canons were invoked, or turn legal categories into a record of practice.

The 1983 codification establishes a second relation rather than a mere abridgment of the first. John Paul II promulgated the revised Code on 25 January 1983 and ordered it to take force on 27 November. The exact

official canons are the controlling artifacts for present universal Latin law. Canon 1 bounds the Code to the Latin Church. Canon 134 supplies the generic category of local ordinary, while canon 1172 reserves licit exorcism over the possessed to a priest who has that authority's particular and express permission. Canon 1166 situates sacramentals more generally. These texts can be compared by legal function with the 1917 cluster, but the comparison cannot restore provisions that the present canon does not state or determine the scope, duration, revocation, or territorial setting of an uninspected permission.

The difference between the codes is documentary and juridical before it is pastoral. The earlier cluster distributes related matters across three canons; the current Code states the reservation more concisely and places it within its own systematic setting. Continuity can be asserted for the episcopally governed reservation and qualified priestly recipient because the identified texts support it. Total verbal or systematic continuity cannot be inferred. Nor may the historical 1917 provisions be treated as though they silently supplement current law.

The ministry history crosses the codal history without merging into it. Paul VI's *Ministeria quaedam*, issued in 1972 and effective on 1 January 1973, changed the universal Latin arrangement of the former minor orders. It retained lector and acolyte as universal ministries and provided a separate route by which a conference could request other ministries from the Apostolic See, naming exorcist among possible examples. The act is evidence for a change in ministerial categories and for the existence of that request route. It is not evidence that a particular conference made such a request, that the Apostolic See approved one, or that an instituted ministry would supply canon 1172 permission.

Spiritus Domini in 2021 modifies another bounded object. Its operative amendment makes canon 230 §1 sex-neutral while the canon continues to name lector and acolyte. The actor and act can therefore be described exactly: Francis amended the admission rule for the two instituted ministries stated in the canon. The artifact does not create a universal instituted exorcist, restore the former minor-order structure, or alter canon 1172. The history of who may be instituted as lector or acolyte and the history of who may receive a particular major-exorcism permission remain adjacent but distinct.

The liturgical-book sequence adds a third line. A decree dated 22 November 1998 promulgated the revised book; the Latin typical edition was issued in 1999; the competent dicastery publicly presented it in January 1999; and an emended reprint followed in 2004. Each verb identifies a different documentary event. Promulgation gives the act's normative beginning. Issue identifies the published typical artifact. Presentation is an official act of explanation and reception. Emendation identifies a reprint with technical-typographical corrections, not a second typical edition. Combining the dates into "the 1999 reform" may be convenient, but it hides the evidence that allows the states to be distinguished.

The 2021 decree implementing amended canon 838 then acts upon the governance of territorial texts. Its controlled preliminary norm 37 differentiates a conference-approved complete faithful translation submitted for *confirmatio* from proposed adaptations of signs or gestures that follow the distinct consent-and-*recognitio* route. The decree adjusts a preliminary norm governing those acts. It does not issue another typical edition, confer local permission, or appoint a minister. The artifact belongs to the translation-and-adaptation ledger even though it concerns the exorcism book.

Praedicate Evangelium, effective 5 June 2022, identifies the current curial actor at another level. Articles 88–90 assign the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments the relevant Apostolic-See competence over liturgical regulation, typical books, translations, adaptations, and sacramentals. The constitution establishes institutional competence. It does not record that every possible confirmation or recognition occurred, and it does not convert curial competence into the local ordinary's particular act under canon 1172.

The United States chronology shows the territorial relations in a controlled instance. The Latin Church bishops approved the English translation in November 2014; the Holy See confirmed the final text in December 2016; and the edition took effect in U.S. Latin dioceses on 29 June 2017. The conference vote,

Holy See confirmation, and implementation date concern one territorial edition. They do not establish the chronology of another conference, the contents of a diocesan policy, or the existence and terms of a particular permission. The USCCB's public pastoral explanation is a further artifact with a different function: it describes the identified territory's guidance but is neither the universal code nor the proprietary liturgical book.

Historical line	Controlled actor–act–artifact relation	Boundary retained
Codification	Promulgating authority enacts a Latin code; exact canons preserve the legal state.	No inference to individual grants, practice frequency, or an Eastern rule.
Ministry reform	Universal authority changes instituted-ministry categories in identified acts.	No universal exorcist ministry and no canon 1172 permission.
Typical book	Competent authority promulgates, issues, presents, or emends identified book states.	No inference from possession or edition identity to a person's authorization.
Territorial text	Conference approval and Apostolic-See confirmation or recognition produce an edition for an identified territory.	No universal implementation date or local appointment.
Local authorization	Competent local authority gives a particular and express grant to a qualified priest.	No diagnosis, ritual efficacy finding, or transfer of the grant to another person.

Seen together, the sequence is not a ladder in which every later act cancels the earlier history. Codal revision changes the governing legal artifact. Ministerial reform changes the categories it addresses. Liturgical revision creates a new typical-book state. Translation governance differentiates the acts needed for territorial texts. Curial reform identifies the competent dicastery. Local authorization remains a particular decision within the universal reservation. The lines meet in ecclesial practice, but historical clarity depends on showing which line each document controls.

This accounting also prevents authority from being inferred backward from an artifact's survival. A nineteenth- or twentieth-century book may be bibliographically important without governing present use. An electronic copy of a current decree may reproduce an official act without giving its reader the competence named in it. A confirmed territorial edition may be the proper book for a place while remaining unusable by someone who lacks the required local permission. Documentary access is evidence for historical study; it is not an authorization mechanism.

Nor may authority be inferred sideways. A conference can approve a translation but cannot thereby perform the local ordinary's act for every priest. A dicastery can exercise Apostolic-See competence over a typical book without making the conference's vote. A local ordinary can grant permission without revising the typical edition or universal code. A priest can receive a particular grant without acquiring competence to diagnose a clinical condition. The limits are consequences of the positive allocation of acts, not merely cautions added from outside the legal history.

The actor–act–artifact method finally gives reform a measured historical meaning. It shows real continuity where identified legal and theological relations persist, and real change where books, categories, jurisdictions, or competencies are revised. It avoids both the claim that a timeless ceremony passed unchanged through every document and the claim that a new edition abolished every earlier continuity. Most importantly, it keeps the account non-operational: the reader learns how authoritative documentary states relate without receiving formulas, alleged signs, a diagnostic test, or a sequence for performing the reserved act.

That rule keeps the history broad without becoming vague. It accommodates Roman publication, codification,

ministerial reform, liturgical revision, translation governance, territorial reception, and local authorization in one account. At the same time, it prevents a reader from mistaking institutional complexity for contradiction. Different authorities appear because different objects are being governed.

This differentiation explains both continuity and reform. The 1917 and 1983 codes preserve an episcopally governed reservation while differing in their verbal and systematic detail. *Ministeria quaedam* ends the old universal minor-order arrangement without denying the reserved major rite. *Spiritus Domini* changes access to lector and acolyte without creating an exorcist ministry. The 1998 decree, 1999 edition, 2004 emended reprint, and 2021 preliminary-norm adjustment form a documentary sequence without becoming one event. Current curial, conference, and local competencies cooperate without merging.

It follows that no single artifact can answer every modern question. An old book does not establish current permission. A current canon does not reproduce the rite. A ministry title does not authorize major exorcism. A confirmed translation does not appoint its user. A local grant does not diagnose the person or validate an alleged outcome. Historical and present claims become more precise, not less Catholic, when each is assigned to the authority that can actually support it.

Modern reform is therefore neither abolition nor simple survival. It is a rearticulation through differentiated books, laws, offices, translations, and local acts. The enduring elements—ecclesial prayer, scriptural orientation, prudent discernment, a qualified priest, and accountable authority—are visible only when continuity is stated at the right level. Verbal identity, frequency, diagnosis, efficacy, and present authority each require separate proof.

9 Loudun: A Case in Documents, Institutions, and Reception

Loudun is useful here not because it offers a retrospective test for possession, but because it exposes how many different documentary acts can accumulate around one contested event. A royal commission produced a register extract. A defense *factum* spoke from an adversarial position. Royal commissioners issued a criminal judgment. Clerics and pamphleteers published arguments about what had occurred and why their own interpretation should be believed. After the judgment, further pamphlets continued to make the affair public. Later editors gathered letters, proceedings, spiritual memoirs, and medical reinterpretations into new documentary arrangements. Those objects do not say the same thing, and their coexistence does not make them independent corroboration.

The historical question is therefore deliberately narrow: what does the surviving documentary plurality reveal about authority, controversy, and the making of a public case? This chapter does not decide whether any person was possessed, whether a retrospective diagnosis fits, whether Urbain Grandier was guilty, or whether any ritual act was efficacious. It does not reproduce formulas, alleged signs, or sensational episodes. Its subject is the work performed by documents: commissioning, pleading, judging, defending, publishing, remembering, and reclassifying.

9.1 A dossier is not a single story

The archive cannot responsibly be flattened into a chronology in which every dated paper verifies the event narrated by the next. At minimum, five documentary levels must remain separate.

First, an institutional act establishes that an authorized body acted within the terms printed or recorded. The royal commission and its register extract belong here. Second, a pleading establishes the position taken for a party. Grandier's twelve-page *Factum* belongs to this adversarial class; its survival proves that a defense voice entered print, not that every defense claim was accepted or true. Third, the printed judgment of 18 August 1634 establishes what the royal commissioners adjudged and ordered. It is neither a

complete transcript nor an ecclesiastical decree. Fourth, a contemporary partisan account establishes how an author sought to legitimate or contest the proceedings. Fifth, a later pamphlet or documentary edition establishes an act of reception: it shows what later readers were invited to see, not what an earlier witness independently observed.

This layered reading changes the grammar of the account. The historian says that a commission was constituted, a defense was printed, commissioners adjudged, and a partisan author alleged. The historian does not convert those verbs into “the case proved.” A judgment is conclusive evidence that a judgment occurred in its stated form; it is not self-authenticating evidence for every factual premise on which it proceeded. A defense is evidence that claims were resisted; it is not an acquittal. A pamphlet’s confidence is a feature of its rhetoric, not a measurement of its reliability.

The surviving BnF manuscript catalogue reinforces this need for separation. Its composite Dupuy 641 dossier locates, among other objects, a 1621 complaint, a 1630 procedural piece, 1632 convent-inspection minutes, a physicians’ report, observations from the same period, Tranquille’s later printed *Véritable relation*, defense materials, and a report dated 1639. The catalogue identifies that variety and supplies exact folio routes; it does not by itself verify the wording of every item. Even at the level of inventory, however, the case appears not as one testimony multiplied many times but as a collection of civil, medical, ecclesiastical, defensive, polemical, and later reporting genres.

9.2 Royal process and the limits of a printed judgment

The *Extraict des registres de la commission ordonnée par le Roy* names its institutional location in its title. It is an extract from the registers of a commission ordered by the king for the criminal proceeding against Grandier and alleged accomplices. The identified 1634 printing runs to twenty-five pages and bears the signature attribution Nozay. Those bibliographic facts make it a closer procedural witness than a later retelling. They do not make it the entire evidentiary file, a verbatim record of every hearing, or a neutral account of disputed conduct.

That distinction matters because the criminal process and ecclesiastical opinions intersected without becoming the same jurisdictional act. The royal commissions of late 1633 and July 1634 were acts of the Crown. Ecclesiastical actors, theological opinions, clerical narratives, and reported medical observations could enter the process as material cited or evaluated by the commissioners. Their presence did not transform the resulting criminal judgment into an act of the Church. Conversely, a bishop’s judgment about the religious interpretation of reported events would not itself constitute a royal criminal sentence.

The seven-page *Arest de condemnation de mort* is the strongest exact control for the final adjudicative act. Its identified Paris printing by Estienne Hébert and Jacques Poullard is dated at its close on 18 August 1634. The act records the commissioners’ condemnation and sentence. It therefore controls the proposition that the royal tribunal adjudged Grandier under the categories and allegations stated in that printing. It does not control the complete path by which each item of evidence entered the tribunal, preserve every objection, or establish the truth of its findings outside the legal act itself.

The verb “condemned” must consequently keep its institutional subject: royal commissioners condemned Grandier. “The Church condemned Grandier” would erase the civil character of the act and merge several ecclesiastical voices into a single juridical agent. “Loudun proved possession” would go further still, treating an early-modern judgment as though it supplied a controlled assay for an invisible cause. Neither compression is historically acceptable.

The judgment’s brevity also prevents an easy substitute for the missing archive. Seven printed pages can state an outcome, characterize charges, and order consequences without reproducing the full proceeding. The exact object is therefore simultaneously indispensable and insufficient: indispensable for saying what the commissioners did, insufficient for reconstructing every fact, witness dependency, or contested procedural

choice. This is not a defect repaired by adding more narrative confidence. It is the evidence ceiling under which the case must be written.

9.3 Defense is evidence even when it does not prevail

The 1634 *Factum pour maistre Urbain Grandier* occupies a different documentary position. Its title identifies Grandier's clerical offices and announces a defense-side pleading. The controlled BnF item is twelve pages, anonymous as to printer and place. Because its internal wording has not been image-collated for this study, it is used here only for whole-document identity, genre, and adversarial presence.

That limited use still corrects a common narrative distortion. A history built only from the judgment and prosecution-aligned pamphlets can make the outcome seem to have emerged from an uncontested body of evidence. The existence of a printed *factum* shows instead that readers could encounter a document explicitly organized for Grandier's defense. It does not tell us, without closer collation, which arguments were answered, ignored, preserved accurately, or later detached from their original context. It does establish that disagreement belongs inside the documentary history rather than being added only as a modern objection.

Later edited collections locate further defensive pieces alongside prosecution and observation materials. Such catalog and edition routes are valuable because they identify where comparison should proceed. They remain routes rather than automatic verification. A nineteenth-century editor may modernize spelling, silently select documents, inherit an earlier misattribution, or arrange pieces to serve a new thesis. A defensive text quoted by that editor must still be traced to the named witness before its exact wording carries a consequential claim.

This discipline also prevents symmetrical overreach. It would be wrong to treat the final sentence as proof of every allegation. It would be equally wrong to treat the mere existence of a defense as proof that every charge was fabricated. Adversarial documents show that claims were made under opposed interests. The historian's next work is provenance, dependency, and claim-by-claim comparison, not selection of the preferred voice as a complete story.

9.4 Tranquille's pamphlet and advocacy disguised as completeness

Tranquille de Saint-Remi's *Véritable relation des justes procédures* provides a particularly instructive contemporary control because its limitations appear within the pamphlet itself. Its title promises a true account of just procedures concerning both the Ursulines and Grandier's trial. The pamphlet opens its advocacy around two linked questions: how the reported condition should be understood and whether Grandier caused it. It then argues against explanations of fraud and presents allegations offered as support for the prosecution-aligned reading.

The important historical fact is not whether those allegations satisfy a modern reader. It is how the author connects an interpretation of reported events to a defense of procedure. The pamphlet does not merely narrate. It seeks to establish the legitimacy of judges, clerical actors, and the outcome by presenting resistance to their interpretation as unreasonable. Claims about concealed obedience, knowledge, languages, and attestations function in that argumentative structure. They are reported claims within advocacy, not independently verified observations adopted by this study.

At scan page 23, Tranquille supplies the decisive internal ceiling: he does not reproduce the whole trial and instead offers general marks and conjectures in support of Laubardemont and the judges. That admission defeats any use of the pamphlet as a substitute transcript. It also shows why the word *relation* cannot be allowed to decide genre by itself. The author has selected and arranged material to legitimate an outcome while expressly withholding the complete proceeding.

The final pages intensify rather than cure the problem. Their hostile account of torture and execution reads behavior through the presumption that guilt has already been established. What the narrative presents as further confirmation is therefore partly circular: an interpretation formed by the judgment is applied to conduct surrounding the judgment and returned as proof of the same conclusion. The text is valuable evidence for prosecution rhetoric and the moral world of its defense. It cannot establish procedural fairness, Grandier's agency in the reported events, or a supernatural cause.

Reading Tranquille alongside the judgment and the defense *factum* produces a more exact account than paraphrasing any one of them. The judgment records adjudication. The *factum* records adversarial defense. Tranquille records an effort to persuade the public that the proceedings and their interpretation were just. Their relationship is documentary and conflictual; it is not threefold corroboration.

9.5 Ecclesiastical voices were plural, mediated, and bounded

The ecclesiastical record also resists compression. A Paris consultation of 11 February 1633, preserved in a modern edited witness, records four theologians responding to supplied medical reports and minutes rather than claiming personal observation. Their opinion distinguished between persons about whom they gave a conclusion and others for whom they suspended formal judgment while expressing an inclination. This was a mediated theological consultation requested in an episcopal context. It was not a diocesan decree, a royal judgment, or a finding against Grandier.

A declaration attributed to Henri-Louis Chasteigner de La Rocheposay, bishop of Poitiers, and dated at Dissay on 10 August 1634, records a different institutional act. In the modern edited extract, the bishop describes earlier delegation, consultation, an extended period of attendance, and his religious judgment concerning the women. The extract does not name Grandier as the cause or adjudge his criminal guilt. The distinction is consequential: even an episcopal conclusion concerning the reported condition cannot silently become the commissioners' conclusion concerning criminal responsibility.

The record of Henri de Sourdis, archbishop of Bordeaux, adds another limit. Modern scholarship identifies a metropolitan order of 27 December 1632 that regulated or restricted the first phase of the exorcisms. Because the direct text has not been acquired here, its exact provisions are not reconstructed. Its safe historical force is narrower but still important: the ecclesiastical history included regulatory intervention and was not one uninterrupted line of institutional assent.

These three objects—a mediated theological consultation, a diocesan declaration, and a metropolitan regulatory act known through scholarship—do not add up to an undifferentiated “Church position.” They differ in author, competence, evidence base, date, and relation to the criminal process. Their plurality is not an embarrassment to be harmonized. It is part of what the case establishes about early-modern authority: several actors could speak religiously about the same controversy without performing the same juridical act.

9.6 From proceeding to public event

The case did not end as a documentary phenomenon with the judgment. A prosecution-side *Récit véritable* appeared in 1634. The controlled BnF item is a fifteen-page Paris printing by Pierre Targa. Its exact internal claims have not been image-collated here, so the publication is retained only as evidence that an aligned narrative entered print in the year of the judgment. Its title's promise of a “true account” is a rhetorical claim, not a source classification.

A distinct 1635 pamphlet, *Relation de la sortie du demon Balam*, shows continued narration after Grandier's death. It is used here only as a whole-artifact reception witness. Its existence establishes that public print continued to organize later reported exorcisms into a named and marketable event. It does not retroactively corroborate the commissioners' findings, prove the reality of its narrated cause, or establish

that the reported action produced the claimed result.

Chronology alone cannot make these pamphlets independent. A 1635 account may depend on categories, names, authorities, and expectations already stabilized by 1634 prosecution print. Repetition after the judgment can show the success of a public frame rather than the arrival of new evidence. The proper research question is therefore genealogical: which earlier documents does a later text quote, summarize, presume, or rewrite? Until that dependency is mapped, two pamphlets remain two publications, not two witnesses to every reported event.

The public dimension also changes what survival means. Judicial and ecclesiastical records survive unevenly, while polemical print was designed to circulate. A plentiful pamphlet record may consequently reveal what was publishable and persuasive more clearly than what occurred behind institutional doors. The imbalance must not be mistaken for a vote in which the most reprinted position wins.

9.7 A dependency map changes the apparent weight of evidence

The safest way to compare this corpus is to draw its dependencies before counting its assertions. The commissioners' judgment, for example, may summarize or presuppose material supplied by clerical actors, theologians, physicians, and officers. A pamphleteer may then invoke the judgment while also repeating the same earlier reports. A nineteenth-century editor may print both the pamphlet and an extract from the judgment. Four visible texts can thus rest on one report, one institutional decision, or one chain of copying.

Dependency does not make a document useless. It changes the question the document can answer. If Tranquille follows the prosecution's categories, his pamphlet remains direct evidence that those categories were defended in public. It does not become a second observation of everything alleged in the proceeding. If a later pamphlet inherits names and narrative structures from Tranquille or another aligned publication, it witnesses the circulation of that structure. It does not add another independent witness to the event behind it.

The defense materials require the same analysis. Several later collections may preserve or excerpt a defense claim, but the number of editions does not multiply the underlying pleading. A later editor's heading or connective summary may also alter how a detached excerpt is read. Comparison must therefore distinguish the seventeenth-century act, the manuscript or printing that transmits it, and each later editorial frame.

Silence likewise has only bounded force. An abbreviated judgment need not rehearse every objection. A partisan pamphlet need not disclose material unhelpful to its purpose. A catalogue description cannot be expected to summarize a document's entire argument. Silence becomes consequential only when the genre and purpose give reason to expect the missing statement. Otherwise, absence in one object is a research question rather than a refutation.

This dependency map explains why the present account does not narrate a minute-by-minute case. The sources presently control institutional identities, documentary genres, selected arguments, and a final adjudicative act. They do not supply a complete, independently collated trial file. A detailed sequence of reported manifestations, examinations, statements, and ritual sessions would therefore appear more precise than its evidence. Omitting that sequence is not withholding an established history; it is refusing to convert related print acts into a synthetic transcript that no inspected source contains.

9.8 Person, office, and allegation must remain distinct

The dossier's ethical boundary is also a historical one. Grandier appears in these documents as priest, curé, canon, accused person, defended party, and condemned person. Those are not synonyms. His offices are historical identifiers. An accusation describes a procedural position. The printed sentence describes the

tribunal's act and its legal consequence. None of these labels authorizes a modern writer to treat every hostile allegation as a settled biographical fact.

The Ursuline women present a parallel problem. Prosecution print, theological consultation, episcopal declaration, later spiritual writing, and modern retelling assign them different documentary roles. They may appear as religious subjects, reported sufferers, sources of attributed speech, participants in public events, or authors and objects of later reception. Reducing them to "the possessed" adopts a contested conclusion as their identity and allows the most sensational source category to dominate all others.

The same restraint applies to clerics, physicians, and officials. A physician named in a proceeding may be reporting an observation, endorsing an interpretation supplied by others, or appearing only through a later summary. An exorcist's pamphlet may defend his conduct rather than preserve neutral minutes. An officer's signature authenticates an institutional act within its documentary setting; it does not make that officer an eyewitness to every premise stated in it.

This separation protects the reader from two tempting retrospective trials. One repeats the commissioners' conclusions as though modern history merely ratified them. The other announces a modern diagnosis or theory of fraud as though a sparse early-modern dossier could satisfy contemporary clinical or forensic standards. Both approaches claim more jurisdiction than their evidence possesses. A historian can identify coercion, punishment, rhetoric, institutional conflict, and documentary asymmetry without pretending to conduct a new criminal, medical, or ecclesiastical adjudication.

For that reason, this chapter names persons only where documentary roles make the names necessary. It does not inventory alleged utterances, bodily phenomena, sexualized descriptions, or names assigned to spirits. Such details would add spectacle without increasing control over the historical question. The consequential history lies instead in who had power to issue an act, whose position entered print, what an author admitted omitting, how later texts depended on earlier ones, and how subsequent editors changed the questions asked of the case.

9.9 Later editors made new Louduns

Nineteenth-century documentary editors inherited this heterogeneous record and arranged it for new questions. Alfred Barbier's 1886 study of Jean II d'Armagnac and Grandier separates a historical essay, a substantial body of letters, and supporting documents. Its correspondence opens a route into patronage and political context that is not dependent on reported possession phenomena. Its supporting dossier includes, at printed page 168, a 1625 episcopal authorization concerning the Ursuline foundation. The edition is a public-domain documentary guide, but its transcriptions remain nineteenth-century editorial acts requiring comparison with named originals before exact quotation.

Gabriel Legué's 1880 collection similarly shaped access through documents and facsimiles. Its medical and psychological synthesis belongs to the intellectual world of its editor; it cannot be projected backward as though a seventeenth-century clinician had issued a modern diagnosis. The documentary materials may lead to earlier witnesses, while the arrangement itself documents a later effort to make Loudun intelligible through historical and medical categories.

Other editions transmitted first-person and spiritual strands associated with Jeanne des Anges and Jean-Joseph Surin. These strands matter to reception because the affair became material for self-writing, spiritual interpretation, and later editorial reconstruction. They do not operate as delayed, independent testimony to every claim made during the criminal process. Manuscript date, copying history, editorial intervention, and the retrospective purposes of autobiography all govern what such texts can establish.

Modern scholarship has made the documentary plurality itself central, placing judicial history, public performance, literature, Surin, Jeanne, and primary sources in distinguishable frames. That scholarship is a guide to provenance and dependency, not a new authority capable of changing a partisan pamphlet into

neutral minutes. Its protected wording is not reproduced here.

Each editorial generation thus made a new Loudun by selecting and arranging the surviving materials. Seventeenth-century advocacy defended or contested persons and proceedings. Spiritual reception refigured the affair through interior experience and religious meaning. Nineteenth-century editors assembled documentary and medical histories. Modern historians reconstructed the relations among politics, institutions, language, and belief. These Louduns are historically connected, but they are not interchangeable.

9.10 What this case establishes

Loudun establishes, at the level controlled here, that a famous case is not a unit of evidence. It is a changing relation among acts, genres, institutions, and receptions. The royal commission's extract, Grandier's defense *factum*, the commissioners' final judgment, Tranquille's explicit advocacy, later pamphlet circulation, and documentary editing each answer a different question.

The case also demonstrates why authority and truth cannot be collapsed. Royal commissioners possessed authority to issue their judgment within the historical process; that fact does not give their printing the evidentiary properties of a complete archive. Ecclesiastical actors could offer consultations, declarations, restrictions, and interpretations without constituting one juridical speaker. A pamphleteer could defend the justice of the proceeding while admitting that he did not print it in full. A later editor could enlarge the accessible dossier while imposing a new explanatory frame.

Finally, the case supplies a practical rule for the rest of this history: preserve the verb of every source. A witness reports; a pleader argues; a theologian opines; a bishop declares or regulates; commissioners adjudge; a pamphleteer persuades; an editor selects; a historian reconstructs. None of those verbs is "proves possession." Keeping them distinct permits Loudun to carry substantial historical weight without exploiting the persons involved or pretending that documentary survival can settle an invisible cause.

It also supplies a representative test for the larger history told in this book. Earlier chapters distinguish scriptural narrative from later ritual, apologetic report from initiation, office from charism, manuscript placement from performed practice, and a liturgical book from current authorization. Loudun applies the same discipline to a much denser early-modern controversy. The presence of familiar vocabulary cannot make unlike documents identical. A religious interpretation, a civil commission, a defense pleading, a criminal sentence, and a printed apology remain different acts even when they concern the same persons and borrow language from one another.

The case therefore contributes more than a cautionary footnote. It shows how institutional plurality becomes historical content. Authority was distributed among metropolitan and diocesan actors, consulted theologians, royal commissioners, officers, clerical participants, and printers. Their acts could intersect, conflict, and become inputs to later acts without merging into one authority. The resulting record is not incoherent because it lacks a single speaker. Its plurality is precisely what must be explained.

Loudun also clarifies what "historical accounting" should mean in a work on exorcism. It does not mean collecting the most vivid incidents from famous stories. It means accounting for documentary production: who commissioned a record, under which competence, for what audience, through which edition, and with what omissions. It means accounting for coercive consequences without turning them into spectacle. It means accounting for the later editors whose selection often determines what a modern reader mistakes for the archive itself.

This method leaves genuine losses visible. The exact inspected corpus does not include a complete trial transcript, a fully collated diocesan register, or a complete convent archive. Several ecclesiastical acts remain available only through edited witnesses or modern scholarly description. The three Gallica items bound at catalogue level still require internal image inspection before their wording can support narrower propositions. These are not minor technical qualifications. They identify which future acquisitions could

change the narrative and which conclusions must remain unavailable.

Accordingly, Loudun is admitted as one source-controlled case, not as a model for all exorcism history. No frequency, prevalence, institutional norm, or typical outcome is inferred from it. Its representative value lies in method: it demonstrates how a case becomes public through interacting documents and how later reception can magnify a story without independently verifying its premises. That limited conclusion is substantial enough to warrant inclusion and narrow enough to remain honest.

10 Seven Cross-Period Tests: What Actually Continues?

The preceding history is broad by necessity, but breadth can conceal a new error. Once biblical narratives, apologetic claims, initiatory prayers, offices, manuscript books, Roman editions, codes, current law, clinical classification, and safeguarding sources occupy one volume, their mere proximity can look like a single tradition moving intact through time. The opposite error is just as easy: every change of word, book, or authority can be treated as rupture.

A responsible synthesis must name the object whose continuity or change is being claimed. Seven tests do that work: recipient, act, minister, book, authority, evidence, and care. They do not form a ritual sequence and must not be used as an intake checklist. They are historical controls for comparing unlike sources.

10.1 Test one: who is the recipient represented by the source?

Recipient identity is the fastest way to expose false continuity. Mark's restored man, the child in the disputed textual history of Mark 9, a catechumen renouncing Satan, a person described by a medieval rubric as *energumenus*, a candidate admitted to an ecclesiastical grade, a church or object named in a blessing, and the person contemplated by canon 1172 are not one documentary subject.

The biblical narratives represent persons within plots of proclamation, conflict, restoration, discipleship, and the arrival of God's reign. They do not classify a population through a later canonical category. Initiatory sources address candidates for incorporation into the Church. Their exorcistic language belongs to conversion and Baptism and does not imply that every catechumen is being diagnosed as possessed. Ordination witnesses address candidates for ministry rather than afflicted recipients. Medieval sacramentaries and pontificals may place several recipient classes in one book, but book proximity does not erase the rubrical difference.

The 1614 Roman unit and its successors provide a more bounded documentary setting for a person represented as afflicted in the manner contemplated by that book. Current Latin law is narrower still in juridical function: canon 1172 governs exorcisms *in obsessos*, and the applicable ritual and territorial implementation supply further controls. Neither the canon nor the book retrospectively renames every ancient or medieval recipient.

This test yields a positive continuity and a decisive discontinuity. Across many sources, a human being is represented as needing divine help and ecclesial care. The source-specific identity of that person changes substantially. Human dignity can continue without one unchanged recipient category.

10.2 Test two: what act does the source represent?

The word family "exorcism" can name or neighbor very different acts: Christ's command in a Gospel narrative, an apologist's public challenge, renunciation before Baptism, prayer over a catechumen, an ordination act, a blessing, prayer over an afflicted person, a legal reservation, or a modern liturgical sacramental. Similar vocabulary is evidence for comparison, not a permission to merge.

Genre supplies the first control. Narrative tells what a narrator represents as occurring and why it matters in the plot. Apology argues before an audience and may use public confidence as part of persuasion. A church order or sacramentary supplies normative or reconstructed liturgical material. An ordinal represents admission to a grade. A canon regulates conduct. A ritual book supplies an authorized liturgical form. A clinical manual classifies presentations for diagnosis and care within medicine. A safeguarding source names harms and duties within a territorial civil or professional setting.

The historical continuity lies at a higher level than one procedure: Christians pray to God, confess Christ's victory, reject magic, and order public ministry within the Church. The acts by which those convictions are expressed are not invariant. This distinction explains why the present study can be comprehensive without reproducing formulas. Formula recovery would deepen a textual history; it would not by itself settle identity, authority, use, efficacy, or lawful present action.

10.3 Test three: who is the minister, and what makes the act theirs?

Ministerial vocabulary is especially vulnerable to anachronism. The Gospels represent Jesus' authority and delegated mission. Apologists sometimes stress ordinary Christians rather than a reserved professional class. Eusebius' quotation of Cornelius names exorcists among Roman personnel but gives a combined numerical total and does not define their duties. Laodicea 26 restricts unauthorized persons in its own disciplinary setting. The *Apostolic Constitutions* distinguishes charismatic action from an ordination conferred for that purpose. Western ordinals represent admission to the exorcist grade; initiatory books assign actions according to their own ritual order.

Those pieces cannot be arranged as a simple career ladder ending in the modern diocesan exorcist. The 1972 reform itself proves that office history changed: *Ministeria quaedam* suppressed the former minor-order structure as such, retained lector and acolyte as universal instituted ministries, and treated any additional regional ministry as a separate conference request to the Apostolic See. The 2021 amendment of canon 230 §1 changed eligibility for the named instituted ministries; it did not create a universal ministry of exorcist.

Canon 1172 supplies the governing Latin rule for the act it names: no one may lawfully pronounce exorcisms over the possessed without the local ordinary's particular and express permission, granted only to a priest possessing the stated qualities. This is a permission rule, not a historical definition of every exorcist and not proof that every diocese constitutes a permanent office. U.S. implementation may describe appointment by a diocesan bishop on a stable or case-specific basis; that is a territorial implementation and must not be substituted silently for the exact universal wording.

The durable thread is accountable ministry rather than a stable job description. Claims to spiritual power do not self-authenticate. The institutional form of accountability, the minister named, and the act reserved change across sources.

10.4 Test four: what kind of book or artifact carries the evidence?

Books create powerful optical illusions. A carefully copied manuscript can look universally normative. A printed typical edition can look universally used. A title repeated across editions can look textually motionless. A modern translation can look like the universal Latin act. Artifact criticism breaks those illusions.

The Gellone and Kraków manuscripts show placement and differentiated units in named books. They do not establish frequency, geographical saturation, or one archetypal practice. Vogel–Elze's PRG edition and the Vendôme manuscript permit a bounded edition-to-manuscript comparison; they do not turn every pontifical into a witness to the same local use. Parker MS 79 provides a late-medieval English ordinal comparison, not representative statistics for England or the West.

The Roman edition sequence demonstrates real continuity and change at a different scale. Direct page controls establish the 1614 unit through its terminal page; the next page's title remains independently located but was not recovered as a usable exact image in the present 29 July 2026 recheck. The 1872 state remains continuous in architecture; the 1925 edition visibly divides title XI into chapters; the 1952 typical-edition location is known at lower textual depth; official acts distinguish the 1998 decree, 1999 physical issue, and 2004 emended reprint. The history is neither one unchanged book nor a blank before the latest edition.

Each artifact answers only the question its bytes and identity can bear. Title, page boundary, chapter architecture, promulgating act, translation approval, confirmation, and territorial implementation are separate facts. They should remain separate even when a reader eventually encounters them in one bound volume.

10.5 Test five: what authority does the source possess?

Authority is not a ladder on which every later source simply outranks every earlier one. It is competence related to a question. Scripture normatively proclaims the canonical witness but does not contain the text of canon 1172. A father or medieval theologian may be a major reception witness without legislating current discipline. A typical liturgical book regulates its act without supplying clinical diagnosis. The Latin Code governs the Latin Church and does not become Eastern common law. A conference page establishes identified territorial implementation and guidance, not universal law. WHO classification governs clinical description within professional scope and does not adjudicate a preternatural cause. Civil safeguarding guidance identifies harms and duties in its jurisdiction without settling Catholic demonology.

This authority test also exposes false appeals to “the Church.” The Catechism, a dicastery decree, a Code canon, a conference FAQ, an exorcist's memoir, and a diocesan practice are not interchangeable speakers. A claim must name the authority, jurisdiction, date, and kind of act. The current Latin rule remains the 1983 Code as amended through the stated as-of date; the official pages checked on 29 July 2026 retain canons 1 and 1172 in the form used here. The official published authentic-interpretations register checked for this study still supplies no entry for canon 1172. That negative register check is bounded and does not replace fact-specific legal research.

Historical age does not create present authority, and present authority does not alter historical evidence. The 1614 book's age cannot authorize private use; canon 1172 cannot be projected backward as the legal grammar of the Gospels or outward as the law of an Eastern Catholic Church.

10.6 Test six: what would count as evidence for practice or efficacy?

Normative evidence is abundant because institutions preserve books and acts. Practice evidence is thinner and more vulnerable. A rubric establishes an available or prescribed form. An ordinal establishes a represented admission. A canon establishes regulation. None counts actual events or outcomes. Ownership does not prove use; use does not prove authorization; authorization does not prove the alleged cause; a narrated outcome does not prove efficacy.

The Loudun module shows why named cases require dependency analysis. Royal process, defense writing, polemical pamphlet, ecclesiastical voice, later edition, and cultural retelling may concern the same events while performing different argumentative work. Their multiplication is not automatic corroboration. The controlled dossier can establish acts, allegations, institutional conflict, and reception. It cannot establish possession, diagnosis, efficacy, guilt beyond the bounded legal record, or the truth of every narrated incident.

A representative history of practice would require archival series rather than a chain of famous stories: diocesan faculties and correspondence, inventories, visitation or seminary records, dated case files with

lawful access, and evidence about preservation bias. Comparative efficacy would require defined outcomes, denominators, follow-up, and controls no ritual book or memoir supplies. The present study therefore refuses prevalence and success rates not because the questions are unimportant, but because the controlled corpus is not designed to answer them.

The same discipline applies to clinical evidence. The WHO 2024 CDDR describes possession-trance disorder and relevant differentials within a diagnostic framework. It neither supplies a ritual criterion nor proves or disproves a spiritual cause. A clinical workup can identify, treat, or exclude conditions within medicine; an unexplained remainder is not thereby converted into positive evidence of possession.

10.7 Test seven: what form of care remains obligatory under uncertainty?

The final test is historical, theological, and moral. Sources differ sharply about recipient, act, minister, and authority, but uncertainty never converts a person into an experiment. The U.S. conference material checked again on 29 July 2026 continues to emphasize authorization, professional evaluation, consent where possible, confidentiality, cultural attention, and avoidance of isolated ministry. Those statements are U.S. guidance and implementation, not one universal civil or clinical protocol.

The WHO control retains the clinical boundary used in this study. The 2026 Crown Prosecution Service guidance remains a distinct England-and-Wales prosecution and safeguarding control: it recognizes spiritual or ritualistic abuse linked to accusations involving witchcraft, spirit possession, or demonic influence. It does not establish Catholic prevalence. It does establish that religious interpretation can become a vehicle of coercion or harm and that good intention is not a safeguarding defense.

Care therefore does not wait for metaphysical agreement. Immediate danger requires the appropriate emergency or protective response. Medical, neurological, psychiatric, sleep, substance, trauma, and cultural differentials remain within competent professional assessment. Prescribed treatment should not be stopped on a minister’s instruction. Consent is ongoing; a person with capacity may refuse or withdraw from a non-emergency religious inquiry or rite, and refusal must not be renamed spiritual resistance. Privacy does not excuse concealment of abuse or override lawful protective disclosure.

Ordinary Catholic care likewise continues whether or not a reserved rite is authorized: prayer addressed to God, sacramental life, material assistance, truthful listening, and accountable pastoral accompaniment. The historical continuity most worth preserving is therefore not dramatic technique. It is the subordination of ministry to Christ, truth, ecclesial order, and the dignity of the person.

10.8 The comparative result

Test	Continuity responsibly affirmed	Discontinuity or unknown preserved
Recipient	A person in need of divine help and human care remains a neighbor.	Catechumen, afflicted recipient, office candidate, place, and canon 1172 subject are not one category.
Act	Christian prayer confesses God’s sovereignty and Christ’s victory.	Narrative command, initiation, ordination, blessing, major exorcism, and clinical assessment are different acts.
Minister	Public ministry requires ecclesial accountability.	Charism, ancient title, minor order, priesthood, office, and particular permission are not identical.
Book	Traditions are transmitted in identifiable artifacts.	Manuscript, critical edition, typical book, translation, and local implementation answer different questions.

Test	Continuity responsibly affirmed	Discontinuity or unknown preserved
Authority	Sources possess real but bounded competence.	Scripture, father, theologian, canon, dicastery, conference, clinician, and civil authority do not speak interchangeably.
Evidence	Acts, claims, structures, and receptions can be established.	Frequency, cause, efficacy, and representativeness remain unproved without their own evidence.
Care	Truth, consent, safety, competent care, and dignity remain obligatory.	Uncertainty never authorizes coercion, spectacle, amateur testing, or treatment displacement.

The seven tests change the governing thesis from a slogan into a reproducible historical judgment. Continuity without identity means continuity must be located at the level supported by the sources, while every changed recipient, act, minister, book, authority, evidence class, and duty of care remains visible. That result is neither skeptical evasion nor a pedigree for private practice. It is the substantive history required before present discipline can be described honestly.

11 Catholic demonology: doctrine, inference, and restraint

The Church’s discipline makes sense only within a sharply asymmetrical theology. God is uncreated goodness, the source of every creature and every power creatures possess. Lateran IV teaches that the devil and other demons were created good by nature but became evil by their own doing (const. 1, *Firmiter credimus*, DS 800). The Catechism identifies them as fallen angels, describes their rejection of God as free and irrevocable, and insists that Satan remains a creature whose finite action is permitted by providence (CCC 391–395). Evil is therefore neither an eternal principle nor a second sovereignty.

This is doctrine. Many details supplied by later demonologies are not. The existence and fall of personal evil spirits, their opposition to God’s reign, their temptation of human beings, Christ’s victory, and the final defeat of evil belong to the Church’s received confession (CCC 391–395, 550, 2850–2854). This study’s authority audit found no defined status for elaborate ranks or territorial assignments, non-scriptural names, causal explanations of a particular misfortune, or pastoral taxonomies of “infestation,” “oppression,” and “obsession.” Such terms may distinguish questions in a particular school or pastoral setting; repetition does not make them dogma.

11.1 Four source functions

An account can repeat only true propositions and still mislead if it suppresses their different functions and kinds of authority. The following four-part map is not a rank order within the magisterium. The first is the conciliar confession received in Lateran IV: the devil and the other demons are creatures, good in their created nature and evil through their own act. The second is authoritative catechetical synthesis. The Catechism gathers the fall of the angels, their irrevocable choice, their finite creaturely power, providence, Christ’s victory, temptation, sacramentals, human dignity, and Christian prayer into one account (CCC 391–395, 550, 1667–1673, 1700–1706, 2850–2854). The synthesis is more extensive than the one conciliar sentence; its propositions should not all be attributed to that sentence as though one locus contained the whole later account.

The third level is school theology. Aquinas offers a disciplined analysis of angelic knowledge, influence, temptation, and baptismal preparation. His arguments clarify what a created intellect and will can and cannot do, but this study does not turn every conclusion of that school into a defined proposition. The

fourth level is editorial synthesis. Terms such as natural, preternatural, and supernatural, or a comparison among doctrine, authorization, and diagnosis, can help prevent category mistakes. Their usefulness does not give the editor authority to create a Catholic taxonomy.

These levels are related without being interchangeable. Doctrine supplies boundaries within which theology reasons. Catechesis orders many doctrines for teaching and Christian life. School theology asks further questions and proposes arguments. Editorial synthesis explains why the distinctions matter for this history. A claim does not become dogma because a theological school is venerable, a pastoral term is widespread, or a contemporary author places it beside a conciliar citation.

Level	What it contributes here	What it cannot establish
Conciliar confession	The created goodness and creaturely fall of the devil and demons.	A complete demonology, pastoral taxonomy, diagnosis, or ritual procedure.
Catechetical synthesis	The fall, finite creaturely power, providence, Christ's victory, sacramentals, dignity, and prayer.	A finding about a particular person or the permission required by law.
School theology	Reasoned distinctions concerning angelic knowledge, influence, temptation, and a scholastic interpretation of inherited ministry.	Defined doctrine merely by being traditional, or a clinical account of symptoms.
Editorial synthesis	A transparent map of categories and evidentiary limits.	A new doctrine, universal Catholic terminology, or authority over a case.

11.2 Creation, fall, and the asymmetry of evil

The created-good and self-made-evil clauses do more work than deny a rival god. They separate nature from moral defection. Demons are not evil because creaturehood, spirit, intelligence, or power is evil. Their evil is not a substance added by a second creator. The doctrinal grammar therefore blocks both dualism and a fearful sacralization of evil. Whatever power a creature has remains received, finite, and subject to providence (CCC 391–395).

This asymmetry also governs historical interpretation. A source may devote many lines to hostile spirits because its literary subject requires it; that verbal prominence cannot make evil metaphysically coordinate with God. Conversely, a sparse treatment does not prove that an author or community denied personal evil. Genre, purpose, and authority must be asked before the length or drama of a passage is treated as theological weight.

The limit of the conciliar control is equally important. The exact witness used here is the Holy See's later reception and quotation of *Firmiter credimus*, with its DS and conciliar locus, not a new collation of the 1215 act. It controls the attributed proposition. It does not by itself control the complete medieval context, the constitution's manuscript history, or every later interpretation. The Catechism supplies a separately identified authoritative synthesis; it is not silently substituted for the conciliar artifact.

11.3 The Christological center

The Gospel controversies about expulsion are arguments about Christ and the kingdom before they are material for a later theory of cases. In the Synoptic stronger-man sayings, the decisive question is the source and meaning of Jesus' authority (Mk 3:22–27; Mt 12:22–32; Lk 11:14–22). The Catechism's summary makes the same center explicit: Christ's expulsions manifest the arrival of God's reign and his victory over the ruler of this world (CCC 550). The theological subject is not an autonomous map of demonic capacities but the identity and mission of Christ.

That center disciplines later reception in two directions. It prevents a naturalistic historical method from deciding in advance that the narratives can have no theological referent; the texts must first be heard as the canonical witnesses they are. It also prevents a Christian reader from treating them as a portable diagnostic or procedural manual. Narrative action, controversy, proclamation, and later ecclesial discipline are distinct genres. The Church's confession of Christ's victory does not supply a checklist by which a reader can assign an unseen cause to another person's suffering.

The petitions concerning deliverance from evil in Christian prayer likewise place spiritual conflict within dependence on the Father, forgiveness, temptation, perseverance, and final hope (CCC 2846–2854). This broad horizon corrects a reception that makes extraordinary affliction the normal measure of Christian seriousness. Ordinary temptation and the struggle for faithful consent concern every Christian; a reserved rite does not.

11.4 Dogma does not function as a case archive

The doctrinal propositions and the history of alleged cases answer different questions. Lateran IV identifies the created status and moral fall of demons. The Catechism orders that confession within creation, providence, Christology, moral life, sacramentals, and prayer. Neither source supplies a census of affliction, a dossier of verified events, or an empirical rate. A dogmatic proposition can be true without making every narrative offered under its vocabulary historically reliable.

The converse also follows. Failure to verify a particular report does not disprove the doctrinal proposition to which its narrator appeals. Historical criticism may find dependence, literary shaping, missing records, or contradiction in a case tradition. Those findings govern that tradition. They do not become a laboratory judgment about angels. This separation protects both inquiries: theology is not made hostage to sensational accounts, and history is not required to certify an event because the metaphysical category is Catholic.

Reception often obscures the separation by moving authority sideways. A catechetical statement is cited as though it authenticated a memoir; the memoir is then cited as though it supplied empirical confirmation of the catechesis. The two references appear mutually supporting while neither performs the task assigned to it. A disciplined account instead asks of each claim whether its support is doctrinal, juridical, historical, pastoral, or clinical, and then stops at that source class's limit.

11.5 Natural, preternatural, and supernatural

For the bounded purposes of this study, these school-theological terms mark relations, not three kinds of being. The definitions that follow are an editorial synthesis used to keep kinds of claim distinct; the three-word scheme is not presented as a definition of doctrine. *Natural* refers to a creature and to powers and effects proportioned to a created nature. Catholic writers may call an alleged effect *preternatural* when they attribute it to a created spiritual power beyond the ordinary capacities of embodied human agents. An angel or demon is nevertheless a creature with an angelic nature, not a "preternatural substance." *Supernatural* refers to God and to the order exceeding every created nature: uncreated divine life and created gifts of grace by which creatures participate in it.

These are metaphysical classifications, not diagnostic test results. A surprising event does not become preternatural because its natural explanation is not yet known. "Unexplained" describes an epistemic state; it does not name a cause. Conversely, Catholic theology does not require that the preternatural be redefined as an unknown natural mechanism. It permits the question while refusing a shortcut from possibility to case judgment.

The same distinction governs medicine. A clinician can diagnose, treat, or exclude conditions within professional competence. Clinical evidence cannot demonstrate that no created spirit exists; neither can a

theological belief diagnose epilepsy, psychosis, dissociation, delirium, intoxication, or trauma. At the direct intersection—a living person’s symptoms and safety—current U.S. pastoral guidance calls for competent medical and psychological or psychiatric assessment. This is a safeguarding discipline, not a clinical test for a spiritual cause (CCC 1673; USCCB, “Exorcism”).

11.6 Temptation, sin, and responsibility

The ordinary Christian doctrine of temptation is broader and more important than extraordinary claims. Being tempted is distinct from consenting: personal sin results from morally attributable consent. Responsibility follows voluntariness, so ignorance, duress, fear, habit, and psychological or social factors may diminish or nullify imputability; mortal sin requires grave matter, full knowledge, and deliberate consent (CCC 1734–1735, 1857, 1859, 2846–2847). Neither grave sin nor persistent habit proves direct demonic action. Persons remain moral subjects even when freedom or knowledge is impaired. Attributing harmful conduct to possession can displace accountability, blame a harmed person, stigmatize illness, or conceal abuse.

In Aquinas’s scholastic analysis, demons neither know secret thoughts as they exist in intellect and will nor move the will inwardly or by necessity. They may infer dispositions from outward effects, persuade through an apparent good, rouse passions, and affect imagination or sense through bounded bodily causality; the will remains able to consent or resist (ST I, q. 57, a. 4; q. 111, aa. 2–4; q. 114, aa. 2–3). Aquinas also denies that every sin comes from direct demonic instigation. This metaphysical account is neither defined clinical mechanism nor a warrant for attributing a particular symptom.

11.7 A school account and its limits

Those distinctions restrain opposite errors. One error makes a demon the author of everything a distressed or sinful person does, dissolving human agency and the responsibility of other human actors. The other treats every theological claim about creaturely spiritual agency as though it were a primitive rival to medicine. Aquinas is answering metaphysical and moral questions, not supplying a differential diagnosis. His account cannot identify the cause of speech, movement, memory, fear, intrusive thought, or altered behavior in a living person.

Nor should the limits be hidden beneath the authority of his name. This study does not claim that his psychology is a clinical mechanism, that every Catholic school uses identical terminology, or that his thirteenth-century discussion describes a present diocesan process. In the history of offices, his treatment of the exorcist within baptismal preparation witnesses one scholastic interpretation of inherited ministry (ST III, q. 71, aa. 2–4). It cannot collapse baptismal exorcism, a former minor order, and the current reserved act into one timeless office.

11.8 Possession and the integrity of the person

In Catholic pastoral usage, alleged possession concerns extraordinary affliction attributed to demonic power; it never means that a human being has become a demon. The person remains the subject of human dignity and care (CCC 1700–1706). An allegation does not authorize treating every utterance during distress as a spirit’s speech, ignoring disclosures of pain or abuse, or relabeling refusal as demonic resistance. Capacity must be assessed, consent sought wherever possible, and applicable safeguarding and legal protections remain operative (CCC 1673; USCCB, “Exorcism”).

The rite is directed toward liberation through Christ and the prayer of the Church. It is not punishment, interrogation, evidence extraction, or an ordeal designed to force a reaction. The person seeking or referred

for care is never the enemy. This Christological boundary is more fundamental than any proposed sign: Christ has no equal rival, and the Church's ministry seeks liberation rather than spectacle or domination (CCC 550, 1673).

11.9 Doctrine, sacramental, and authorization

Three affirmations that often appear together answer different questions. First, doctrine identifies the creaturely reality of evil spirits, Christ's victory, and the dignity of the afflicted person. Second, the Church classifies exorcism among the sacramentals: sacred signs obtain principally spiritual effects through the Church's intercession (CIC c. 1166; CCC 1667, 1673). Third, Latin law reserves licit exorcism over the possessed to a qualified priest who has obtained the local ordinary's particular and express permission (CIC c. 1172). Doctrine supplies neither a diagnosis nor an appointment; the definition of a sacramental supplies neither permission nor jurisdiction.

The word *exorcist* consequently requires a dated context. It may denote a holder of an ancient or medieval ecclesial grade, the minor order discussed in scholastic and later Latin sources, or a priest permitted to undertake the reserved ministry under current Latin law. Those are not interchangeable offices. Aquinas's placement of exorcists among ministers assisting the priest in baptismal preparation (ST III, q. 71, a. 4) does not confer the permission required by canon 1172, describe a current diocesan post, or prove habitual practice of major exorcism.

Nor does permission settle the factual judgment that precedes ritual action. The Catechism's statement that major exorcism may be performed only by a priest with episcopal permission gives catechetical orientation (CCC 1673); canon 1172 states the legal requirement as particular and express permission from the local ordinary. Neither proposition turns authorization into proof that a person is possessed. The office or administrative arrangement by which a diocese receives referrals, the authority competent to give permission, and the discernment of a particular presentation remain distinct.

The resulting category controls are concise: belief does not establish a finding in a case; permission does not establish the alleged cause; clinical diagnosis does not adjudicate every metaphysical proposition; and possession of a book does not confer office.

11.10 Angels, saints, sacramentals, and magic

Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church; through her intercession they signify and obtain effects, especially spiritual ones. They do not confer grace in the manner of the sacraments, but prepare persons to receive grace and dispose them to cooperate with it (CIC c. 1166; CCC 1667, 1670). Their use is not a mechanism under the user's control: attributing efficacy to mere external performance apart from the dispositions it calls for is superstition (CCC 2111). Blessed objects are not talismans and sacred words are not incantations. The materiality of a sign does not make it magic. The decisive contrasts are petition rather than control, ecclesial worship rather than self-authorized technique, and trust in God rather than an attempt to tame occult powers or place them at one's service (CCC 2116–2117).

Invoking angels or saints within received Christian prayer differs from seeking secret names, bargaining with spirits, divination, necromancy, or coercive technique (CCC 2116–2117). Curiosity about a demon's identity has no pastoral claim over the person's dignity. The CDF's letter of 29 September 1985 forbids direct questioning aimed at learning a demon's identity in the unauthorized prayer gatherings it addresses. That precise restriction should not be expanded into a description of an authorized rite. Historical ritual questions are not reader-facing instructions.

Editorial synthesis: the doctrinal center

Christian demonology is a small province within creation, providence, Christology, and redemption. Its central propositions are that evil is creaturely and parasitic, Christ is victorious, human dignity remains, and the Church's prayer depends on God. A system that produces fascination, fatalism, fear of ordinary medicine, or contempt for an afflicted person has lost that center even when it uses traditional vocabulary.

12 The Latin rule and the Eastern boundary

No universal sentence about "the Catholic rite of exorcism" is safe unless it names a Church, book, minister, and juridical scope. This study establishes one necessary boundary: the 1983 *Codex Iuris Canonici* governs the Latin Church, while CCEO canon 1 says that the Eastern Code concerns all and only the Eastern Catholic Churches unless it expressly provides otherwise about relations with the Latin Church. Canon 2 requires the Eastern canons to be assessed principally from the ancient law they receive or adapt. Latin canon 1172 therefore may not be silently transplanted as though it were an Eastern canon.

12.1 The Latin reservation

In the Latin Church, canon 1172 makes particular and express permission of the local ordinary necessary for licit exorcism over the possessed. Permission may be given only to a priest marked by piety, knowledge, prudence, and integrity. Canon 134 supplies the controlling definition. Its paragraphs 1–2 include vicars general and episcopal vicars among local ordinaries; the exclusion in paragraph 3 instead governs canons that attribute executive power by name to the diocesan bishop, unless a vicar has a special mandate. Canon 1172 says *local ordinary*, not *diocesan bishop*. The Catechism's shorter episcopal summary and the 2000 instruction's rule of dependence on the diocesan bishop do not rewrite that canonical term. The revised *De Exorcismis et Supplicationibus Quibusdam* supplies the liturgical discipline. The 2021 amendment to canon 230 §1 concerns stable institution in the ministries of lector and acolyte; it neither creates an exorcist ministry nor supplies canon 1172 permission. Since 5 June 2022, *Praedicate Evangelium* articles 88–90 assign the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments the Apostolic See's work of regulating the liturgy, preparing or revising typical books, confirming conference-approved translations, recognizing legitimate adaptations, and overseeing sacramental and sacramental discipline. This is institutional competence over the book and its discipline. It is not the local ordinary's particular and express permission under canon 1172, the episcopal conference's approval of a translation or adaptation, or the institution, appointment, or authorization of an exorcist.

The universal law identifies neither a permanent diocesan office nor a universal intake system; concrete diocesan arrangements therefore require their own territorial and local controls.

Question	What the bound source establishes	What it does not establish
Minister	Canon 1172 restricts the permission to a priest with the stated qualities.	Priesthood alone does not confer permission for the reserved act.
Permission	It must be particular and express and must come from the local ordinary.	It is not supplied by a family, prayer group, lay association, or the priest's private judgment.
Office	A diocese may make practical arrangements for receiving and assigning cases.	Canon 1172 does not itself create a permanent diocesan office, title, intake system, or territorial protocol.
Case judgment	Permission regulates who may act licitly.	The grant does not by itself prove possession or displace continuing discernment and care.

Question	What the bound source establishes	What it does not establish
Ritual governance	Approved liturgical law governs the ecclesial act; the Holy See's typical-book competence, a conference's territorial approval, and a local canon 1172 permission must be distinguished.	Historical possession of an older book or a privately preferred formula does not establish present authorization.

This separation also disciplines the word “jurisdiction.” Canons 1172 and 134 establish the generic category of competent authority; they do not decide the competence of a particular officeholder in a concrete matter. Nor does calling someone a local ordinary answer questions about territorial or personal competence, the scope or duration of a grant, its revocation, or applicable particular law. Those questions require the competent authority’s actual office and act, the facts of place and person, and the universal and particular law then in force. This study supplies no case-specific legal opinion.

The permission is not a declaration that possession has been proved. It is particular and express authorization for a reserved ecclesial act; ordination alone does not supply it, a lay association cannot delegate it, and a family cannot create it by consent. The 1985 CDF letter also governs assemblies in which no exorcism strictly so called is performed but demons are directly addressed and their identities are sought. The 2000 instruction on healing prayers keeps exorcism distinct from healing services and under the diocesan bishop. These interventions close attempts to evade the reservation by changing an event’s label; they do not convert every prayer for deliverance into the major exorcism governed by canon 1172.

Territorial implementation remains subordinate. The USCCB’s public account identifies the confirmed English book and a responsible American pattern: medical and psychological assessment, moral certitude, consent where possible, privacy, limited participation, and fidelity to the rite. It is official conference guidance and an identified U.S. implementation, not universal law. A diocese elsewhere may use a different approved translation and protocol while remaining bound by canon 1172 and the typical book.

12.2 What this Latin rule does not decide

The Eastern boundary is not simply the absence of Latin canon 1172. It is a positive legal architecture with its own scope, interpretive direction, liturgical sources, and forms of particular law. The controlling body of common law is the *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, promulgated by John Paul II in *Sacri canones* on 18 October 1990 and binding from 1 October 1991. The jurisdiction named here is the Eastern Catholic Churches, not the Orthodox Churches and not the Latin Church. Canon 1 says that the CCEO concerns all and only the Eastern Catholic Churches unless a provision expressly addresses relations with the Latin Church. A Latin canon can therefore illuminate a comparison, but it does not become Eastern common law through proximity, shared subject matter, or an appeal to Catholic unity.

Canon 2 gives the boundary an interpretive direction. Canons that receive or adapt the ancient law of the Eastern Churches are to be assessed principally from that law. Canon 3 then prevents the Code from being mistaken for a complete liturgical manual: although it often refers to liturgical books, it ordinarily does not decide liturgical matters, and the prescriptions of those books are to be observed unless contrary to the canons. A present Eastern Catholic claim may therefore require three distinct controls: CCEO common law, the particular law of the identified Church *sui iuris*, and that Church’s approved liturgical book. Silence in one layer cannot be filled by copying the corresponding Latin provision.

Two further common-law canons establish a floor without supplying a procedure. Canon 668 §1 defines public divine worship as worship offered in the Church’s name by persons legitimately deputed for it and through acts approved by ecclesiastical authority. The definition excludes the inference that private initiative alone makes an act public worship. Yet it does not name an exorcist, reserve a prayer, identify a

permission giver, or decide whether a particular prayer is public or private. Those propositions still require the law and liturgical source competent for them.

Canon 867 is more directly relevant. Its first paragraph defines sacramentals as sacred signs which, in a certain imitation of the sacraments, signify effects—especially spiritual effects—obtained through the Church’s intercession; they dispose persons to receive the principal effect of the sacraments and sanctify the varied circumstances of life. Its second paragraph then gives the operative routing rule: concerning sacramentals, the norms of the particular law of one’s own Church *sui iuris* are to be observed. The canon contains no exorcism-specific minister, faculty, permission, diagnostic process, or ritual sequence. Its remittal to particular law is not an authorization vacuum. It is a direction to identify the Church and consult the law that governs it.

Question	What CCEO common law establishes	What remains Church-specific
Scope	Canons 1–2 establish the Eastern Catholic codal boundary and its Eastern interpretive context.	No Latin rule is transplanted merely because it addresses the same subject.
Liturgy	Canon 3 preserves the governing place of liturgical books; canon 668 §1 defines public divine worship.	The approved book, text, minister, and authorized act must be identified for the Church concerned.
Sacramentals	Canon 867 §1 defines the category and §2 directs the reader to the particular law of the proper Church <i>sui iuris</i> .	Minister, reservation, permission, competent authority, territory, and procedure cannot be supplied generically.
Currentness	<i>Sacri canones</i> controls promulgation and the 1 October 1991 effective date.	Current particular law and liturgical books must be dated and checked for the identified Church.

The phrase “particular law” also requires care. It does not name one identical legislator or one territorial reach for every Eastern Catholic Church. For a patriarchal Church, canon 110 §1 assigns legislation for the whole patriarchal Church exclusively to its synod of bishops, while canon 150 §§2–3 distinguishes the reach of liturgical laws, disciplinary laws, and synodal decisions inside and outside patriarchal territory. Canon 152 applies the common-law provisions concerning patriarchal Churches and patriarchs to major archiepiscopal Churches and major archbishops unless the law expressly provides otherwise or the nature of the matter indicates otherwise. For a metropolitan Church *sui iuris*, canon 167 provides for legislation by the council of hierarchs where common law remits a matter to the Church’s particular law, with the stated Apostolic See receipt and promulgation conditions. These canons map possible legislative organs and the reach of their acts. They do not prove that any one of them enacted a particular exorcism rule.

Consequently, naming “the bishop” without identifying the Church, office, law, and act is not yet a canonical conclusion. Nor would the discovery of an Eastern prayer bearing a translated title such as “exorcism” establish who may use it, under what conditions, or whether the translated word covers the same juridical category as Latin major exorcism. An office title, a liturgical text, a minister’s ordination, and an authorization are separate evidence objects. CCEO canons on governance in general cannot be used to manufacture an exorcism faculty that canon 867 does not state.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* supplies a universal catechetical control, but it must not be misidentified as the text of Eastern canon law. Paragraph 1673 places exorcism among the Church’s authoritative public acts, distinguishes the simple form associated with Baptism from what it calls a major exorcism, states that the latter may be performed only by a priest with the bishop’s permission, requires prudence and observance of ecclesial rules, and insists that illness—especially psychological illness—be distinguished and treated medically. That teaching governs the study’s doctrinal and safety boundary. It does not rewrite CCEO canon 867 into the wording of Latin canon 1172, identify the competent Eastern

authority, settle the juridical form of permission, or establish a uniform Eastern intake and discernment process.

Currentness was checked at two levels. The authentic promulgation layer is *Sacri canones* and the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* Latin Code. The Holy See's official Codes of Canon Law archive, in its dated 28 July 2026 state, presents four later CCEO amendment acts: *Ad tuendam fidem* (1998), *Mitis et misericors Iesus* (2015), *Ab initio* (2020), and *Competentias quasdam decernere* (2022). None is presented there as an amendment to canon 867. No official authentic interpretation of canon 867 was located in the official materials checked. These are bounded negative results, not a claim that every act, particular norm, or liturgical directive of every Eastern Catholic Church has been exhausted.

This study therefore states no uniform Eastern Catholic major-exorcism rule. It has not bound the current particular law and approved exorcistic or initiation books of each Church *sui iuris*, nor the promulgation and territorial facts needed to apply them. It also states no present Orthodox law or practice. A responsible Church-specific account would have to name at least the Church *sui iuris*, its juridical rank and competent legislative authority, the exact particular-law act, its promulgation and geographic reach, the approved liturgical book and language, the kind of prayer involved, and the date for which the claim is made.

That research limit has a practical consequence. An Eastern Catholic should not be directed to act on a generalized summary of Latin canon 1172 or on a privately circulated formula. The accurate route is to the competent authority of the person's own Church, with ordinary pastoral, medical, mental-health, emergency, and safeguarding care continuing according to their own competences. The absence of a published rule in this study neither grants authority nor proves that an identified Church lacks a rule. It marks the point at which a universal comparison must stop and Church-specific evidence must begin.

12.3 An actor-and-act ladder

The present discipline becomes clearer when its authorities are arranged by the acts for which the sources make them responsible. The universal legislator promulgates the law governing the Latin Church. Canon 1172 states the reservation and the qualifications of the priest to whom permission may be given. Canon 134 identifies the juridical category denoted by "local ordinary." The Apostolic See regulates the typical liturgical book and the discipline reserved to it. An episcopal conference prepares and approves a complete territorial translation for submission for confirmation and may propose the adaptations contemplated by the implementing norms. The competent local ordinary gives a particular and express permission. These are related acts, but none substitutes for another.

This ladder prevents several common category errors. Confirmation of an English translation does not appoint a priest. Appointment to a diocesan role does not prove the truth of an allegation. The availability of an approved book does not create permission to use its reserved rite. Conversely, a particular permission does not authorize a minister to improvise another book, bypass the discipline governing the rite, or treat authorization as a clinical finding. Each documentary question must be answered by the source competent for that question.

Canon 1172's two paragraphs should not be compressed into the proposition that any priest may act whenever he personally thinks a case warrants it. Paragraph 1 makes permission a condition of legitimate performance and describes it as both particular and express. Paragraph 2 limits the person to whom the local ordinary may give that permission: a priest distinguished by piety, knowledge, prudence, and integrity of life. Priesthood is therefore a necessary qualification in the canon, not a self-executing grant. The canon joins personal suitability to accountable authorization rather than offering either one as a replacement for the other.

The adjective "particular" also resists an unlimited inference. The checked universal text does not by itself settle the territorial or personal facts of a concrete matter, the scope or duration of a grant, whether it was

revoked, or what applicable particular law requires. Nor does this study possess a specific decree from which such details could be inferred. It can describe the universal category and insist upon an actual competent act; it cannot convert that description into an opinion about an unidentified minister or case.

12.4 Office, ministry, and permission

Historical vocabulary makes this separation especially important. Earlier Western sources can name an order or office of exorcist, and modern diocesan usage can call a priest “the exorcist.” Neither use answers canon 1172’s permission question without evidence of the competent local ordinary’s particular and express permission and its demonstrated scope. The 1972 reform of former minor orders retained lector and acolyte as instituted ministries throughout the Latin Church and mentioned other possible ministries in connection with a conference request to the Apostolic See. It did not establish a universal instituted exorcist ministry. The 2021 amendment to canon 230 §1 altered who may be stably instituted as lector or acolyte; it did not add exorcist to that canon or revise canon 1172.

A practical diocesan arrangement remains distinct again. A diocese may identify a contact, receive referrals, designate advisers, or assign a priest. Those arrangements can matter greatly for accountability, but the universal canon does not prescribe one permanent organizational chart. A public title therefore proves neither that every request has been accepted nor that every act associated with the title falls within a standing permission. On the other hand, the absence of a public office page does not prove that a diocese lacks an authorized means of responding. Public administrative visibility, canonical competence, and the facts of a particular authorization are three different evidentiary questions.

The same distinction protects the afflicted person. Authorization decides who may perform a reserved act under the Church’s discipline; it neither decides a clinical diagnosis nor displaces continuing medical, psychological, social, safeguarding, or pastoral care. An office does not enlarge the minister’s competence into every domain that may bear upon the person’s distress.

12.5 Boundaries against relabeling

The 1985 CDF letter supplies a precise example of discipline extending beyond a merely verbal label. It recalls canon 1172, forbids the faithful to use the Leonine formula against Satan and the apostate angels, and addresses assemblies in which, although no exorcism strictly so called is performed, demons are directly addressed and their identities are sought. The source therefore cannot be reduced to a rule that only an event advertised as “major exorcism” is accountable. At the same time, its exact scope should not be inflated into a prohibition of every ordinary petition to God for protection or deliverance.

The 2000 instruction on prayers for healing supplies a related but distinct boundary. Article 8 keeps liturgical exorcism under the diocesan bishop and forbids inserting its prayers into the celebration of Mass, the sacraments, or the Liturgy of the Hours. The instruction distinguishes healing assemblies from exorcism; it does not make a healing service an alternative route around the reservation. Read together, the two acts show why ecclesial discipline attends to what participants actually do and claim, not only to an organizer’s chosen title.

Several categories consequently must remain visible. Ordinary Christian prayer addressed to God is not identical with direct address to a demon. Minor exorcisms situated in Christian initiation are not declarations that a catechumen is possessed. A celebration does not become the reserved liturgical act merely because it is called a prayer for healing, nor may that label be used to insert exorcism prayers or evade the reservation. A major exorcism is not made available to an unauthorized assembly by removing its name from a flyer. These distinctions do not publish the content or sequence of any rite. They identify the lines that prevent devotional language, pastoral care, and a reserved ecclesial act from being collapsed into

one undifferentiated practice.

12.6 One territorial implementation, not a universal template

The United States chronology illustrates the difference between universal law and territorial implementation. The bishops approved the English translation in November 2014, the Holy See confirmed the final text in December 2016, and the edition took effect in the United States on 29 June 2017. Those dates establish the history of the identified U.S. English book. They are not the promulgation date of canon 1172, the date of the Latin typical edition, or a universal date on which every local Church adopted the same translation.

The USCCB account also describes diocesan protocol, referral, professional evaluation, and the relation between the authorized minister and assistants. It is strong official evidence for the public U.S. pastoral pattern it describes. It does not establish that every diocese uses identical internal forms, that a conference page grants permission in a particular case, or that its administrative description is legislation for another territory. A responsible comparison would identify the other conference's approved book, the relevant implementation act, and any applicable particular law rather than treating the U.S. account as a universal handbook.

This territorial boundary is substantive, not ceremonial. Translation governance concerns the faithful rendering of an authentic book and legitimate adaptation for a people. Canonical authorization concerns a minister and a reserved act. Pastoral protocol concerns how requests are received, assessed, and cared for. Civil and professional rules govern additional responsibilities within their own jurisdictions. A single word such as "approval" can obscure all four unless the approving authority, object, territory, and date are named.

12.7 The Eastern limit as a positive research rule

The absence of a verified Eastern procedure is not merely a disclaimer. It identifies what evidence a responsible account would need: the particular Church *sui iuris*; its common and particular law; the competent hierarchy; an approved liturgical book and language; the type of prayer under discussion; and the date and territory in which the claim is made. Without those coordinates, a statement about "the Eastern rite" has no stable juridical or liturgical object.

This means that an Eastern Catholic should not be told that the Latin local-ordinary rule is necessarily the rule of that person's Church merely because both Churches are Catholic. Nor can silence in this study establish authority to use any unverified text. Referral to the competent authority of the person's own Church is more accurate than a confident but source-less synthesis.

The boundary also keeps historical comparison honest. Shared biblical language, patristic inheritance, or the word "exorcism" may illuminate relationships among traditions, but none alone establishes that two present acts have the same minister, juridical reservation, liturgical form, or pastoral process. Catholic unity does not erase the legal and liturgical identity of the Eastern Churches, and historical resemblance does not supply missing present law.

12.8 A bounded Byzantine Catholic initiation comparison

One narrow comparison can now be made without inventing a generic "Eastern rite." It concerns Christian initiation in two identified Byzantine Catholic jurisdictions, not a stand-alone response to an allegation of possession. The stronger evidence comes from the Metropolitan Cantor Institute of the Byzantine (Ruthenian) Catholic Archeparchy of Pittsburgh. Its study *The Mystery of Baptism* identifies the official Slavonic order in the *Malyy Trebnyk*, printed at Rome in 1952, at pages 25–71. It then distinguishes three

English stages: a 1952 Byzantine Seminary Press booklet marked “for private use only,” which nevertheless served for many years; a provisional 1994 Parma order based on the 1952 Slavonic book and the 1730 Greek euchologion edited by Jacobus Goar; and a revised order promulgated for the Eparchy of Passaic in 1997. The study says that the Passaic edition became widely used in other eparchies. That last description is evidence of reported use, not proof that one promulgation governed every Ruthenian eparchy.

The same study locates the prayers precisely within initiation. In the fuller adult pattern, reception into the catechumenate and instruction lead to three prayers associated with the fourth, fifth, and sixth weeks of the Great Fast. They are situated in the narthex and precede profession of faith, baptism, chrismation, and Eucharistic communion. When an infant is initiated, the catechumenal ceremonies are compressed into the immediate preparation for baptism, and the study describes two such prayers before the sponsors’ profession of faith. The historical adult sequence and its infant adaptation therefore belong to one initiatory architecture. Their label does not turn them into evidence for the diagnosis, authorization, or conduct of a stand-alone rite over a person alleged to be possessed.

A second Institute page makes the source and approval boundary unusually clear. *The Exorcisms Before Baptism* says that its English texts are translated from the Roman 1952 *Malyj Trebnyk* and based on work of the Inter-Eparchial Liturgical Commission. It also calls them unofficial and provisional and directs readers to obtain episcopal permission for any use beyond private self-study. The page’s headings corroborate the three-week Great-Fast sequence. This study therefore uses the page only for provenance, status, number, and placement. It reproduces neither its formulas nor its performative directions.

Limited Melkite evidence supports comparison at the level of structure, not textual identity. A pastoral explanation published by the Melkite Greek Catholic Eparchy of Newton places several prayers called exorcisms at the opening of the catechumen rites in the narthex. It then describes renunciation while facing west and adherence to Christ while facing east, before the main initiation ceremony. This is useful corroboration that a Byzantine Catholic source outside the Ruthenian jurisdiction also embeds such material in initiation. But the six-page explanation is catechesis, not an identified promulgated euchologion. It cannot establish the exact wording of an approved Melkite ritual book, a common rule for every Melkite territory, or uniformity among Byzantine Catholic Churches.

These witnesses produce a modest but important conclusion. The word “exorcism” spans acts whose ecclesial location matters. In the checked Ruthenian and Melkite sources, the material described here serves the passage from catechumenate into baptismal life. It should not be collapsed into the Latin major-exorcism category discussed elsewhere in this study. Conversely, the presence of baptismal exorcism language cannot answer who may undertake a different act, under what authorization, from which approved book, or in response to what pastoral allegation in an Eastern Catholic Church.

The limits also protect the comparison from confessional conflation. Goar’s 1730 Greek edition helps explain one stated source behind Parma’s 1994 work, but a Greek or Orthodox book does not become current Catholic law merely because a Catholic editor or commission consulted it. Nor does shared Byzantine inheritance erase the authority of a Church *sui iuris*, its hierarchs, its particular law, or its approved editions. A fuller account would still need the exact current ritual book and particular law of each named Church and territory. Until those are controlled, this subsection establishes an initiation sequence and an edition history—not a pan-Byzantine procedure or a stand-alone faculty rule.

12.9 Authorization does not decide the allegation

The actor-and-act ladder ends in a distinction that should govern the whole current-practice account. A competent authority can decide that a qualified priest may perform an ecclesial act; that decision is not identical with a historian’s judgment about past events, a clinician’s diagnosis, or a claim that possession has been demonstrated as an observable fact. Permission answers a juridical question. Discernment remains

an accountable pastoral and ecclesial process, and professional assessment retains its own objects.

This prevents circular reasoning in both directions. The existence of an authorized exorcist does not prove that a diocese has found possession in every person referred to him. A decision not to authorize the reserved rite does not prove that the person's suffering is unreal or unworthy of care. Likewise, a clinician's inability to explain every reported feature does not generate canonical permission, while a clinical diagnosis does not itself determine what ordinary pastoral support the Church may offer.

Documentary language should therefore name the proposition actually established. An appointment establishes an appointment. A grant establishes permission within its demonstrated scope. A conference account establishes the public territorial guidance it states. A typical book establishes an approved liturgical text and discipline within its authority. None should be made to carry the unrecorded factual conclusions of a particular case.

12.10 Accountability after a grant

Particular and express permission is not the end of responsibility. The USCCB's account joins authorization to prudence, professional input, confidentiality, limited participation, and fidelity to the rite. These features show that accountability continues after a minister is selected. They do not create a universal administrative code, but they prevent the grant from being imagined as an exemption from continuing discernment and care.

The same point explains why private confidence cannot replace ecclesial oversight. A minister may possess experience, learning, or a strong personal conviction and still remain bound by the authority, book, territorial discipline, and safeguards applicable to the act. Charisma asserted by an individual is not the juridical act described by canon 1172. Apparent success, popular demand, or testimony from participants does not retrospectively manufacture permission.

Accountability also includes restraint in public claims. Confidential cases cannot responsibly be converted into statistics when the underlying records, definitions, and denominators are unavailable. A diocesan title does not establish frequency, and an edition's publication does not establish use. Current law can be described firmly while empirical claims about prevalence, outcomes, or ordinary diocesan practice remain unmade. This is the evidentiary discipline required when law, pastoral care, and vulnerable persons meet.

13 Discernment, consent, and safeguarding

Discernment is not a hunt for confirming signs. It is an accountable process that protects a person while several hypotheses remain open. The Church's theological permission to consider a preternatural cause never removes the duty to investigate natural danger, illness, coercion, fraud, trauma, and social context. The USCCB's official account therefore places medical and psychological or psychiatric evaluation within the inquiry and urges great circumspection.

13.1 Different questions, different competences

Medical and mental-health assessment belongs to appropriately qualified professionals. Relevant differential questions can include symptoms, functioning, safety, physical and neurological conditions, medicines and substances, sleep, trauma, dissociation, mood, psychosis, and cultural or religious context. The WHO's ICD-11 clinical descriptions distinguish culturally accepted practices, substances, sleep-transition states, neurological disease, trauma-related and dissociative conditions, delirium, and psychotic disorders. That classification neither proves nor disproves a preternatural cause. Pastoral and ecclesial judgments remain

distinct from diagnosis and treatment.

Clinical findings and pastoral judgments should be communicated only as applicable law, professional duties, and the person's authorized choices permit. A clinician need not affirm a preternatural explanation to provide competent care. A priest should not ask a clinician for a certificate that "rules out every natural cause," a demand outside ordinary clinical competence. As an editorial safeguarding principle, neither professional assessment nor ecclesial discernment should be made to certify a conclusion outside its own competence.

Culture can shape how distress is described, explained, and addressed. The USCCB's United States guidance therefore calls cultural and regional awareness helpful in discernment. Asking how the person and social network understand a problem, what help has been tried, and what care is sought neither makes a culturally framed experience self-proving pathology nor decides an ecclesial attribution.

13.2 Consent and capacity

Consent is not a decorative courtesy. The USCCB states that the person's consent should be ascertained if at all possible. Responsible practice explains the pastoral nature of the inquiry, who will be present, what information may be shared, and that medical care should continue. Questions of capacity, supported participation, emergency treatment, and surrogate decisions belong to competent persons applying the law, policy, and professional duties of the jurisdiction. None of those decisions by itself creates permission for a non-emergency religious rite. A person with capacity may refuse or withdraw from a non-emergency religious inquiry or rite; that refusal must not be relabeled spiritual resistance. Rules for minors, incapacity, and surrogate decisions remain jurisdiction-specific.

Family fear does not itself confer authority over an adult. For a minor, parental or guardian involvement, the child's participation, and protective duties depend on applicable safeguarding law and policy. No ritual claim authorizes restraint, confinement, food or sleep deprivation, medication withdrawal, pain, humiliation, or prolonged questioning.

13.3 Privacy without secrecy

The USCCB's United States guidance says confidentiality is important for the reputation of the afflicted person and assistants. Case records, recordings, and disclosures should follow applicable law, diocesan safeguarding policy, and the professional duties of those involved. They are not evidence of cause merely because they are dramatic.

The USCCB also discourages an exorcist from working alone and places the authorized minister under episcopal direction. Its public guidance limits lay participants to supporting prayer and reserves the minister's prayers to the authorized minister; it is a boundary on participation, not a public ritual manual. Confidentiality does not displace reporting, emergency, or protective-disclosure duties where applicable law requires them.

13.4 Abuse patterns

Official safeguarding material for England documents child abuse linked to accusations of witchcraft or spirit possession. Current prosecution and statutory domestic-abuse guidance for England and Wales also identifies spiritual or ritual abuse affecting children and adults, including vulnerable adults, and faith-related harm, isolation, neglect, coercion, and exploitation. These territorial records do not establish Catholic prevalence or a worldwide rate. They establish the controlling safeguarding point: violence, emotional harm, neglect, coercion, trafficking, and exploitation remain abuse when justified through spiritual accusations.

Catholic teaching condemns such conduct independently of whether perpetrators claimed sincere belief. A preternatural explanation cannot legalize assault or neglect.

Less visible harms also matter: telling a child he is inhabited by evil; teaching a survivor that trauma symptoms prove complicity; blaming disability or sexual orientation on a spirit; repeatedly eliciting lurid narratives; isolating a person from skeptical relatives; demanding money; or making relief depend on obedience to an unaccountable minister. Such labeling can itself inflict emotional harm. Other coercive practices risk fear, stigma, dependency, family conflict, and retraumatization.

Safeguarding therefore examines relationships and incentives, not only ritual text. Who has authority? Who can stop the process? Is care conditioned on payment, publicity, or loyalty? Are allegations against another person being reported to competent civil and ecclesial authorities rather than “treated” as a spirit? Does the team recognize domestic violence, trafficking, abuse, self-harm, and medical emergency?

13.5 Emergency and continuing care

Imminent risk of serious self-harm or violence, sudden confusion, medical instability, suspected poisoning, or abuse calls for urgent medical, mental-health, emergency, or protective action appropriate to the jurisdiction. Prayer may accompany care; it may not replace it. Changes to prescribed medicines should be discussed with the prescribing clinician.

Ordinary pastoral care continues whether or not major exorcism is considered: safe prayer, sacramental care appropriate to the person, medical treatment, therapy, and practical support. A decision not to authorize a major rite is not abandonment. Nor does celebration make indicated professional care or safeguarding unnecessary.

A safeguarding test

Any claimed ministry fails before its extraordinary hypothesis is reached if it bypasses emergency care, suppresses medical treatment, coerces consent, isolates the person, uses violence or humiliation, conceals abuse, monetizes fear, publishes the case, or lacks accountable ecclesial authority.

13.6 Discernment is not proof by exclusion

The USCCB’s public account uses the language of moral certitude and calls for medical and psychological or psychiatric evaluation. Those propositions belong together only if their competences remain distinct. Professional assessment can identify diagnoses, risks, treatment needs, and plausible differentials within the clinician’s field. It cannot certify that every natural explanation has been exhausted or that a preternatural cause remains as the only possible answer. Ecclesial discernment likewise cannot turn an unexplained symptom into a medical diagnosis.

An assessment may be incomplete because information is unavailable, symptoms change, several conditions coexist, or no current diagnosis explains every reported experience. Uncertainty is not a positive test for possession. Neither is prior treatment failure: a medicine may be inappropriate, insufficient, poorly tolerated, or taken inconsistently; access to care may be limited; diagnosis may change; trauma, disability, sleep, substance use, social pressure, and physical illness may interact. A pastoral team that treats every unresolved feature as supernatural evidence converts ordinary limits of knowledge into a one-way confirmation system.

The reverse reduction is also outside the sources. The WHO classification organizes clinical descriptions and differential diagnoses; it does not adjudicate Catholic doctrine. A clinician can conclude that a presentation fits a clinical condition or requires further assessment without issuing a theological judgment. The disciplined position is asymmetrical in a useful way: clinical danger and treatable illness demand competent attention,

while the existence of such attention neither authorizes a rite nor requires a clinician to affirm the Church's theological explanation.

13.7 A differential field, not a checklist

The ICD-11 clinical descriptions place possession-trance presentations within a bounded differential field. Relevant distinctions include whether an experience occurs within a collectively accepted cultural or religious practice; whether it is involuntary and unwanted; whether substances, medicines, sleep-transition states, neurological disease, delirium, trauma, dissociation, or psychotic disorders better account for the presentation; and whether it causes clinically significant distress or impairment. These are domains for individual clinical assessment, not a sequence that a pastoral worker can administer from a book.

The difference between a differential field and a checklist is crucial. A checklist invites an unqualified observer to count dramatic features and announce a result. Differential assessment instead asks how symptoms began, vary over time, relate to health and context, and affect functioning; it considers competing and coexisting explanations and remains revisable as evidence changes. The publication therefore names broad domains only to show why competent assessment matters. It does not give threshold scores, alleged signs of possession, tests with sacred objects, or instructions for provoking a response.

Cultural attention belongs inside that assessment rather than at its margins. A practice accepted within a community is not for that reason immune from questions about coercion, impairment, or harm. Conversely, unfamiliar religious language is not for that reason evidence of disorder. Interpretation requires attention to the person's own account, the norms of the relevant community, the voluntariness of participation, changes from prior functioning, and the consequences of the experience. No single observer is presumed to possess clinical, cultural, theological, and canonical competence at once.

13.8 Communication without forced agreement

Collaboration is most useful when each participant states what was actually assessed and the limits of the conclusion. A clinician can describe symptoms, functioning, risk, capacity, relevant diagnoses, and recommended care without endorsing or ridiculing a religious interpretation. A priest can explain the pastoral question and the Church's discipline without asking the clinician to certify a spiritual cause. The person can report religious meaning without having every experience either medicalized or ratified.

This division of labor also protects confidential information. The fact that a diocese seeks professional input does not make the clinician an agent of every ecclesial decision, and the fact that a person seeks pastoral care does not erase ordinary professional duties. Information sharing should have a defined purpose and follow the person's authorized choices, applicable law, emergency exceptions, and professional or ecclesial duties. Broad circulation of a dossier "for discernment" can itself become a privacy harm.

13.9 Consent as an ongoing boundary

Seeking consent "if at all possible," as the U.S. guidance states, should not be reduced to obtaining one signature at intake. A person's understanding, willingness, and ability to stop participation remain relevant as the inquiry continues. New participants, recording, disclosure of information, changes in the character of prayer, and proposed contact with outside professionals can raise new consent questions. This publication does not prescribe a legal form; it identifies why consent must remain connected to the actual activity.

Capacity is decision- and jurisdiction-specific. Confusion, disability, a psychiatric diagnosis, intense religious language, or disagreement with a minister does not by itself establish incapacity. Where capacity is genuinely in question, the answer belongs to qualified persons applying the law and policy governing that decision. A

pastoral team may need support to communicate accessibly, allow time, include an authorized supporter, or defer an extraordinary process while urgent health needs are addressed.

Withdrawal must remain meaningful. A person who asks to pause, leave, decline questions, or refuse a non-emergency religious act should not be told that the request proves malign influence. That response makes the minister's interpretation impossible to challenge and turns consent into a trap. It also obscures the separate question whether emergency or protective intervention is required for a reason recognized by applicable civil law. Religious refusal and emergency incapacity are not interchangeable.

13.10 A team does not erase accountability

The USCCB's advice that the exorcist not work alone and its limits on lay participation support accountability, but the mere presence of several people does not make a process safe. Roles should be intelligible: who holds ecclesial responsibility, who provides professional care, who is present for support, who keeps any necessary record, and who can halt the activity when a safety concern arises. A participant's professional title should not be used to imply approval outside that person's actual role.

Limited participation also protects against diffusion of responsibility. A prayer group cannot collectively manufacture the authorization that none of its members possesses. Assistants do not acquire permission to reproduce the minister's reserved role. Observers should not become an audience, and recording should not become a substitute for accountable documentation. Numbers, enthusiasm, and secrecy can intensify group confidence while making it harder for the afflicted person to dissent.

Confidentiality protects dignity and reputation, but "confidential" must not mean unreviewable. Applicable reporting duties, emergency disclosures, supervision, and safeguarding escalation remain operative. Conversely, accountability does not require publication of a person's story. Internal review can identify decisions, authorization, participants, consent, referrals, and safety actions without creating promotional media or a sensational case archive.

13.11 What territorial safeguarding sources establish

The official Department for Education material for England and the Crown Prosecution Service and Home Office materials for England and Wales answer a bounded question: can accusations of witchcraft, spirit possession, or alleged evil become a setting for recognizable abuse? The Department for Education records child abuse linked to faith or belief as a safeguarding concern. The Crown Prosecution Service identifies spiritual or ritual abuse affecting children, adults, and vulnerable adults and names physical, emotional, sexual, financial, neglectful, and fatal harms in its prosecution context. The Home Office statutory guidance describes religious manipulation, coercion, secrecy, isolation, neglect, and attempts to remove an alleged evil force within its domestic-abuse framework.

These records support recognition and protection, not an epidemiology of Catholic exorcism. They do not show how often abuse occurs worldwide, how often Catholic authorities receive a report, or what proportion of allegations arise in any religious community. They also do not decide a theological claim. Their importance lies in the more limited proposition that a spiritual explanation does not remove conduct from ordinary categories of harm and does not suspend the territorial systems responsible for protection and prosecution.

That distinction should govern the use of examples. A safeguarding document may name forms of coercion so that professionals can recognize them; it should not be converted into lurid narrative or evidence that every unconventional prayer setting is abusive. The inquiry remains conduct-centered: what was done, to whom, under what pressure, with what injury or risk, and what protective response is required? Sincerity of belief may explain a perpetrator's stated motive, but it does not make violence, neglect, exploitation, or

coercive control pastoral care.

13.12 The one-way safety rule

Where immediate danger is plausible, safety action should not wait for the extraordinary hypothesis to be resolved. Sudden altered consciousness may require medical assessment; threats or attempts of self-harm may require an emergency mental-health response; suspected poisoning, injury, or medication complication may require urgent physical care; disclosure of abuse may trigger protective or reporting duties. The appropriate action depends on the jurisdiction and facts, but none depends on first deciding whether a preternatural cause exists.

This rule is one-way because emergency care can proceed without deciding the theological question, whereas a theological theory cannot safely cancel an emergency response. Prayer and pastoral presence may accompany care when appropriate and desired. They do not authorize delay, restraint by an unqualified group, withdrawal of prescribed treatment, or concealment of the danger. If that belief is used to delay, obstruct, or conceal indicated care, the resulting conduct creates a safeguarding concern rather than an exemption.

Continuing care follows the same logic. A completed evaluation does not end the need to monitor symptoms, risk, treatment, consent, and social conditions. An authorized religious act, if one occurs, does not prove that medical or psychological care is no longer indicated. A decision against the reserved rite likewise should not leave the person without pastoral attention. The ordinary goods of stable relationships, housing, sleep, nutrition, treatment, therapy, prayer, and sacramental life retain their value across uncertainty.

13.13 A process can fail before its theory is tested

Safeguarding provides an important asymmetry. The truth or falsity of an extraordinary causal claim may remain disputed, but some conduct is already disqualifying. A process that strikes, restrains, starves, deprives sleep, withholds medicine, humiliates, sexually exploits, isolates, extorts, threatens, or conceals abuse has failed as care before anyone settles the underlying theory. A process that publishes distress for entertainment or fundraising likewise makes the person's vulnerability serve the ministry.

Accountable authority is necessary but does not turn harmful conduct into a legitimate technique. Consent requirements remain activity- and jurisdiction-specific; consent cannot legalize assault or exploitation. Professional participation is valuable but does not bless conduct outside professional competence. Privacy is protective but cannot be invoked to suppress required reporting. These boundaries are mutually reinforcing: each prevents one good word from being used to excuse a different form of harm.

The resulting discernment is sober rather than spectacular. It asks whether the person is safe, whether competent assessments continue, whether authorization is real, whether consent and withdrawal are respected, whether information is protected and appropriately shared, whether cultural meaning is understood, and whether ordinary care remains available. None of those questions diagnoses possession. Together they describe the minimum accountability without which an extraordinary claim should not command a vulnerable person's life.

14 Culture, reception, and the strongest objections

Film, memoir, podcast, viral testimony, and exposé are mediated accounts, not clinical records or prevalence data. This study therefore does not use them to establish diagnosis, efficacy, or frequency. The Church's public discipline instead emphasizes authorization, circumspection, professional consultation, consent where

possible, and confidentiality.

14.1 How reception changes a case

Reception is historically important even when it cannot authenticate the event being retold. A private pastoral encounter may become a clerical narrative, devotional example, newspaper controversy, entertainment property, or online testimony. At each stage, selection and genre change what the audience receives. A memoir organizes memory around an author's later understanding. Journalism compresses a dossier into reportable conflict. Film supplies scenes, dialogue, causal sequence, and resolution whether or not the archive does. A short online extract can detach a voice or gesture from the circumstances in which it was recorded.

The historical question must therefore follow the artifact. A film can show how an era imagined exorcism; it cannot prove the event it dramatizes. A memoir can establish what its author later asserted; it cannot become an independent clinical or diocesan record. A recording can preserve sounds made at a particular session only after provenance and context are controlled; it does not identify their cause. Audience size, repetition, and emotional force measure reception, not prevalence or efficacy.

14.2 A chain of reception is not a chain of corroboration

The stages can be mapped without pretending that each later artifact is a new witness to the underlying event. An encounter may first be represented in pastoral notes or an administrative record. A participant may later narrate it from memory. A journalist may select that narration and add interviews. A film may dramatize the article or memoir. Online commentary may then quote the film as though it reproduced the initial record. The number of artifacts has grown, but their dependence may still lead back to one assertion.

Each stage can nevertheless support a different historical claim. A dated ecclesial record may establish what an office received or decided, within the record's competence and completeness. A memoir may establish the author's later recollection and interpretation. Journalism may establish the public controversy it documents. Film may establish a cultural image. Online circulation may establish popularity or transformation of a motif. None of these modest claims requires treating the artifact as clinical proof or a measure of efficacy.

Reception analysis therefore uses two ledgers. The dependency ledger asks which later accounts derive from which earlier representation. The transformation ledger asks what was selected, omitted, renamed, dramatized, or given a new audience. A disagreement among dependent accounts can reveal changing reception without giving the historian an independent route to the event. Agreement can show copying or shared dependence rather than corroboration.

14.3 The burden created by ambiguity

Ambiguity does not require equal probability for every proposed explanation. It requires that the strength of a conclusion answer to the evidence actually available. A naturally unexplained observation may justify further medical, pastoral, or historical inquiry. It does not by itself shift the burden so that a preternatural cause stands unless someone disproves it. Nor does a plausible natural account prove that every theological question has been answered.

Institutions carry an additional burden because their classifications change what happens to a person. A private metaphor may become an intake label; an intake label may shape questioning; repeated questioning may shape memory and conduct; and an official-seeming narrative may escape into public culture. Authority therefore increases the duty to distinguish observation, interpretation, decision, and later retelling. The

greater the foreseeable effect on treatment, liberty, reputation, family life, or public exposure, the less defensible it is to hide uncertainty behind inherited vocabulary.

The same rule applies to skeptical reception. A natural explanation proposed without access to records remains a proposal, not a retrospective diagnosis. Public ridicule can harm a vulnerable person even while criticizing harmful ministry. Evidentiary discipline is not reserved for believers: every interpreter must identify what the artifact can bear and whose dignity is at stake.

This distinction also applies to hostile reception. An exposé may document a real institutional failure when it supplies controlled records, but the label “exposé” does not itself establish its allegations. A skeptical retelling and a devotional retelling remain dependent witnesses if both ultimately derive their chronology from the same unexamined narrative.

14.4 The ethics of public evidence

Availability is not permission and publicity is not harmlessness. Case records may disclose health information, trauma, family conflict, spiritual direction, or the identity of a vulnerable person. Recordings and transcripts can become spectacles detached from consent and context. A responsible history asks not only whether material is accessible, but whether naming, quotation, or reproduction is necessary to the historical claim, lawful, and proportionate to the foreseeable harm.

Anonymization also has limits. A famous chronology may identify a person even after a name is removed, while aggressive abstraction may make the evidence impossible to audit. Where those duties cannot be reconciled, the proper result may be a source-audited institutional history without intimate case detail.

14.5 The secular-clinical objection

The strongest naturalist objection is not merely “demons do not exist.” It argues that every observable feature offered as evidence is mediated by human bodies, minds, expectations, and institutions; that possession idioms vary culturally; that naturally caused illness may be missed; and that no validated clinical test identifies a preternatural cause. History supplies fraud, misdiagnosis, and abuse. Therefore, the objection concludes, introducing demons adds no explanatory value and creates preventable risk.

Catholic theology should concede the empirical and moral force of much of this case. Observable ambiguity, cultural shaping, and risks from delayed or inappropriate care are reasons for restriction and consultation. The Church does not possess a laboratory assay for possession. The philosophical conclusion does not follow by empirical method alone: clinical sciences rightly study natural mechanisms and need not pronounce on every created spiritual cause. But a metaphysical possibility earns no case judgment without evidence. The Catholic answer must therefore be both realist and disciplined: preternatural agency is possible; natural care and safeguarding are obligatory; an extraordinary attribution is rare, ecclesial, and morally burdened.

14.6 The Protestant objections

Protestant traditions are not one position. Many evangelicals and Pentecostals affirm continuing spiritual conflict and direct deliverance prayer, while often rejecting Catholic sacramentals, priestly reservation, or episcopal control as unscriptural. Reformed cessationists may regard apostolic exorcisms as signs tied to Christ and the apostles, question later rites, and stress preaching, discipline, and ordinary prayer. Other Protestants interpret possession narratives principally through ancient cosmology or illness.

The strongest shared challenge asks where Scripture authorizes a proprietary post-apostolic rite and whether institutional control protects truth or monopolizes a gift of the Spirit. The Catholic reply distinguishes the

apostolic reality from a frozen manual. Scripture depicts Christ authorizing ministry, the Church ordering gifts, and borrowed technique failing. The later reservation is a disciplinary judgment within the Church's authority over public worship, intended to protect persons and the integrity of prayer. It does not teach that only priests may ask God for deliverance in ordinary Christian prayer.

Catholic criticism also runs the other way. A decentralized ministry may lack case review, clinical consultation, safeguarding, and a route of appeal. Repetition of direct commands, public testimony, or the search for named spirits can increase pressure, publicity, and risk of harm. This criticism must be applied first to Catholic practice wherever it acquires the same defects.

14.7 The Orthodox objection

Orthodox critics may see the Latin revised rite and juridical discussion as over-systematized, detached from ascetic and sacramental life, or too willing to isolate extraordinary ministry from fasting, repentance, and the Church's continuous prayer. Some also contest Latin claims about jurisdiction and the later history of sacramentals.

The objection usefully restores the baptismal, liturgical, and therapeutic horizon. The Latin answer need not deny it: the revised discipline also orders the ministry to Christ, Scripture, sacraments, and pastoral care. The real ecclesiological disagreements cannot be solved inside a study of exorcism. Nor may one Orthodox book or dramatic clerical practice be treated as "the Orthodox view." Both traditions face the same safeguarding question: antiquity and sanctity of intention do not excuse coercion or neglect.

14.8 The Catholic traditionalist objection

Some traditionalist criticism holds that the 1998/2004 rite weakened the 1614 tradition by reducing imperative formulas, adopting modern psychological caution, or expressing uncertainty where the older book spoke plainly. A related claim treats reported preference among exorcists as proof of the older rite's superior efficacy.

The historical questions deserve textual study, but memoir preference is not a controlled comparison and "more confrontational" is not a theological measure of efficacy. The current typical book has competent authority. A priest requires canon 1172 permission for the act; use of an older book additionally depends on the distinct applicable liturgical-law authorization, not private judgment. Psychological and medical consultation does not deny demons; it recognizes natural causes and the moral cost of error. Legitimate criticism may examine translation, pastoral prudence, and continuity without instructing unauthorized use or turning obedience into a referendum on anecdotes.

14.9 The feminist, disability, and trauma-informed objections

Safeguarding critics ask whether possession language can police bodies and dissent, transfer blame from perpetrators to victims, and gives male or clerical authority a sacred pretext for control. Disability advocates add that unusual movement, speech, cognition, or behavior can be misread as spiritual defect. The government safeguarding record from England documents the narrower case of children harmed after accusations tied to witchcraft or spirit possession, including children targeted because of disability, learning difficulty, or illness.

These are not external concerns that doctrine can wave away. They test whether Catholic claims about dignity are operative. A diagnosis, identity, dissent, trauma response, or disability is not evidence of possession. Allegations of abuse must be investigated as allegations against human agents, not dissolved into demon language. Consent where possible, appropriate accommodations, professional care, and safeguarding

under applicable law and policy remain necessary. The Church's belief in demons increases, rather than decreases, the obligation not to make vulnerable persons carry a community's fear.

14.10 The popular-realist objection

A different critic says institutional caution is unbelief disguised as safety: the Gospels are clear, suffering people report relief, and excessive referral abandons them. This objection rightly resists contempt and a closed naturalism. But confidence is not discernment. The Gospels also center Christ rather than technique; the Church's law presupposes possibility while restricting action; and ordinary pastoral and clinical care are not rejection. A ministry that must disregard consent, medicine, evidence, or episcopal authority to display faith has confused audacity with trust.

The grouped objections converge on one demand: a Catholic account must be falsifiable at the level of conduct. Whatever cannot be settled about an extraordinary cause, violence, exploitation, concealment, unauthorized ritual, and medical neglect can be rejected now.

14.11 Concession, answer, and unresolved question

The objections become clearer when three kinds of response are not compressed into apologetic victory. A *concession* identifies what the criticism correctly exposes. An *answer* states what the Catholic sources actually permit the study to maintain. An *unresolved question* records what the present evidence cannot settle.

To the secular-clinical objection, the required concession is substantial: observable behavior is naturally and culturally ambiguous; harm follows from misdiagnosis, coercion, and delayed care; and no validated clinical test in the controlled corpus identifies a preternatural cause. The Catholic answer is limited but real: clinical method does not by itself decide the whole metaphysics of created spiritual agency, while the Church's own discipline refuses the inference from metaphysical possibility to a particular case. The unresolved field includes the cause of any unexamined presentation and any empirical claim of prevalence or comparative efficacy.

To Protestant criticisms, the concession is that a later Catholic discipline must not be smuggled into every biblical narrative as though canon 1172 were written there. Nor does reservation mean that ordinary petition for divine help belongs only to a priest. The Catholic answer is that public worship and reserved ecclesial acts can be ordered by ecclesial authority without claiming that the discipline is a second revelation or an unchanged apostolic manual. The unresolved questions are the larger ecclesiological disagreements and the diversity within Protestant traditions, neither of which this source corpus adjudicates.

To the Orthodox criticism, the concession is that a narrowly juridical account can obscure baptismal, ascetical, sacramental, and therapeutic horizons. The Latin answer can receive that correction while still naming the exact law and book that govern a Latin act. The unresolved field is decisive: because this study surveyed neither an identified Orthodox law or liturgical book nor Eastern Catholic particular law, it makes no claim about their present authorization or practice. Respect here takes the form of refusing synthetic comparison.

To Catholic traditionalist criticism, the concession is that edition history, formula architecture, translation, and stated rationale are legitimate historical questions. The answer is that an older book's antiquity and a minister's preference do not establish present authority or comparative efficacy. The unresolved questions include complete textual collation and controlled reception across the selected editions. Anecdotes cannot be made to close them.

To feminist, disability, and trauma-informed criticism, the concession cannot be merely verbal. Religious language has the capacity to intensify stigma, relocate blame, and clothe control with sacred authority. The

Catholic answer rests on the dignity and agency of the person, moral responsibility, consent where possible, continuing care, and safeguarding. The unresolved cause of extraordinary distress never suspends those duties. The test is not whether the institution can repeat an anthropological proposition, but whether its conduct protects the person whom the proposition describes.

This three-part pattern keeps the argument symmetrical. Critics do not acquire authority over theology merely by identifying natural ambiguity; Catholic belief does not acquire authority over a case merely by preserving metaphysical possibility. Historical evidence can establish what a source said, an authority enacted, or a reception transformed. It cannot be forced to answer a different question because the answer would satisfy one side.

A reception rule

Later repetition increases cultural reach, not evidentiary independence. Receive a criticism at its strongest supported point; state the Catholic answer at its actual authority level; and leave the remainder unresolved when the controlled sources do not decide it.

15 Pastoral conclusion: authority without spectacle

The history does not end with a recovered ancient technique. It ends with a more disciplined account of Christian responsibility. Exorcistic prayer grew within proclamation, initiation, ascetic struggle, care of afflicted persons, and the ordering of public worship. The modern Latin reservation is one historical and juridical form of a durable insight: extraordinary claims require accountable authority because the person can be harmed by credulity, disbelief, and curiosity alike.

15.1 What the history establishes

The sources do not yield a single ritual transmitted without change from the apostolic age. They show several histories that meet without collapsing into one another. The Gospel narratives proclaim the authority of Christ and the arrival of God's reign. Ancient apologists make public claims within the arguments of their own time. Initiatory sources place renunciation and exorcistic prayer within conversion and incorporation. Clergy lists and disciplinary acts show offices and authorization without disclosing a uniform practice. Medieval books, theological accounts, and later Roman rituals differentiate recipients, ministers, purposes, and effects. Modern law and ritual discipline inherit that history while governing a specific ecclesial act in the present.

Continuity therefore belongs first to the Christian confession and the Church's responsibility, not to an imagined invariant script. The history is continuous in its proclamation that evil is creaturely rather than divine, that Christ is victor, that prayer is not an occult mechanism, and that ministry belongs within ecclesial accountability. It is discontinuous in terminology, books, offices, jurisdiction, and pastoral setting. These changes are not embarrassments to be hidden. They are the evidence by which a later practice can be located honestly rather than projected backward.

The negative findings matter as well. The checked evidence does not provide a global prevalence rate, a reliable success count, a universal medieval practice, a complete taxonomy of demonic activity, or a documentary basis for using famous cases as representative proof. It does not permit a biblical expression to become a modern diagnostic category or a clinical differential to decide a metaphysical question. Restraint at those boundaries is a historical conclusion, not merely an editorial disclaimer.

15.2 A ledger of continuity and change

The word *continuity* is too imprecise unless its object is named. There is continuity of confession: evil is creaturely, Christ is victorious, prayer depends on God, and the afflicted person remains a neighbor rather than an enemy. There is continuity of ecclesial responsibility: public ministry is ordered, ministers are not self-authorizing, and extraordinary claims do not cancel ordinary duties of care. These continuities can persist through substantial changes in vocabulary, office, book, and law.

There is not evidence for continuity of one complete script. Biblical narratives, initiatory exorcisms, apologetic claims, ordination texts, medieval service books, the Roman Ritual, and current discipline are not successive copies of a single recoverable manual. Nor does recurrence of the word *exorcist* establish continuity of one office. The recipient, purpose, minister, ecclesial setting, and juridical effect must be compared before a shared title is treated as shared identity.

Change likewise needs a named object. A revised book can change textual architecture without changing the Church’s confession about Christ. A legal act can alter an office or authorization while leaving ancient source evidence exactly what it was. A territorially approved and confirmed translation, once implemented, can change the authorized textual form in that territory without creating new universal law. Historical candor does not choose between “everything continued” and “everything was invented.” It keeps several ledgers and reports what changed in each.

Historical result	What the controlled sources support	What remains outside it
Confession	Creaturely evil, Christ’s victory, dependence on God, and human dignity.	Later taxonomies, case attribution, prevalence, and efficacy.
Practice history	Diverse narrative, initiatory, ministerial, liturgical, and juridical witnesses.	One invariant apostolic procedure or a global census of use.
Present Latin discipline	For exorcism over the possessed, legitimate performance is reserved to a qualified priest with the local ordinary’s particular and express permission.	Eastern or Orthodox rules, a concrete grant, or a factual judgment in a presented case.
Pastoral synthesis	Ordinary care, professional competence, safeguarding, and accountable ecclesial authority remain necessary.	A diagnosis, ritual instruction, or advice for an individual case.

15.3 Three kinds of historical answer

A comprehensive history should say positively what it establishes. It establishes that hostile-spirit language belonged to several ancient environments; that the canonical narratives have their own literary and theological purposes; that early Christians situated expulsion claims, renunciation, initiation, charisma, office, and discipline in distinguishable genres; that medieval evidence differentiates offices and ritual purposes; and that Roman consolidation, later edition states, codification, ministerial reform, and revised ritual discipline are acts with identifiable dates and authorities. The result is richer than a pedigree for one current practice.

It should also say what the evidence disproves as a method. A later title cannot be projected backward without checking the earlier witness. An office list cannot disclose the unrecorded frequency or content of practice. An official act proves its own enactment, not universal reception. A memoir or film cannot become independent outcome evidence by repetition. A canon of the Latin Code cannot be projected onto an Eastern Catholic or Orthodox Church. An unexplained symptom cannot be renamed a cause.

Finally, it should name questions that remain open rather than filling them with inherited confidence. The controlled corpus does not yield worldwide rates, comparative efficacy, a complete medieval synthesis, a universal pastoral taxonomy, a named-case dossier adequate for publication, or a verified Eastern and Orthodox legal comparison. Several important historical dependencies remain partial at the level of critical editions, manuscript collation, and reception. These limits define the bounded sense in which the present study is comprehensive; they do not erase the conclusions already secured.

15.4 Authority read through historical accountability

The historical record does not make authority unnecessary; it shows why authority must be specified. “The Church teaches,” “the ritual provides,” “the law requires,” “the conference advises,” and “a minister reports” name different speakers and acts. Their claims may be compatible, but they are not interchangeable. Responsible reception names the promulgating or teaching authority, the jurisdiction, the date, the kind of text, and the question that text is competent to answer.

Accountability also runs backward from present use to historical claim. A current minister cannot authorize an ancient reconstruction merely by adopting it, and a historian cannot confer present permission by showing that a practice is old. The present law does not erase earlier diversity; earlier diversity does not suspend the present law. This two-way boundary permits genuine historical comparison without turning scholarship into a ritual license or current discipline into an origin story.

Finally, authority remains answerable to the person affected. A valid category of office or permission does not excuse coercion, humiliation, concealment, or neglect. Authorization remains distinct from factual judgment; Catholic anthropology and the safeguarding controls used in this study preserve dignity through distress. Historical accountability therefore culminates in moral accountability: identifying who may act never removes the obligation to ask whether the person is being protected, heard, and kept within competent care.

15.5 Different responsibilities around one person

For the person seeking help, the first question need not be “Is this possession?” It can be “What keeps you safe, cared for, and connected to truthful help today?” Emergency danger goes to emergency services. Bodily and mental symptoms deserve competent care. Abuse calls for protection and use of the reporting route required in the applicable jurisdiction. Pastoral suffering deserves patient prayer and accompaniment. A Catholic can approach a parish or diocese without first proving a theory.

For family and friends, love does not require becoming investigators. Support sleep, appointments, food, housing, prescribed care, and ordinary relationships. Do not test reactions to sacred objects, publish or circulate recordings, argue with an alleged spirit, restrain the person, or recruit an online minister. Listen without promising an explanation beyond one’s competence. Where the person’s account includes violence, self-harm, abuse, or medical danger, use the local emergency or safeguarding route rather than spiritualizing it away.

This ordinary support is not a lesser response while an extraordinary answer is awaited. Stable relationships, truthful listening, clinical care, material assistance, and ordinary pastoral life remain goods whatever conclusion is eventually reached. They also resist the isolation on which coercive ministries depend. A person should not have to accept a frightening interpretation, abandon treatment, surrender privacy, or display distress in order to remain worthy of attention.

For clergy and pastoral workers, taking a person seriously differs from ratifying every interpretation. The pastor can pray, hear, ask about immediate safety, arrange emergency or professional help when indicated, and consult diocesan authority. If the matter reaches a reserved process, authorization, supervision, consent,

confidentiality, cultural attention, and applicable safeguarding requirements remain part of fidelity rather than bureaucratic obstacles to it.

The same accountability limits confidence as well as action. A minister may recognize the Church's theological categories without claiming clinical competence, and may observe disturbing behavior without declaring its hidden cause. Referral is not abandonment; consultation is not disbelief; refusal to perform an unauthorized act is not indifference. If competent authority does not authorize the reserved rite, ordinary pastoral care does not thereby end.

For clinicians, collaboration need not require theological agreement. The Church needs honest natural assessment, not a certificate of metaphysical approval. A clinician can respectfully elicit a patient's religious framework, assess health and safety within clinical competence, and identify harmful practices without adjudicating doctrine. Pastoral teams should be equally willing to hear when their own language or procedure is worsening symptoms.

The division of competence is not a claim that truth has been divided into unrelated compartments. It is a discipline of truthful speech. A clinician may know much about a person's health without authority to decide a theological question. A cleric may know the Church's doctrine and law without competence to diagnose a medical condition. An ecclesiastical authority may regulate an act without thereby proving the alleged cause. A historian may reconstruct an edition or decision without access to the intimate truth of a case. Cooperation is strongest when each contribution is both welcomed and bounded.

Good collaboration preserves the difference between the questions being asked. The clinician assesses symptoms, functioning, capacity, risk, and relevant differentials within professional competence. Ecclesial authority judges what the Church may authorize under its own law and ritual discipline. Neither party serves the person by asking the other to certify a conclusion outside that party's competence. Both remain answerable to consent, privacy, applicable law, and the need for continuing care.

For researchers and media, official caution and confidentiality limit what can be known. Absence of public data does not justify invented prevalence; a recording does not by itself establish provenance, diagnosis, or cause. This study therefore privileges identified law, ritual texts, institutional records, and safeguarding evidence over exposure of a person's case.

15.6 Authority is a form of restraint

The history explains why authorization cannot be reduced to possession of a text or confidence in a private gift. In the Latin Church, canon 1172 governs who may act and under what permission. The ritual book governs a liturgical act; labels do not change whether conduct falls under the applicable canonical and ritual controls. Territorial implementation, diocesan policy, civil law, and professional duties add their own applicable controls. None of these sources proves the alleged cause merely by regulating the response.

Authority is therefore visible partly in what a responsible minister declines to do: no amateur experiment, no public performance, no coercion dressed as persistence, no displacement of treatment, and no promise of certainty the evidence cannot bear. Confidentiality protects the person, but it does not conceal abuse or override duties of emergency and protective disclosure. Consent protects freedom, but it does not authorize harmful conduct. Clinical consultation protects competent judgment, but it does not transfer a religious decision to a clinician.

Latin and Eastern Catholic differences matter, and this study does not project Latin law onto an Eastern Church. Catholics should seek the competent authority of their own Church; comparison does not license borrowed rites. The Catholic center remains Christological: evil is not God, Christ is victor, prayer is not magic, and the afflicted person remains neighbor.

15.7 Why restraint is a substantive conclusion

Restraint can sound like the absence of an answer, especially in a field shaped by dramatic claims. Here it is part of the answer. The source history shows that words, offices, and rites have changed; theology distinguishes creaturely possibility from factual attribution; law distinguishes priesthood from permission; clinical and safeguarding competence distinguish care from metaphysical judgment. Refusing to collapse those distinctions is the constructive synthesis of the study.

This restraint is not a compromise between belief and unbelief. It follows from the positive claims on each side of the boundary. Because evil is creaturely rather than divine, fear need not grant it limitless knowledge or power. Because the human person retains dignity, distress does not make that person an object of spectacle or experiment. Because this sacramental is an ecclesial act whose effects are sought through the Church's intercession rather than a controllable mechanism, a text cannot be used as private technique. Because authority is accountable, confidence in a personal gift cannot replace a lawful act. Because natural causes and dangers are real, care cannot wait for metaphysical agreement.

The same logic protects historical inquiry. A bounded conclusion is not weak because it refuses a larger inherited story. It is stronger because the reader can identify the witness, authority, genre, date, and limit that support it. The resulting history does not offer an ancient secret recovered for modern use. It offers a more demanding form of continuity: fidelity to Christ joined to fidelity about what the sources can actually bear.

15.8 The measure of a Christian response

The final measure is not how much attention a ministry gives the devil. It is whether the Church's action makes Christ's lordship credible through truth, freedom, mercy, prudence, and protection of the weak. An authorized major exorcism may form part of ecclesial care when competent authority authorizes it under the Church's discipline; that authorization is not proof of cause. Most readers will never encounter one. Every reader can refuse superstition, protect a suffering person, use ordinary prayer, receive the sacraments, seek competent help, and resist the glamour by which evil asks to become the center of the story.

This conclusion is deliberately less dramatic than the cultural image of the subject. It leaves unresolved what the evidence does not resolve and refuses to make a suffering person carry the burden of proving a worldview. It also refuses the opposite reduction by which the historical and theological claims of the Church are dismissed without being heard in their own terms. Sober Catholic practice requires neither credulity nor contempt. It requires confidence in Christ joined to truthful evidence, competent care, lawful authority, and patience with uncertainty.

Where this study leaves the reader

Do not attempt a rite, diagnosis, confrontation, or test. In immediate danger, contact the emergency or protective service appropriate to the jurisdiction. Do not change prescribed treatment on a minister's instruction; consult the treating clinician. For Catholic pastoral help, begin with a parish or the competent diocesan or eparchial authority; Orthodox Christians should begin with their canonical parish and bishop. Confidential, accountable care is not a failure of faith.

16 Scope, Method, and Historical Coordinates

16.1 Question, corpus, and periods

This study asks how diverse biblical, initiatory, pastoral, and ritual practices became the modern Latin Church's restricted major exorcism, and what the resulting history and current discipline do—and do not—authorize. Its selected corpus begins with Israelite and Second Temple contexts, moves through New Testament narratives, early Christian apology and initiation, late-antique offices and representative medieval Western books, and then follows the Roman Ritual, codification, twentieth-century reform, and current official sources. It is not an exhaustive catalog of rites, demonologies, local practice, or reported cases.

16.2 Place, Churches, language, and terminology

The historical account is principally Mediterranean and Western; its legal center is the Latin Church, with U.S. territorial implementation considered separately. A bounded comparison identifies why Latin law and ritual cannot be projected onto Eastern Catholic Churches; it does not state Orthodox law or practice. Ancient sources are read through the exact Greek, Latin, or identified English witnesses recorded in the source audit, including the Douay–Rheims/Challoner reception text, Robinson–Pierpont Byzantine Greek, Charles's English *Jubilees*, Whiston's Josephus, and identified patristic and ritual editions. No Hebrew or Syriac wording supports a publication claim, and absence of an original-language collation is stated where material.

“Exorcism” is a family of historically changing uses, not the name of one unchanged ceremony. “Major exorcism” here means the solemn Latin liturgical act governed by canon 1172 and the applicable Roman ritual book. “Minor exorcism” refers chiefly to authorized initiatory prayers and never by itself implies possession. “Deliverance” creates neither a canonical category nor permission. Doctrine, school theology, historical witness, universal law, territorial implementation, clinical judgment, and project synthesis remain distinct.

16.3 Evidence classes, hierarchy, and method

Canonical narratives are read in their own literary and theological settings. Ancient and medieval texts establish what a witness says and how a practice was represented, not an event's hidden cause or incidence. Official acts establish their own law, rite, publication, or guidance; they do not retrospectively authenticate a reported case. Modern scholarship assists reconstruction but does not supply ecclesiastical authority. Clinical classifications and safeguarding literature control claims within their professional scope, not theological judgments.

The method separates contemporary or near-contemporary evidence, later narrative and institutional memory, official reception, and modern reconstruction. It records textual and jurisdictional variation rather than silently harmonizing it. Loudun is the sole named case admitted, and only as a documentary and institutional study of competing acts and reception. Other named cases were excluded after a case-specific audit did not recover a sufficient chain for the claims they would be asked to bear.

16.4 Legal scope and currentness

The controlling universal law is the 1983 *Codex Iuris Canonici* for the Latin Church, promulgated by John Paul II on 25 January 1983 and in force from 27 November 1983, in its official Latin text, especially canons 1, 134 §§1–3, and 1172. Pertinent dicastery acts and the current Roman ritual discipline are distinguished

from the USCCB’s account of the English edition implemented for the Latin dioceses of the United States. The published authentic-interpretations compilation and the official Code and liturgical pages were checked through 28 July 2026: the compilation contains no entry for canons 134 or 1172, and the governing Code text remains as recorded. This was not a comprehensive amendment-or-repeal inventory. Particular law and diocesan processes may add applicable controls and must be obtained from the competent authority. This work gives no opinion on an individual case.

16.5 Global uncertainties and rights

No auditable global dataset establishes the frequency or outcomes of major exorcism. Ancient and medieval reports usually cannot be retrospectively diagnosed, and several early liturgical corpora have disputed dates, attributions, or compositional histories. The proprietary current ritual is neither reproduced nor operationally summarized. Protected modern works are quoted only in focused excerpts or paraphrased.

The title page quotes one focused passage from Gene Wolfe’s protected *The Devil in a Forest* for criticism and discussion. A reader attested the exact wording, the Abbé as speaker, and p. 207 in the first Orb edition (1996); the project did not acquire or independently collate that protected page. The adjacent “exorcist club” sentence is displayed under the attribution “Anonymous.” Its endnote identifies the editorial adaptation after Chuck Palahniuk’s *Fight Club*, ch. 6 (1996), as popularized in Jim Uhls’s screenplay for David Fincher’s 1999 film. It is not presented as wording from either work, and no novel, screenplay, or film bytes are retained.

The repository’s CC BY 4.0 terms apply only to project-created synthesis, organization, and other contributions that the project may license. Scripture, liturgical and official texts, received translations, historical source wording, and modern scholarship retain their own status. The few biblical phrases quoted in the body use the identified public-domain Douay–Rheims/Challoner witness; ancient and medieval witnesses, official acts, modern scholarship, and clinical or safeguarding sources are otherwise paraphrased at identified loci. The Wolfe excerpt and the expression underlying the labeled adaptation remain excluded third-party material. No scan, ritual formulary, modern-source table, diagnostic criteria, case transcript, recording, or third-party image is reproduced.

16.6 Completion and reliance

This study has no ecclesiastical authority and is not a diagnostic, clinical, legal, or ritual guide; it does not replace competent pastoral, medical, mental-health, emergency, protective, or canonical help.

The historical-accounts profile governs the narrative. The articles profile applies only to bounded theological-authority and current-law claims. The study contains more than 100 Arabic-numbered substantive pages, from the governing thesis through the pastoral conclusion, before the terminal apparatus. It is a bounded comprehensive study of the representative, source-audited corpus named above, not an exhaustive catalog of every witness, local rite, particular law, or reported case. Inaccessible or deliberately excluded source families remain documented ceilings and future research rather than unstated support for this study’s claims. It has been source-audited and production-reviewed; no specialist, clerical, intended-reader, or ecclesiastical review or approval is claimed.

17 Dated Witness, Act, and Edition Orientation

This orientation dates the acts and witnesses that carry the argument. It is not a chronology of an unchanged rite. A date may belong to a narrated event, a work’s composition, a surviving manuscript, a later edition,

or a modern inspection. Those dates answer different questions. The entries therefore identify both the historical coordinate and the source function for which the item is used.

17.1 Narrative, comparative, and early Christian coordinates

Israelite and deuterocanonical witnesses. First Samuel 16 and Tobit 6–8 belong to different textual and narrative histories. This study controls the former through Kittel’s 1909 Hebrew, Swete’s 1909 Greek, Hetzenauer’s 1914 Clementine Latin, and an identified English reception; it controls Tobit through Swete’s 1896 Vatican and Sinaitic Greek forms and Hetzenauer’s Clementine Latin. The publication dates identify the exact editions inspected, not the dates of the underlying narratives. Their differences do not establish one primitive ritual sequence.

Second Temple and early Roman-period witnesses. *Jubilees* 10, the Qumran fragments selected here, the Genesis Apocryphon, and Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.45–49 preserve unlike literary situations: petition, hymnic protection, fragmentary address, expanded narrative, and historiographic performance report. Modern transcriptions and Charles’s or Whiston’s English editions control the wording available to this study; they do not redetermine composition dates or turn the witnesses into one shared rite. The exact Niese digital Greek controls Josephus’s section boundaries separately from Whiston’s later English reception.

Selected comparative genres. The Hippocratic *On the Sacred Disease*, Plato’s *Symposium*, Lucian’s *Philopseudes*, Philostratus’s *Life of Apollonius*, and PGM IV.3007–3086 occupy medical-polemical, philosophical, satirical, biographical, and technical-text settings. Their modern printed controls date from 1849, 1925, 1905, 1912, and 1928 respectively. These items establish that related vocabulary and motifs appeared in different explanatory and literary systems. They do not establish a transmission line into Christian practice, and the technical item supplies no operative material here.

First century: canonical Christian witness. Gospel and Acts narratives place expulsion of hostile spirits within Jesus’ kingdom ministry and apostolic mission; Pauline passages order conflict language toward worship, allegiance, holiness, armor, and prayer. The exact SBLGNT and Robinson–Pierpont controls used here are modern editions of ancient texts. They support literary and theological comparison, not a later diagnostic taxonomy, ministerial office, or ritual handbook.

Second and early third centuries: apologetic claims. Justin, Tertullian, and Origen address different audiences and make distinguishable public arguments about Christian expulsion and rival ritual speech. The exact English witnesses and the old-edition Latin or Greek controls verify what those authors argue. They are not case registers, independent outcome reports, or measures of common practice. Their chronological proximity does not convert three literary claims into three corroborating observations.

Third century: titles and personnel. Cornelius’s c. 251 Roman clergy list survives in fourth-century Eusebius and gives one combined total for exorcists, readers, and door-keepers. A Carthaginian confessors’ letter transmitted in the Cyprianic collection names an exorcist and a reader among clergy present. These witnesses establish enumeration and titles within their respective documents. They do not supply a separate Roman exorcist count, an ordination rule, ordinary duties, or institutional uniformity between Rome and North Africa.

Fourth-century initiation and discipline. Jerusalem catecheses place exorcism, renunciation, and confession within preparation for baptism; Gregory Nazianzen’s *Oration* 40.27 exhorts candidates not to reject lengthy preparation. The *Apostolic Tradition* complex is represented only through Easton’s 1934 identified reconstruction, whose unity, attribution, date, provenance, and wording remain disputed. Laodicea 26 is controlled through Percival’s 1900 historical English text. The late-fourth-century *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII.22–26, checked in Funk’s 1905 Greek and Latin edition, distinguishes several relations

between charism, category, and ordination. These are separate regional and generic witnesses, not stages in a proved universal sequence.

17.2 Medieval books, theology, and Roman edition states

Late antique rule through medieval collections. The material conventionally called the *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua* is used through Ballerini's older edited text, Maassen's 1870 source history, and the current MGH *Clavis canonum* notice. Together they control a bounded book-delivery rule and the fact that the material survives within materially varied later compilations. They do not supply Munier's unacquired critical text, a single uncomplicated promulgation event, or a direct line to the modern major exorcism.

Late eighth century: the Gellone manuscript. Paris, BnF, Latin 12048, fols. 194v–199v visibly preserves a differentiated sequence for recipients described by several rubrics before the book moves to relic deposition and church dedication. The exact manuscript images and BnF catalog coordinates control book position, rubric, and visible sequence. They do not establish the date of every textual stratum, actual performance, frequency, normativity, or the wording of the uninspected Dumas–Deshusses critical edition.

Early medieval baptismal material. The Gelasian Sacramentary survives through layered manuscript and editorial histories. Wilson's 1894 edition, pp. 45–50, controls the selected preparation-of-the-elect material used here. It establishes placement in that printed witness rather than the date, authorship, or geographical prevalence of every component prayer.

Tenth century: the *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum*. Vogel–Elze volume I, p. 14 (XV.7) and p. 17 (XV.17–19), supports a bounded ordinal architecture: named grades, a distinct exorcist unit, and association with a book containing exorcisms. The date belongs to the compiled pontifical tradition, while Vogel–Elze is the modern critical-edition control inspected. No named manuscript was collated, and no actual ordination, ordinary duty, frequency, or later textual descent is inferred.

Late medieval England: Parker MS 79. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library MS 79, fols. 43r–43v, places exorcist ordination between reader and acolyte ordinations and visibly presents episcopal book delivery. It is one local pontifical witness. Probable London production and proposed patronage or ownership remain catalog inferences; the manuscript does not establish Western representativeness or direct dependence on the PRG.

Thirteenth century: scholastic distinction. Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* III, q. 71, distinguishes preparatory exorcistic acts from Baptism's sacramental effect and places the exorcist in an assisting office. The coordinate belongs to theological reception, not to a new ritual edition or a census of practice. Aquinas can clarify how one school account relates preparation, sacrament, and ministry; he cannot supply the missing local history of use.

1614: a bounded first-edition state. Paul V issues the *Rituale Romanum*. An independent modern collation reports *De exorcizandis obsessis a daemonio* beginning at p. 198, the next unit at p. 220, the index at p. 225, and errata at p. 227. This securely bounds one terminal section of the princeps. Because direct page-image bytes remain unacquired, the 1614 coordinate does not control its interior wording, typography, formulas, or practical reception.

1872, 1895, and 1925: three later printed coordinates. The exact 1872 Pustet first Regensburg edition preserves *De exorcizandis obsessis a daemonio* as one continuous unnumbered unit at printed pp. 281–301. The 1895 Roman Pontifical separately retains an ordinal section for exorcists. The 1925 Roman Ritual reset presents title XI in three chapters. These witnesses show that ritual-book architecture

and the history of the ordained grade must be kept in separate ledgers. Structural recurrence establishes neither unchanged text nor unchanged use.

1917–1918: codification. The first Latin Code is promulgated in 1917; the 1918 Vatican Polyglot book witness controls canons 1151–1153. Those canons distinguish permission and ministerial qualifications, eligible subjects, and exorcisms embedded in other rites. This legal cluster is broader than the single current canon, but the comparison does not establish substantive continuity for omitted provisions. It is between identified legal texts, not a finding about an individual permission or diocesan practice.

25 January 1952: a typical-edition ceiling. The Sacred Congregation of Rites' *Cum denuo*, as described by the 2008 anastatic edition's editors, identifies a sixth typical edition with twelve titles. Title XII's reported outer extent is pp. 847–886, items 2115–2174. No complete public facsimile was available for internal collation. The date and outer architecture are controlled at a lower depth than the exact 1872 pages, and historical identity does not authorize present use.

17.3 Reform, current law, and territorial implementation

1972–1973: the office-history break. Paul VI issues *Ministeria quaedam* on 15 August 1972; its norms take effect on 1 January 1973. The former minor orders are called ministries, lector and acolyte remain universal Latin ministries, and other ministries require a conference request and an Apostolic-See decision. Naming exorcist as an example of a ministry that might be requested neither universally institutes it nor supplies the particular and express permission later required by canon 1172.

1983: current Latin codal reservation. John Paul II promulgates the revised Latin Code on 25 January; it takes force on 27 November. Canons 1, 134 §§1–3, and 1172 together control Latin scope, the generic term “local ordinary,” and the reservation of licit exorcism over the possessed to a priest with particular and express permission. The Code establishes universal Latin law. It does not establish the facts of a case, the scope of an uninspected grant, or applicable particular law.

29 September 1985 and 14 September 2000: disciplinary boundaries. The CDF's 1985 letter forbids the faithful's use of the Leonine formula and separately governs unauthorized assemblies that directly address demons and seek their identity. Its 2000 *Instruction on Prayers for Healing*, article 8, distinguishes healing services from exorcism and reaffirms dependence on the diocesan bishop. The two acts answer different abuses and must not be collapsed into a generic permission or a ritual summary.

1990: an Eastern codal boundary. The *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium*, especially canons 1–3, confirms that the Latin Code's canon 1172 cannot simply be projected onto Eastern Catholic Churches. Canons 668 and 867 establish a bounded common-law floor for liturgical worship and sacramentals, while the checked Ruthenian and Melkite sources illustrate initiatory placement without supplying a uniform major-exorcism rule. Church-specific particular law, current stand-alone ritual books, and Orthodox discipline remain unsurveyed. The date therefore marks a positive jurisdictional limit, not a comprehensive account of Eastern practice.

1998–2004: promulgation, presentation, and reprint. A decree dated 22 November 1998 promulgates the revised book; the Latin typical edition appears in 1999, the dicastery presents it on 26 January 1999, and an emended reprint appears in 2004. These are distinct publication acts. The 2004 state is not treated as a second typical edition, and the sequence does not by itself describe territorial translation, implementation, or authorization of a local minister.

2014–2017: one territorial implementation. The USCCB approves the English edition in November 2014, the Holy See confirms the final text in December 2016, and it takes effect in U.S. Latin dioceses on

29 June 2017. These dates establish the identified United States chronology. They are not a universal implementation date, evidence of a particular diocesan process, or authority for projecting U.S. pastoral guidance into every territory.

10 January 2021: instituted ministries. *Spiritus Domini* changes canon 230 §1 to admit qualified lay persons without a sex restriction to stable institution as lector or acolyte. It creates no universal exorcist ministry and does not amend canon 1172. The act therefore belongs to the history of instituted ministries, not to the local authorization ladder for major exorcism.

22 October 2021: implementation of amended canon 838. The competent dicastery issued the implementation decree checked as operative at the cutoff, including the exorcism book's preliminary norm 37. A conference approves a complete faithful translation for submission for *confirmatio*; proposed adaptations follow a distinct route involving Holy See consent and *recognitio*. Neither act is the priest's local canon 1172 permission.

5 June 2022: current curial competence. *Praedicate Evangelium*, issued 19 March 2022, takes effect on 5 June. Articles 88–90 state the present competence of the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments over Apostolic-See liturgical regulation, typical books, confirmation and recognition, and sacramentals. This central competence remains distinct from a conference's acts and from a local ordinary's permission to a priest.

27–28 July 2026: research and currentness coordinates. Current-law deliveries, the published authentic-interpretations compilation, and additional historical controls were checked through these dates as recorded in the source audit. The exact official texts showed no published authentic interpretation for canons 134 or 1172 in the inspected compilation. This is a dated text-and-register check, not a comprehensive amendment-or-repeal inventory. It closes this dated research snapshot without converting a currentness check into a claim of permanent completion.

17.4 How to read the sequence

Four transitions organize the dated evidence. First, canonical, apologetic, initiatory, and comparative texts supply different kinds of witness before there is a fixed Roman book. Second, late-antique and medieval sources differentiate baptismal preparation, recipients described as afflicted, and an ordained grade; their coexistence does not prove identity or linear descent. Third, printed Roman editions and codification create increasingly identifiable book and legal states without documenting actual frequency or efficacy. Fourth, modern reform separates universal law, typical-book governance, conference action, territorial implementation, curial competence, and local permission. The history is therefore a sequence of changing documentary relations, not the survival of one timeless procedure.

18 References by Source Function

18.1 Scripture and received teaching

Selected loci in 1 Samuel 16 (Kittel's 1909 Hebrew, Swete's 1909 Greek *1 Kingdoms*, Hetzenauer's 1914 Clementine Latin *1 Regum*, and the Douay–Rheims/Challoner English reception); Tobit 6–8 (Swete's 1896 Vatican and Sinaitic Greek forms and Hetzenauer's 1914 Clementine Latin *Tobias*); Matthew 4, 7, 8, 12, 17; Mark 1, 3, 5, 9; Luke 4, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13; Acts 16 and 19; 1 Corinthians 10; 2 Corinthians 6; and Ephesians 6. Greek controls include Robinson–Pierpont's 2018 Byzantine textform and Michael W. Holmes, ed., *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition*, v1.2 electronic text and comparison apparatus (2023), CC BY 4.0.

Exact biblical editions, artifacts, and textual limits are recorded in the source audit. Mark 9:29 additionally uses the Institut für Neutestamentliche Textforschung, *Novum Testamentum Graecum: Editio Critica Maior*, I.2, *The Gospel of Mark* (2021), digital apparatus and text-critical commentary at word address 9:29/29, including the dated correction record for GA 706. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 391–395, 550, 1237, 1667, 1670, 1673, 1700–1706, 1734–1735, 1857, 1859, 2111, 2116–2117, 2846–2854. Fourth Lateran Council, *Firmiter credimus*.

18.2 Ancient Jewish and Christian witnesses

Jubilees 10.1–11, trans. R. H. Charles (1913). Genesis Apocryphon 1Q20 XX.14–29 and 4Q560 fragments 1–2, exact dated Comprehensive Aramaic Lexicon transcriptions. Songs of the Sage, 4Q510 fragment 1 and 4Q511 fragment 10, and 11Q11 V.4–14, exact dated Qumran-Digital Hebrew transcriptions. These transcription controls preserve lacunae and uncertainty; they are not publication translations or manuscript-image collations. Israel Antiquities Authority, Leon Levy Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Library, official manuscript records for 4Q510, 4Q511, and 11Q11 (accessed 28 July 2026), used only for manuscript identity, material, broad period, plate-group, and official-publication coordinates; IAA images are not reproduced. Josephus, *Antiquities* 8.45–49, exact Perseus Niese Greek digital text and Whiston’s English reception. Justin, *Second Apology* 6, Dods–Reith English. Tertullian, *Apology* 23, Thelwall English; Oehler–Mayor–Souter, eds., *Apologeticus* (Cambridge, 1917), pp. 79–83, Latin historical control. Origen, *Against Celsus* 1.6, 1.25, and 7.4, Crombie English; Paul Koetschau, ed., *Origenes Werke*, vols. 1–2 (Leipzig, 1899), pp. 59–60, 75–77, and 156–157, Greek historical controls. Jerusalem *Procatechesis* 9 and *Mystagogical Catechesis* 1.4–9, Gifford English. Gregory Nazianzen, *Oration* 40.27, Browne–Swallow English. The Carthaginian confessors’ letter transmitted as Cyprianic *Epistle* 16, Wallis English. Eusebius, *Church History* 6.43.11, McGiffert English; Eduard Schwartz and Theodor Mommsen, eds., *Eusebius Werke*, vol. 2, part 2 (Leipzig, 1908), p. 618, Greek historical control. The English Tertullian, Origen, Jerusalem, Gregory, Carthaginian, and Eusebius witnesses are exact dated New Advent delivery states acquired and hashed 2026-07-27. The Latin and Greek editions are exact public-domain historical controls, not current critical editions or manuscript collations. B. S. Easton, *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* (Cambridge, 1934), introduction and chs. 20–21, is used as an exact identified reconstruction whose versional basis and stated restoration limits remain controlling. Laodicea 26 is read in Henry R. Percival’s historical English text in *NPNF*, second series, vol. 14 (1900), exact PDF artifact p. 317, and in Joannou’s 1962 Greek, Latin, and French printed p. 141; Joannou pp. 127–129 bound the collection as a local Phrygian summary tradition. Wider reception and manuscript collation remain outstanding. *Apostolic Constitutions* VIII.22–26, in Franz Xaver von Funk, ed., *Didascalia et Constitutiones Apostolorum*, vol. I (Paderborn, 1905), pp. 528–529, Greek with facing Latin and apparatus; James Donaldson’s *Ante-Nicene Fathers* 7 (Buffalo, 1886), p. 493, as a historical English aid. Funk was inspected from page images rather than Greek OCR; Marcel Metzger’s later critical edition in *Sources Chrétiennes* 336 was not publicly acquired.

18.3 Ancient comparative contexts

On the Sacred Disease 1, trans. Francis Adams, *The Genuine Works of Hippocrates*, vol. 2 (London, 1849), pp. 843–845. Plato, *Symposium* 202d–203a, trans. Harold N. Fowler, *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, vol. 9 (1925), exact dated Perseus page states. Lucian, *Philopseudes* 16, trans. H. W. and F. G. Fowler, *The Works of Lucian of Samosata*, vol. 3 (Oxford, 1905), pp. 238–239. Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 4.20, trans. F. C. Conybeare, vol. 1 (London, 1912), pp. 390–392. Karl Preisendanz, ed., *Papyri Graecae Magicae*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1928), PGM IV.3007–3086, pp. 170–173. The last witness is used only for the bounded item’s textual architecture; no operative content is reproduced.

18.4 Ritual and theological witnesses

Royal commissioners, Loudun. *Extraict des registres de la commission ordonnée par le Roy* (Paris: I. Thoreau and A. Mesnier, 1634), 25 pp.; and *Arest de condemnation de mort contre maistre Urbain Grandier* (Paris: Estienne Hébert and Jacques Poullard, 1634), pp. 1–7.

Grandier defense. *Factum pour maistre Urbain Grandier* ([s.l.: s.n.], 1634), 12 pp.

Tranquille de Saint-Remi, O.F.M.Cap. *Véritable relation des justes procédures observées au fait de la possession des Ursulines de Loudun et au procès de Grandier* (1634), especially scan pp. 10, 13, 21, 23, and 29–31.

Anonymous Loudun reception pamphlet. *Relation de la sortie du demon Balam* (1635), exact Internet Archive scan used as a whole reception artifact.

Gelasian Sacramentary, selected scrutinies and exorcisms. *Sacramentarium Gellonense*, Paris, BnF, Latin 12048, fols. 194v–199v, exact Gallica IIF manifest and images; BnF manuscript catalog for the Dumas-derived coordinates no. 2406, no. 2412, and section 355. The Dumas–Deshusses CCSL edition was not inspected. *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua*, Ballerini editorial text reprinted in Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 56 (Paris, 1850), cols. 887–888, item 7/XCV; Friedrich Maassen, *Geschichte der Quellen und der Literatur des canonischen Rechts im Abendlande*, vol. 1 (Graz, 1870), pp. 382–394; MGH *Clavis canonum*, “Statuta ecclesiae antiqua,” dated web state 28 July 2026. Charles Munier’s reconstruction in *Concilia Galliae*, CCSL 148, pp. 166–185, was not acquired or inspected. *Pontificale Romano-Germanicum*, Vogel–Elze edition, volume I, pp. 14 and 17 (XV.7, 17–19); no manuscript collation. Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Parker Library MS 79, fols. 43r–43v, “Ordination of exorcists,” exact Stanford IIF manifest and width-2000 images, licensed CC BY-NC 4.0; probable London origin and proposed patronage or ownership are catalog inferences. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, first part, question 57, article 4; question 111, articles 2–4; question 114, articles 2–3; and third part, question 71, articles 2–4. Hildegard of Bingen, *Causae et curae*, ed. Paul Kaiser (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903), book II, pp. 90–92, especially *De amentia*, p. 91. Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. Joseph Strange, vol. II (Cologne, Bonn, and Brussels, 1851), distinction VII, chapter 24, pp. 52–53. Hermann Joseph Wasserschleben, ed., *Die Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche* (Halle, 1851), *Capitula Dacheriana* 151, pp. 158–159, and the related *De vexatis a diabulo*, §§1–5, pp. 211–212. Regino of Prüm, *Libri duo de synodalibus causis*, ed. F. W. H. Wasserschleben (Leipzig, 1840), book I, *Notitia*, questions 76–95, pp. 51–52. These public-domain historical editions are exact genre controls, not modern critical editions, representative corpora, or evidence of diagnosis, prevalence, efficacy, caseload, or uniform medieval practice. Metropolitan Cantor Institute, *The Mystery of Baptism*, English study PDF (file metadata dated 10 December 2012), pp. 3–6, 10–11; and “The Exorcisms Before Baptism,” dated web state 28 July 2026, unofficial and provisional English based on the Roman 1952 *Malyj Trebnyk*. Melkite Greek Catholic Eparchy of Newton, *An Explanation of the Ceremonies of Christian Initiation*, English pastoral PDF (file metadata dated 16 December 2013), p. 1. These modern English witnesses are used only for jurisdiction-bounded edition history, approval status, and initiatory placement; no formula is reproduced and no stand-alone Eastern faculty rule is inferred. *Rituale Romanum Pauli V* (1614), *De exorcizandis obsessis a daemonio*, reported outer extent pp. 198–219. Petar Bašić, “Koji je bio latinski predložak Kašićeva *Rituala rimskoga* (1640).?,” *Bogoslovska smotra* 84, no. 4 (2014): 787–803, especially p. 788, secondary title and terminal-boundary collation. *Rituale Romanum* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1872), first Regensburg edition, title and approval leaves, and *De exorcizandis obsessis a daemonio*, printed pp. 281–301. *Rituale Romanum* (1925), title XI, chapters 1–3, electronic reset used only for chapter architecture. Manlio Sodi and Alessandro Toniolo, introduction to *Rituale Romanum: Editio typica 1952* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2008), pp. VII–IX; Manlio Sodi, *Esorcismi*, course notes (2017), p. 8 n. 29. These modern finding aids control only the 1952 edition identity, reported decree, twelve-title architecture, and title-XII outer extent. Paul VI, *Ministeria quaedam*

(15 August 1972), introduction, I–IV, effective 1 January 1973; AAS 64 (1972), 529–534, exact official Latin web state inspected 27 July 2026. Francis, *Spiritus Domini* (10 January 2021), amendment of CIC canon 230 §1 and immediate-effective-date clause; exact official Latin, with the official English page used only as a translation aid.

18.5 Eastern Christian transmission controls

Jacques Goar, ed., *Euchologion sive rituale Graecorum* (Paris, 1647), printed p. 719 onward, exact public-domain Commons facsimile artifact pp. 764–772; the distinct expanded 1730 edition’s commonly cited pp. 578–584 remain bibliographic coordinates. F. C. Conybeare, ed. and trans., *Rituale Armenorum* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), pp. 86–93. Heinrich Denzinger, ed., *Ritus Orientalium*, vol. I (Würzburg: Stahel, 1863), Coptic baptismal order pp. 215–219 and West-Syriac baptismal orders pp. 266–273 and 334–340. André Jacob, “Les euchologes du fonds Barberini grec,” *Didaskalia* 4 (1974): 131–222, especially 154–157; Dionysios Stathakopoulos, “The Boundaries between Possession and Disease: Medical Concepts in Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Exorcisms” (accepted manuscript, 2019), manuscript-history discussion and notes 22–30. The modern studies control manuscript coordinates, chronology, anonymity, and attribution status only; their protected bytes and wording are not retained.

18.6 Law and current official practice

Codex Iuris Canonici (1917), cc. 1151–1153; (1983), cc. 1, 134 §§1–3, 230, 1166–1172; John Paul II, *Sacrae disciplinae leges* (25 January 1983). *Codex Canonum Ecclesiarum Orientalium* (1990), cc. 1–3, 668 §1, 867 §§1–2, and the bounded legislative-structure loci cc. 110 §1, 150 §§2–3, 152, and 167; John Paul II, *Sacri canones* (18 October 1990), effective 1 October 1991; Holy See, “Codes of Canon Law,” dated 28 July 2026 amendment-index state. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, letter to ordinaries concerning exorcism (29 September 1985), AAS 77 (1985), 1169–1170; and *Instruction on Prayers for Healing* (14 September 2000), art. 8. Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *De Exorcismis et Supplicationibus Quibusdam*, promulgation decree (22 November 1998), 1999 typical edition, and 2004 emended reprint; official presentation (26 January 1999); decree implementing amended CIC canon 838 (22 October 2021), *In De Exorcismis et Supplicationibus Quibusdam*, praenotanda 37(a)–(b), official Latin with official English aid. USCCB Secretariat of Divine Worship, “Exorcism,” accessed 26 July 2026. Francis, *Praedicate Evangelium* (19 March 2022), arts. 88–90 and effective-date clause, effective 5 June 2022; exact official Latin, with the official English page used only as a translation aid.

18.7 Modern reconstruction and professional controls

Gene Wolfe, *The Devil in a Forest*, first Orb edition (New York: Orb/Tom Doherty Associates, 1996), p. 207. The focused quotation is a reader-attested literary point of departure used for criticism; the project did not independently collate the protected page, and fiction supplies neither Catholic teaching nor evidence that curses work. Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), ch. 6; and Jim Uhls, screenplay for David Fincher’s *Fight Club* (1999). These latter works identify the literary context and popular reception recorded in the endnote to the title-page epigraph attributed there to Anonymous; their protected wording and bytes are not reproduced.

Francis Young, *A History of Exorcism in Catholic Christianity* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), used critically as historical reconstruction. World Health Organization, *Clinical Descriptions and Diagnostic Requirements for ICD-11 Mental, Behavioural and Neurodevelopmental Disorders* (2024), used only within the bounded clinical discussion recorded in the source audit. United Kingdom Department for Education, *National action plan to tackle child abuse linked to faith or belief* (2012), used only for its England-specific safeguarding

evidence.

Notes

¹Editorial adaptation after Chuck Palahniuk, *Fight Club*, ch. 6 (1996); popularized in Jim Uhls's screenplay for David Fincher's *Fight Club* (1999).

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