

Tertullian and Cyprian do not give statements relative to mode. Augustine wrote (Homily IV), "After you professed your belief, three times did we submerge (*demersemus*) your heads in the sacred fountain." Ambrose wrote (*De Sacramenti*), "You were asked, Dost thou believe in God Almighty? Thou saidst, I believe; and thus thou was immersed (*mersist*), that is, thou was buried."

From this evidence we would seem to draw a rather mixed conclusion, although we are aware that the usual (and it would seem, the most natural) conclusion is that during the first few centuries, Immersion was the almost universal form of administering the rite. At this point, the statement that the early Church Fathers, being closest in point of time to the New Testament writings, would be most likely to interpret them accurately, might well give us pause.

*Mode as illustrated in frescoes and drawings.* In his revealing work, *Baptism and Christian Archaeology* (Oxford, 1903), Clement F. Rogers presents sixty examples of Christian art, dating from the first to the tenth century, and coming from Rome, Gaul, Spain, Milan, Ravenna, Armenia, Syria, Egypt, Byzantium, Sicily, Ireland, Lombardy, and Germany. In all of these cases, the person being baptized is standing in the water, usually naked, and water is pouring or being poured over his head. Frequently a dove is found in the pictures, representative of the Holy Spirit. In the earliest representations, the water is only ankle deep; but as the centuries pass, the water reaches the knees, the thighs, the waist, and finally the neck. There is usually another person in the representation (frequently John the Baptizer) who stands on a higher level, is clothed, and either guides the head of the candidate under the descending stream of water or places his hand upon him. There are no representations of Immersion until the ninth century, at which time three pictures of infants being immersed appear.

*Mode as related to the physical characteristics of ancient baptisteries.* In addition to providing us with pictorial evidence as to mode, Rogers delves into the question of whether or not such pictorial representations tell only part of the story. The question must yet be asked, Were these candidates also immersed as well as poured upon?

Rogers answers this query by providing us with data as to the size and shape of 38 baptisteries and baptismal fonts, dating from the second to the