Local Religious Life in England, *c*. 1160-1210

Rebecca Springer
Merton College

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History
University of Oxford
Trinity Term 2017

Short Abstract

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This is a thesis about the ideas and relationships which shaped local religious life, particularly the quotidian religious experiences of ordinary lay people, in late twelfth-century England. Local religious life was not primarily a product of developing ecclesiastical structures, nor of systematic pastoral reform, but rather of ministry relationships, in which one person or group received some kind of religious ministry from another. These relationships were coloured by the beliefs and practical interests of clerical and lay participants.

The elite clerical idea of prelacy—in which a prelate, endowed with the burden of pastoral care, spiritually governs subjects—was an old idea which reflected the relationship-based structure of religious life, and which writers adapted in response to local realities. The principal manifestation of this interaction between idea and practice was the claiming of certain lay people as the parishioners of religious houses and local churches: priests and parishioners were analogous, in the minds of ecclesiastics, to prelates and subjects. This grated against the reality that lay people actively shaped their own religious experiences. Local practices, as well as factors such as lordship, geography and association, influenced the ways in which laity and clergy in a given locality thought about their ministry relationships. Lay people in late twelfth-century England were not merely parishioners: they received ministries from the religious, anchorites, saints, and other lay people.

This thesis is intended as a corrective to the historiographical field of pastoral care: firstly for a particular historical moment, the second half of the twelfth century in England, but also as a model for future inquiry into other periods and regions. It builds a new conceptual foundation which demands, in turn, a reevaluation of local religious life beyond the late twelfth century and beyond England.

Long Abstract

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This is a thesis about the ideas and relationships which shaped local religious life, particularly the quotidian religious experiences of ordinary lay people, in late twelfth-century England. Local religious life was not primarily a product of developing ecclesiastical structures, nor of systematic pastoral reform, but rather of ministry relationships, in which one person or group received some kind of religious ministry from another. These relationships were coloured by the beliefs and practical interests of clerical and lay participants.

The thesis is intended in the first instance as a corrective to the historiographical field of 'pastoral care', which has long been defined by an anachronistic emphasis on the provision of particular religious ministries, namely preaching and the relevant sacraments. Historians have projected the spiritual requirements outlined by late medieval ecclesiastical reformers backward onto earlier periods and downward onto the laity, whose own interests have thus been conceptually subsumed into clerical agendas. In other words, 'pastoral care' in the current historiography is assumed to be an objective, atemporal category, rather than a historically contingent, elite, clerical idea. Pastoral care (*cura pastoralis*) in twelfth-century texts signified a superior's complete authority over and responsibility for the souls of his subjects. This thesis analyses the ways in which this idea interacted with the lived experiences of priests and lay people, but it also explores elements of lay religious experience which the relatively narrow clerical concept of pastoral care excluded, such as spiritual interactions with saints, hermits, and other lay people. By structuring inquiry around the ministry relationships in which lay people participated, and emphasising interpersonal authority relationships over institutional structures, this thesis cuts across traditional disciplinary boundaries which have constrained our understanding of the complicated relationship between ecclesiastical institutions and lay people.

In addition to its wider historiographical agenda, this thesis also reinterprets an under-studied and often misunderstood historical moment. The late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries in England have been frequently characterised as a transitional period between

the ‘monastic’ high Middle Ages and ‘pastoral’ late Middle Ages, leading to both neglect and teleological error. Additionally, historians tend to approach religious life in twelfth- and thirteenth-century England either through the study of texts, such as preaching treatises and confessor’s manuals, or through documentary sources, such as charters. The former approach struggles to link theory to practice, while the latter disproportionately emphasises pecuniary motives; the two perspectives are not often reconciled. These two methodologies are integrated by studying texts alongside sources for the localities in which they were written, working from the premise that, in addition to responding to supra-local intellectual influences, writers nuance their aims and emphases according to local realities. Six local case studies, each of which can be associated with a relevant text or texts, comprise the research for this thesis. They are Exeter diocese (Bartholomew of Exeter’s sermons); London (Peter of Cornwall’s *Pantheologus* and *Book of Revelations*); Northampton and its surroundings (Alexander of Ashby’s *On the Artful Method of Preaching* and sermons); ‘Ormland’, the area around southern Lincolnshire (Orm’s *Orrmulum*, a collection of Middle English homilies); Oxford and its surroundings (Robert of Cricklade’s *Homilies on Ezekiel* and Alexander Neckam’s Oxford sermons); and Wells archdeaconry (Thomas Agnellus’ sermons). These case studies were chosen in part because the associated texts have been little studied as sources for religious life; several have never been printed. While the resulting thesis is structured thematically, the localised integration of sources which are almost always studied separately provides fresh insights into a period that is often dismissed as too sparsely documented to support the study of lay religious experience. Moreover, contrasts between localities are drawn throughout the thesis, demonstrating the contingency of processes which are often assumed to have been uniform across England. Rather than a universal clerical theology being gradually imposed over variable ‘popular’ religious practices, this thesis describe elite ideas being adapted to, and even shaped by, local realities.

Chapter one (‘Prelacy’) introduces the concept of prelacy as propounded in the texts studied in this thesis. It asks how the authors of these texts exercised a functional prelacy—in addition to the offices of prelacy which many of them held—by writing. Writers drew on old, yet still current, ideas, many of them traceable to Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604), and moulded and applied them according to local interests. Chief among these was the idea that prelates should ‘teach by word and example’, *docere verbo et exemplo*: a phrase which represented not just a warning against hypocrisy, but the presupposition that preaching to subordinates was morally imperative. This coloured contemporary thinking about the education and equipping of preachers in a way that

modern historians have missed. The current scholarship turns on the question of whether and how priests and prelates could get access to textual aids that would improve their preaching. But the writers studied in this thesis assumed that good teaching derived from personal virtue, and conversely that any failure to preach was a manifestation not of insufficient resources, but of pastoral negligence. The prelate's responsibility to teach subordinates was all the more consequential in light of the assumption that they would instruct subordinate clergy and religious who themselves ministered to lay people. Alexander of Ashby and Bartholomew of Exeter aimed to ensure the proper administration of sacraments to lay people by directing instructional texts not to local priests themselves, but to their prelates. Peter of Cornwall aided the ministries of local priests, particularly the canons of his own priory, by collecting distinctions and miracle narratives for use in sermons to lay audiences. The notoriously enigmatic *Orrmulum* may have served a similar purpose for the regular canons of Orm's house, providing material which the canons utilised in public sermons to lay people. Thomas Agnellus and Robert of Cricklade focussed on improving the behaviour and augmenting the knowledge of subordinate clergy and religious through preaching. Their homilies and sermons demonstrate how contemporaries transposed the prelate-subject model of instruction—the enlightened superior guiding the inferior—onto relationships between local priests and lay people. Finally, the sermons of Alexander of Ashby, Bartholomew of Exeter, and Alexander Neckam show that all three men preached publicly to lay audiences. Motivated by the Gregorian idea of prelacy, in which the prelate or preacher intimately understands each subject or listener's spiritual needs and crafts his teaching accordingly, these preachers aimed to engage the unique interests of varied groups of listeners. This chapter argues that late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century English writers applied established ideas to the current realities of local religious ministry, and that prelacy was a potent idea because it mirrored the relationship-based structure of local religious life.

The principal manifestation of this interaction between idea and practice was the claiming of certain lay people as the parishioners of religious houses and local churches. Chapter two ('Parishioners') first establishes that the seemingly technical word *parochia* was in fact variable in meaning, representing at times a geographical area, a legal unit, or a spiritual community; reference to a parish in one sense did not necessarily imply the other senses. Similarly, the word *parochiana*/*us* did not simply mean the resident of a parish, first because the very idea of a parish was not always consistent, and more importantly because it was possible to speak of parishioners even in situations where a parish in any sense was absent. Calling someone a 'parishioner'

meant something. Religious houses claimed lay people as ‘their parishioners’ when they wanted to assert their alleged right to minister to them, especially to the exclusion of others: to claim responsibility for their pastoral care and the revenues thereof, to make them subjects. The writings of Alexander of Ashby point to the link between prelacy as exercised by preaching on behalf of the religious house and the claiming of lay people as parishioners. With this established, the chapter turns to descriptions of lay people as ‘parishioners’ of their local churches or priests. In some cases ‘parishioners’ are referred to essentially as monetary assets, but usually the word is used of lay people who have an interest in receiving ministries through their local church. Many of these cases involved lay people, called ‘parishioners’, actively advocating for religious ministries, often attempting to increase the frequency or range of ministries offered in their local chapel at the expense of a more distant mother church’s rights. This was the opposite of the passivity which being the subject of a prelate was supposed to entail. Personal and community interests, not an overarching theory of parochial jurisdiction, guided the negotiations in which ecclesiastics, patrons and ordinary lay people aimed to shape their ministry relationships. Because the state of being a ‘parishioner’ was subjective and relational, it was possible for a single person to be claimed as a parishioner by multiple parties, or not to be claimed as a parishioner at all. The conclusions of this study of a single word, ‘parishioner’, point to a radically new analytical model for the development of the English parish.

The bulk of chapter three (‘Local Variation’) is a detailed comparison of two vastly different localities, Ormland and London. In Ormland, relationships between local priests and lay people were relatively exclusive, stable, pastoral, and even reciprocal. Lay people knew exactly who their priests were. They paid tithes to their priests; in exchange they expected to receive certain spiritual ministries, to hold their priests to account in the delivery of those ministries, and even to minister to their priests by praying for them. Local priests, for their part, were tasked with instructing lay people in the manner of prelates: that is, priests were supposed to teach lay people by word and example. By contrast, in London, relationships between local priests and lay people were relatively detached. Priests saw the performance of masses and prayers, rather than sacramental ministry to or spiritual guidance of lay people, as their primary function; lay people relied on the priests of churches outside their geographical parishes for at least burial, and probably other ministries as well. A single lay person in London might maintain ministry relationships with several priests, including priests outside her parish, simultaneously. What is perhaps most surprising about the contrast between Ormland and London was that parish boundaries developed earlier, and were clearer and more

important, in London than in Ormland. The only plausible way to account for the variation between these localities is by recognising that ministry relationships were not always linked to the payment of tithes. Rather, the arrangement of ministry relationships in a locality determined how participants in those relationships thought about tithing. The chapter concludes with two further comparisons, describing aspects of ministry relationships in the town of Exeter and in the vicinity of Launceston (Corn.). Exeter presents the case of an urban area, which, because of the dominance of its cathedral, lacked parishes altogether; charitable donations made by prominent citizens suggest that some lay people maintained ministry relationships with many of the city's chaplains collectively. At Launceston, Peter of Cornwall's narration of a tithe dispute in which his grandfather was implicated points to the prioritisation of lord-tenant bonds and devotion to local saints over parish boundaries in the formation of ministry relationships. Local practices, as well as factors such as lordship, geography and association, influenced not only the arrangement of ministry relationships in a given locality, but the ways in which laity and clergy in that locality thought about those relationships.

Chapter four ('Other Ministers') explores the range of ministries offered to lay people by entities other than secular priests in local churches. It focusses on four categories which make clear and frequent appearances in the sources studied in this thesis. The first category is the religious. The extent and nature in this period of ministry to the laity by the religious, and particularly the service of local churches by regular canons, has been a persistent historiographical problem. It is argued that two specific ministries, public preaching and administration of or service in hospitals, were widely practiced by monks and regular canons. Moreover, the service of local churches by regular canons—accepting the pastoral care of parishioners in the fullest sense—was neither routine nor implausible. Instead, it was undertaken by some houses of regular canons in response to particular circumstances, such as the perceived moral rectitude of local priests or the geographical proximity of certain churches; or, as an outworking of an institutional ethos; or both. The chapter then turns to the murkier, but no less significant, evidence for special or holy places of various kinds as sites of ministry, and for the ministries of women and men, including anchorites. Holy places were not makeshift solutions for an inadequate 'parish system'; rather they allowed lay people to participate in ministry relationships which even the most virtuous and best-educated priest of a local church could not offer them. Two groups which are not conventionally thought of as ministers nevertheless appear in that role in the sources: saints and laymen. Although clerics and religious often had some role in promoting saints as ministers—and although they sometimes referred to saints merely as representations or validations of their own

ministries—lay individuals and communities also shaped their own relationships with saints, experiencing visions and miracles in the presence of tonsured onlookers. There is also evidence for lay people acting as interlocutors between lay communities and the divine and counselling members of their communities. Recognising the participation of 'other ministers' in local religious life further disrupts the illusion of a standardised distribution of religious services being gradually imposed in late twelfth-century England. Lay people were not only parishioners of local churches: in fact, in their minds, they may not have been parishioners at all. Instead they were participants in many ministry relationships, interacting with a wide and locally variable array of ministers.

Religious life in late twelfth-century England was local; it was relationship-based; it was shaped by ideas and practices which were distinct, yet causally related; it had many participants. The world which this thesis describes is not one of distinctive popular and literate religions, nor one of a harmonious, clerical-lay Christian piety. Instead, this thesis emphasises the dissonance between clerical and lay perspectives, while at the same time insisting that those perspectives only mattered insofar as they were worked out in the highly localised context of ministry relationships. Lay religious experience and clerical ministry must be studied together on a local scale, not because they constituted the separate ingredients for religious life, but because they were inextricable: they were causally related and in constant dialogue. This thesis builds a new conceptual foundation which demands, in turn, a reevaluation of local religious life beyond the late twelfth century and beyond England.

Acknowledgements

It goes without saying that I could not have written this thesis on my own. Many thanks are due to my supervisor, Ian Forrest, who has shaped this thesis and my academic career in many ways—most importantly by challenging me to push my ideas to their logical ends, and to state the implications confidently. John Blair kindly read and commented on part of chapter one and all of chapter two. Any remaining inadequacies are my own. Several colleagues, including Tessa Webber and Carl Watkins, responded helpfully to specific queries. Many others took time away from their own work to listen to and discuss my ideas. I am also grateful to all those who offered comments and questions when I presented aspects of this thesis at the Leeds International Medieval Congress in 2016, the Ecclesiastical History Society's Summer Conference in 2017, and the Thirteenth Century England Conference in 2017. Thanks are due to the staff of the many libraries and archives where this research was conducted for their advice and hospitality: Anne Crawford at Wells Cathedral, Ellie Jones at Exeter Cathedral, and Sandy Watson of the Spalding Gentlemen's Society stand out in this regard.

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Finally, I am grateful to my family and friends for their constant encouragement: particularly to my parents, to the people of Trinity Church Oxford, to Kristina Terpoy, and most of all to my husband, Joel. The three years spent writing this thesis have more significantly been the first three years of our partnership.

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Abbreviations

AA I	Alexander of Ashby, *Alexandri Essebiensis opera omnia I: Opera theologica*, ed. F. Morenzoni, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 188 (Turnhout, 2004).
AA II	Alexander of Ashby, *Alexandri Essebiensis opera omnia II: Opera poetica*, ed. G. Dinkova-Bruun, Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 188A (Turnhout, 2004).
AN	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Wood empt. 13
BE	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 449
BL	London, British Library
Bodl.	Oxford, Bodleian Library
CHT	G.A.J. Hodgett, *The Cartulary of Holy Trinity Aldgate*, London Record Society, 7 (Leicester, 1971)
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CD	*The Cartulary of Daventry Priory*, ed. M.J. Franklin, Northamptonshire Record Society, 35 (Northampton, 1988)
CO	*Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, ed. H.E. Salter, Oxford Historical Society, 89-91, 97-8, 101 (6 vols., Oxford, 1929-36)
CRO	Cornwall Record Office
CSB	*Cartulary of St Bartholomew's Hospital, Founded 1123: A Calendar*, ed. N.J.M. Kerling (London, 1973)
CSF	*The Cartulary of the Monastery of St. Frideswide at Oxford*, ed. S.R. Wigram, Oxford Historical Society, 28, 31 (2 vols., Oxford, 1895-6)
CSP	*Early Charters of the Cathedral Church of St Paul, London*, ed. M. Gibbs, Camden Third Series, 58 (London, 1939)
DHC	Devon Heritage Centre
EEA	*English Episcopal Acta*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
Ex. Cath.	Exeter Cathedral Archives
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Dean and Chapter of Wells* (2 vols., London, 1907-1914)
JEH	*Journal of Ecclesiastical History*
JMH	*Journal of Medieval History*
LA	Wells Cathedral Library, Liber Albus
Lincs. Arch.	Lincolnshire Archives
LLRRO	Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Record Office

LR	*Peter of Cornwall's Book of Revelations*, ed. and trans. R. Easting and R. Sharpe (Toronto, 2013)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica
Morey	A. Morey, *Bartholomew of Exeter, Bishop and Canonist: A Study in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1937)
NRO	Northamptonshire Record Office
OHS	Oxford Historical Society
Ormulum	*The Ormulum*, ed. R.M. White and R. Holt, 2nd edn. (2 vols., Oxford, 1878)
PL	Patrologia Latina
RC	Cambridge University Library, MS Pembroke 30
Rolls Ser.	Rerum Britannicarum medii aevi scriptores
RP	Gregory the Great, *Règle pastorale*, ed. B. Judic, C. Morel and F. Rommel, Sources Chrétiennes, 381, 382 (2 vols., Paris, 1992)
SHC	Somerset Heritage Centre
SC	Sources Chrétiennes
TA	Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud misc. 71
TRHS	*Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
Visitations	W. Sparrow Simpson, 'Visitations of Certain Churches in the City of London in the Patronage of St. Paul's Cathedral Church, Between the Years 1138 and 1250', *Archaeologia*, 55 (Jan. 1897)

Note on Translations

I use editors' translations (indicated by 'ed. and trans.' in the citation) unless otherwise noted. All other translations are my own. The original language of translated quotations is supplied in footnotes only for sources which lack a modern print edition.

Maps

Figure 1. Town of Exeter
Drawn using N. Orme, *The Churches of Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2014), p. 4. Used with permission.

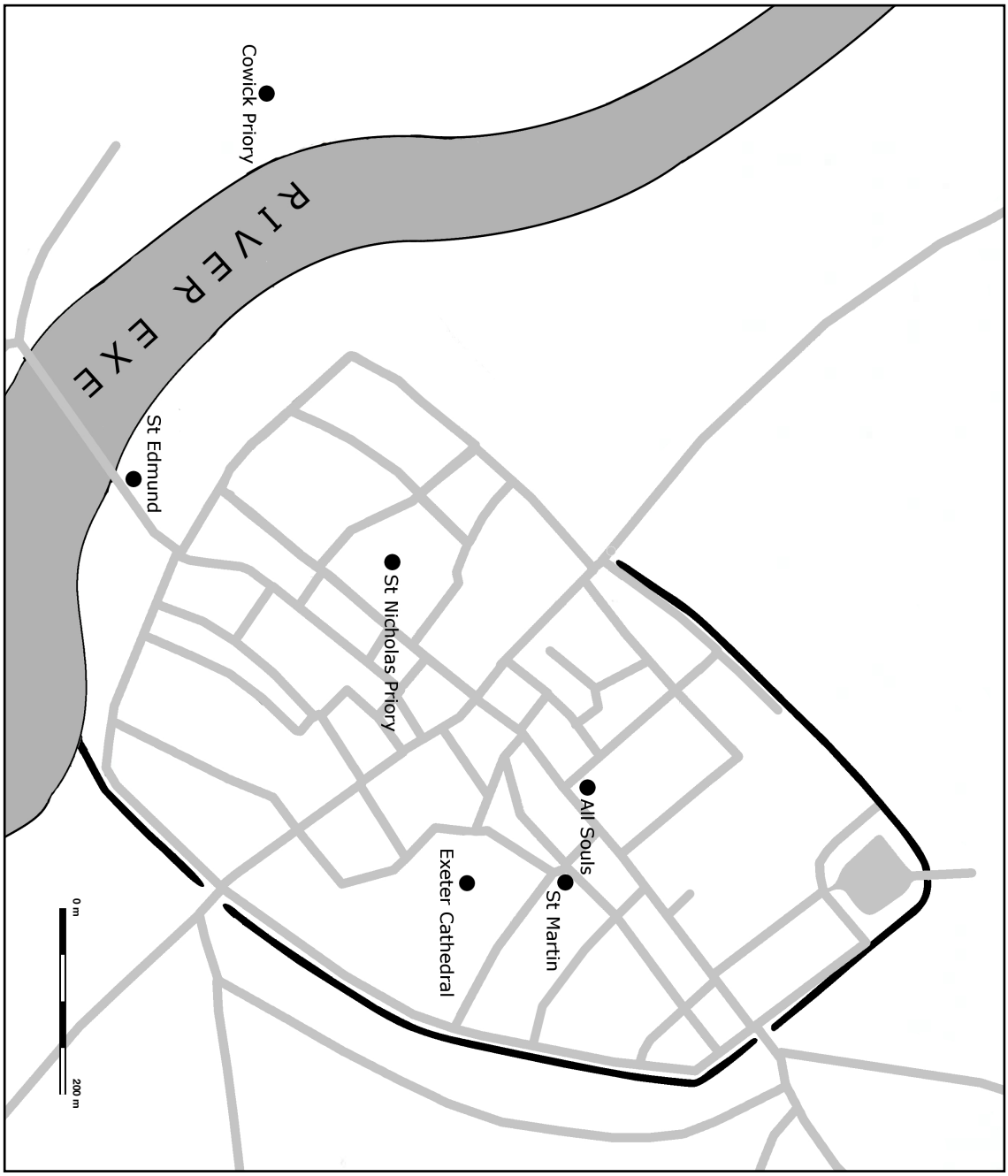


Figure 2. Exeter Diocese

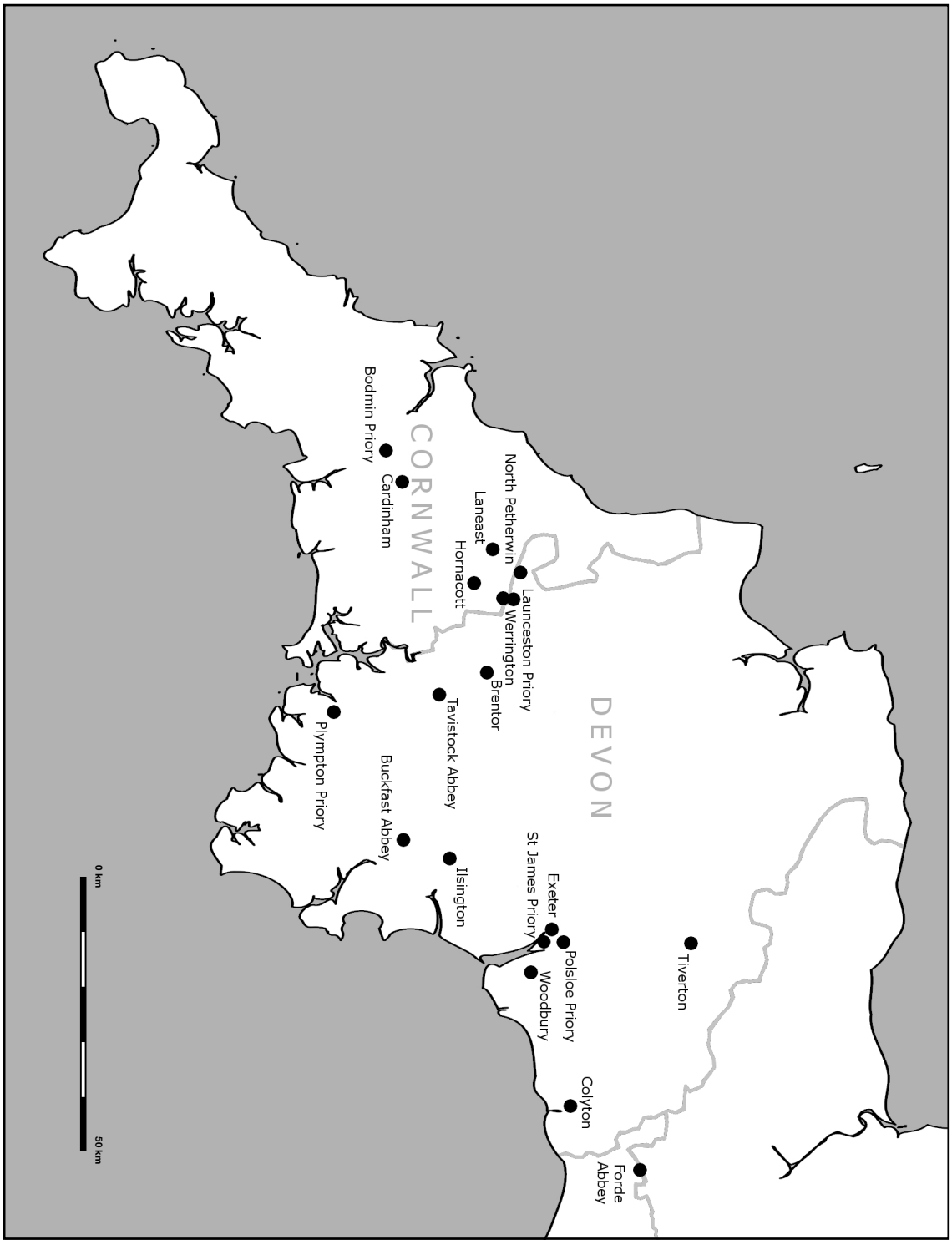


Figure 3. London

Based on C.N.L. Brooke and G. Keir, *London, 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), pp. 124-5.

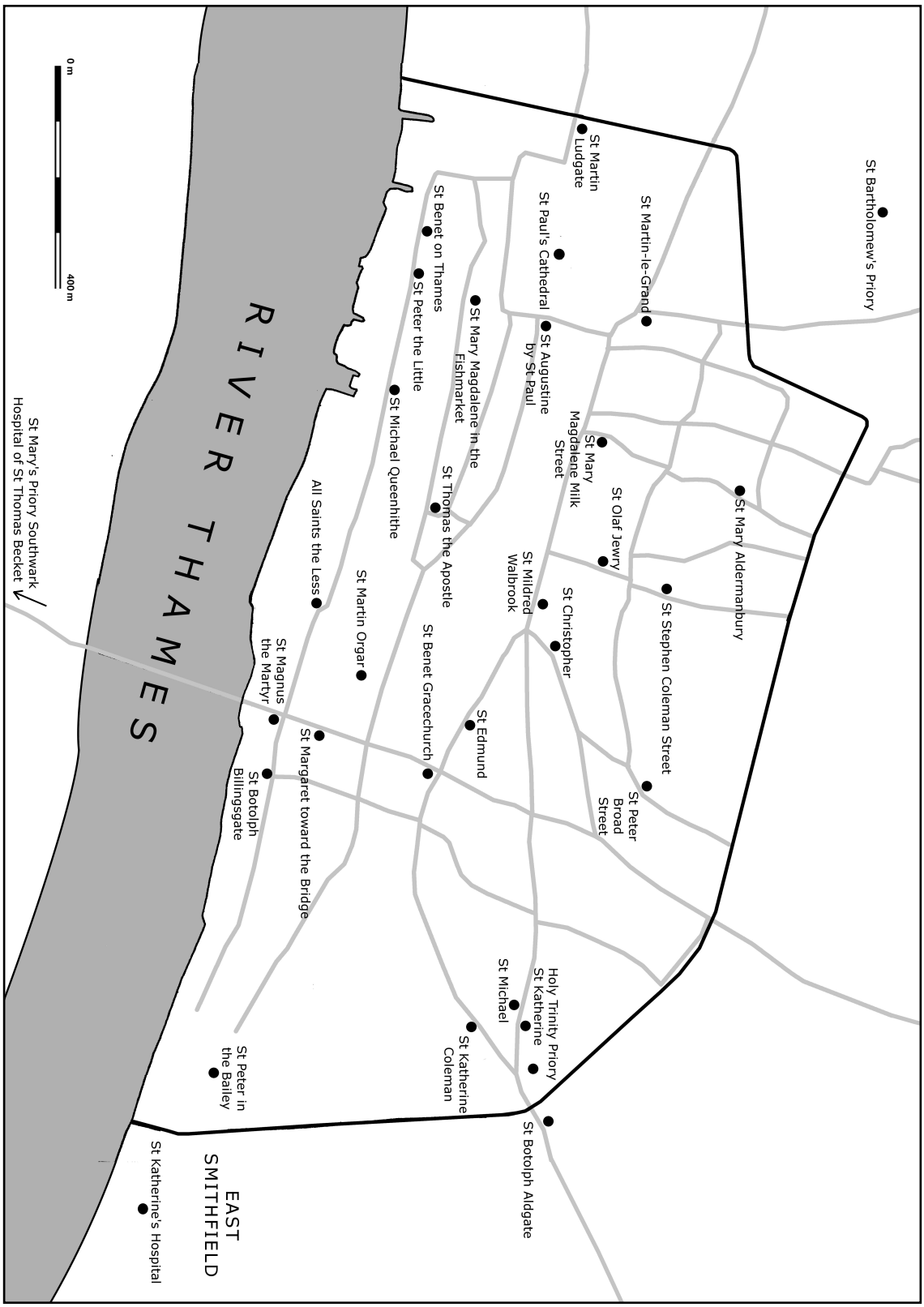


Figure 4. Town of Northampton

Drawn using Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire* (6 vols., London, 1985), v, p. 49. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

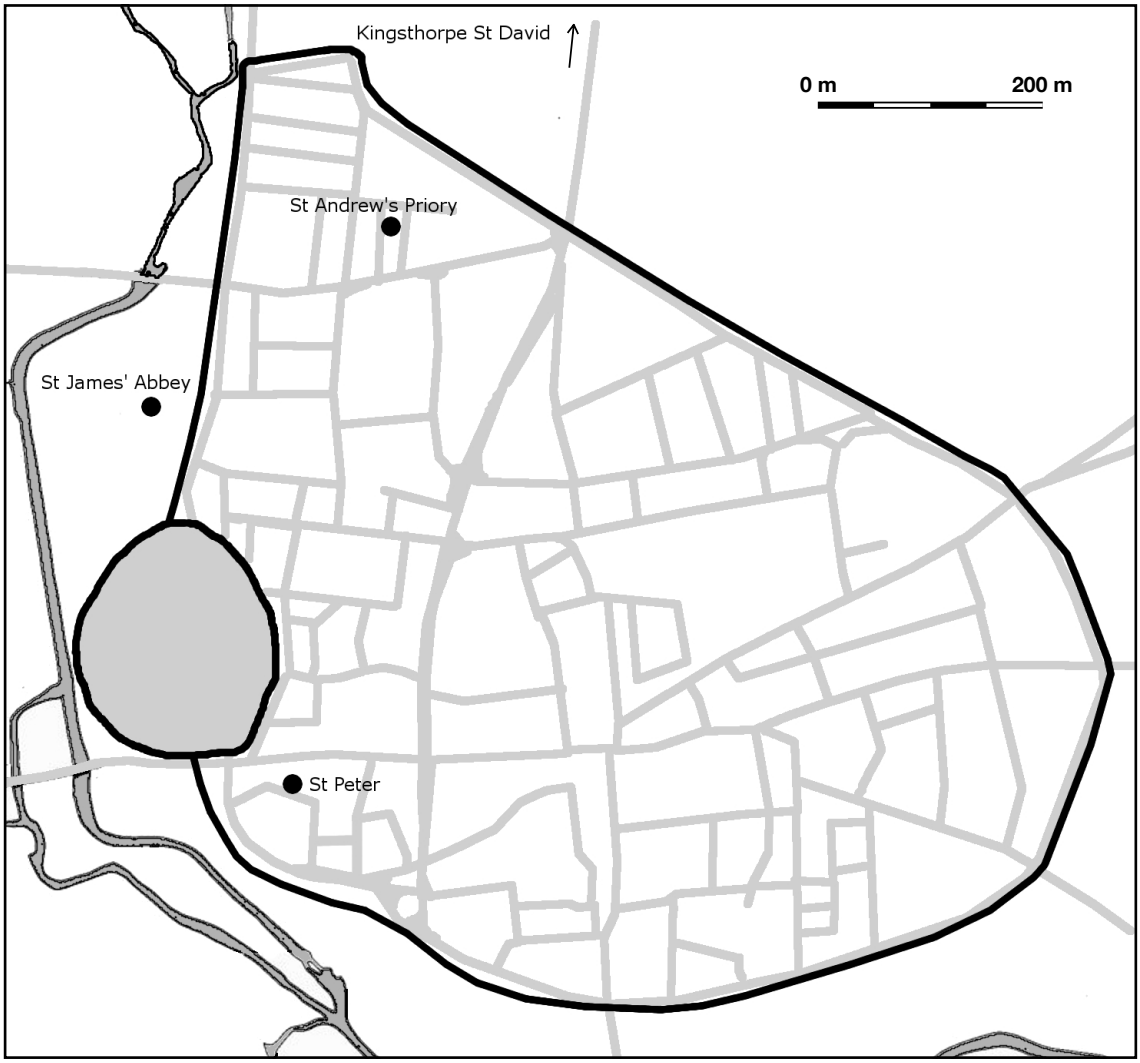


Figure 5. Northampton and Surroundings

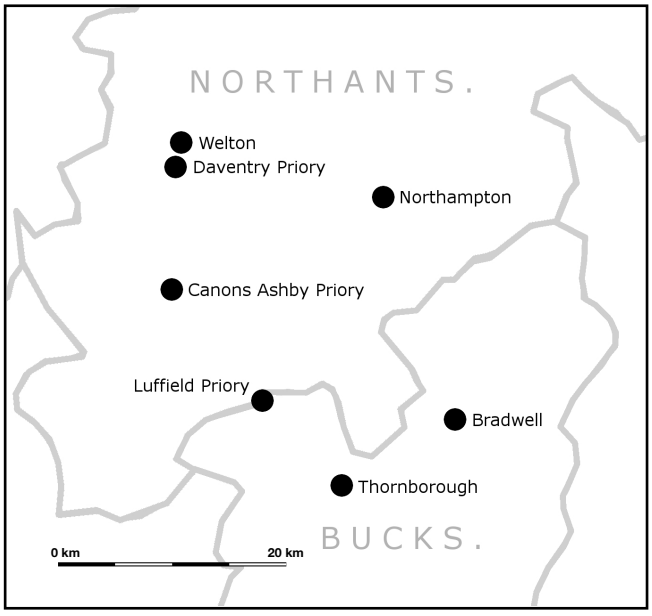


Figure 6. Ormland

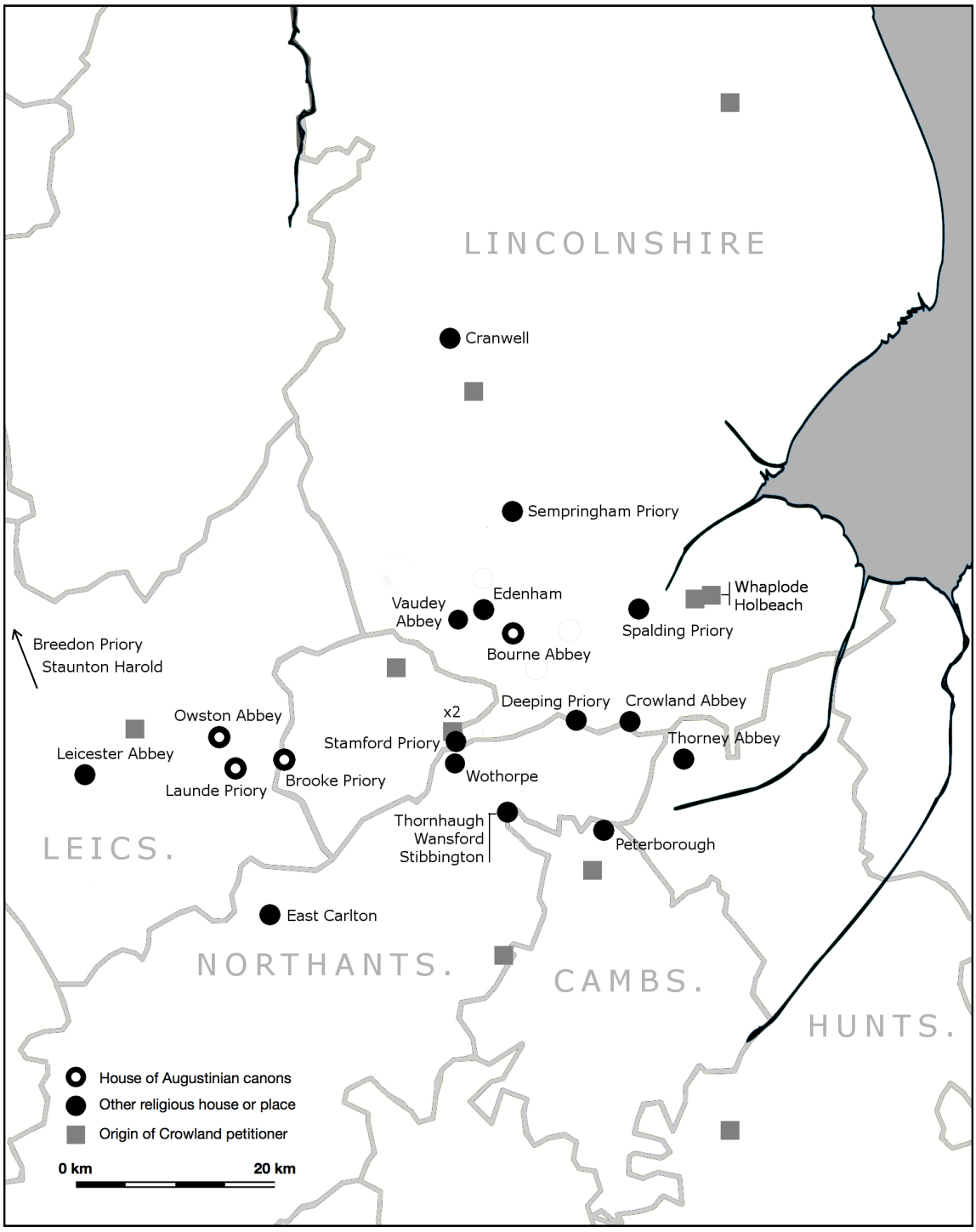


Figure 7. Town of Oxford

Drawn using A. Dodd, *Oxford before the University: The Late Saxon and Norman Archaeology of the Thames Crossing, the Defences and the Town* (Oxford, 2003), p. 47. Used with the permission of Oxford Archaeology.

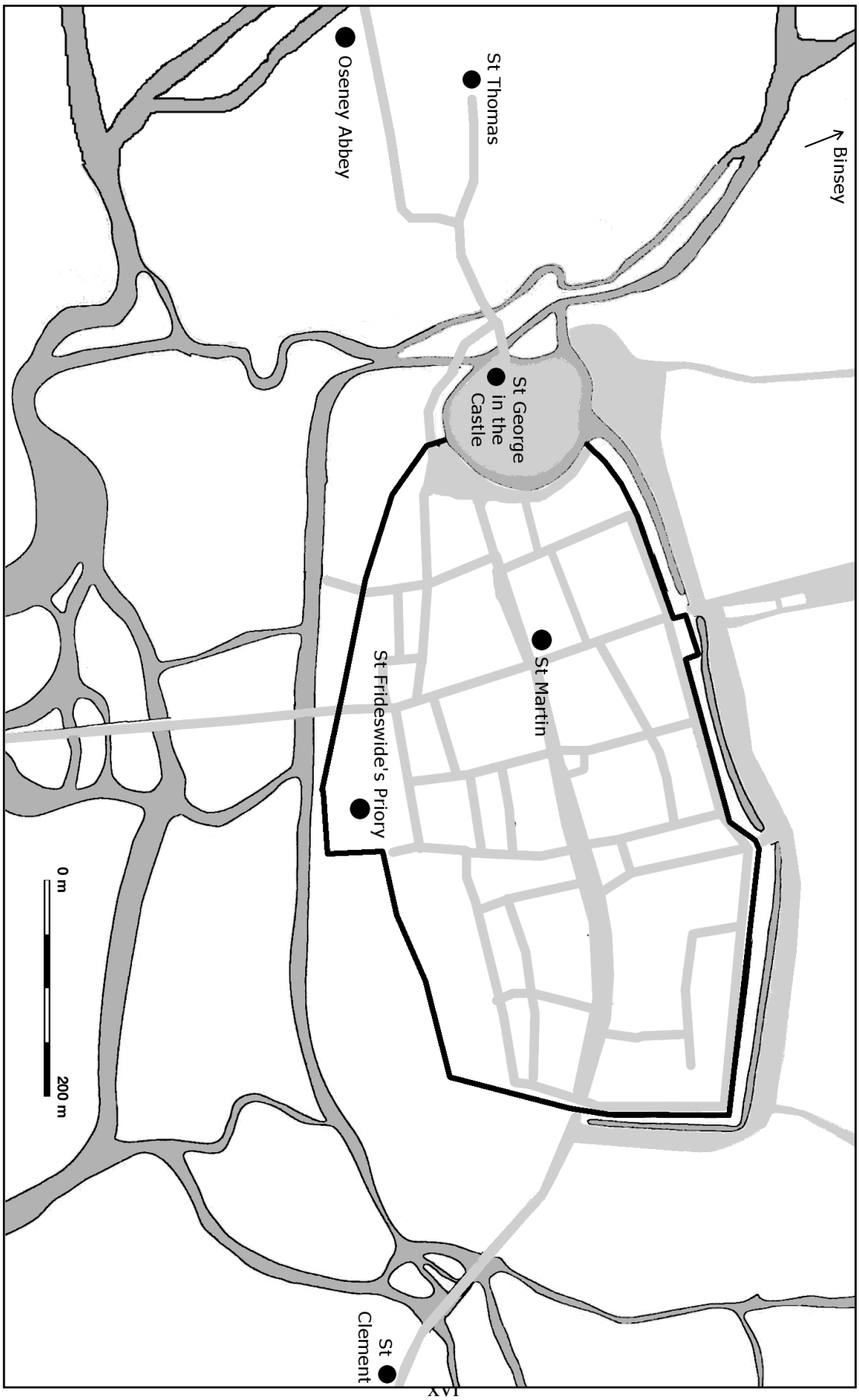


Figure 8. Oxford and Surroundings

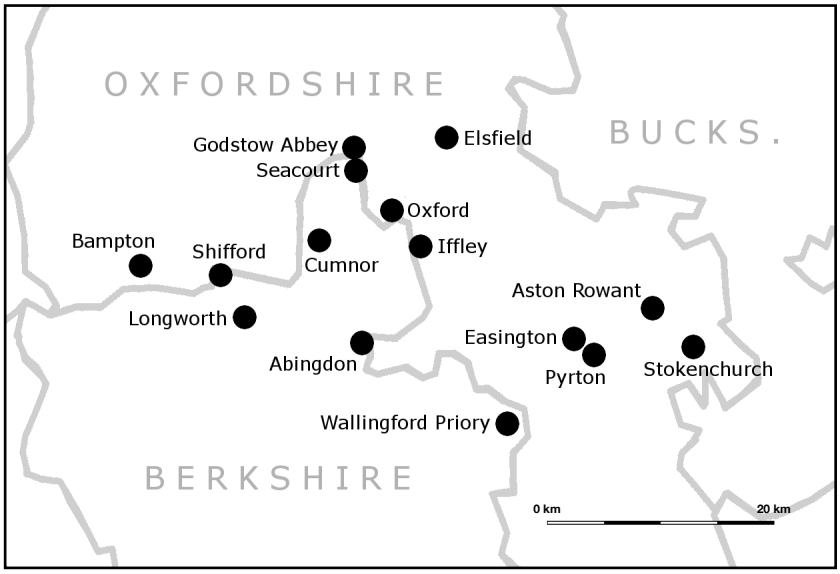
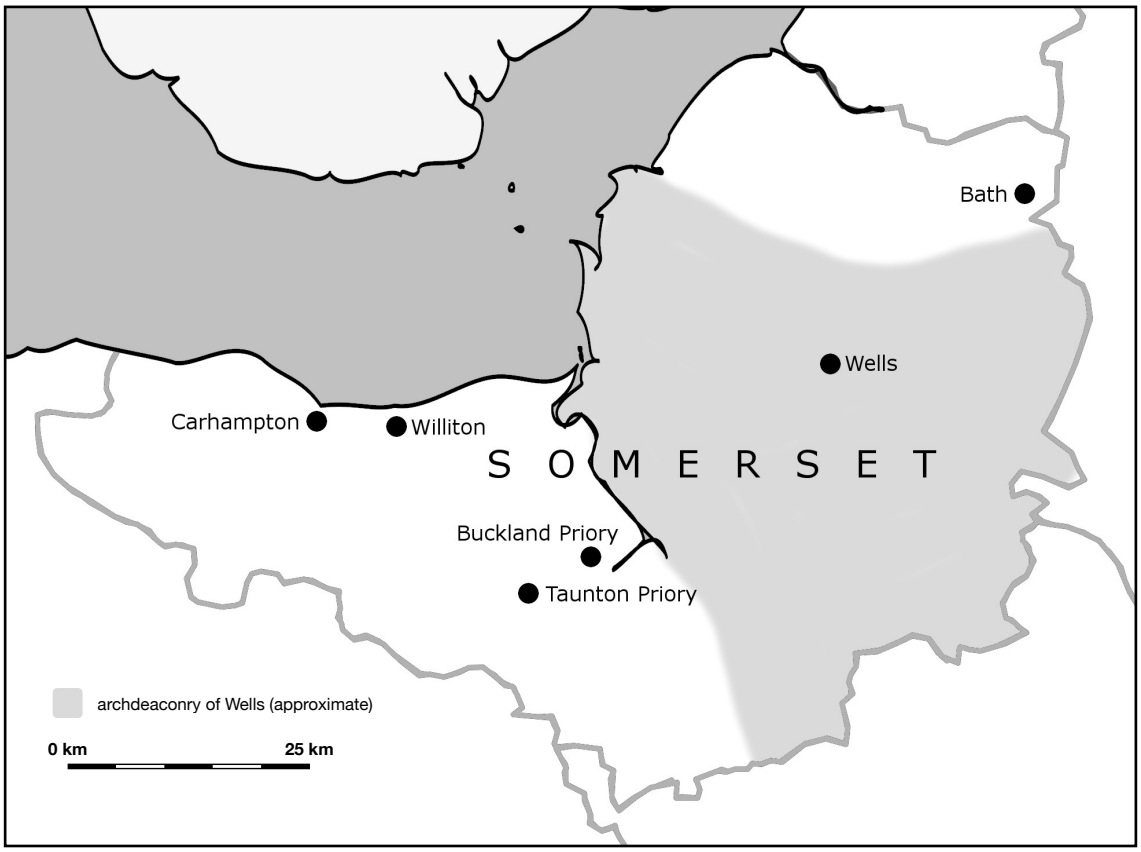


Figure 9. Wells Archdeaconry



Introduction

This is a thesis about the ideas and relationships which shaped local religious life in late twelfth-century England. Specifically, it focusses on the quotidian religious experiences of ordinary lay people. These experiences arose through participation in ministry relationships, in which one person or group received some kind of religious ministry from another. Lay people maintained ministry relationships with preachers, priests, monks, canons, anchorites, saints, even other lay people; the availability and nature of such relationships was determined by geographical, social, economic, and political conditions, as well as by individual and collective wills. This meant that localities within England developed distinctive religious cultures. The image of local religious life which this thesis produces is not, however, merely one of infinite variation. Patterns and themes emerge. Many ministry relationships, especially between priests and the people they claimed as their parishioners, were coloured by elite clerical ideas of prelacy and pastoral care, in which prelates claimed authority over their subjects' souls. These ideas did not bring universalising order to a chaotic reality. Rather they grew out of that reality; were moulded to fit local conditions; provided conceptual frameworks, however imperfect, by which churchmen understood and tried to regulate the provision and reception of ministries. Assertions of prelacy and pastoral care did not define the religious experiences of lay people, who maintained relationships with many different ministers, regardless of claims to pastoral authority. This thesis argues that local religious life in late twelfth-century England was not primarily a product of developing ecclesiastical structures, nor of systematic pastoral reform, but rather of ministry relationships, shaped by the beliefs and practical interests of clerical and lay participants.

A few caveats are necessary up front. I exclude, for the most part, the religious practices of the upper nobility, who in a sense lived supra-local lives. They occasionally intrude into the picture where they, either of their own will or, more importantly, with the encouragement of peasants or townspeople, endow churches, hospitals or religious houses. The lower nobility and urban elites play a more prominent role, but I am not interested in drawing religious biographies of individuals or families so much as in understanding what roles such persons played in the formation of a local religious culture. Nor am I trying to describe every facet of interaction between ecclesiastics and lay people. Monasteries were integral to local economies, but I do not study the economic functions of religious institutions except where there is evidence that those functions affected religious life. The same bishops who bore the pastoral care of their dioceses were inextricably part of England's political fabric, yet I do not deal with the political entanglements of prelates. These and other political and economic considerations are never completely separable from religion, but they are not the focus of this thesis. Finally, this thesis is studies Christian local religious life specifically: I do not treat the religious beliefs and experiences of the various Jewish communities who lived in the localities studied in this thesis.

There are two avenues, historiographically, by which one might approach local religious life. The first is the study of lay piety or popular religion. (The latter term, though problematic, connotes an emphasis on the lower end of the social scale, so I will use it here.) This field asks directly what lay people believed, experienced and did with regards to religion, and then, as a secondary but perennial question, what relationship

their piety bore to the institutional church.[1] Previous generations of scholars described lay piety as an ancient trove of folkloristic ritual and belief untouched by clerical religion;[2] subsequently the image was advanced of popular and clerical religions as blended together into a single harmonious and syncretic morass.[3] Neither position is wholly tenable, and the current consensus has to wrestle with the contrasting, though not antithetical, assertions that the line between clerical and popular religion was blurred—for instance, in the clerical promotion of saints' cults and in the flowering of Marian devotion[4]—and, at the same time, that elite religion increasingly constructed, defined and persecuted heterodoxy.[5]

The second historiographical avenue is pastoral care.[6] This is the study of how the Church provided for the salvation and general spiritual welfare of Christian people, particularly lay people, according to whatever requirements were deemed theologically necessary. Those requirements, of course, changed over time. Thus the narrative of pastoral care is essentially one of post-conversion Christianisation: of clerical elites

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[1] Helpful historiographical essays are J. Van Engen, 'The Christian Middle Ages as an Historiographical Problem', *American Historical Review*, 91 (1986), pp. 519-552 and, as a recent update, C. Caldwell Ames, 'Authentic, True, and Right: Inquisition and the Study of Medieval Popular Religion', in D.C. Mengel and L. Wolverton (eds.), *Christianity and Culture in the Middle Ages: Essays to Honour John Van Engen* (Notre Dame, 2014), pp. 87-119. Some of the most important contributions are: E. Delaruelle, *La piété populaire au moyen âge* (Turin, 1975); P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago, 1981); J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (London, 1984); J.-C. Schmitt, *The Holy Greyhound: Guinefort, Healer of Children since the Thirteenth Century*, trans. M. Thom (Cambridge, 1983); A. Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, trans. J.M. Bak and P. Hollingsworth (Cambridge, 1988); M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991); E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-1580*, 2nd edn. (New Haven, 1992); A. Vauchez, *The Laity in the Middle Ages: Religious Beliefs and Devotional Practices*, trans. M.J. Schneider (Notre Dame, 1993); H. Grundmann, *Religious Movements in the Middle Ages*, trans. S. Rowan (Notre Dame, 1995). Several early modernists also made important contributions, including C. Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth Century Miller*, trans. J.A. Tedeschi and A. Tedeschi (London, 1980); N.Z. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, 1983); J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985).

[2] For this view see especially Le Goff, *Pour un autre moyen âge* (Paris, 1977); idem, *Birth*; Schmitt, *Greyhound*.

[3] Van Engen, 'Christian Middle Ages'; Duffy, *Stripping*.

[4] M. Rubin, *Mother of God: A History of the Virgin Mary* (London, 2010); Brown, *Cult*.

[5] R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 2007); idem, *The War on Heresy: Faith and Power in Medieval Europe* (London, 2012).

[6] For the historiography of this field see below, pp. 6-20.

developing ideas about the nature of the acceptable Christian life, then gradually imposing those ideas onto the lives of ordinary people—educating them, encouraging or requiring them to receive certain sacraments—thus making those people more Christian.[7] If the field of popular religion began as history from below, but has since had to grapple with the power and pervasiveness of ecclesiastical institutions, then the field of pastoral care began as very much a top-down history, and yet has always run aground on the vexing question of what effect pastoral care had on the actual practice of religion by lay people.

It is troubling, then, that the two fields, popular religion and pastoral care, remain almost entirely separate. To be sure, there are some disparities of approach to be overcome. The study of popular religion has drawn heavily on anthropology, at least at the beginning,[8] whereas the study of pastoral care is steeped in the intellectual history of theology and canon law.[9] There is also a difference in tone. Historians of popular religion are familiar with the highly unsympathetic character of the clerical inquisitor, whereas historians of pastoral care describe the benevolent efforts of elite churchmen to write texts for the improvement of the *cura animarum*. Ironically, the inquisitor and the pastoral writer could be the same man: Etienne de Bourbon, Jean Claude Schmitt's

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[7] Van Engen, 'Christian', pp. 530, 532; see also C. Morris, *The Papal Monarchy: The Western Church from 1050 to 1250* (Oxford, 1989), especially Part III and Conclusion.

[8] P. Brown, 'The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Roman Studies*, 61 (1971), pp. 80-101; Schmitt, *Greyhound*; C. Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, 1987). For an overview see S. Yarrow, 'Religion, Belief, and Society: Anthropological Approaches', in J. Arnold (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Christianity* (Oxford, 2014). Here, again, the influence of early modernists is strongly felt: W. Christian, *Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Princeton, 1981); C. Ginzburg, 'The Inquisitor as Anthropologist', in idem, *Myths, Emblems, Clues*, trans. J. Tedeschi and A.C. Tedeschi (London, 1990), pp. 156-64; N.Z. Davis, 'Anthropology and History in the 1980s: The Possibilities of the Past', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 12 (1981), pp. 267-76.

[9] B. Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, trans. F. Courtney (Freiburg, 1964); P. Anciaux, *The Sacrament of Penance*, trans. anon. (London, 1962); J. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter & His Circle* (2 vols., Princeton, 1970); L. Boyle, *Pastoral Care, Clerical Education and Canon Law, 1200-1400* (London, 1981); J. Goering, 'The Internal Forum and the Literature of Penance and Confession', in W. Hartmann and K. Pennington (eds.), *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140-1234: From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX* (Washington, DC, 2008), pp. 379-428.

famous inquisitor into the cult of the holy greyhound, appears in histories of pastoral care as the author of an important *exempla* collection, an aid to preachers.[10] Finally, there is a discrepancy in the scope of the two fields, or more precisely in the perspective from which each field sets out to define its parameters. The field of popular religion uses anthropological principles to define what constituted religion from the perspective of the lay participant, regardless of clerical participation or approval, drawing a circle around a wide range of activities from attendance at mass to pilgrimage to magical practices. The field of pastoral care is not interested in religion writ large, but rather in those aspects of religion deemed necessary for salvation by ecclesiastical elites—or deemed beneficial for the creation of a devout Christian population by modern historians.

This thesis is intended as a corrective to the historiographical field of pastoral care: firstly for a particular historical moment, the second half of the twelfth century in England, but perhaps also as a model for future inquiry into other periods and regions. Yet in this correction it envisions ways in which the fields of pastoral care and popular religion might be meaningfully connected. Before discussing pastoral care in more depth, then, I want to offer two reasons for approaching the question of lay religious experience by dealing with the historiography of pastoral care, rather than with that of popular religion. The first is that the field is, in a sense, ripe for reform. It has not undergone the same heated debates that have transformed the study of popular religion; the questions asked and the arguments put forward by historians in today's scholarship bear a striking resemblance to those propounded by Leonard Boyle, the father of the

[10] Schmitt, *Greyhound*; Etienne de Bourbon, *Tractatus de diversis materiis predicabilibus*, ed. J. Berlioz and J.-L. Eichenlaub, CCCM, 124 (Turnhout, 2002), pp. xxviii-xxxiv.

discipline, from the 1950s to 1980s,[11] and a large portion of Anglophone pastoral care scholarship still emanates from the University of Toronto and the doctoral students of Joseph Goering, Boyle's preeminent protégé.[12] This is not inherently a bad thing, of course, but it suggests that there is room for a fresh approach. Secondly, the study of clerical ministries to the laity offers an analytical advantage in that it treats the clerical bias of written sources as a relevant subject in itself, rather than an obstacle to the search for an underlying, 'lay' reality. Historians of heresy and inquisition, led by R.I. Moore, have already made significant progress on this front by arguing that the construction of heresies by ecclesiastical elites *itself* tells us something about the nature of the society that did the constructing. But what of the construction of the very orthodox aspects of religious life: parishes and parishioners, the clergy, sacraments? What do these elite ideas, and the ways in which they contrast with what can be discerned about lay experiences, tell us about medieval religion and society? This thesis begins the work of answering such questions.

Pastoral Care and Clerical Ministries

'Pastoral care' as a sub-field within medieval religious history is a relatively recent innovation. The first half of the twentieth century saw pioneering studies on subjects which we would now place under the heading of 'pastoral care', such as confession,

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[11] L. Boyle, 'The "Oculus sacerdotis" and Some Other Works of William of Pagula', *TRHS*, 5th ser., 5 (1955), pp. 81-110; idem, *Pastoral Care*; idem, '*Summae confessorum*', in *Les genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales: definition, critique et exploitation* (Louvain, 1982), pp. 227-37; idem, 'The Fourth Lateran Council and Manuals of Popular Theology', in T.J. Hefferman (ed.), *The Popular Literature of Medieval England* (Knoxville, 1985), pp. 30-43; idem, 'The Inter-Conciliar Period 1179-1215 and the Beginnings of Pastoral Manuals', in F. Liotta (ed.), *Miscellanea Rolando Bandinelli Papa Alessandro III* (Sienna, 1986), pp. 45-56.

[12] Recent examples include A. Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England: The Creed and Articles of Faith* (Leiden, 2015) and A.N.J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester', PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2016.

preaching, and episcopal oversight of the parish clergy.[13] These studies narrated twelfth- and thirteenth-century developments in terms of church reform, clerical education, lay religious education, organisation, administration, and discipline. The field began to coalesce in response to the work of Leonard Boyle.[14] In his 1956 Oxford D.Phil thesis, Boyle studied and contextualised William of Pagula's *Oculus sacerdotis*, a Latin treatise of the late fourteenth century which offers instructions for priests on hearing confessions, preaching, and administering sacraments.[15] For Boyle, the *Oculus* was the culmination of a pastoral reform programme encapsulated in Innocent III's Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.[16]

Boyle's particular contribution was to facilitate the integration of formerly disparate lines of enquiry, often esoteric and theological in orientation, into a single narrative of sweeping reform. In his D.Phil thesis and subsequent articles, Boyle coined the term *pastoralia* to describe the wide range of texts which he considered to be 'aids for the *cura animarum*'.[17] There was no real genre of *pastoralia*, Boyle warned (he has not always been heeded), only a sort of road map among a maze of texts related by a common purpose: a 'movement to aid uneducated or indifferently educated clerics' spearheaded by the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215.[18] This is why the historiography of

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[13] H.C. Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (3 vols., London, 1896); O.D. Watkins, *A History of Penance: Being a Study of the Authorities* (2 vols., London, 1920); A. Teetaert, *La confession aux laïques dans l'église latine depuis le VIIIe jusqu'au XIVe siècle: étude de théologie positive* (Wetteren, 1926); M. Gibbs and J. Lang, *Bishops and Reform, 1215-1272: With Special Reference to the Lateran Council of 1215* (London, 1934); H. Caplan, *Mediaeval Artes praedicandi: a Hand List* (Ithaca, 1934); T.M. Charland, *Artes praedicandi: contribution à l'histoire de la rhétorique au moyen âge* (Paris, 1936); Poschmann, *Penance*; W.A. Pantin, *The English Church in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1955), part. III; Anciaux, *Sacrament*; P. Michaud-Quantin, *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au Moyen Age (XII-XVI siècles)* (Louvain, 1962).

[14] J. Goering, 'Leonard E. Boyle and the Invention of *Pastoralia*', in R.J. Stansbury (ed.), *A Companion to Pastoral Care in the Late Middle Ages (1200-1500)* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 7-20.

[15] L. Boyle, 'A Study of the Works Attributed to William of Pagula, with Special Reference to the *Oculus sacerdotis* and *Summa summarium*', DPhil thesis, 2 vols., University of Oxford, 1956, i, pp. 282-328.

[16] Ibid., i, pp. 188-200.

[17] Ibid., i, p. 200; see also Boyle, '*Summae confessorum*', p. 230.

[18] Boyle, 'Study', i, pp. 200, 208.

pastoral care has heavily relied on theological texts, instructional manuals, and canon law. It is also the reason why historians' assumptions about the basic requirements of pastoral care generally mirror the contents of a typical thirteenth- or fourteenth century *summa* of practical theology, like the *Oculus*. For Boyle, the duties of pastoral care were epitomised by the *Oculus sacerdotis* and other manuals like it, which covered confession, preaching, and the other sacraments; in it, he asserted, 'pastoral care is seen as a whole'.[19] By 1986 he could breezily assert that 'in the Middle Ages, if not in other ages too, the mainstays of the c*ura animarum* or pastoral care were the sacraments and preaching.'[20]

The first historiographical argument of this thesis lies in the meaning of the phrase 'pastoral care'. It is ultimately an argument not about terminology so much as about emphasis, and the force of a medieval construct. The weight of meaning which the words *cura pastoralis* or *cura animarum* held for medieval writers demands an overhaul of the questions that currently animate the study of pastoral care.

There is already some unease among historians about 'pastoral care' as a category of inquiry. Some historians of the late Middle Ages argue that the field as limited to the sacraments and preaching is too restrictive for those interested, ultimately, in lay religious experience. In his introduction to a recent volume on late medieval pastoral care, Ronald Stansbury suggests that although 'the sacramental system is certainly at the heart of this care as is preaching and other forms of catechesis … the *cura animarum* … involves or at least should involve more than the church serving as a sacramental vending machine'.[21] Contributions to the same volume include discussions of ritual

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[19] Boyle, 'Oculus sacerdotis', p. 92.

[20] Boyle, 'Inter-conciliar period', p. 45.

[21] R.J. Stansbury, 'Introduction', in idem, *Companion*, pp. 1-6, at 1.

purity, contemplative meditation, and religious instruction within the lay family.[22] Historians of the early and high Middle Ages have also attempted to broaden the purview of 'pastoral care' studies. In an article on the ministry of monks to the laity in the early Middle Ages, Giles Constable distinguishes between the 'para-pastoral activities' or 'caritative' functions of monks, particularly service in hospitals, and strictly pastoral work.[23] Pascal Montaubin has similarly distinguished between various 'activités pastorales' of regular canons and 'la plénitude du ministère pastoral', which occurred 'dans le prise en charge d'une communauté de laïcs dans le cadre stable d'une paroisse'.[24] Francesca Tinti, writing about Anglo-Saxon England, asserts that pastoral care 'is a somewhat slippery term which can encompass a variety of activities', including the care of pilgrims and the poor.[25] Writing about the late Roman church, Rowan Greer has suggested that not just bishops and clerics, but also monks, holy women, and teachers could take on a pastoral role, particularly caring for orphans, the poor, the sick, prisoners and captives.[26] Ernst Ludwig Grasmück's study of Otto I of Bamburg's episcopate assumes that such diverse religious activities as church building, the observance of the liturgical calendar, the performance of masses, the burial of the dead, religious fraternities, the observation of fasts, and penance are all relevant to the

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[22] C.C. Anderson, 'Ritual Purity and Pastoral Reform in the Thirteenth Century', pp. 73-94; B.A. Barr, 'Three's a Crowd: Wives, Husbands and Priests in the Late Medieval Confessional', pp. 213-34; and L.M. Diener, 'Entering the Bedchamber of Your Soul: How Religious Women Learned the Art of Monastic Meditation', pp. 339-61, all in Stansbury, *Companion*.

[23] Constable, G., 'Monasteries, Rural Churches, and the *Cura animarum* in the Early Middle Ages', in *Christianizzazione ed organizzazione ecclesiastica delle campagne nell'alto medioevo: espansione e resistenze* (Spoleto, 1982), pp. 349-89, at 353.

[24] P. Montaubin, 'Les chanoines réguliers et le service pastoral (XIe-XIIIe siècles)', in M. Parisse (ed.), *Les chanoines réguliers: émergence et expansion (XIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Saint-Etienne, 2009), pp. 119-57, at 144.

[25] F. Tinti, 'Benedictine Reform and Pastoral Care in Anglo-Saxon England', *Early Medieval Europe*, 23 (2015), pp. 229-51, at 234.

[26] R.A. Greer, 'Pastoral Care and Discipline', in A. Casiday and F.W. Norris (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Christianity, 2: Constantine to c.600* (Cambridge, 2007), pp. 567-84, at 567.

cura animarum.[27] But even these more flexible definitions share the same basic assumption: that pastoral care is a particular collection of spiritual services or activities provided to Christians, and that any definitional ambiguity boils down to the question of which activities to include or not include in that collection. The definition offered by Pierre Michaud-Quantin is revealing. 'Dans le christianisme occidental au moyen-âge, la pastorale est l'ensemble des moyens par lesquels les membres du clergé qui en ont la charge s'efforcent de diriger les fidèles qui leur sont confiés … en vue d'assurer le salut éternel de leurs âmes.'[28]

In fact, the medieval conception of pastoral care, among those clerical elites who wrote about it, was not 'l'ensemble des moyens' by which the clergy directed the souls under their charge, but rather the very responsibility and authority of the clergy to do so. By thinking about pastoral care as merely the sum of certain ministries, historians have missed the gravity and urgency which the phrases *cura pastoralis* and *cura animarum* connoted in the minds of medieval writers. They have not realised that the medieval idea of pastoral care was entirely focussed on the agency of the pastor: pastoral care was not received by lay people, but rather borne by their priests. Put succinctly, pastoral care was the authority of a superior individual—the *prelatus*, the one placed in front—over the moral behaviour and, ultimately, the salvation of an inferior subject.

By the second half of the twelfth century, pastoral care was an old, yet still highly relevant, idea. Writers of late antiquity occasionally mentioned solicitous bishops acting 'with pastoral care' or being constrained 'by pastoral care',[29] and the early sixth-century

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[27] E.L. Grasmück, '*Cura animarum*: Zur Praxis der Seelsorge in der Zeit der Reform, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Bischof Ottos von Bamberg', in M. Weitlauff and K. Hausberger (eds.), *Papsttum und Kirchenreform: Historische Beiträge: Festschrift für Georg Schwaiger zum 65. Geburtstag* (St. Ottilien, 1990), pp. 57-96, at 57.

[28] P. Michaud-Quantin, 'Les méthodes de la pastorale du XIIIe au XVe siècle', in *Methoden in Wissenschaft und Kunst des Mittelalters*, ed. A. Zimmerman (Berlin, 1970), pp. 76-91, at 76.

[29] Augustine of Hippo, *Epistolae*, PL 33:773; Gregory of Tours, *Liber de virtutibus sancti Martini*, ed. B. Krusch, MGH SS. rer. Merov. 1, 2 (Hannover, 1885), p. 145; *Synodus Romana 502*, ed. T. Mommsen, MGH Auct. ant. 12 (Berlin, 1894), p. 449; Ennodius, *Praeceptum de cellulanis*, PL 63:256.

Rule of St Benedict emphasised the abbot's responsibility to instruct the souls under his care using the metaphor of a shepherd guiding sheep, although the phrase *cura pastoralis* does not appear.[30] But it was Gregory the Great's (d. 604) formulation of pastoral care as a burden set on the shoulders of prelates—so solemn and ponderous in its requirements that even Gregory himself was 'unequal to it in merit'—which was to shape the thinking and language of ecclesiastical writers down to the thirteenth century.[31] For Gregory, pastoral care was a superior's benevolent governance of his inferiors, the gravity of which stemmed from the vast disparity between any pastor's quality and the extraordinary difficulty of governing well.[32] Early medieval writers would draw heavily on Gregory's concept of a pastoral burden, but increasingly emphasised the pastor's responsibility to render account (*reddere rationem*) for the fate of each soul under his care; they warned that those who allowed their subjects to err into condemnation would themselves face divine wrath.[33] The phrase *cura animarum* exemplified this new emphasis on the souls to be cared for, and by the ninth century writers were using it interchangeably with *cura pastoralis*. At the same time, pastoral care had also become associated with abbots and priors as well as with bishops, so that chroniclers across Europe from the eighth century on described elections, institutions, deaths and resignations of both abbots and bishops in shorthand by stating that they

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[30] St Benedict, *La règle de Saint Benoît*, ed. A. de Vogüé and J. Neufville, SC, 181-6 (7 vols., Paris, 1971-7), especially i, pp. 440-52 even.

[31] Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistularum*, ed. D. Norberg, CCSL 140, 140A, (2 vols., Turnholt, 1982), i, pp. 22, 31-2, 47, 174; quote at 22. See V. Paroneto, 'Connotazione del "pastor" nell'opera di Gregorio Magno teoria e prassi', *Benedictina*, 31 (1984), pp. 325-43; C. Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 142, 160-2; L. Dattrino, 'Gregorio Magno *Pastor et Praedicator*', *Lateranum*, 75 (2009), pp. 355-70; G.E. Demacopoulos, 'Gregory's Model of Spiritual Direction in the *Liber regulae pastoralis*', in B. Neil and M. Dal Santo (eds.), *A Companion to Gregory the Great* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 204-24, at 210.

[32] *RP*, especially i, pp. 136-60; ii, pp. 534-40.

[33] Bede, 'Epistula ad Egbertum', *Venerabilis Bedae opera historica*, ed. C. Plummer (Oxford, 1896), pp. 405-423, at 417; *Concilium Ascheimense, a. 756 vel 755/760*, ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH Conc. 2, 1 (Hannover, 1906), p. 57; Theodulf of Orléans, *Capitula*, ed. P. Brommer, MGH Capit. episc. 1 (Hannover, 1984), p. 104; *Concilium Rom, Ende März 981*, ed. E.-D. Hehl, MGH Conc. 6, 2 (Hannover, 1987-2007), p. 360.

'took up' or 'gave up' the *cura pastoralis* or *cura animarum*.[34] From the beginning, then, pastoral care was primarily discussed in relation to prelates: that is, the pastoral care of a bishop over his cathedral canons, diocesan clergy or the residents of his diocese more broadly; or of an abbot or prior over the monks or canons of his house. One of the fundamental dynamics addressed by this thesis, particularly in chapters one and two, is how by the twelfth century a functional definition of prelacy allowed for the burden of pastoral care to be attributed not only to those holding high ecclesiastical offices, but to local priests as well.

It is important to recognise how the medieval concept of pastoral care differs from modern historiographical usage, even in its syntactic function. In medieval texts, pastoral care was something which prelates—or those who fulfilled the function of prelacy—'had', or 'bore', or 'administered' (in the sense of 'to manage', not 'to distribute'). Thus it would be ludicrous, to medieval ears, to say that a lay person 'received pastoral care'. Again, pastoral care was not a collection of services due to be rendered to every Christian, but a kind of divine authority given to a prelate to hold over his subjects; it was his responsibility to govern and instruct them, and ultimately to ensure their salvation. Although some activities such as preaching and hearing confessions were strongly associated with pastoral care, there was no widely acknowledged set of ministries which pastors had to provide to their flocks, at least before the thirteenth century. There were, of course, obvious requirements for salvation

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[34] A few examples of many: *Annalista Saxo (741-1139)*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 6 (Hannover, 1844), p. 623; Anonymous of Herrieden, *De episcopis Eichstetensibus*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 7 (Hannover, 1846), p. 261; Anson of Lobbes, *Vita Ursmari episcoporum et abbatum Lobbiensis*, ed. B. Krusch and W. Levison, MGH SS rer. Merov. 6 (Hannover, 1913), p. 460; Bernold of Constance, *Apologeticus*, ed. F. Thaner, MGH Libelli de lite 2 (Hannover, 1892), p. 69; *Chronica Boemorum, Continuatio monachi Sazavensis (932-1162)*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 9 (Hannover, 1851), p. 150; *Chronicon Sancti Michaelis monasterii in pago Virdunensi*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 4 (Hannover, 1951); *Collectaneum exemplorum et visionum Clarevallense e codice Trecensi 946*, ed. Olivier Legendre, CCCM, 208 (Turnhout, 2005), p. 323; Folcwin of Laubes, *Gesta abbatum Sancti Bertini Sithiensium*, ed. O. Holder-Egger, MGH SS 13 (Hannover, 1881), p. 630; Sigebert of Gembloux, *Gesta abbatum Gemblacensium*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 8 (Hannover, 1848), p. 531.

which had to be met: no one would excuse a bishop who willingly allowed his subjects to remain unbaptised, for example. But the tasks of understanding and fulfilling these requirements, as well as effecting good morals and right beliefs, were left to the discretion of the pastor; the exact nature of those requirements, moreover, was contingent on contemporary theology and local practice. This allowed for a great deal of personal discretion as well as regional and chronological variation in what pastoral care actually looked like. Most importantly, the idea of pastoral care located agency entirely with the pastor; it was rhetorically if not theoretically blind to the possibility that an individual might determine her own level of religious devotion and therefore her eternal, spiritual fate. If the pastor was meritorious and solicitous, his flock would thrive; if he lived badly or neglected his office, they were liable to wander away, like so many witless sheep.

The remit of the traditional field of 'pastoral care'—the administration of the relevant sacraments and preaching—is both artificial and misleading. Of course it is not wrong to apply anachronistic categories to historical research; we need to shape and label fields of inquiry using commonly accepted terminologies. But in this particular case historians have applied a conceptual framework that obscures or distorts our view of pastoral relationships. The historiographical definition of pastoral care reifies a concept which in reality was not only historically contingent, but representative only of the perspective of elite churchmen. Lay people, of course, were not actually devoid of agency as the idea of pastoral care implied; their religious practices and beliefs did not depend entirely on the quality of their bishops and priests. It is probably safe to say that they themselves recognised this. By acknowledging that pastoral care was an idea, we allow it to be studied as such, asking who espoused it and why, how it was adapted to individual interests and local circumstances, and how it interacted with the realities of

everyday religious life. This is the first step toward studying the construction of orthodox religious practices: or, in other words, of recognising that even mundane, institutional sorts of things like pastoral care were not entirely objective realities, but rather expressions, in part, of elite ecclesiastical authority.

The current tendency to define the historiography of pastoral care around a specific set of ministries has also reinforced a teleological interpretation of the period before the thirteenth century. Accordingly, this thesis proposes a corrective not only to the study of pastoral care in general, but to the study of pastoral care in England during the second half of the twelfth century. At this point it would be helpful to briefly sketch the standard narrative of pastoral reform between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. According to this narrative, the Church's concern for pastoral care had been inconsistent before the thirteenth century. Highlights included Carolingian capitularies and manuals for priests,[35] and in tenth-century England, Ælfric's vernacular homilies;[36] the eleventh century, by contrast, seemed little interested in the welfare of souls. The church's real turn toward pastoral reform was driven by the development of canon law and of 'practical theology' in the twelfth century at Europe's two great universities, Bologna and Paris, respectively.[37] The so-called 'interconciliar period', between the Third Lateran Council of 1179 and the Fourth of 1215, saw the creation of the earliest *artes praedicandi*, model sermon collections, and confessors' manuals by mostly Paris-educated theologians: signs of the church's nascent interest in digesting and organising

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[35] R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms, 789-895* (London, 1977); C. Van Rhijn, *Local Priests and Episcopal Statutes in the Carolingian Period* (Turnhout, 2007).

[36] M.M. Gatch, *Preaching and Theology in Anglo-Saxon England: Ælfric and Wulfstan* (Toronto, 1977); F. Tinti (ed.), *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Woodbridge, 2005); J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992).

[37] J. Goering, *William de Montibus (c. 1140-1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care* (Toronto, 1992); Baldwin, *Masters*; J. Longère, *Œuvres oratoires de maîtres parisiens au XIIe siècle: étude historique et doctrinale* (2 vols., Paris, 1975).

information to support the everyday spiritual ministries of prelates and priests.[38] Reformists in England, France and Germany became increasingly concerned that all lay people—*omnis utriusque sexus*—should be baptised, should confess to a priest annually, should receive the Eucharist at Easter, should hear weekly sermons, and should know the basic tenets of Christianity. These concerns existed before 1215, but they were crystallised and prioritised by the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council.[39] The bishops who attended the council returned to their dioceses and, within a decade, began to issue synodal decrees with the aim of achieving the Council's aims in their parishes. The most rigorous reformers also intensified their visitations and examinations of candidates for ordination; a moral, educated clergy was considered essential for ensuring universal lay access to sacraments and religious instruction.[40] At the same time, the creation and circulation of manuals and references for priests dramatically increased. These ranged from informal short treatises to what Boyle called *summae confessorum*, great systematised tomes of pastoral knowledge.[41] By the late Middle

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[38] Boyle, 'Inter-Conciliar Period'.

[39] Boyle, '*Summae confessorum*', p. 230; idem, 'Fourth Lateran'; N. Bériou, 'Autour de Latran IV (1215): la naissance de la confession moderne et sa diffusion, in Groupe de la Bussière (ed.), *Pratiques de la confession des pères du désert à Vatican II: Quinze études d'histoire* (Paris, 1983), pp. 74-92, at 75; J. Baldwin, 'Paris et Rome en 1215: les réformes du IVe concile de Latran', *Journal des savants*, 1 (1997), pp. 99-124.

[40] Gibbs and Lang, *Bishops*; C.R. Cheney, *English Synodalia of the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1941); J. Avril, 'Eglise, paroisse, encadrement diocésain aux XIIIe et XIVe s., d'après les conciles et statuts synodaux', in M.-H. Vicaire (ed.), *La Paroisse en Languedoc (XIIIe-XIVe s.)* (Toulouse, 1990), pp. 23-49; A. García García, 'El Concilio IV Lateranense (1215) y Francia', *Annuarium historiae conciliorum*, 26 (1994), pp. 61-86; idem, 'El Concilio IV Lateranense de 1215 y las Islas Británicas', *Annuarium historiae conciliorum*, 27-28 (1996), pp. 275-92; P.B. Pixton, *German Episcopacy and the Implementation of the Decrees of the Fourth Lateran Council (1216-1245): Watchmen on the Tower* (Leiden, 1995); V. Tabbagh, 'La pratique sacramentelle des fidèles, d'après les documents épiscopaux de la France du Nord (XIIIe-XVe siècle)', *Revue Mabillon*, 12 (2001), pp. 159-204; H. Birkett, 'The Pastoral Application of the Lateran IV Reforms in the Northern Province', *Northern History*, 43 (2006), pp. 199-219; I. Razum, 'Clerical Reform in Central Europe Following the Fourth Lateran Council', *Annual of Medieval Studies at the Central European University*, 21 (2015), pp. 36-46.

[41] Charland, Artes praedicandi; F.W. Oediger, *Über die Bildung der Geistlichen im späten Mittelalter* (Leiden, 1953); Boyle, 'Oculus sacerdotis'; Goering, *William de Montibus*; P. Michaud-Quantin, *Sommes de casuistique et manuels de confession au Moyen Âge (XII-XVI siècles)* (Louvain, 1962); Boyle, '*Summae confessorum*'; C. Bremond, J. Le Goff and J.-C. Schmitt, *L'"exemplum"*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental, 40 (Turnhout, 1982); D.L. D'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused from Paris before 1300* (Oxford, 1985); F. Morenzoni, *Des écoles aux paroisses: Thomas de Chobham et la promotion de la prédication au début du XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1995); C. Rider, 'Lay Religion and Pastoral Care in Thirteenth Century England: The Evidence of Group of Short Confession Manuals', *JMH*, 36 (2010), pp. 327-40.

Ages vernacular confessor's handbooks and sermon collections, as well as vernacular religious texts designed for direct lay use, supplemented Latin works and facilitated increased popularisation and access—in other words, textual aids to pastoral care were being used more widely and by people of limited Latinity.[42]

This thesis will present a number of challenges to this narrative, particularly the teleological characterisation of texts written in the second half of the twelfth century as inferior to, yet progressing toward, thirteenth-century reforms. This is in part an accident of periodisation; any fifty-year section of history is, in its own way, transitional. But in the study of pastoral care in England, the second half of the twelfth century has been particularly ill-treated. Historians have assumed that pastoral care was 'ideally' comprised of a fixed set of ministries—weekly preaching, annual confession, annual receipt of the Eucharist, baptism, extreme unction, and perhaps confirmation—and accordingly that an era's interest in pastoral care can be measured by the production of texts and diocesan statutes which directly facilitate or comment on those ministries. In a sense, the standards of 'good pastoral care' have been calibrated to the century from *c*. 1225 to *c*. 1325, a reflection of the origins of the field in Leonard Boyle's work on William of Pagula (d. 1332). The second half of the twelfth century has been singled out as producing some early antecedents of later pastoral texts, yet is still characterised as experimental, merely foreshadowing the more effective work to come.[43]

This thesis takes a deliberately narrow chronological window, the second half of the twelfth century, and seeks to describe it on its own terms. In order to supply an

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[42] E.J. Arnould, *Le Manuel des péchés: étude de littérature religieuse anglo-normande (XIIIme siècle)* (Paris, 1940); Pantin, *English Church*; S. Powell, 'The *Festial*: The Priest and His Parish', in C. Burgess and E. Duffy (ed.), *The Parish in Late Medieval England* (Donington, 2006), pp. 160-76; R. Hasenfratz, 'Terror and Pastoral Care in *Handlyng Synne*', in C. Gunn and C. Innes-Parker (eds.), *Texts and Traditions of Medieval Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett* (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 132-48.

[43] Morenzoni, 'Origines', pp. 887-985; R. Meens, *Penance in Medieval Europe, 600-1200* (Cambridge, 2014), pp. 205-9; A. Diem, 'Virtues and Vices in Early Texts on Pastoral Care', *Franciscan Studies*, 62 (2004), pp. 193-223; R.W. Hunt, 'English Learning in the Late Twelfth Century', *TRHS*, 4th ser., 19 (1936), pp. 19-42; A. Murray, 'Confession before 1215', *TRHS*, 6th ser., 3 (1993), pp. 51-81.

antidote to the prevailing narratives of transition and nascence, I avoid attempting to trace change within the period covered by this thesis, and resist the temptation to hold it up against the thirteenth century for comparison. I look to earlier precedents and causes where necessary, and describe the structures and assumptions of local religious life as products of their own time, intended to be sufficient for that time, rather than as fits and starts toward a superior goal. Practically, this means interpreting the purposes and intended audiences of didactic texts with fresh eyes, reading charters without importing technical meanings onto ambiguous terminology, and defining the scope of inquiry in response to the emphases and priorities of the sources.

So far I have traced the historiography of pastoral care with reference to western Europe in general. What, then, is particularly English about this problem—or why study England in particular? In a way, the historiographical disjointedness of pastoral care is felt in England most acutely. Generally speaking, the history of the religious life of ordinary lay people in the twelfth century has received less attention for England than for the continent, where the persecution of heresy and the activities of itinerant, charismatic preachers produced colourful records of a type not found in twelfth-century England.[44] There has been some progress in recent decades: Carl Watkins' use of historical chronicles to explore twelfth-century conceptions of the supernatural suggests a useful avenue that has not been much explored, while studies of saints' cults, monastic patronage, and hermits and anchorites have pointed toward different paths into the

[44] Schmitt, *Greyhound*; Ginzburg, *Cheese*; Grundmann, *Religious Movements*; E. Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: Cathars and Catholics in a French Village, 1294-1324*, trans. B. Bray (London, 1978).

question of lay religious experience in twelfth-century England.[45] What is missing is an effective way of relating this new history to the study of English ecclesiastical institutions, particularly the history of the parish. Here, again, there is a serious chronological divide. The parish in late medieval England is practically synonymous with lay piety,[46] but for the twelfth century, the work of John Blair is dominant and the narrative is primarily structural: the crystallisation of parish boundaries, the eroding of the customary rights of mother churches, the transference of churches from lay to ecclesiastical hands.[47] One historian has gone so far as to discuss at length whether any sign of 'late medieval piety' can be found in England before 1215.[48] There is little overlap between the two fields, so that even if scholars acknowledge the essential blurriness between elite and popular religion, the two categories still remain difficult to reconcile. By imagining a relationship-based structure of local religious life, this thesis crosses the boundary between institutional and popular religious history.

In order to facilitate this, I offer a new vocabulary and conceptual structure for thinking about religion in late twelfth-century England which more accurately and objectively represents the world evinced in the sources. For the rest of the thesis, I only

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[45] C.S. Watkins, *History and the Supernatural in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 2007); R.C. Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (London, 1977); B. Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event, 1000–1215* (Aldershot, 1982); S. Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford, 2006); E. Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England, 1066-1135* (Woodbridge, 1998); C. Harper-Bill, 'Searching for Salvation in Anglo-Norman East Anglia', in C. Harper-Bill, C. Rawcliffe and R.G. Wilson (eds.), *East Anglia's History: Studies in Honour of Norman Scarfe* (Woodbridge, 2002), pp. 19-39; H. Mayr-Harting, 'Functions of a Twelfth-Century Recluse', *History*, 60 (1975), pp. 337-52; T. License, *Hermits and Recluses in English Society, 950-1200* (Oxford, 2011).

[46] K.L. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge, 1965); N.P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984); Duffy, *Stripping*; A.D. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury, 1250-1550* (Oxford, 1995); B.A. Kümin, *The Shaping of a Community: The Rise and Reformation of the English Parish, c. 1400-1560* (Aldershot, 1996); K.L. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia, 2001); C. Burgess and E. Duffy (eds.), *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 14 (Donington, 2006).

[47] J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2007). See also idem (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200* (Oxford, 1988); S. Foot, 'Parochial Ministry in Early Anglo-Saxon England: The Role of Monastic Communities', *Studies in Church History*, 26 (1989), pp. 43-54.

[48] H.M. Thomas, 'Lay Piety in England from 1066 to 1215', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 29 (2005), pp. 179-92.

use phrase ‘pastoral care’ and the adjective ‘pastoral’ to describe the elite clerical idea of the *cura pastoralis* or *cura animarum*; I signal the traditional historiographical usage of ‘pastoral care’ with quotations marks. My subject, as highlighted at the beginning of this introduction, is local religious life, not pastoral care. A thorough treatment of pastoral care in late twelfth-century England would explore ideas about episcopal and monastic governance, ecclesiastical justice and punishment, the schools, universities, and elite intellectual circles. Canon law compilations and theological commentaries would be as important as sermon collections and penitentials, for pastoral care was as much concerned with the moral and intellectual formation of the prelate, and his role as a judge and governor, as with his more curative ministries. These aspects of prelacy are important to this thesis insofar as prelates held pastoral care over the lay people of a particular locality, or over the clerics or religious who in turn ministered to lay people; but they are not its central focus.

Instead of pastoral care, I write about discrete ‘ministries’ and about ‘ministering’. By ministry I mean any spiritual or religious service which one party, such as a cleric, religious, anchorite, lay person, or saint, could provide to another—masses, prayers, sacraments, visions, healing, advice, preaching—or a collection of those services provided in a church. Medieval writers often used the noun *ministerium* and the verb *ministrare* in similar ways, although in an attempt to represent lay perspectives I am likely pushing the boundaries of what medieval clerics would have thought to call a

'ministry'.[49] The provision of ministries was part of, but not commensurate with, pastoral care, since ministry in itself did not connote authority, governance or responsibility. Ministries were things provided *to* someone, while pastoral care was a thing held *over* someone. To speak of pastoral care assumes the perspective of the prelate or superior, since pastoral care implies a passive subject. To speak of ministry relationships allows neutrality: any time a person solicited, or received without soliciting, a ministry from someone else, a ministry relationship was established. Local religious life was built from ministry relationships, from the preaching of a bishop to the townspeople at the major feasts, to the baptism of a village's children by a local priest, to the prayers offered by a solitary monk in a rural cell, to a saint's appearances in the dreams of a devout lay person. Some of these relationships, such as preaching, were considered pastoral by clerics; some, such as baptism, would have fallen within a priest's formal right to the care of souls in his parish church; others, such as intercessory prayer, were clerical or religious ministries that were not considered pastoral; still others, such as visions from a saint, were only promoted or facilitated by clergy, or circumvented the clergy altogether.

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[49] Medieval writers often used the words *ministerium* and *ministrare* in this way. In the eleventh century Arnold of St Emmeram wrote that bishop Emmeram was accustomed, 'inter cetera pastoralis curae ministeria', to preach to the people: *Libri II de Sancto Emmerammo*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS 4 (Hannover, 1841), p. 557. In the early thirteenth century John of Ford wrote of the 'praedicationis ministerium et sollicitudo pastoralis' of those who seek the things of Christ 'in cura pastorali': *Super extremam partem Cantici canticorum sermones cxx*, ed. E. Mikkers and H. Costello, CCCM 17, 18 (2 vols., Turnhout, 1970), i, p. 456. Bartholomew of Exeter wrote that the liturgy of Exeter cathedral was principally sustained by 'hiis qui in ea assidue ministrant', *i.e*. the vicars: Ex. Cath., D&C 802. In 1200x3 Savaric, bishop of Bath, offered to make the monks of Cirencester and Athelney canons of Wells in exchange for the gift of certain churches as prebends, saving provision for the vicars necessary 'ad ministerium earundem ecclesiarum', that is, the prebendal churches: *EEA X: Bath and Wells, 1061-1205*, ed. F.M.R. Ramsey (Oxford, 1995), pp. 187-8. In another *actum* of 1195x1205, Savaric specified that the church of Street 'per idoneos capellanos ministretur': *EEA X*, p. 167. Innocent III, in the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, stated that bishops often are not able personally to 'ministrare populo verbum Dei': *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. and trans. N.P. Tanner (2 vols., London, 1990), i, p. 239.

Methods

The historiography of 'pastoral care' in twelfth- and thirteenth-century England has also been approached in another way, through the study of episcopal reform and the regulation of parishes and the parish clergy. This approach identifies projects of reform in conciliar and synodal legislation, and then examines how certain bishops implemented those reforms in their *acta*. The narrative yielded is one in which progress is marked by the issuance of synodal decrees about clerical education and the administration of the sacraments, and by documentary evidence of bishops installing priests into *vicarie perpetuales*, perpetual vicarages, which supposedly protected priests from the machinations of lay patrons and tithe-hungry religious houses.[50] This approach is difficult to reconcile with research which focusses on 'pastoral' texts as defined in the work of Leonard Boyle and his students. There is a troubling dissonance between the pecuniary flavour of the documentary sources, which seemingly always turn on some question of revenue, and the textual sources, which often struggle to relate theology to the grittier realities of quotidian religious practice. Ultimately, if we are interested in local religious life, neither method is satisfying. Both tend to obscure regional and local variation, envisioning the whole of England being gradually drawn toward greater pastoral regularity. Particular dioceses—notably Lincoln, which hosted a series of reform-minded bishops in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries—are assumed to have been precocious in the adoption of this new regularity, but comparisons at the ground level are lacking.[51] Worse, despite exhaustive study, historians are still unsure as to whether, how and when all these interventions of reforming bishops and works of practical theology actually produced results.

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[50] Gibbs and Lang, *Bishops*; Cheney, *English Synodalia*; A. Morey and C.N.L. Brooke, *Gilbert Foliot and His Letters* (Cambridge, 1965); C.R. Cheney, *Hubert Walter* (London, 1967); C.R. Cheney, *From Becket to Langton: English Church Government 1170-1213* (Manchester, 1968), pp. 122-45.

[51] For Lincoln diocese see chapter three, pp. 190-1.

This thesis takes locality as a basis from which to integrate these two historiographical streams. In addition to documentary sources which are more commonly thought about as 'local', it uses texts which discuss pastoral care and clerical ministry to the laity as sources for religious life in the localities in which they were written. Such texts are rarely studied as sources for local history. They were usually written by prelates or other elite churchmen, a class hardly restricted to provincial interests. The greatest prelates of the late twelfth century travelled extensively, moved among regions and nations for education and career advancement, and maintained contacts across Christendom.[52] Lesser prelates—heads of minor religious houses, archdeacons—enjoyed much smaller spheres of influence, but still regularly studied, spent parts of their careers, or maintained contacts outside their immediate localities.[53] And although studies of the administrations or political actions of particular bishops or abbots abound, texts authored by the same men are usually contextualised against intellectual, rather than geographical, backdrops.[54] This is largely because they were intimately connected to a Latinate academic milieu that reached not only across localities, but across centuries. The texts they read and produced comprise at once old genres and tropes, new intellectual trends, esoteric references and original innovations. It is easy to assume that writers' religious attitudes and concerns were, as a result, aloof. But it is also reasonable to think that they responded, whether consciously or

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[52] To take examples from only late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century England: Morey; Morey and Brooke, *Gilbert Foliot*; R.W. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam, 1157-1217*, ed. and rev. Margaret Gibson (Oxford, 1984); H. Mayr-Harting (ed.), *St Hugh of Lincoln* (Oxford, 1987); J. Baldwin, 'Master Stephen Langton, Future Archbishop of Canterbury: The Paris Schools and Magna Carta', *EHR*, 123 (2008), p. 811-46; B. Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order, c.1130-c.1300*; C. Harper-Bill, *Saint Thomas Becket* (London, 2009); R.P. Freeburn, *Hugh of Amiens and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Farnham, 2011). See also collections focussed on individual prelates: R.W. Dunning (ed.), *Jocelin of Wells: Bishop, Builder, Courtier* (Woodbridge, 2010); G. Christophe and F. Lachaud (eds.), *A Companion to John of Salisbury* (Leiden, 2014).

[53] G. Dinkova-Bruun, 'Alexander of Ashby: New Biographical Evidence', *Mediaeval Studies*, 63 (2001), pp. 301-22; *EEA X*, p. 218.

[54] Hunt, *Schools*; Morey; Morenzoni, 'Origines'; idem, ' "Sermones breues et leues composui": les sermons d'Alexandre d'Ashby', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd ser., 42 (2001), pp. 121-64.

unconsciously, to the religious life they saw around them, particularly if they were writing practical texts by which they hoped to enable, improve or record real ministries.[55] In other words, we may imagine the writer working at a desk piled high with books, but we should also imagine him looking out his window from time to time. Writers lived not just in intellectual milieus but in places: among populations, economies, and geographies. They talked to their neighbours, walked along roads, visited churches.

Perhaps counterintuitively, understanding this can also help to draw out the significance of widely-used textual tropes. Common ideas and repetitive phrases—such as *docere verbo et exemplo*, discussed in chapter one—are easily overlooked by historians, but writers nuance, shape, and apply them under the influence of the surrounding realities they perceive. In a sense this is the reverse Brian Stock's 'textual communities', in which the oral transmission of textual ideas, real or purported, order a community's social relationships.[56] I am talking about how the assumptions and actions of mostly non-literate community might shape the creation of a text. One could imagine defining such textual localities on different scales, from a village up to a sub-national region like the West Midlands. The scale depends on what we know about the author, what questions we are asking, and how localised or widespread we think particular ideas and practices are. Every writer in England saw that most lay people expected to worship at parish churches or chapels, but patterns of patronage, geographical distribution and even church architecture varied significantly across regions; and on a

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[55] For a similar hypothesis on a larger geographical scale see P.P.A. Biller, 'Marriage Patterns and Women's Lives: A Sketch of Pastoral Geography', in P.J.P. Goldberg (ed.), *Women in Medieval English Society* (Stroud, 1997), pp. 60-107.

[56] B. Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton, 1983), part II.

smaller scale too, the ministries of individual parish priests, and consequently lay experiences of worship, may have differed sharply between one village and the next.

Texts, then, are studied alongside a range of other local sources in this thesis, primarily lay and ecclesiastical charters, but also miracle stories, chronicles, fraternity statutes and archaeological reports. This is achieved by focussing on six localities; the sources for each locality include one or more texts written in that locality during the period *c*. 1160-1210. It is important to clarify that in this model the documentary sources are not envisioned merely as providing context for the textual sources; rather both types are analysed as products of distinctive, local religious cultures. Thus the historiographical conundrum of the differences between source types in emphasis and scope is made into an advantage: by moving freely between the two, I sketch a fuller picture than would otherwise be possible. Frequently, sources of different types from the same locality resonate with one another.

While the resulting thesis is organised thematically, rather than by case study, each chapter draws out particular characteristics of several localities, so that contrasts emerge under several thematic headings. It is not the purpose of this thesis, nor would it be possible, to succinctly or completely characterise the nature of religious life in each locality. The available evidence is too inconsistent. But through dense and close reading of sources of a variety of types, it has been possible to demonstrate just how locally contingent religious life in late twelfth-century England was. This stands as an important corrective both to the historiography of parochial development, which often characterises the late twelfth century as a final stage in the progression toward a uniform ‘parish system’, and to the historiographies of ‘pastoral care’ and popular religion in England, which tend to obscure local distinctions altogether.

The six localities studied in this thesis are:

1. Exeter diocese
2. London
3. Northampton and surroundings
4. 'Ormland' (to be explained below)
5. Oxford and surroundings
6. Wells archdeaconry.

The localities have been chosen, in the first instance, based on the availability of suitable texts: that is, texts which tell us something directly about clerical ministry and pastoral care, and which can be firmly identified as having been written in a particular place. I have chosen to study texts which have received little or no attention as sources for clerical ministry or pastoral care, and several of which have not even been printed, as will be set out below. Finally, I have sought, so far as is possible for the period, to study a variety of forms and genres of text. Perhaps the greatest disadvantage of this method is that it has forced a concentration on roughly the southern half of England: the northernmost locality, Ormland, brings us only as far as southern Lincolnshire. This means, of course, that the archdiocese of York is totally unrepresented, not to mention a vast geographical area which surely exhibited many distinctive features of local religious life. The reason for this omission is that I have not found any texts written in the north which appear, on initial reading, to say enough about lay religious experience to warrant selection. That does not mean that they do not exist. In particular, the sermons of Adam of Dryburgh (d. 1212?), abbot of a Praemonstratensian house on the Anglo-Scottish border, have been little studied and may bear further examination.[57] In the end, practical constraints required me to limit my research to the six most promising localities.

[57] Adam of Dryburgh, *Sermones*, PL 198:91-440.

In addition to considering the textual sources available for each locality, I have also tried to design the case studies with an eye to diversity in scale and type: thus a large diocese, a city, two county towns, an archdeaconry situated around a small town, and a rural area. The scale of each locality has been defined principally in relation to the responsibility and realm of influence of the writer(s) associated with it: so Exeter diocese corresponds to Bartholomew, bishop of Exeter; Wells archdeaconry corresponds to Thomas Agnellus, archdeacon of Wells; London corresponds to Peter of Cornwall, prior of Holy Trinity Priory, one of the more important religious foundations within the city walls. Northampton and Oxford focus on the respective towns, but also take the religious houses of the immediately surrounding rural areas into view, since town and countryside were closely linked. The clearest example of this is Alexander of Ashby, whose small priory was located around fifteen miles from Northampton, but who maintained close ties with St Andrew's Priory within the town. Orm and 'Ormland' present the most difficult, or at least the most complex, case, and I will discuss this before moving on to introduce more briefly the other writers and corresponding texts.

i. Ormland

Orm, a canon living under the rule of St Augustine, wrote a collection of English verse homilies on the life of Christ in the second half of the twelfth century.[58] He called the work *Orrmulum*, after himself: 'þiss boc iss nemmnedd Orrmulum | Forrþi þatt Orrm itt

[58] M.B. Parkes, 'On the Presumed Date and Possible Origin of the Manuscript of the *Orrmulum*: Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 1', in E.G. Stanley and D. Gray (eds.), *Five Hundred Years of Words and Sounds: a Festschrift for Eric Dobson* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 115-27, at 120-5.

wrohhte'.[59] In the *Orrmulum*, which survives in a single, imperfect autograph copy, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 1, Orm debuted a quasi-phonological spelling system which, as far as we know, was never again utilised. He doubled consonants following short vowels and marked other vowels with one, two or three accents. Our only biographical information about Orm comes from the *Orrmulum* itself. He dedicated the work to his 'brother Walter', apparently a fellow canon.[60]

The *Orrmulum* was once dismissed as little more than an orthographic curiosity, with little literary merit.[61] But recent commentators have rallied to Orm's defence, celebrating his self-conscious identification as a writer of English.[62] Nils-Lennart Johannesson has worked extensively to identify Orm's Latin sources, showing that Orm uses his source texts in sophisticated ways, and is currently preparing a new critical edition of the *Orrmulum*—a much-needed update to Robert Holt's 1878 edition.[63] Stephen Morrison has also written extensively on Orm's sources, building on the work

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[59] *Ormulum*, i, 'Preface', ll. 1-2. What I call Orm's 'introduction' is printed by White and Holt as the 'Dedication', ending with the chapter list, with the 'Preface' following that; White's and Holt's 'Preface' should actually be inserted after l. 156 of the 'Dedication'. In the following notes, though, I identify quotations from White and Holt using 'dedication' and 'preface' to aid the reader in searching the edition. N.-L. Johannesson, 'The Four-Wheeled Quadriga and the Seven Sacraments: On the Sources for the 'Dedication' of the *Ormulum*', in *Bells Chiming From the Past: Cultural and Linguistic Studies on Early English* (Amsterdam, 2007), pp. 227-45, at 228.

[60] *Ormulum*, i, 'Dedication', ll. 1-10.

[61] J.E. Wells, *A Manual of the Writings in Middle English* (New Haven, 1926), p. 283; J.C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England* (London, 1950), p. 228, n. 1; J.A.W. Bennet and G.V. Smithers (eds.), *Early Middle English Verse and Prose* (Oxford, 1968), p. 17; Malcolm Parkes quoted in M. Worley, 'Using the *Ormulum* to Redefine Vernacularity', in F. Somerset and N. Watson (eds.), *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity* (University Park, PA, 2003), pp. 19-30, at 19.

[62] S. Morrison, 'Orm's English Sources', *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, 221 (1984), pp. 54-64, at 54; C. Cannon, *The Grounds of English Literature* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 82-3; Worley, 'Using the *Ormulum*', pp. 21, 27.

[63] A select list of Johannesson's numerous publications on the *Orrmulum*: N.-L. Johnannesson, 'The Etymology of *Rime* in the *Ormulum*', in C. Dollerup (ed.), *Worlds of Words: A Tribute to Arne Zettersten* (2004), 61-73; idem, 'Four-Wheeled Quadriga'; idem, 'Icc hafe don swa summ þu badd: An Anatomy of the Preface to the *Ormulum*', *Selim*, 14 (2007), pp. 107-40; idem, '*Orrmulum*: Genre Membership and Text Organisation', in idem, G. Melchers and B. Björkman (eds.), *Of Butterflies and Birds, of Dialects and Genres: Essays in Honour of Philip Shaw* (Stockholm, 2013), pp. 77-89.

of Heinrich Matthes.[64] In spite of this renewed interest among philologists and scholars of Middle English literature, the *Orrmulum* has been virtually ignored by historians.

The whole of the *Orrmulum*, with the exception of the table of contents, is written in seven-foot metrical English verse.[65] At the end of his introduction, Orm provides a table of contents listing 242 numbered chapters. The first 230 chapter headings are Latin incipits of gospel pericopes, drawn from all four gospels and arranged to chronologically narrate the life of Christ. In the introduction to the *Orrmulum*, Orm says that he 'has gathered in this book almost all the gospels that are in the mass-book [to be read] at mass throughout the year'.[66] By 'gospels' Orm means pericopes, passages from any of the four gospels which were read at Mass. His 'mass-book' was probably a lectionary with a *capitulare evangeliorum*, which contained the full texts of the pericopes, appended. In the table of contents, the 230 incipits of pericopes are followed by twelve more chapter headings, each giving a more or less detailed summary in Latin of a segment of the book of Acts. Then the main text of the *Orrmulum* begins. For each chapter heading, Orm first paraphrases a pericope from his list, then gives a long-winded explanation of the pericope's meaning and significance: 'I have put the gospels' holy lore into English, and then what little wisdom my Lord has granted me', he explains in the *Orrmulum*'s introduction.[67] For clarity, I will refer to the sections delineated in the table of contents as 'chapters' and the textual units themselves as

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[64] H.C. Matthes, *Die Einheitlichkeit des Orrmulum: Studien zur Textkritik, zu den Quellen und zur sprachlichen Form von Orrmins Evangelienbuch* (Heidelberg, 1933); S. Morrison, 'Sources for the *Ormulum*: A Re-examination', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 84 (1983), pp 419-36; idem, 'New Sources for the *Ormulum*', *Neophilologus*, 68 (1984), pp. 444-50; idem, 'Orm's English Sources'; idem, 'A Reminiscence of Wulfstan in the Twelfth Century', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 96 (1995), pp. 229-34; idem, 'Continuité et innovation littéraire en Angleterre au XIIe siècle: la prédication de la *militia Christi*', *Cahiers de Civilisation Médiévale*, 44 (2001), pp. 139-57.

[65] E. Solopova, 'The Metre of the Ormulum', in M.J. Toswell and E.M. Tyler (eds.), *Studies in English Language and Literature: 'Doubt Wisely', Papers in Honour of E. G. Stanley* (London, 1996), pp. 423-39.

[66] *Orrmulum*, i, 'Dedication', ll. 29-32.

[67] Ibid., i, 'Dedication', ll. 13-16.

'gospel paraphrases' and 'homilies': each chapter comprises a gospel paraphrase and homily. Although the homilies account for the bulk of the text, Orm clearly sees them as extractions of the truths found in the gospels, 'for', as he says, 'the gospels' holy lore teaches Christian people everything that is needed for them to do what is right in truth and deed on earth'.[68] Orm's project was immense, but we will never know whether he completed it: the manuscript breaks off in the middle of the thirty-second chapter. If it was completed, the *Orrmulum* might have exceeded 200,000 lines.[69]

Defining Orm's locality presents particular challenges, the greatest of which is that we do not know precisely where Orm lived. Orm tells us in the opening lines of the *Orrmulum* that he lives 'in God's house' under the Rule of St Augustine,[70] but it has proved impossible to determine with certainty to which Augustinian house Orm belonged. Early guesses varied widely, with the only general consensus being that Orm's dialect shows both East Anglian features and Scandinavian influences.[71] The development of dialectical mapping techniques in connection with the eventual *Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (*LALME*) facilitated a more scientific approach.[72] In 1963 and 1978 respectively, Angus McIntosh and Margaret Laing, both contributors to *LALME*, independently placed the *Orrmulum* in the vicinity of Stamford (Lincs.) and of Crowland (Lincs.), respectively. Stamford and Crowland are both near the southern edge of Lincolnshire, only about fourteen miles apart. Moreover, Derek Britton has recently noted that Orm's use of *wikenn* (meaning office, duty, or function),

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[68] *Ormulum*, i, 'Dedication', ll. 121-4.

[69] Or short verses: two short verses equal a long (fifteen-syllable, seven-foot) verse. The original number of lines for the extant thirty-one (complete) chapters can be estimated by comparing the number of extant to wanting columns given by Holt: *Orrmulum*, i, p. lxxxviii. This is then multiplied by the ratio of planned to complete chapters.

[70] *Ormulum*, i, 'Dedication', ll. 1-10.

[71] A. McIntosh, 'A New Approach to Middle English Dialectology', *English Studies*, 44 (1963), pp. 1-11, at 11; M. Laing, 'Studies in the Dialectical Material of Mediaeval Lincolnshire', University of Edinburgh PhD Thesis, 1978, pp. 20-23.

[72] A. McIntosh *et al*., *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (4 vols., Aberdeen, 1986).

formerly thought to be a unique example, parallels compounds with *-wican* in the Peterborough Chronicle, written *c*. 1155 at Peterborough, only eleven miles south of Stamford and eight miles south of Crowland.[73] A southern Lincolnshire location for Orm is now widely assumed.

In 1983, Malcolm Parkes suggested that Orm might have been a canon of Bourne Abbey, an Arrouasian house about nine miles northeast of Stamford and eleven miles northwest of Crowland.[74] Bourne was a daughter house of the abbey of St Nicholas of Arrouaise and followed the rule of St Augustine.[75] Although Parkes insisted that this hypothesis was 'no more than a suggestion', one recent commentator on the *Orrmulum* has adopted the Bourne association as all but proven fact.[76] However, while Bourne is an entirely possible location for Orm, there is little reason to think it a more likely candidate than other Augustinian houses in the area around Stamford and Crowland.

Parkes' identification of Orm with Bourne Abbey turns on the final five chapters in his table of contents, which draw together material from chapters nine to twenty of Acts. Parkes asserts that their presence is 'difficult to explain' given that the extant parts of the *Orrmulum*, including its introduction, repeatedly claim that the purpose of the work is to describe the four Gospels and the life of Christ.[77] Since these five planned chapters would narrate the deeds of the apostles Paul and Peter, Parkes guessed that Orm's religious house may have been dedicated to SS Peter and Paul. Such a dedication would have been incorporated into the liturgy of the house and therefore 'reflected in

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[73] D. Britton, 'Orm's *Wikenn* and Compounds with *-Wican* in Annal 1137 of *The Peterborough Chronicle*', *Notes and Queries*, 52 (2005), pp. 10-11.

[74] Parkes, 'Presumed Date', pp. 125-7.

[75] J.C. Dickinson, 'English Regular Canons and the Continent in the Twelfth Century', *TRHS*, 5th ser., 1 (1951), pp. 71-89, at 79-83.

[76] Parkes, 'Presumed Date', p. 127; Worley, 'Using the *Ormulum*', p. 23.

[77] Parkes, 'Presumed Date', p. 126.

the "messeboc" Orm used'.[78] The only Augustinian house in or near southern Lincolnshire dedicated to Peter and Paul was Bourne Abbey, remarkably close to the dialectical epicentre identified by McIntosh and Laing. However, this argument does not stand up to scrutiny.

First of all, Parkes' assumption that Orm's interest in the book of Acts must have been a reflection of his house's liturgy is unwarranted. Orm arranges the gospel pericopes on which the first 230 planned chapters of the *Orrmulum* are based not according to liturgical order, but in such a way as to narrate the life of Christ from birth to ascension. His planned foray into Acts suggests that his primary intent was not to elaborate the liturgical gospel lections, but to consolidate the story of Christ's life and its aftermath. It is impossible to know exactly which gospel lections Orm's lectionary contained, but a comparison of the incipits listed in the *Orrmulum* with the standard lections of the Roman missal shows that Orm probably omitted a number of lections, including a few for Sundays, which were unlikely to vary among localities and religious houses.[79] Orm also included incipits from all four gospels which do not correspond to any pericopes in the standard Roman rite. While it is possible that these were included in the particular lectionary Orm used, it is much more likely that he added them to fill in gaps in the narrative of Christ's life not covered in the liturgy. Thus seems that Orm used his lectionary only as a handy example for how to divide up the gospel texts, adding to it or subtracting from it wherever necessary. Orm did not depend solely on his lectionary in planning the *Orrmulum*, and therefore there is no reason to assume that the passages in Acts which Orm summarises in his table of contents were related to the liturgy of his house.

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[78] Ibid.

[79] W.H. Frere, *Studies in Early Roman Liturgy* (3 vols., Oxford, 1934), ii, pp. 29-58.

Second, Parkes inexplicably ignored the first seven of the twelve chapters which Orm planned for the book of Acts, focussing instead on the final five. When all of Orm's planned chapters in Acts are examined as a whole, the apparent emphasis on Peter and Paul appears not as a deviation requiring a special explanation, but as a logical way for Orm to boil down the book's lengthy accounts of both characters into useful thematic chunks. When one compares Orm's plans for his homilies on Acts with the biblical text itself, clear patterns emerge. Orm is particularly interested in miracles, including healings, visions and appearances of angels;[80] in punishments or denunciations of wrongdoing among would-be converts;[81] in the foundations of the western church, including the ordination of deacons and Peter's ministry to the Gentiles;[82] and, as noted below, in manifestations of the Holy Spirit.[83] He is decidedly uninterested in the many lengthy speeches and dialogues which the book of Acts records. When we turn to chapters 238 to 242, the five chapters which Parkes believed were 'difficult to explain', Orm's interests appear to remain consistent. He synthesises the book's interwoven narratives of Paul and Peter into coherent categories: Paul's conversion (238), Paul's miracles (240); Peter's miracles (239), Peter's ministry to the Gentiles (241), and Peter's post-Acts ministry (242). Orm's summary of chapter 242 ends with Peter remaining in Antioch for seven years, then leaving to preach elsewhere for two years. There is a loss of text at the end of the entry, but a likely conclusion would be Peter's arrival in Rome. Tradition held that Peter was joined in Rome by Paul, and that together they built up the Roman church.[84] Following that narrative would have allowed Orm to dip into in the more interesting narrative portions of Acts chapters

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[80] Chs. 231, 233, 235, 238-41, according to the numbering in *Orrmulum*, i, 'Dedication', after l. 342.

[81] Chs. 234, 237.

[82] Chs. 237, 240-2.

[83] Chs. 232, 235, 237, 240.

[84] *Acta sanctorum Iunii V* (Antwerp, 1709), pp. 426-7.

twenty-seven and twenty-eight, in which Paul, en route to Rome, is shipwrecked on Malta, survives a snakebite and heals many sick people. More importantly, it would be a fitting end to his project to describe how the life of Christ provided for the salvation of lay people by establishing the Roman church. Peter and Paul are important characters in Orm's planned homilies simply because they are important characters in his central narrative. The problem which Parkes proposed to solve by suggesting Orm's attachment to Bourne Abbey is therefore not a problem at all.

Nor is Orm's plan to continue his collection beyond the narrative of the Gospels particularly surprising. The *Orrmulum* itself is evidence enough that he was not wary of ambitious projects. More importantly, the coming of the Holy Spirit and work of the early church were, in Orm's mind, essential to the completion and implementation of the story of the Gospels. In his introduction, Orm explains what the Gospels are: '*Goddspell* in English means "good word" and "good tidings" and "good message" ', and the Gospels describe 'how God was made a man for all mankind's need, and how mankind through his death was freed from hell'.[85] To elaborate, he then numbers and describes seven 'goodnesses' of Christ, that is, the seven sacraments of Christ's life.[86] But only the first five of these actually happen in the course of the Gospels; the sixth is the sending of the Holy Spirit, the seventh Christ's return on Domesday. Orm specifically characterises the Holy Spirit's work through Christ's disciples as continuing Christ's ministry on Earth: 'The sixth good which the Lord Christ has done for us on earth is that for our good he went up into heaven's bliss, and afterwards sent the Holy Spirit to his disciples, to comfort them and embolden them to stand against the Devil'.[87] Orm uses similar language when describing the evangelistic mission of contemporary

[85] Ibid., i, 'Dedication', ll. 163-6.

[86] Ibid., i, 'Dedication', ll. 185-250.

[87] Ibid., i, 'Dedication', ll. 231-8.

preachers, including himself, who should 'preach [*spellenn*] to the people' the meaning of the Gospels 'for the sake of their souls'.[88] Orm clearly draws a direct narrative line from the life of Christ, through the early church described in Acts, through his own time and and ultimately to Domesday. He also describes the Holy Spirit as a helper of Christians, strengthening them against temptation, bestowing virtue, wisdom and even 'discernment and skill in worldly things'.[89] Orm's inclusion of the book of Acts in his plan for the *Orrmulum* actually helps to conclude the story of the Gospels, linking the evangelistic mission of Christ's life and of his disciples to Orm's own project.

With the Bourne hypothesis set aside, we can return to the task of defining Orm's locality. Disassociating Orm from Bourne Abbey can force us to think more creatively about Orm's potential relationship with a somewhat wider area around Stamford and Crowland. The first question is what level of precision we should attribute to dialectical mapping. Laing asserts that 'Orm's dialect can be accommodated in (and only in) a small and quite well defined area on the later [Middle English] maps',[90] and Parkes quotes personal correspondence from McIntosh along similar lines,[91] but there are caveats. The close agreement of Laing's and McIntosh's independent analyses perhaps should not impress us too much, since both used the same techniques and data which would ultimately produce *LALME* and later the *Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English* (*LAEME*).[92] Additionally, the *Orrmulum*'s early date means that contemporary dialectical comparisons are sparse, as a glance at *LAEME* will show; McIntosh and Laing had to rely heavily on late medieval data. Finally, the localisation of Orm's

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[88] Ibid., i, 'Dedication', ll. 33-6. Orm often repeats the verse 'To lokenn whatt itt læreþþ uss | Off ure sawle nede' or similar when transitioning from biblical narrative to exposition.

[89] Ibid., i, ll. 4710-15, 5360-7, 5478-627, 8765-6, 8775-816; ii, 10470-7, 14124-40. Quote at i, 5534-5.

[90] Laing, 'Studies', pp. 20, 21 n. 6.

[91] Parkes, 'Presumed Date', p. 127.

[92] McIntosh, *Linguistic Atlas*; M. Laing, *A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English, 1150–1325*, version 3.2 (Edinburgh, 2013), online, http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laeme2/laeme2.html.

dialect does not necessarily point us to the place where he became a canon: it is conceivable that his dialect was formed near Stamford and Crowland but that he joined an Augustinian house some distance away. However, Orm scrupulously represented the pronunciation of English with a view to enabling preachers, as chapter one will show; it seems unlikely that he would do so in a dialect too far removed from local speech. In fact, he specifically requests that his spelling—and therefore his dialect—remain unchanged if anyone should copy the *Orrmulum*: 'Whoever wants to make another copy of this book later, I ask that he copy it correctly, just as this book shows…and that he take care that he writes the letter twice wherever it is written that way in this book…for there's no other way for him to correctly copy it'.[93] It appears that Orm had quite a limited view of the range of spoken English.

We therefore have good reason to trust dialectical mapping in Orm's case, but equally we need to avoid unwarranted precision. It is difficult to discern where to draw the line, and any decision will inevitably be somewhat arbitrary. What is clear is that we cannot limit Orm's locality to the county of Lincoln. Stamford and Crowland sat along the southern edge of Lincolnshire, with Crowland not far from Northamptonshire and Cambridgeshire, and Stamford belonging to a small protrusion between Rutland and Northamptonshire. Neither common sense nor local evidence suggest county boundaries would delineate sharp differences in dialect or religious practice.[94] Disregarding county borders, then, there were four Augustinian houses within around twenty miles of the point equidistant from Stamford and Crowland: Bourne Abbey in Lincolnshire; Brooke Priory, a cell of Kenilworth, in Rutland; and Launde Priory and Owston Abbey in Leicestershire. The Leicestershire houses are somewhat farther from Orm's dialectical

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[93] *Ormulum*, i, 'Dedication', ll. 95-8, 103-6.

[94] See, for example, the dispute regarding the churches of Wansford and Stibbington on opposite sides of the Lincolnshire-Northamptonshire border, chapter two, pp. 137-8.

epicentre, but Laing mentions that, at least in the late medieval data, 'bundles of isoglosses' in the area tend to run east-west rather than north-south.[95] Additionally, Brooke, Launde and Owston are clustered within a few miles of each other, so eliminating two of them would seem artificial. In defining an area for the purposes of studying local documentary sources, we might reasonably confine ourselves to the churches and religious houses which lay within about ten miles of any of these five Augustinian houses. I have also allowed my research to stretch slightly eastward to include Crowland Abbey and Thorney Abbey, two of the richer sources of documentation for the area. The result is a region which includes parts of six counties; which lay mostly in the diocese of Lincoln, except for the area around Thorney Abbey; which was in the diocese of Ely, and shows significant geological variation, between the dense forests in the west and the fens in the east. For convenience—and with a nod to Orm's idiosyncratic self-referencing—I call this locality 'Ormland'.[96]

None of this seems very neat, but if we are interested in the relationships between localities and texts, it is important to study not only neatly-defined localities, such as parishes, cities and dioceses, but fluid and blurry ones. Most historians would now agree that religious ideas and practices were not simply imposed from above on lay people by ecclesiastical structures; following that logic, we should expect that they were not limited by hard jurisdictional boundaries. Ideas about religion might spread over wide areas or be confined to a single settlement, and they might have blended with neighbouring practices or moved over time. One example of how the area described

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[95] Laing, 'Studies', p. 20 n.

[96] There is scholarly precedent for making up words that begin with *Orm-*. 'Ormography', for the study of Orm's spelling system, can be credited to Meg Worley, 'Using the *Ormulum*', p. 20; and Margaret Laing, possibly at the suggestion of J.R.R. Tolkien, showed that one can 'Ormify' other Middle English texts using Orm's spelling system: M. Laing, 'Never the Twain Shall Meet: Early Middle English—the East-West Divide', in I. Taavitsainen et al. (eds.), *Placing Middle English in Context* (Berlin, 2000), pp. 97-124, at 115.

here might have indeed functioned as a coherent locality for the transmission of at least some religious ideas is provided by an early thirteenth-century account of miracles which occurred in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries at St Waltheof's shrine at Crowland Abbey.[97] Figure 6 shows that the places from which eleven petitioners travelled correspond roughly to the area presented here as Ormland.

ii. Exeter diocese

Bartholomew of Exeter was born in Millières in Normandy. There is good reason to believe he was a master at Paris in 1140-42 and a member of Archbishop Theobald's household thereafter. By *c*. 1155 he was archdeacon of Exeter, and was elected bishop in 1161, holding that office until his death in 1184. He played an important role in the Becket controversy, in which he steered a middle path, well documented by John of Salisbury's advisory letters to him.[98] After Becket's death Bartholomew served both as a judge on the king's bench and as a judge delegate for Pope Alexander III; the importance of papal letters sent to Exeter in the development of English decretal collections is a testament to Bartholomew's prominence as a canonist.[99] During his lifetime Bartholomew authored *Contra fatalitatis errorem*, a treatise on free will and predestination;[100] a *Dialogus contra Judaeos*;[101] a collection of 125 sermons for Sundays and feast days; and a penitential known as *Liber penitentialis*.[102] Despite this

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[97] *Chroniques anglo-normandes*, ed. F.X. Michel (3 vols., Rouen, 1836-40), ii, 131-41, and see also the study by C.S. Watkins, 'The Cult of Earl Waltheof at Crowland', *Hagiographica*, 3 (1996), pp. 95-111. The origin of the twelfth petitioner cannot be identified; we are told only that she was Athelis, an abbess born in Normandy.

[98] Morey, chs. 1-2; F. Barlow, 'Bartholomew (*d*. 1184)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

[99] C. Duggan, *Twelfth-Century Decretal Collections and Their Importance in English History* (London, 1963), pp. 77-123.

[100] Bartholomew of Exeter, *Bartholomaei Exoniensis contra fatalitatis errorem*, ed. D.N. Bell, CCCM, 157 (Turnhout, 1996).

[101] Bodl., MS Bodley 482, a thirteenth-century Exeter copy.

[102] Printed in Morey, pp. 175-300, from BL, MS Cotton Vit. A XII.

noteworthy career, Bartholomew of Exeter has received relatively little scholarly attention.[103] Of his works, only *Contra fatalitatis errorem* and *Liber penitentialis* have been printed. Adrian Morey's 1937 monograph, *Bartholomew of Exeter: Bishop and Canonist*, remains the authoritative account of Bartholomew's career. In this thesis I draw on Bartholomew's *Liber penitentialis* and sermons. The *Liber penitentialis* was Bartholomew's most successful work, surviving in twenty-two medieval copies, in addition to six known copies now lost.[104] His sermons survive as a complete collection in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 449; scattered sermons are also present in at least two other manuscripts.[105] MS Bodley 449 is undoubtedly the volume of his own sermons which, according to a 1327 inventory, Bartholomew bequeathed to the Exeter cathedral library.[106] In fact, it is plausible that the manuscript was produced under the bishop's own supervision. Setting aside a booklet added after the final folio,[107] the entire manuscript was written by approximately three scribes working in coordination before being painstakingly corrected throughout. The hands are similar protogothic bookhands of the second half of the twelfth century.

I take Bartholomew's entire diocese of Exeter, comprising the counties of Devon and Cornwall, as his locality. Although most of Bartholomew's preserved sermons were probably intended for delivery in Exeter, as bishop he held the pastoral care of his entire

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[103] The *Liber penitentialis* alone has received modest attention: L.E. Boyle, 'The Inter-Conciliar Period 1179-1215 and the Beginnings of Pastoral Manuals', in F. Liotta (ed.), *Miscellanea Rolando Bandinelli Papa Alessandro III* (Siena, 1986), pp. 45-56, at 47; Meens, *Penance*, pp. 205-9; Diem, 'Virtues', p. 202; J. Taliadoros, 'Bartholomew of Exeter's Penitential: Some Observations on His Personal Dicta', in P. Erdö and A. Szuromi, *Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Congress of Medieval Canon Law* (Vatican City, 2010), pp. 457-73.

[104] Morey, pp. 164-6; *Contra fatalitatis errorem*, pp. xviii-ix. Bell did not know about two additional Bodleian copies, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 443 and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Lyell 3.

[105] Rouen, Bibliothèque Municipale, MS 626 and Cambridge, Clare College, MS Kk 3 10. The latter had not previously been identified.

[106] Ibid., pp. 50-51.

[107] This booklet contains a handful of anonymous sermons on the Psalms, written in two late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century hands, on twenty-nine folios which are significantly smaller than the rest of the manuscript. Although the sermons have not been otherwise identified, there is no reason to assume they are Bartholomew's, as they differ in both style and structure from the sermons in the main part of the manuscript.

diocese, and he did visit and preach outside his cathedral city. For example, two sermons which address religious audiences and commemorate the translation of St Benedict were probably delivered at Benedictine monasteries.[108] Another was almost certainly delivered to nuns.[109] We know that Bartholomew held a synod at Bodmin Priory in Cornwall in 1171, and was at Buckfast Abbey in Devon between 1180 and 1184;[110] in thirteenth-century chronicles he was remembered as having attended to the spiritual needs of 'a certain village of the countryside' while staying there during a visitation.[111] Additionally, sermons preached in the town of Exeter probably reached many who had traveled there from other parts of the diocese, especially prelates and wealthy laymen. One sermon for Palm Sunday addresses 'lords from diverse parts of the world', and another, for the cathedral's dedication day, addresses 'brothers from diverse parts of the world'.[112] In 1174x81 the monks of Forde Abbey (Dorset) were given permission to build a hospice in St Martin's Lane 'so that, when they come to Exeter because of their vocation or [the bishop's] will, they might have their own hospice in which they can be honourably received'.[113] Thus although Bartholomew's writings most strongly reflect the pastoral realities of the town of Exeter, his writings must have also been informed by a knowledge of, and interest in, other parts of his diocese. This is not to say, of course, that religious life was uniform across such a large diocese. In what follows, I often discuss Devon, Cornwall, or the town of Exeter in particular; we might think of these places as sub-localities. Recalling the lessons of

[108] BE, fols. 61va-63ra.

[109] Ibid., fols. 54vb-55rb.

[110] Morey, p. 89.

[111] See chapter four, pp. 263-4.

[112] Fols. 31vb, 76rb.

[113] *EEA XI: Exeter, 1046-1184*, ed. F. Barlow (Oxford, 1996), p. 94.

Ormland, I try to treat the boundaries of counties and dioceses, where used for convenience, as permeable rather than definitive.

iii. London

Peter of Cornwall was born around 1140, in or near Launceston (Corn.). His father was Jordan of Trecarrel, who according to Peter 'was considered by all to have a high reputation' and was evidently of some wealth.[114] Peter also reported that Jordan had followed the devotion of his father and Peter's grandfather, Ailsi, to St Stephen, the patron saint of Launceston Priory. Originally a college of secular canons, Launceston was one of three secular houses re-founded as Augustinian priories by William Warelwast, bishop of Exeter from 1107 to 1138; the other two were Plympton and Bodmin. Launceston and Plympton were both colonised with canons from Holy Trinity Aldgate, the London priory where Peter took his vows.[115] Only the second house of regular canons established in England and the first religious house established in London after the Conquest, Holy Trinity was founded by Queen Matilda in 1108 and colonised by the Priory of St Botolph, Colchester, itself England's first house of regular canons. The priory's origins are narrated in a 1425 cartulary written by Thomas Axbridge, a canon.[116] According to Axbridge, Matilda established Holy Trinity on the advice of Archbishop Anselm, and the priory continued to enjoy royal patronage in the twelfth century. The priory also received gifts from a number of London's prominent citizens, including an alderman and London's first mayor, Henry fitz Ailwin, who was buried at the entrance to the chapter house in 1212.[117] Peter of Cornwall's scholarly

[114] LR, pp. 2, 198.

[115] P.L. Hull, *The Cartulary of Launceston Priory (Lambeth Palace MS 719): A Calendar* (Exeter, 1987), Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new ser., 30 (Exeter, 1987), p. xv.

[116] *HT*.

[117] Ibid, pp. 51-2, 84, 232; J. Schofield and R. Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate, City of London: An Archaeological Reconstruction and History* (London, 2005), p. 17.

achievements seem to have augmented the priory's status: Axbridge remembered him as a 'leading and preeminent doctor among all the English doctors of his time'.[118] He was elected prior of Holy Trinity on 9 May 1197, and died on 7 July 1221.

Peter of Cornwall authored four known works at Holy Trinity Priory: *Pantheologus*, an immense concordance of Biblical *distinctiones* completed in 1189;[119] *Liber reuelationum*, a similarly impressive collection of miracle and vision stories completed in around 1200; a treatise, *De reparatione lapsus generis humani*, of uncertain date;[120] and *Liber disputationum Petri contra Symonem iudeum de confutatione iudeorum*, probably written during the interdict (1208-14) for presentation to the exiled Stephen Langton when Peter was sent to him by King John in 1210.[121] *Pantheologus* survives in whole or in part in seven manuscripts, with another four attested;[122] the other works are only known from a single manuscript each.[123] This thesis is concerned with the *Pantheologus* and the *Liber reuelationum*. The former has been upheld as an early example of new indexing and cross-referencing techniques for academic reference works; only its prologue has been printed.[124] The latter has been of

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[118] Ibid., p. 233.

[119] The presentation copy, and only surviving complete copy, is BL, MSS Royal 7 E. VIII, 7 C. XIII, 7 C. XIV.

[120] R. Sharpe, 'Peter of Cornwall's *De Reparatione Lapsus*: A "Lost" Work Traced', *Scriptorium*, 38 (1984), pp. 79-81.

[121] R.W. Hunt, 'The Disputation of Peter of Cornwall against Simon the Jew', in idem, W.A. Pantin and R.W. Southern (eds.), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to F. M. Powicke* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 143-56.

[122] LR, pp. 32-33.

[123] SHC DD/AH/66/17, the sole manuscript of *De reparatione lapsus*, is a fine illuminated volume of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century, and may therefore be the original presentation copy. Windsor, Eton College Library, MS 130, the sole manuscript of *Liber disputationum Petri contra Symonem iudeum*, is a fourteenth-century codex which also contains an unidentified work regarding the Jews. *Liber reuelationum* is preserved in London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51, which was produced and revised under Peter's supervision: see chapter two, p. 133, n. 38.

[124] R.H. Rouse and M.A. Rouse, '*Statim invenire*: Schools, Preachers, and New Attitudes to the Page', in R.L. Benson, G. Constable and C.D. Lanham (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 191-219, at 205-12, 215-16; Hunt, 'English Learning', pp. 38-42.

some interest to historians interested in vision narratives,[125] and is the subject of a recent study, calendar and partial edition by Robert Easting and Richard Sharpe.[126] Its prologue has also been cited as evidence of lay skepticism of the supernatural.[127] However, neither text has been rigorously studied as a source for clerical ministry to the laity.

I have defined this locality as comprising London and its immediate suburbs, excluding Westminster and the city's wider hinterland. Although Holy Trinity controlled at least thirteen churches in Middlesex, Essex, Kent and Hertfordshire,[128] at least one of which Peter mentions in his *Liber reuelationum*, both the priory and Peter himself were closely involved in the life of the city. The majority of the priory's temporal revenues came from London assets, rents and churches.[129] As chapter one shows, Peter of Cornwall's intellectual career was London-centric; all three of the dedicatees of his *Pantheologus* had connections to the schools based at St Paul's cathedral. Finally, the city's population density and profusion of local churches, far outpacing any other urban area in England, gave rise to a distinctive religious culture which deserves focussed study, as chapter three shows.

iv. Northampton and Surroundings

Alexander of Ashby was prior of Canons Ashby, a small house of Augustinian canons in Northamptonshire, from the 1180s to the early years of the thirteenth century. He was born in 1148 or 1154, and died in either 1208 or 1214; a verse epitaph in a thirteenth-

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[125] R. Easting, 'Peter of Cornwall's Account of St Patrick's Purgatory', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 97 (1979), pp. 397-416; C.S. Watkins, 'Sin, Penance and Purgatory in the Anglo-Norman Realm: The Evidence of Visions and Ghost Stories', *Past & Present*, 175 (2002), pp. 3-33, at 16-18.

[126] LR.

[127] R. Bartlett, *England under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225* (Oxford, 2000), p. 478; J. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe* (London, 2005), p. 226; Watkins, *History*, p. 219.

[128] *CHT*, pp. 192, 200-1, 229; Schofield and Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory*, pp. 14-15; LR, pp. 255-6, 260, 262.

[129] *CHT*, p. xvi.

century manuscript celebrates his love of learning and describes him falling ill and being granted fifteen more days of life in response to his prayer.[130] A papal judge-delegate on at least eight cases,[131] he was in all likelihood connected with the school based at St Andrew's Priory Northampton and claimed to know theologians in Oxford and Exeter.[132] His known writings are the *De artificioso modo predicandi*, a preaching treatise with five model sermons; two sermon collections, each covering the liturgical year; twenty-one miscellaneous sermons; a *Libellus meditationum*; the *Liber festiualis*, a collection of saints' lives in elegiac couplets; and the *Brevissima comprehensio historiarum*, a Biblical epitome also in elegiac couplets. Scholarly editions of all of Alexander of Ashby's works were published in 2004 by Franco Morenzoni and Greti Dinkova-Bruun.[133] Morenzoni's work is of particular significance, both in terms of locating *De artificioso modo predicandi* in the emergence of the *ars praedicandi* genre[134] and in his re-attribution to Alexander of fifty-three sermons which Joseph Goering had tentatively attributed to William de Montibus.[135] This thesis primarily studies *De artificioso modo predicandi* and Alexander's sermons. Although a few commentators have noted that Alexander was the first medieval author to apply the terminology of Ciceronian rhetoric to sermon composition,[136] his writings have not been utilised as sources for the study of religious life or practical religious ministry.

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[130] Dinkova-Bruun, 'Alexander of Ashby', pp. 319-23

[131] Ibid., pp. 306-11

[132] See chapter one, p. 73.

[133] *AA I*; *AA II*. See also T.H. Bestul, 'The *Meditationes* of Alexander of Ashby: An edition', *Mediaeval Studies*, 52 (1990), pp. 24-81.

[134] Morenzoni, 'Aux origines'; ibid., 'Parole du prédicateur et inspiration divine d'aprés les *Artes praedicandi*', in R.M. Dessi and M. Lauwers (eds.), *La parole du prédicateur: Ve-XVe siècle* (Nice, 1997), pp. 271-90.

[135] Goering, *William de Montibus*, pp. 515-66.

[136] See chapter one, p. 71.

Since Alexander witnessed charters of religious houses throughout Northampton, and since his own priory of Canons Ashby lay some fifteen miles southwest of Northampton, I have included southern Northamptonshire in this case study.

v. Oxford and Surroundings

The works of two writers are studied for Oxford. Robert of Cricklade was first a canon of Cirencester Abbey (Glos.), where he composed *De connubia patriarche Jacob* between 1131 and 1140,[137] and then prior of St Frideswide's Priory in Oxford from 1141 to 1174; he died in or after that year. Between 1171 and 1173 he wrote a collection of forty-two *Homiliae super Ezechielem*, and in *c*. 1173-4 he penned a life of St Thomas Becket which, although now lost in its original Latin version, was translated into Old Norse and incorporated into the Icelandic *Thómas saga* in the late thirteenth century.[138] Also attributed to Robert are *Speculum fidei*, a theological treatise,[139] and a life of St Frideswide, which John Blair has edited from three manuscripts.[140] This thesis studies Robert's *Homiliae super Ezechielem*, a commentary on the final eight chapters of Ezekiel, which survives in two manuscripts. The first, Hereford Cathedral Library, MS O III 10, is thought to have been written and revised in Robert's own hand;[141] Cambridge University Library, MS Pembroke 30, has been identified as a second copy produced by Walter de Melida, the Cirencester canon who also collected and

[137] Bodl., MS Laud misc. 725.

[138] A.J. Duggan, 'Cricklade, Robert of (*d*. in or after 1174)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); M. Orme, 'A Reconstruction of Robert of Cricklade's *Vita et Miracula S. Thomae Cantuariensis*', *Analecta Bollandiana*, 84 (1996), pp. 379-98.

[139] Hunt, 'English Learning', pp. 32-33, 37-38

[140] J. Blair, 'Saint Frideswide Reconsidered', *Oxoniensia*, 54 (1989), pp. 71-127, at 101-16.

[141] Dunning, 'Neckam's Manuscripts', p. 180.

disseminated the works of Alexander Neckam in the early thirteenth century.[142] Robert's *Homiliae super Ezechielem* have been neither printed nor studied.

Alexander Neckam was born in 1157 and studied grammar at St Albans (Herts.) before teaching the liberal arts and studying theology, canon law and civil law at Paris between *c*. 1175 and 1182. He returned to England and taught as a master first at Dunstable (Beds.) and then at St Albans. He was in Oxford by around 1190, and there either became closely associated or joined St Frideswide's Priory. He joined the regular canons of Cirencester Abbey, where Robert of Cricklade had been a canon, in *c*. 1200, and became abbot in 1213; he died in 1217. Alexander's life and works are the subject of a posthumously published monograph by R.W. Hunt and a recent doctoral thesis by Andrew Dunning.[143] His works are too numerous to list here; they range from pedagogical compositions to exegetical and theological commentaries, from a treatise on grammar to encyclopaedias, as well as meditations and poems on such diverse topics as wine and the 'strong woman' of Proverbs chapter twenty-one.[144] Alexander also wrote at least fifty-one sermons, which are spread among at least eleven manuscripts;[145] most cannot be identified with any particular stage of Alexander's career.[146] His sermons were collected after his death by Walter de Melida, a Cirencester canon.[147] The forty-two sermons contained in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Wood empt. 13, an early thirteenth-century manuscript probably produced by Walter, were apparently copied from a number of manuscript sources and re-organised according to the liturgical cycle.

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[142] Ibid., pp. 67-8. The Hereford MS is imperfect, lacking part of homily 38 onward. Here I quote from the Pembroke MS, which incorporates corrections made in the Hereford MS.

[143] Hunt, *Schools*; Dunning, 'Neckam's Manuscripts'.

[144] On Neckam's works in general see Hunt, *Schools*, pp. 118-53 and Dunning, 'Neckam's Manuscripts', ch. 2; on his commentaries on the biblical Wisdom books see Dunning, ibid., ch. 3; on his encyclopaedic works see T. Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopaedic Knowledge: The Tropological Universe of Alexander Neckam (1157-1217)* (Turnhout, 2014).

[145] Hunt, *Schools*, pp. 149-3.

[146] Contrary to R.W. Hunt's assumption: ibid., p. 84.

[147] Dunning, 'Neckam's Manuscripts', pp. 59-68.

In one sermon for the Assumption, for example, Neckam instructs the 'reader' to 'look for the sermon I composed in the previous annual cycle … which begins "*Que est*" ', referring to the preceding sermon, also for the Assumption.[148] Nevertheless, clear indications of the original preaching occasions of many of the sermons survive. This thesis draws on two sermons in this manuscript which address the lay people of Oxford and discuss St Frideswide's Priory.[149] These sermons have long been known to historians interested in the priory and the early history of the schools at Oxford, but their significance for religious life and pastoral care in Oxford has not been seriously considered.

In defining the geographical boundaries of Oxford as Robert of Cricklade's and Alexander Neckam's locality I have followed a similar principle to that used for Northampton, a town of comparable size: in addition to the town itself, I have incorporated sources for Oxfordshire and Berkshire churches and religious houses within around a fifteen-mile radius.

vi. Wells Archdeaconry

Thomas Agnellus, *alias* of Earley (Berks.), was archdeacon of Wells from 1169x70 to *c.* 1195.[150] He advanced his clerical career with the help of family connections and royal patronage. A canon of Tournai in 1159, he was a royal clerk to Henry II when he received by the king's influence first the Wells prebend of Whitchurch, and then the archdeaconry of Wells in 1169x70. Thomas then gave Whitchurch to his brother Stephen of Tournai, who kept it despite an attempted intervention by Pope Alexander

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[148] 'Qualiter uero dicatur assumpcio si scire desiderat lector, querat sermonem quem composui iam reuoluto anni circulo in laudem et honorem beatissime et uitem erate uirginis marie qui sic incipit: "Que est" ', AN, fol. 55r.

[149] AN, fols. 74r-76v, 93r-97r.

[150] *EEA X*, pp. lvii-iii, 218.

III. Reginald, bishop of Bath 1174-91, refers to him in a charter as 'my very dear kinsman'.[151] Thomas' nephew, William of Earley, was a chamberlain of Henry II, and in 1166 Thomas helped William to establish a religious house at Buckland, first as a priory of regular canons and later as a preceptory of nuns associated with the Hospital of St John in Jerusalem.[152] Other Earleys can be found in Somerset ecclesiastical circles, including Hubert, a vicar, and Adam and Reginald, witnesses to charters of bishops Reginald and Savaric (1192-1205).[153]

Thomas Agnellus' sermons have been almost entirely overlooked by historians.[154] They can be found in a single manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud misc. 71. It contains a collection of twenty-eight sermons which must have been compiled before Thomas' death in 1194, since he wrote an introduction for the collection, and after the death of Reginald, bishop of Bath, in 1191.[155] The manuscript's provenance is unknown, but it was likely the original fair copy, created under Thomas' watch: it is the work of two scribes working in cooperation and is corrected by a single, contemporary hand throughout, including substantive additions.[156] The sermons themselves are not rubricated for particular Sundays or feasts, but a few can be identified with particular days, either because the day's solemnity is mentioned in the text or because the sermon takes a common mass or office as its *thema*.[157] A sermon for St Andrew opens with an

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[151] J.A. Robinson, *Somerset Historical Essays* (London, 1921), pp. 80-85.

[152] *EEA X*, pp. 68-9.

[153] E.A. Crosby, *The King's Bishops: The Politics of Patronage in England and Normandy* (New York, 2013), p. 74.

[154] With two exceptions: Agnellus's account of the death of King Henry, which appears at the end of the manuscript, is printed in Ralph of Coggeshall, *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon anglicanum*, ed. J. Stevenson (London, 1875), and Hugh Thomas's recent book, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066-1215* (Oxford, 2014), uses a handful of short quotations from Agnellus' sermons.

[155] Thomas describes a miracle which occurred at Wells, 'uiri uenerabilis Rainaldi Wellensis episcopi … in dies', TA, fol. 44vb.

[156] A scribal transition occurs at fol. 21va, the fourth line down. There is a second, later, annotating hand which writes comments and summaries on many folios, but does not mark corrections or insertions.

[157] Textual reference: TA, fols. 18va-22va, 26rb-29va, 30rb, 46va-50va, 94vb-97va. *Thema*: ibid., fols. 1va, 22va.

acknowledgement that ‘this versicle is frequently sung by the church so that the special praise of St Andrew might be more frequently pronounced’.[158] Nevertheless, many of the sermons are not identifiable with particular days, and the collection does not follow any discernible order, except that two sermons in praise of St Andrew appear together. This suggests that Thomas simply collected sermons which he had already written or preached into one volume, rather than creating a cycle of sermons as a single work. He or subsequent users of the manuscript apparently planned to read aloud from it, since some folios have tonic accents marked on unusual words.[159] Ten short sermon outlines follow the sermons, and the manuscript concludes with an account of the death of Henry the Young King, a clear nod to the royal patronage Thomas enjoyed.[160]

Thomas must have spent a substantial amount of time in Bath as a member of Bishop Reginald’s household: Bath was, at the time, the sole cathedral of the diocese that would later become Bath and Wells. However, I have defined Thomas’ locality as the archdeaconry of Wells, an area comprising the town of Wells and roughly the central third of Somerset.[161] Most of Thomas’ sermons were probably delivered or intended for delivery in and around Wells, where he clearly focussed his career and ministry. Although he is sometimes referred to as ‘Thomas, archdeacon of Bath’ in documents, this is probably in reference to the seat of his bishop (Bath), rather than the

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[158] ‘Uersiculus iste, ad spetialem beati andree laudem frequentius exprimendam, frequenter ab ecclesia canitur’, ibid., fol. 46va.

[159] For example, at fol. 85rb the words ‘erróneos’ and ‘téxili’. These marks must be distinguished in the MS from similar marks above and below the line, which appear to mark intended corrections, as on fols. 29va, 30va. See L.E. Boyle, ‘Tonic Accent, Codicology, and Literacy’, in R.A. Taylor et al., *The Centre and Its Compass: Studies in Medieval Literature in Honour of Professor John Leyerle* (Kalamazoo, 1993), pp. 1-10.

[160] Sermon outlines: TA, fols. 104ra-116va. Account of Henry’s death: fols. 116va-124vb.

[161] For archdeacons’ governance of their territorial archdeaconries at this date see B.R. Kemp, ‘Informing the Archdeacon on Ecclesiastical Matters in Twelfth-Century England’, in M.J. Franklin and C. Harper-Bill (eds.), *Medieval Ecclesiastical Studies in Honour of Dorothy M. Owen* (Woodbridge, 1995), pp. 131-49.

archdeaconry which he held (Wells).[162] Moreover, in the late twelfth century the collegiate church of St Andrew in Wells appears to have functioned as a *de facto* second cathedral for the diocese. This has not been recognised in the historical literature, which usually portrays a protracted struggle between Wells and Bath, populated with greedy bishops, benevolent bishops, and disgruntled canons;[163] a short digression will help to clarify.

Although bishop John of Tours had removed the see of Wells to Bath shortly after his consecration in 1088, the late-twelfth-century canons of Wells strongly identified with their own Anglo-Saxon episcopal history. The *Historiola*, an narrative of the see's history written at Wells in the 1170s, opens with an account of the miraculous identification, coronation, and marriage of King Ine, supposed to have founded the church of St Andrew in the early eighth century.[164] In *c*. 1180-4, the canons of St Andrew installed four retrospective effigies of Anglo-Saxon bishops of Wells; two more were added after *c*. 1205. M.M. Reeve has suggested that even the iconography of the carvings—the recumbent bishops are framed in 'wildly overgrown' foliage—evokes Anglo-Saxon, rather than strictly Gothic, decorative styles.[165] It is tempting to read such expressions as a sort of institutional posturing, representing a concerted campaign to regain lost legitimacy.[166] But Frances Ramsey, pointing to the remarkably pacific tone of the *Historiola*'s description of the see's removal, suggests that the canons were

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[162] *Twelfth-Century English Archidiaconal and Vice-Archidiaconal Acta*, ed. B.R. Kemp, Canterbury and York Society, 92 (Woodbridge, 2001), p. xxxv.

[163] See, for example, W. Rodwell, 'The Anglo-Saxon and Norman Churches at Wells', i, pp. 1-23, at 12, and A. Gransden, 'History of Wells Cathedral, *c.* 1090-1547', i, pp. 24-51, at 24-35, both in L.S. Colchester (ed.), *Wells Cathedral: A History* (Wells, 1996); W. Rodwell, *Wells Cathedral: Excavations and Structural Studies*, 1978-93 (2 vols., London, 2001), i, 3.

[164] *Ecclesiastical Documents*, ed. J. Hunter (London, 1840), pp. 9-28, at 10-14. For evidence that the *Historiola* was written at Wells see *EEA X*, p. xxxiii.

[165] M.M. Reeve, 'The Retrospective Effigies of Anglo-Saxon Bishops at Wells Cathedral: A Reassessment', *Somerset Archaeology and Natural History*, 142 (1999), pp. 235-70, especially 242.

[166] Ibid., pp. 237-9.

'comfortably assured of their status and not in a position where they still had to persuade others'.[167] This hypothesis looks persuasive in light of further evidence. The bishops of Bath after John of Tours took great interest in the affairs of both the church and town of Wells. Bishop Robert of Lewes (1136-66) organised the canons under a cathedral-style constitution, removed the office of the provost, and rebuilt the Anglo-Saxon church, which was by then in disrepair. That structure was gradually taken down and replaced with an entirely new church under Bishop Reginald. Reginald also took a more active role in the economic governance of the growing town and added twenty-four new prebends, and increased the church's estates.[168] Thomas Agnellus, in a sermon for St Andrew, recalls how Reginald had added to the church's assets, remarkably referring to him as 'the venerable man Reginald, bishop of *Wells*'.[169] As for their electoral rights, the canons of Wells secured papal instructions to hold episcopal elections jointly with the monks of Bath in the 1174x1178,[170] and participated in the election of Bishop Joscelin in 1206.[171] A royal grant of 1208 recorded in the *Liber Albus* names Joscelin not 'bishop of Bath' but 'bishop of both churches', i.e. Bath and Wells.[172] Moreover, two twelfth-century charters show the Wells chapter giving its assent alongside the canons of Bath to grants of episcopal lands.[173]

Thomas Agnellus, for his part, appears to have been loyal to the principal church of his archdeaconry. In addition to claiming Bishop Reginald for Wells, he wistfully refers to St Andrew's as 'the mother church, which is the mother of the rest of the

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[167] *EEA X*, xxxiii.

[168] Ibid., xxviii.

[169] TA, fol. 44vb, emphasis mine.

[170] *Papsturkunden in England*, ed. W. Holtzmann (3 vols., 1930-52), p. 360; see also the discussion of authenticity of this *inspeximus* in *EEA X*, p. xxxi.

[171] Gransden, 'History', p. 27.

[172] HMC, i, p. 7.

[173] *EEA X*, pp. 57-8, 65.

churches of this diocese since antiquity'.[174] Two of his sermons extol St Andrew, the patron saint of the collegiate church at Wells, while none celebrate SS Peter and Paul, the patron saints of Bath Abbey.[175] Thus most of Thomas' sermons were probably delivered or intended for delivery in and around Wells. He may have preached to Wells canons and vicars during the course of services within St Andrew's church,[176] or to local clergy at archidiaconal synods or at the chapters of rural deaneries, over which archdeacons sometimes presided.[177]

Plan

Although one contribution of this thesis is to analyse texts which have been under-studied or which have not been discussed in relation to pastoral care and clerical ministry, ultimately these texts are only a few of the many sources employed in drawing out the ideas and relationships which shaped local religious life in late twelfth-century England. Texts, of course, are particularly suited to the study of elite clerical ideas, and these are the subject of chapter one ('Prelacy'). This chapter introduces the concept of prelacy as propounded in the texts studied in this thesis. It asks how the authors of these texts exercised a functional prelacy—in addition to the offices of prelacy which many of them held—by writing. In so doing, this chapter fulfils a secondary purpose, introducing the texts studied in this thesis in more detail, and presenting arguments about their intended use which are either entirely new or significant revisions to the current consensus. The principal arguments of the chapter turn on the functionality and

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[174] 'Et eius ope et opera fidelium largitionibus matricis ecclesie, que reliquarum ab antiquo diocesis illius mater est ecclesiarum, augerentur patrimonia . . .', TA, fol. 44vb.

[175] Ibid.., fols. 44va-50va.

[176] HMC, i, p. 31.

[177] B.R. Kemp, 'Archdeacons and Parish Churches in England in the Twelfth Century', in G. Garnett and J. Hudson (eds.), *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy: Essays in Honour of Sir James Holt* (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 341-64, at 344.

variability of widely-held concepts, such as prelacy and pastoral care, a reflection of the interaction between these ideas and the messier circumstances of local religious life. Chapter two ('Parishioners') examines the evidence for this interaction between ideas and local practice on the ground. In particular, it presents an argument about the meanings of the word *parochiana/us* in late twelfth-century documents and texts. The approach of this chapter is to strip back assumptions about the technical definitions of words, and to ask first what kind of a world the documents suggest, and second how that world related to the elite idea of prelacy. To call someone a parishioner was not to state an objective fact about their residence within a geographically-defined parish, but to make a claim about their relationship to a church and its representatives. The clerical concept of a parishioner neither completely dictated nor perfectly described the actions of lay people, and this allows the interpretation of lay religious experiences outside and regardless of the parish not as irregularities, but as natural to a local religious culture comprised of ministry relationships. Chapter three ('Local Variation') analyses the influence of external factors such as lordship and geography on both the arrangement and conceptualisation of ministry relationships. In this chapter the case studies which comprise the archival and textual research for this thesis are most visible: the bulk of the chapter contrasts Ormland with London, while additional comparisons from the city and diocese of Exeter suggest further variation. I argue that variation among localities demands a model that treats the development of parishes as a contingency, not a rule. Chapter four ('Other ministers') surveys the immense world of ministers to the laity who were not secular priests serving parish churches, including monks and canons who ministered directly to the laity, the inhabitants of holy places, saints, and lay people. I examine not only the interdependency of these ministers with local churches and secular clergy, but also, in many cases, the extent to which the lines between the traditional

categories of the institutional church and other modes of lay religious devotion were blurred. The result is an image of an integrated religious landscape, shaped in large part by the preferences of lay people.

Terminology

Finally, it is necessary to give a short explanation of some of the terminology employed in this thesis. I prefer 'local church' and 'local priest' to 'parish church' and 'parish priest'. This is for two reasons. First, although many churches in late twelfth-century England were indeed considered *ecclesie parochiales*—probably more than can be proven from the surviving evidence—chapter two makes clear that document creators hesitated to associate a *parochia* or *parochiani* with certain churches which lacked parochial communities, parish boundaries, or claims to minister exclusively to particular people. The 'parisheyness' of a church was to a great extent in the eye of the beholder, and documents of the period prefer the more ambiguous *matrix ecclesia* as a designation anyway. I do not advocate for the abolishment of parochial terminology from studies of this period. But for the purposes of this thesis, avoiding 'parish church' in favour of less suggestive language allows the nuances of the documents to come through more clearly. Second, and more broadly, the term 'parish church' in Anglophone historiography carries manifold connotations which primarily derive from studies of the later Middle Ages: of devotional communities, beating the bounds, standardised rector-vicar systems of tenure, and so on. Since my project is to construct a new model of local religious life in the late twelfth century, it would be unhelpful to import those connotations unnecessarily.

I also decline, in many but not all cases, to distinguish between priests, chaplains and vicars, and more rarely between churches and chapels. These terms were often

either relative or connotative, and their Latin equivalents, *presbiter* or *sacerdos*, *capellanus*, *ecclesia*, and *capella*, can rarely be read as fixed technical terms in the documents of this period. Some examples from London, where the unique density of documentation often allows for multiple references to a church or cleric to be compared, as well as from a few other localities, will help to make this point.

We may begin with *ecclesia* and *capella*. Most local churches within London were called *ecclesie*. The few that were regularly referred to as *capelle* sometimes had parishes of their own, but were always closely tied either to a conventual church or to a parish church. The chapels of St Michael Aldgate and St Katherine Coleman, for example, were essentially neighbourhood outposts of Holy Trinity Priory,[178] and the chapel of St Leonard was built in the precinct (*atrium*) of St Martin-le-Grand in 1236 for the use of parishioners who formerly worshipped at an altar of St Leonard within the church of St Martin-le-Grand itself.[179] There is also evidence that at least a few local churches in London had chapels of their own, although we cannot tell whether or not these were physically attached to the churches. For example, St Mildred Walbrook had an associated chapel of St Mary.[180] Richard the priest of St Mary Magdalene in the Fishmarket and 'Richard the priest of the chapel' appear together as witnesses in 1170x97, implying that the church of St Mary Magdalene also had a chapel with a dedicated chaplain.[181] In many cases, then, the designation of chapel was clear, because the chapel was directly subject to a mother church, and I reflect this designation in what follows. But there are more ambiguous cases, in which I prefer 'local church' even for entities which were sometimes called *capelle* in contemporary documents. Peter of

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[178] See chapter four, pp. 227-36.

[179] *CSP*, pp. 230-1; M.B. Honeybourne, 'The Sanctuary Boundaries and Environs of Westminster Abbey and the College of St Martin-le-Grand', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, new ser., 38 (1932), pp. 316-33, at 327.

[180] *CHT*, p. 145.

[181] See chapter two, n. 84.

Cornwall puzzlingly calls All Hallows the Less in London a 'chapel' in his *Liber Reuelationum*, although there is no evidence that it was directly dependent on any other church at the time.[182] He may have been responding to the tendency, discussed below, to refer to London's clergy as chaplains. Exeter Cathedral claimed all the lay residents of Exeter as its parishioners, and buried them in the cathedral cemetery; thus the city's local churches were called chapels in the late twelfth century, presumably because the cathedral was considered to be the mother church.[183] This was a consistent enough local practice that I mirror it in this thesis when discussing Exeter. But each locality must be taken as a separate case: in Northampton, for example, where St Andrew's Priory held a monopoly of control over the town's churches, Alexander of Ashby, nodding to just that monopoly, referred to 'all the *ecclesie*' of Northampton.[184] The difference here may be the antiquity of the custom: Exeter cathedral had been an Anglo-Saxon minster, whereas St Andrew's priory was a Norman foundation, and St Peter's church in Northampton may have been a minster itself before it became subject to the priory.[185] Or it may have been related to the fact that Northampton's *ecclesie* had cemeteries, whereas Exeter's *capelle* did not. There was no hard and fast rule, however, that chapels could not have cemeteries.[186] Finally, it should be noted that I sometimes refer broadly to local churches across England or across a wide locality; in these cases I mean, of course, churches and chapels.

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[182] LR, p. 288.

[183] N. Orme, *The Churches of Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2014), pp. 18-30.

[184] See chapter two, p. 113.

[185] J. Blair, 'Palaces or Minsters? Northampton and Cheddar Reconsidered', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 25 (1996), pp. 97-121.

[186] See, for example, the chapels of Welton (Northants.) and Elsfield (Oxon.), chapter two, pp. 152-4 and chapter four, p. 260.

Capellanus is a more difficult term than *capella,* and its meaning in this period has never been rigorously investigated.[187] Of course chaplains appear in many different contexts in medieval England: in service a noble family or individual; as part of a lord's or prelate's household; as ministers at altars within conventual or capitular churches; and serving local churches, chantries, and chapels of all kinds. 'Chaplain' was also an inheritable surname. Focussing on the clergy who served local churches, though, we can first establish that a chaplain was not simply a priest who served in a chapel. In London many 'chaplains' served in *ecclesie*. An episcopal confirmation of 1199x1221 gave the church of St Botolph Aldgate to Holy Trinity Priory 'saving the proper support for a suitable chaplain'.[188] In 1175x90 Nicholas, archdeacon of London, instituted Geoffrey of Bedford, chaplain, to the church of St Margaret toward the Bridge.[189] In 1196 the bishop confirmed Joseph, chaplain, to the church of St Martin Ludgate, and by 1200 he appears as 'parson of the church' alongside Richard, 'the chaplain of the same church'.[190]

What, then, made someone a chaplain? Many London churches were served by several clerics, often a combination of chaplains and priests. In the record of a visitation of city churches carried out by St Paul's cathedral in *c*. 1183, all twenty churches visited are called *ecclesie*, but of these at least ten churches had one or more chaplains, at least three had priests, and at least one had both a chaplain and a priest.[191] There is some

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[187] For an unsatisfactory attempt see J.R.H. Moorman, *Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1945), pp. 35-36.

[188] *EEA 26: London, 1189-1228*, ed. D.P. Johnson (Oxford, 2003), pp. 139-40.

[189] *Archidiaconal Acta*, p. 126. St Margaret toward the Bridge was also known as St Margaret New Fish Street or St Margaret Eastcheap.

[190] *EEA 26*, pp. 69-70; *Westminster Abbey Charters, 1066-c.1214*, ed. E. Mason, J. Bray, and D.J. Murphy, London Record Society, 25 (London, 1988), p. 204.

[191] Visitations. This visitation is not from c. 1250, as Sparrow claims, but from *c*. 1183, as proposed by Gibbs in *CSP*, p. 174, n. 1. It has elsewhere been dated to 1181, probably on the basis of the date of the 'Domesday Radulphi de Diceto' printed by W.H. Hale, *The Domesday of St. Paul's of the Year 1222*, Camden Society, 69 (1858), p. 109.

indication that the designation of 'priest' was senior to that of 'chaplain'. When a single church was served by multiple clerics, usually either a priest or a chaplain functioned in the principal role, with one or more chaplains or clerics assisting him. This is the usage of *capellanus* which has prompted some historians to use the translation 'curate';[192] but setting aside the problematic modern connotations of the word, deciding when a 'chaplain' is really a 'curate' is virtually impossible for this period. In the St Paul's visitations, there is sometimes evidence suggestive of one individual taking the lead, but there is no consistent designation for the apparently subordinate clergy. During the *c*. 1183 visitation, an unnamed chaplain of St Botolph Billingsgate was assisted by Walter the chaplain,[193] and in *c.* 1210, Richard the chaplain of St Christopher seems to have acquired land near the church's cemetery on behalf of several unnamed chaplains and clerks of the church.[194] In other cases a hierarchy is implied by the ordering of witness lists: in a grant of 1170x97, Richard, priest of St Mary Magdalene in the Fishmarket, is listed before Richard, priest of the chapel; and in *c*. 1220, John, chaplain of St Peter Broad Street, is listed before Adam, clerk of the same church.[195]

There cannot have been a consistently applied technical meaning for the term 'chaplain', because it was not uncommon for an individual to receive different designations in one or more contemporary documents. In London again: William, a cleric who served St Mary Magdalene Milk Street, appears as a chaplain in witness lists of 1162 and 1183 and priest of the church in another witness list of the 1180s.[196] John is

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[192] M. Franklin, 'The Secular College as a Focus for Anglo-Norman Piety: St Augustine's, Daventry', in J. Blair (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 97-104, at 101-2.

[193] Visitations, p. 296.

[194] *CSB*, p. 90.

[195] *CHT*, p. 120; *CSB*, p. 104.

[196] Gibbs, *CSP*, pp. 171-2; Visitations, p. 297. The latter charter should be dated to before *c*. 1183 x 1187, but cannot be much earlier since John Bucointe, the grantor, appears in documents of 1170x97 and *c.* 1215: *CHT*, pp. 13, 204.

called the priest of St Peter Broad Street in 1196 and the chaplain of the same church in *c*. 1220.[197] Richard is called *presbiter* of St Christopher in 1170x97 and chaplain of St Christopher in *c*. 1210 and *c.* 1215.[198] Geoffrey of Bedford, chaplain, was instituted to St Margaret toward the Bridge in 1175x90 but is called *sacerdos* of the church in *c.* 1180 and simply *sacerdos* in 1184.[199] The statutes of a London clerical fraternity copied soon after 1223 generalised to 'the poor priests and clerics of London'.[200] The clergy of Exeter's chapels, on the other hand, appear to have consistently been called 'chaplains.'

It is worth also saying a few words about the term 'perpetual vicar', or *vicarius perpetualis*. This is a particularly loaded term in the modern historiography, which sees the creation of permanent vicarages in local churches as a bulwark against abuse by lay and religious patrons. Some historians have assumed that the status of chaplain should be contrasted with that of perpetual vicar, with the former being removable at will.[201] But again, this level of technical clarity is untenable in late twelfth-century documents.[202] In the St Paul's visitation, both chaplains and priests were recorded in the visitation record as responsible for paying money annually to St Paul's, with the implication that that either term could denote a cleric who held a church of a religious house for a fixed annual pension.[203] In this type of arrangement, the term 'vicar' was occasionally used as well: a vicar could be a priest, a chaplain, or even a religious house that held a church of another religious house. Thus William the chaplain/priest is called the former 'vicar' of St Mary Magdalene in Milk Street in a document of *c.* 1183 x

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[197] *CHT*, p. 209; *CSB*, p. 104.

[198] *CHT*, p. 146; *CSB*, p. 90.

[199] *Archidiaconal acta*, pp. 126-7; *Westminster*, p. 93; *CSB*, p. 114.

[200] See chapter three, pp. 181-2.

[201] Cheney hints, but does not explicitly propose, that cathedral chapters including St Paul's enjoyed a special privilege of establishing removable vicars in their churches, who were sometimes called chaplains: *Becket to Langton*, p. 121, n. 7; p. 198.

[202] On perpetual vicarages see B.R. Kemp, 'Monastic Possession of Parish Churches in England in the Twelfth Century', *JEH*, 31 (1980), pp. 133-60, at 149.

[203] Visitations.

1187.[204] Richard is called 'priest' of St Mary Magdalene in the Fishmarket in *c.* 1182, and perpetual vicar in *c*. 1183.[205] And in 1181x3 the canons of St Mary of Butley (Suffolk) were given the churches of St Olaf Jewry and St Stephen Coleman Street by St Paul's to hold 'as vicars'.[206] The terms 'parson' and 'rector' also appear infrequently and with a range of meanings: they refer to an individual or institution who delegates service of a church to a vicar, and may also be instituted by, and owe payments to, a patron institution.[207] Finally, we should never assume that the presence of a perpetual vicarage in a church points to an episcopal reform agenda. In 1184x6, the brothers Fulk d'Oiry and Geoffrey d'Oiry, who appear to have been laymen, were jointly instituted into a perpetual vicarage in the church of Whaplode by a representative of the bishop of Lincoln. They succeeded their uncle, Baldwin, in the church, and were presented for institution jointly by their father Waleran, other uncle Fulk, and grandmother Emecina, lay patrons who retained the advowson even after granting the church to Crowland Abbey.[208] In order to avoid unwarranted connotations, then, both of technical clarity and of reform, I refer generally to all the priests serving in local churches as 'local priests', unless referencing a specific document which uses another term.

Finally, there is a point to be made about the different words for 'priest', *sacerdos* and *presbiter*. Whereas the latter only referred to local priests, the former meant any man in holy orders, whether local priest, bishop, or even ordained religious. I note which Latin word is used in translations wherever relevant. The writers studied in this thesis prefer *sacerdos*, occasionally turning to *presbiter* only to emphasise that they are

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[204] *EEA 15: London, 1076-1187*, ed. F. Neininger (Oxford, 1999), pp. 92-3. The date of this notification must be *c.* 1183 x 1187, not 1163x87, because William was still chaplain of the church in the visitation of *c*. 1183.

[205] *CSB*, p. 71; Sparrow Simpson, p. 298.

[206] *CSP*, p. 184.

[207] Rector: *EEA 15*, pp. 95, 98-9; *CSP*, pp. 50-1. Parson: Visitations, p. 296; *CHT*, pp. 44, 204; *EEA 15*, pp. 202-3.

[208] See chapter three, pp. 192-3.

writing specifically about local priests. The ambiguity which the word *sacerdos* creates deserves reflection. Writers may have used it intentionally, because they wanted to make claims which were relevant to many different kinds and statuses of priest. Or, more likely and more consequentially, they may not have been thinking about the distinction between bishop, ordained monk and parish priest at all. What mattered were holy orders and the ability and responsibility to perform the most sacred of sacraments, the Eucharist. The functional, rather than official, thinking of writers of this period was essential to the interaction between ideas and relationships which shaped local religious life. This is the starting point of the first chapter.

Chapter One: Prelacy

This thesis does not begin with prelates in an attempt to cast them as the primary agents of religious ministry in their localities. Local religious life was not handed down from above. Rather, I begin with prelates because they were, with a few exceptions, both the authors and intended audience of the texts which are central to this study.

Most simply, the word 'prelate' refers to any man who held a high ecclesiastical office, generally bishops, archdeacons, abbots and priors. *Prelatus* had the same meaning in late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century England, but as the past passive participle of *praeferre* it also referred to any leader or important person, secular or ecclesiastical: literally 'the one set in front'. That is, prelacy was a function as well as a category of office. Within the ecclesiastical context, writers down to the thirteenth century distinguished contrasting roles, in which a superior, bearing the weight of pastoral care, guides and governs inferiors; he takes primary, if not exclusive, responsibility for their spiritual welfare.[1] The writers studied here assume the same dichotomy. They address or refer to the superior group using varied terminology: Alexander of Ashby writes of *prelati* or *sacerdoti*; Thomas Agnellus of *prelati*; Robert of Cricklade of *predicatores*, Bartholomew of Exeter of *pastores*.[2] This group of leaders is often contrasted with an equally indistinct group of followers: *subiecti*, *subditi*, *auditores*, *populum*, *grex*, or *parochiani*.[3] In what follows, I use the terms 'prelate' and

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[1] See introduction, pp. 10-12.

[2] This varied language, like so much writing about prelacy and preaching, reflects the thought of Gregory the Great, whose elusive references to *rectores*, *praedicatores*, *sacerdotes*, *pastores*, and *prelati* have caused historians to ponder whether he intended the *Regula pastoralis* for an audience wider than bishops, perhaps even including secular rulers: C. Leyser, *Authority and Asceticism from Augustine to Gregory the Great* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 157-8; R.A. Markus, 'Gregory the Great's *Rector* and His Genesis', in J. Fontaine et al., *Grégoire le Grand* (Paris, 1986), pp. 137-46; R. Reydillet, *La royauté dans la littérature latine* (Rome, 1981), p. 463.

[3] On the meaning of *parochiana/us* in particular see chapter two.

'prelacy' to refer to the superior group, while 'subjects' or 'subordinates' refer to those for whom prelates bore pastoral responsibility. In practice, this usually means a holder of high ecclesiastical office and the clergy or religious directly under his governance, as an abbot over his monks or a bishop over his cathedral and diocesan clergy. Nevertheless, the ambiguity of the language employed by these writers indicates that the state of having been 'set in front', and the responsibilities that status incurred, were far more important than the particular office which an individual held. Indeed the prelate-subject relationship was so fundamental to contemporary thought that, as I demonstrate below, writers sometimes transposed it onto other ministry relationships.

In this chapter I examine the treatment of prelacy in the writings of Alexander of Ashby, Bartholomew of Exeter, Peter of Cornwall, Robert of Cricklade, and Thomas Agnellus, all of whom were themselves prelates in the official sense. I also discuss the sermons delivered at Oxford by Alexander Neckam, a distinguished scholar, and the homilies written by Orm, a regular canon, who took on the role of prelacy by preaching or writing texts to aid preachers. I begin by exploring the conceptual frame—the common repository of vocabulary, assumption and convictions—which prelates shared regarding their responsibility to their subordinates. They drew on old, yet still current, ideas, many of them traceable to Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604), and moulded and applied them according to local interests. Chief among these was the idea that prelates should 'teach by word and example', *docere verbo et exemplo*: a phrase which represented not just a warning against hypocrisy, but the presupposition that preaching to subordinates was morally imperative. This, I argue, coloured contemporary thinking about the education and equipping of preachers in a way that modern historians have missed. The current scholarship turns on the question of whether and how priests and prelates could get access to textual aids that would improve their preaching. But the

writers studied in this thesis assumed that good teaching derived from personal virtue, and conversely that any failure to preach was a manifestation not of insufficient resources, but of pastoral negligence.

The prelate's responsibility to teach subordinates was all the more consequential in light of the assumption that they would instruct subordinate clergy and religious who themselves ministered to lay people. Writers like Alexander of Ashby and Bartholomew of Exeter aimed to ensure the proper administration of sacraments to lay people by directing instructional texts not to local priests themselves, but to their prelates. Peter of Cornwall aided the ministries of local priests—particularly, it seems, the regular canons of Holy Trinity Priory—by collecting distinctions and miracle narratives for use in sermons to lay audiences. The notoriously enigmatic *Orrmulum* served a similar purpose for the regular canons of Orm's house, providing material which the canons utilised in public sermons to lay people. Thomas Agnellus and Robert of Cricklade focussed on improving the behaviour and augmenting the knowledge of subordinate clergy and religious through preaching. Their homilies and sermons demonstrate how contemporaries transposed the prelate-subject model of instruction—the enlightened superior guiding the inferior—onto relationships between local priests and lay people. Finally, the sermons of Alexander of Ashby, Bartholomew of Exeter, and Alexander Neckam show that all three men preached publicly to lay audiences. Motivated by the Gregorian idea of prelacy, in which the prelate or preacher intimately understands each subject or listener's spiritual needs and crafts his teaching accordingly, these preachers aimed to engage the unique needs of varied groups of listeners. This chapter argues that late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century English writers applied established ideas to the current realities of local religious ministry. They believed that the best way to ensure effective ministry to the laity was to form and equip virtuous prelates who took

seriously the responsibility of instructing their inferiors. That left room for a great deal of practical flexibility, and for localised prioritisation, strategy and response.

Docere verbo et exemplo

The idea that prelates should lead their subjects by word and example can be traced to Gregory the Great, for whom it was so intuitive that he structured the four books of his *Regula pastoralis* accordingly,

> as the necessity of the matter demands: at the beginning we must rigorously consider who should come to rule and in what manner; and duly proceed to how he should live; and once he lives well, how he should teach, and once he teaches rightly, how much he should recognise his own infirmity through daily consideration.[4]

The importance of this idea for late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century English sermon writers is difficult to overestimate, and much of it could be summed up with the phrase *docere verbo et exemplo*, which had become axiomatic in religious writing by the high Middle Ages.[5] Sometimes, it was a handy cliché, a shorthand nod toward familiar conceptions of good prelacy or preaching in a general sense.[6] 'The prelate should instruct his subjects by his own word of doctrine and example of life', Alexander of Ashby writes, and does not need to elaborate.[7] But it also represented a specific conviction that the verbal instruction of subordinates had to be backed up with demonstrable personal virtue. That in turn required the prelate to cultivate both doctrinal understanding and a moral life superior to his those of his subjects. In a sermon on the theme 'Go up the mountain, you who bring good tidings to Zion [Is. 40.9]', Alexander explains that the preacher must 'ascend the mountain' by living a moral life in order to

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[4] *RP*, i, prol.

[5] C. Bynum, Docere verbo et exemplo*: An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality* (Missoula, MT, 1979), p. 15.

[6] *AA I*, pp. 220, 368, 374; RC, fol. 10rb.

[7] *AA I*, p. 275. In Alexander's writings, see also the roughly equivalent phrase *vita et doctrina*: ibid., pp. 61, 70.

be seen and heard more clearly by those to whom he preaches, as if the mountain were a raised pulpit.[8] Thomas Agnellus uses a similar metaphor, in which the mountain represents the priest [*sacerdos*] himself: he is the first to receive the light of wisdom, and 'may rise above the life of his subjects as he gazes on the inferior'.[9] The phrase even entered the vernacular: Orm writes in Middle English that martyrs 'please Jesus Christ with words and with deeds'.[10]

Docere verbo et exemplo was also malleable, and writers frequently altered it to reflect their own priorities. This single concept—one that had been familiar to writers across Europe for centuries—could, along with its associated language, still take on distinctive flavours when expressed in response to local realities. For example, Bartholomew of Exeter, a bishop who was particularly committed to the provision of intercessory prayer in his cathedral and diocese,[11] emphasised the prelate's duty to pray for his subjects in addition to teaching them *verbo et exemplo*. In a sermon for St Peter's feast day, he describes three ways in which 'each and every pastor should feed the elect committed to him like the sheep of Christ: by example, by word, and by prayer. By example, as those who graze them live well; by word, as they commend good living to them with blessed speech; by prayer, as they pray for their subordinates'.[12] Robert of Cricklade, prior of an Augustinian house at which public sermons were delivered,[13] replaced *verbo* with the more specific and forceful *praedicatio* when he praised 'the blessed preachers by whose example and preaching we are stirred up to praise God'.[14]

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[8] Ibid., pp. 61-71.

[9] 'Sicut loco sic honestate preemineat subditorum uitam tamquam inferiorem aspiciat', TA, fol. 9ra.

[10] *Orrmulum*, i, ll. 8023-6.

[11] Exeter Cathedral Archives, D&C 802; Roger de Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, ed. H.G. Hewlett, Rolls Ser., 84 (3 vols., London, 1886-9), i, pp. 18-20.

[12] 'Tribus autem modis unusquisque pastor electos sibi commissos tanquam oues Christi pascere debet: exemplo scilicet, uerbo, et oratione. Exemplo, ut qui eas pascunt bene uiuant; uerbo, ut bonam uitam sancto sermone commendent; oratione, ut pro subditis orent', BE, fol. 57vb.

[13] See below, pp. 115-16.

[14] 'Sancti predicatores quorum exemplo et predicatione ad laudandum deum excitamur', RC, fol. 10rb.

Peter of Cornwall, an admirer of London intellectuals,[15] extolled the learning of Gilbert de Glanville, bishop of Rochester, a master of canon law and civil law who had been among Thomas Becket's *eruditi*, as 'an imitator of Christ, as much by merit of life as by the prerogative of knowledge'.[16] And Alexander of Ashby, closely connected with the school based at St Andrew's Priory, Northampton,[17] passingly connects the phrase with senior academics, who, of course, would frequently preach. The penitent should judge his own life and sins, he writes, like a judge, or bishop, or 'a doctor in his chair, teaching others by word and example the path to a better life'.[18] In fact, in another sermon Alexander goes so far as to state that 'any good men who are able to enlighten others by word and example can be called "the light of the world" '—implying, perhaps, that even a layman might usefully instruct his neighbours or family.[19] Although teaching by word and example remained primarily the duty of prelates, its conceptual force and ubiquitousness in clerical thought encouraged writers to translate the injunction onto other ministry relationships. The complex realities of local religious life meant that many individuals, not just elite churchmen, instructed others, and contemporary writers sometimes comprehended this complexity by overlaying it with the language and theory of the prelate-subject relationship.

In spite of these variations, writers agreed that subjects would benefit more from instruction 'by example' than from instruction 'by word'. This was no monastic or anti-scholastic affectation: Bartholomew of Exeter, a preeminent canonist and secular cleric,

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[15] See below, p. 81-5.

[16] 'Cum enim omnis tam uite merito quam scientie prerogatiua te imitatorem christi futurum recte estimabant', SHC DD/AH/66/17, fol. 1r; M.N. Blount, 'Glanville, Gilbert de (d. 1214)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

[17] *AA I*, pp. 33-40, 53, 203-7, 359-61; see the discussion below, pp. 13-14.

[18] Ibid., p. 368.

[19] Ibid., p. 220. This was not an anomalous view. Orm tells lay people '7 ȝunnc birrþ nimenn mikell gom | To þæwenn ȝunnkerr chilldre, | 7 ȝunc birrþ ȝeorne lærenn hemm | To lufenn Godd 7 drædenn', *Ormulum*, vol. i, ll. 6216-19. See also the statements by Bartholomew of Exeter and Robert of Cricklade, below, pp. 78, 106.

remarked in a sermon for St Nicholas' feast day that 'what he [Nicholas] taught by preaching, he demonstrated better by living well'.[20] Alexander of Ashby, in a sermon appended to his preaching treatise, cites Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*: 'The flock is better led by example than by word'. For this reason, Alexander writes, 'the example of a good deed should precede words of wisdom'.[21] Bartholomew of Exeter and Robert of Cricklade also advised would-be preachers to focus on their morality first and their preaching second. 'For first we should chastise ourselves and tame our carnal vices and luxury', Bartholomew writes. 'Then we should observe and imitate the life of the good men who came before us; then we should correct our subordinates and defend them with our staff, that is, our counsel and our word'.[22] Robert of Cricklade makes the same point allegorically: ' "Abraham" means "the father of many peoples", and this signifies the preachers who should first bring up [*nutrire*] virtue in themselves with great zeal, so that they can demonstrate an abundance of virtues'.[23]

Moreover, it was particularly clear to both Thomas Agnellus and to Alexander of Ashby that audiences were likely to see through a hypocritical preacher, with disastrous consequences. Thomas Agnellus warned that 'doctrine cannot be easily sold to listeners if it comes from a master held in contempt. If his life is despised, consequently his preaching will be easily held in contempt. Thus the guilt of the priest [*sacerdos*] is the ruin of the people.'[24] He was alluding to an often-repeated line from Gregory's

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[20] 'Quod predicando docuit, bene uiuendo melius demonstrauit', BE, fol. 4vb.

[21] *AA I*, p. 30.

[22] 'Nam prius debemus castigare nosmetipsos et in nobis domare uicia carnis et luxuriam, et post inspicere et imitari uitam bonorum uirorum qui ante nos fuerunt, deinde alios nobis subditos corrigere et defendere nostro baculo, id est nostro consilio et nostro uerbo', BE, fol. 36va.

[23] 'Abraham interpretatur pater multarum gentium. Et significat predicatores qui ut possint aliis uirtutum copiam monstrare, in se primum oportet multo studio nutrire', RC, fol. 13vb.

[24] 'Doctrina namque auditoribus non facile produci si ceperit a magistro contempni. Cuius si uita despicitur, consequens est ut et predicatio facile contempnatur. Vnde culpa sacerdotum, ruina populi', TA, fol. 10rb-va. See also a similar assertion at fol. 47vb.

Registrum epistularum which Alexander of Ashby copies verbatim,[25] elaborating with an inversion of the *docere verbo et exemplo* line: 'Bad priests are the cause of the ruin of the people. We should dread this, and to increase our dread it would be good for us to investigate why it is so. Priests are the cause of the ruin of the people in three ways: indiscriminate silence, undisciplined word, and bad example.'[26] In another sermon he expands on that 'ruin':

> In the depths are fornicators, sycophants, drunkards, the greedy and the simoniacs. Through their preaching derision is born in the listeners more often than reverence, detraction more than devotion. Indeed they say: 'If these things that the priest [*sacerdos*] praises are good, then why does he not do them?'[27]

Clichés often point to widespread and influential assumptions. Writers belaboured the necessity of *exemplum* in order to back up *verbum* not only because they believed the former to be fundamentally more important, but because preaching by prelates was already routine. Virtuous living, on the other hand, was more difficult to achieve. The idea of 'teaching by word and example' aimed to moralise preaching, to impress upon prelates the weight of their responsibility as leaders; they could not simply go through the motions. Understanding this leads us to a very different set of questions about late twelfth-century preaching than those historians have traditionally addressed. Current historiography, focussing particularly on the thirteenth-century development of *artes praedicandi*, *exempla* collections, and model sermon collections, has generally characterised the 'problem' of ensuring regular preaching to the laity as one of education and access: a preacher would need at least one manual or collection available to him, not to mention the ability to read Latin, if he were to preach regularly. Speculations as to how frequently sermons were preached in parish churches often turn

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[25] Gregory the Great, *Registrum epistularum*, ed. and trans. D. Norberg, CCSL 140, 140A (2 vols., Turnholt, 1982), ii, p. 943.

[26] *AA I*, p. 58.

[27] Ibid., p. 68.

on these questions.[28] Furthermore, historians often assume that the same prerequisites and expectations were applied to preaching in the twelfth century; because evidence is sparse, they are left with the assertion that preachers must have had many written resources for preaching which we do not know about.[29]

This approach needs revision in two ways. First, it is anachronistic to assume that local priests required either a knowledge of Latin or a written vernacular homily collection in order to instruct lay people. Local priests were probably expected at most to deliver a short explanation of the gospel reading at Sunday mass, or, on a saint's day, to relate aspects of the relevant saint's life or miracles.[30] There is little evidence that the authors studied here intended to put any of their written sermons, homilies or preaching aids directly into the hands of local priests, with the exception of some regular canons. Second, for prelates and others who delivered formal sermons, contemporary writers framed the failure to preach not as a symptom of the church's neglect to educate preachers or to make textual aids accessible, but as a moral offence on the part of the prelate. They asserted that prelates were responsible before God for the behaviour and thus the salvation of the people subject to them, and that they would have to 'render account' to God for those souls.[31]

This conviction was shared even by Alexander of Ashby, who of the writers studied here is the most concerned with the prelate's education. Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi*, a short treatise on preaching with an appendix of five

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[28] J.H. Denton, 'The Competence of the Parish Clergy in Thirteenth-Century England', in C.M. Barron and J. Stratford (eds.), *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R.B. Dobson*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 11 (Donnington, 2002), pp. 273-85; W.J. Dohar, '*Sufficienter litteratus*: Clerical Examination and Instruction for the Cure of Souls', in J. Brown and W.P. Stoneman (eds.), *A Distinct Voice: Medieval Studies in Honour of Leonard E. Boyle, O.P.* (Notre Dame, 1997), pp. 305-21; S. Hamilton, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 73-77; D.W. Robertson, Jr., 'Frequency of Preaching in Thirteenth-Century England', *Speculum*, 24 (1949), pp. 376-88; A. Reeves, *Religious Education in Thirteenth-Century England* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 64-66.

[29] Hamilton, *Church and People*, p. 77; Reeves, *Religious Education*, p. 65.

[30] See below, pp. 91-2 and chapter three, p. 178.

[31] See introduction, p. 11.

model sermons, purports to address an unnamed 'venerable abbot' whom he knew 'in the schools'. His friend was a promising student, he recalls in a prologue, but he gave up intellectual pursuits after becoming a regular canon, despite the suitability of the religious life to study: 'You have become like an uneducated man or a despiser of learning, pursuing neither reading nor doctrine, even though your many fellow canons were frequently bringing you illustrious documents for your edification', Alexander writes.[32] But he is primarily concerned about his friend's lack of study because he believes it is connected to a more significant failing:

> This is the one matter in which I have criticised you—benevolently, I am sure, but I do not know if justly. Perhaps this should not be ascribed to your pride or negligence, but rather to your humility and prudence, that you preferred to sit in the city of the cloister until you were dressed with virtue from on high, that you were unsure about pressing on. And you chose rather to learn the law completely in silence and quiet while you were still unprepared to teach. For this reason you were permitted to ignore the office of preaching, which, now that you are seated on the throne, you are not permitted to ignore.[33]

A few things are important to notice here. Alexander assumes that 'reading' and 'doctrine' are essential to the type of preaching which prelates are required to undertake. Yet he casts his friend's neglect of learning not as a cause, but rather as a result, of his reluctance to preach. Alexander ponders aloud whether his friend only neglected preaching out of humility, preparing his *exemplum* prior to exercising his *verbum* as suggested by contemporary writers, including Alexander himself. But this apology is in fact thinly-veiled criticism. Alexander does not think that endless delay is warranted: the prelate or would-be prelate must prioritise his own virtue over preaching, but equally he cannot ignore preaching altogether. In what follows the tenor of Alexander's admonitions shifts quickly to grave accusation, making it clear that Alexander sees wanton irresponsibility more than excessive caution in his friend:

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[32] *AA I*, p. 23.

[33] Ibid., p. 23.

> If you take away the food of life, will you not be judged to have inflicted death upon them [the Lord's household]? Do you really not know that the law sentences to death the priest [*sacerdos*] who enters the temple without the sound of bells attached to the edge of his hyacinth tunic? … It is also said to you by the prophet: if you will not announce to my people their wickedness, I will consider their blood to be on your hands.[34]

Alexander of Ashby's exasperation is patent, both because of the weight of what is at stake and, it seems, because he is having to state the obvious: *numquid ignoras*, 'do you *really* not know?'

Given all this, Alexander's solution to the problem is less than intuitive. There is nothing in Alexander's letter to indicate that his friend is neglectful because he lacks the skills or tools to preach; indeed, Alexander says he was once a good scholar. The preaching treatise which Alexander sent him gives advice on how to structure a sermon using principles from Ciceronian rhetoric (principles which would have been familiar to anyone who had studied the *trivium*[35]) and how to tailor advice to varied audiences, much of the latter lifted directly from the *Regula pastoralis*, undoubtedly also familiar. Much has been made of Alexander of Ashby as the first writer to apply Ciceronian rhetoric to sermon composition,[36] but Alan of Lille recommended a similar structure around the same time, apparently without knowledge of Alexander of Ashby,[37] and the idea probably stuck because it was highly intuitive for anyone with a foundational Latin education. In short, Alexander was not trying to educate his friend, but to spur him on,

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[34] Ibid., p. 24. In Exodus 28.31-5, Moses orders priests to wear garments with bells attached on when they entered the innermost room of the temple, or risk God's wrath; this was allegorised by Gregory the Great, who connects the sound of the bells to preaching: *RP*, i, pp. 190, 192.

[35] M.G. Briscoe, *Ars praedicandi*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental, 61 (Turnhout, 1992), pp. 258-9; M. Kempshall, *Rhetoric and the Writing of History, 400-1500* (Manchester, 2011), pp. 14-15.

[36] G. Donavin, ' "De sermone sermonem fecimus": Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi*', *Rhetorica*, 15 (1997), pp. 279-96, at 281; *AA I*, introduction, p. 6; Morenzoni, 'Aux origines des *artes praedicandi*: le *De artificioso modo predicandi* d'Alexandre d'Ashby', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd ser., 32 (1991), pp. 887-985, p. 893; J.J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages: A History of Rhetorical Theory from St. Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 309-17.

[37] Alan of Lille, *Summa de arte praedictoria*, PL 210:185-98; *AA I*, p. 6.

to drive home the import of the prelate's responsibility to preach by acting out that import himself, that is, by writing a treatise about it.

We do not know whether Alexander of Ashby's efforts succeeded. He tried a similar strategy with another, or possibly the same, unnamed contact, apparently also a prelate, whom he also believed did not preach.[38] For this contact Alexander wrote two sermon collections, one after the other, the first containing twenty-four and the second eighteen sermons for major holy days and feast days. In the terse prologue to the first collection Alexander complains that 'few priests [*sacerdotes*] preach the word of God and many keep silent, some out of ignorance, others out of negligence', and warns that 'neither group can excuse themselves from blame in the sight of God'. (One senses exasperation rather than a cool-headed assessment of contemporary reality here.) He warns, as in the prologue to *De artificioso modo predicandi*, of the guilt ascribed to priests who fail to preach—they have blood on their hands—and then speculates that 'many of them are so lazy, so self-indulgent, that because they see that the sermons written for them are difficult or lengthy, they do not bother to sustain the labour of memorising them'.[39] Alexander therefore offers to his recipient 'short and easy sermons', which he hopes will get him started, and perhaps serve as a model for his own compositions.[40] In the prologue to his second collection of sermons to the same recipient, who apparently has not reformed, Alexander exclaims that 'that field is like

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[38] *AA I*, pp. 133-256. It is likely the recipient was a prelate since the first collection includes several sermons whose themes pertain to religious audiences, namely 13, 14, 18, 21, and 23 (according to Morenzoni's numbering). Alexander probably would have edited these sermons for relevance if his recipient were not someone who would ever preach to the religious, especially since the point of the collection is to allow his recipient to preach with minimal effort. The first collection appears to contain at least some sermons which Alexander had previously written for specific occasions, but which were shortened and likely simplified. Sermon 12 is cut short with the comment, 'Set horum distinctionem usque in alium sermonem differemus, ne presens sermo promisse breuitatis metas excedat' (p. 173); 22 is written for delivery to the people of Northampton at St Andrew's priory on St Andrew's feast day (pp. 203-7).

[39] Ibid., p. 134.

[40] Ibid.

one that's permanently sterile and uncultivated, which hitherto has offered neither fruit nor the hope of fruit', and offers even shorter and easier sermons, 'so short and so easy … that there can be no difficulty in preaching, no excuse for silence'.[41] The sermons that follow are indeed shorter and easier, essentially skeletal *divisiones* written in extremely simple Latin.

It is clear that 'negligent' prelates—those who are well educated and have 'sermons that are written for them' available, but still do not preach—bear the brunt of Alexander of Ashby's ire. In his view, their failings are laziness and a lack of appreciation for the gravity of their responsibility; the problem is moral, not educational; *vita*, not *doctrina*. This makes his passing comment that some fail to preach because of ignorance more difficult to deal with, but the fact that he still assigns blame to this category suggests that he holds them responsible for having failed to gain the necessary education for themselves. Indeed, he seems to think education is generally available to those charged with preaching. 'It is not possible for someone to excuse himself,' he explains in a sermon for prelates,

> and say that he cannot find these sorts of founts from which he may drink the water of beneficial wisdom. … When I was a schoolboy, there were few such founts in this land. One could scarcely find masters who didn't have ambitious intentions, mercantile lectures, venal tongues. But by the grace of God there are many now who teach for free. … Almost every city has one …

and he goes on to name masters in Northampton (the name is omitted from the manuscript), Oxford (master Philip), and Exeter (master John).[42] There is other evidence for the existence of a school of some kind in Northampton in Alexander's day, although little is known about it. H.G. Richardson pointed to a few pieces of evidence

[41] Ibid., p. 219.

[42] Ibid., pp. 52-53.

which suggest the existence of a *studium* in Northampton in the late twelfth century,[43] and a charter written at Northampton in or after 1200 records among its witnesses six individuals with the title *magister*.[44] From Alexander of Ashby's local vantage point, it would have been clear that any prelate's lack of education was at root just another moral failing. In one sermon he wonders aloud why misbehaving priests 'do not read in a penitential how heavy a penance must be imposed on such a priest? But this is added to the sum of their evils, that they do not own that book, nor care to own it'.[45]

Instruction of Subordinate Ministers

Writers of sermons and preaching aids like Alexander of Ashby viewed their work not through an educational or distributional lens, but through a moral one: they endeavoured to exhort and coax their peers toward fulfilment of the prelate's responsibility to instruct his subjects. This imperative intensified when those subjects were themselves tasked with ministering to lay people. Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi* and Bartholomew of Exeter's *Liber penitentialis*, both pitched for and circulated to prelates, also offer practical advice on the administration of sacraments to lay people, which prelates were expected to impart to their subordinates.

i. Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi*

As mentioned above, *De artificioso modo predicandi* ends with five model sermons. While the first two of these sermons demonstrate Alexander's suggested quadripartite and tripartite sermon structures respectively, the following three do not contribute to this

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[43] H.G. Richardson, 'The Schools of Northampton in the Twelfth Century', *EHR*, 56 (1941), pp. 595-605, at 602.

[44] BL, MS Cotton Vesp. E XVII, fol. 35r.

[45] *AA I*, p. 53.

scheme, and Alexander does not explain what they show about sermon writing as he does with the first two. Instead these three sermons, all of which address prelates, seem to function like an extension of the treatise itself, this time offering advice on prelacy more generally. The third sermon emphasises how the prelate's education allows him to preach well, and the fourth warns prelates not to lead them astray.

The fifth sermon deserves close attention. In it, Alexander admonishes prelates to 'ascend the mountain' before instructing those below them.

> In order that the priest [*sacerdos*] should know how to usefully teach others, it is proper for him to be literate [*sacras litteras scire*], or if he is not, to learn, especially the things which a certain blessed father proposes that priests should learn: 'These things are necessary for bishops and priests to learn: a sacramentary, a lectionary, an antiphonary, a baptismal service book, calendrical tables, a penitential canon, a psalter, and a yearly collection of homilies for Sundays and feast days.'[46]

This list dates to the Carolingian era and was well known by the twelfth century, particularly in the penitential tradition.[47] Alexander makes an interesting change to an otherwise verbatim quotation: he adds *episcopis et*, specifying that both priests and bishops require the listed books. Later, after condemning priests who do not bother to keep or use the books, he circles back to justify his addition. 'The sacramentary is a book for bishops containing things regarding the sacraments, which bishops should have and be held to know. But those things in that book which pertain to lesser priests [*minores sacerdotes*], those lesser priests should be held to know.'[48] It seems Alexander has been prompted to add *episcopis et* by the presence of the sacramentary, which he identifies strongly with bishops, in the list. This leads Alexander to enumerate 'three

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[46] Ibid., pp. 64-5.

[47] The list comes from Haito of Basil's early ninth-century *Capitula*. It was picked up by Regino of Prüm and Burchard of Worms, and then by Gratian, who attributes it to Augustine. Bartholomew of Exeter also uses it in his penitential, as does Thomas of Chobham in his *Summa penitentie* (1215x17). C. Van Rhijn, *Shepherds of the Lord: Priests and Episcopal Statutes in the Carolingian Period* (Turnhout, 2007), p. 107; Haito of Basel, *Capitula*, ed. P. Brommer, MGH Capit. episc. 1 (Hannover, 1984), p. 211; Gratian, *Decretum*, ed. E. Friedberg, Corpus Iuris Canonici, 1 (Leipzig, 1872), D. 1, c. 5; Morey, p. 192; Thomas of Chobham, *Thomae de Chobham summa confessorum*, ed. F. Broomfield, Analecta Mediaevalia Namurcensia, 25 (Louvain, 1968), pp. 86-8.

[48] *AA I*, p. 65.

sacraments in which errors are frequently and dangerously committed through lack of skill': baptism, the Eucharist and extreme unction.[49] He then discusses each sacrament in turn, not giving complete instructions for performing the sacrament—that would be unnecessary for an audience of prelates—but highlighting potential mistakes which put the salvation of lay people at risk. For baptism, this is failing to teach lay people to baptise their own children immediately after birth, should the infant be at risk of dying; for the Eucharist, doubting the veracity of transubstantiation; for extreme unction, allowing lay people to delay receiving the sacrament based on the mistaken belief that if a person who has received extreme unction recovers, he is required to abstain from sex or eating meat.[50]

Alexander then returns to his original message, about how the prelate should acquire *doctrina* and impart it to others: 'These things which we have told you from the sacramentary, and other things which we cannot tell now, you should know and teach';[51] that is, it seems, teach to subordinate 'lesser priests'. In other words, not all books are strictly necessary for such lesser priests, for the sacramentary is a 'bishop's book', containing some information that pertains only to bishops; however, it is important that lesser priests know the parts of the book which are relevant to their ministry to lay people. I argue in chapter four that Alexander probably envisioned that some religious would be 'lesser priests', instructed by abbots and priors. What is important here is that by providing this sermon-treatise to a prelate—and likely to other prelates for whom the work would be copied—Alexander was attempting to ensure that local priests would

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[49] Ibid., p. 65.

[50] Ibid., pp. 66-8. On contemporary efforts to dispel the belief that those who recover after having received extreme unction must abstain from sex, eating meat, and perhaps wearing shoes, see B. Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick*, trans. F. Courtney (New York, 1964), pp. 245-7. Alexander was particularly concerned that if sick persons delayed too long, they would become unconscious or too confused to receive the sacrament, an issue which thirteenth-century theologians would continue to debate: Poschmann, *Penance*, p. 255.

[51] Ibid., p. 68.

have the requisite knowledge for their ministries, and would be steered away from common errors. Understanding this project can help us make sense of the severity with which Alexander castigates the recipient of *De artificioso modo predicandi* for failing to preach. If prelates were held accountable before God for the eternal fate of their subjects, then the expectation that they should instruct subordinate ministers must have magnified that responsibility, and the attendant risk, by adding local lay people to the category of subjects, albeit one degree removed. Within this frame, Alexander's exasperation at his friend's disinterest seems quite proportionate.

ii. Bartholomew of Exeter's *Liber penitentialis*

Bartholomew of Exeter's *Liber penitentialis* also evinces an intention for prelates to communicate information from the text to their subordinates. Bartholomew of Exeter was a noted canonist and favourite judge delegate of Pope Alexander III, who described him and Roger of Worcester as 'two great luminaries of the English church',[52] and his penitential draws heavily on the eleventh-century canonists Ivo of Chartres and Burchard of Worms, as well as on Gratian.[53] But the text's early manuscript transmission suggests that it was received both as a canonical-judicial guide for bishops and as an aid to clerical ministry. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century copies of the penitential survive in manuscripts which also contain sermons and tracts on the administration of sacraments; materials for the study of canon law; and more general theological works.[54] A manuscript written in France at the beginning of the thirteenth

[52] Duggan, *Decretal Collections*, p. 70 n. 3; pp. 77-123.

[53] Morey, p. 172.

[54] Pastoral: London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 235; Bodl., MS Rawlinson D 1228; Bodl., MS Bodley 443. Canon law: Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 151. General theology: BL, MS Royal 7 E I; Oxford, St John's College, MS 163; Oxford, St John's College, MS 165; Oxford, Lincoln College, MS 96; Paris, Bibliothèque Ste Geneviève, MS 167.

century describes the *Liber penitentialis* as 'a book which is very necessary for all priests and especially for prelates'.[55]

Like the sermons appended to Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi*, Bartholomew of Exeter's *Liber penitentialis* offers advice relevant both to prelates ministering to their subjects and to local priests ministering to lay people. He instructs that confessors should take into consideration what type of person the penitent is: 'One should pay attention to whether the penitent is free or a servant, whether cleric, layman, or monk; and if he is a cleric, to which order or dignity he belongs'.[56] Additionally, when giving examples of venial or 'light' sins, he includes failings specific to monastic or clerical life, including coming early to breakfast, being late to visitations of the incarcerated or sick, and thinking about something else while singing in the choir.[57] At the same time, Bartholomew states that anyone who comes to a priest to confess should first be examined as to his knowledge of the Creed, so that any inadequacies can be corrected; in the following chapter he specifies that this instruction pertains to the confessions of lay people, and suggests that sons should be sent 'to the schools or the monasteries or to the other priests [*presbiteris*] so that they might correctly learn the catholic faith and Sunday prayer, and so that they will be able to teach others at home'.[58]

Bartholomew's advice to confessors allows for, and even encourages, a high degree of judicial discretion in the assignment of penances—what might be expected of a prelate—while in many cases also underlining which pastoral tasks are truly essential. In his prologue, he sets out the aim of the *Liber penitentialis* in the most general sense

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[55] 'Incipit liber omnibus sacerdotibus et maxime prelatis pernecessarius', Bodl., MS Lyell 3, fol. 1r.

[56] Ibid., p. 194.

[57] Ibid., p. 196.

[58] Ibid., p. 176.

possible, encompassing the tasks of both prelates and local priests: 'Priests [*sacerdotes*] should strive in all things to learn both the wrong deeds with which and the good deeds without which no one can be saved'.[59] In chapters twelve to twenty-two, Bartholomew describes the arsenal of penances at the disposal of the confessor: alms, prayer, fasting, sorrow and tears, silence, manual labour, vigils, genuflections, words, rough clothing, and pilgrimage; yet he also makes clear that the confessor need not employ them. Chapter six lists things which 'should never be omitted or relaxed by priests or bishops', namely 'true penance, pure confession, making satisfaction … and forgiving from the heart';[60] in contrast, Bartholomew writes in chapter seven that the penances listed in the following chapters 'should be relaxed or omitted in consideration of many reasons'.[61] These reasons, outlined in chapters twenty-five and twenty-six, include the social status, marital status, wealth, age, intelligence, health, sex, virginity, temperance, and occupation of the penitent, and the publicity, consciousness, spontaneity, forethought, execution, grade, attitude, time, location, and intention of the sin itself.[62] Bartholomew does not elaborate exactly how such factors should affect a confessor's deliberations, other than that in general penances can be increased or decreased in consideration of them: the lists are meant to cover all possibilities rather than to enumerate requirements. Finally, the *Liber penitentialis* suggests that confessors should have access to a relatively substantial library of pastoral books: the priest should have 'written penances, that is forms of satisfaction gathered from the sacred fathers',[63] as well as the same list of books which Alexander of Ashby recommends.[64] Yet he also

[59] Ibid., p. 174.
[60] Ibid., p. 177.
[61] Ibid., p. 178.
[62] Ibid., pp. 194-5.
[63] Ibid., p. 192.
[64] Ibid.; p. 75 above.

admits that—in the mode of standard *docere verbo et exempo* exhortations—the example of a good life is more important than literacy and access to books: 'In the dispensation [of penances] the most necessary of all is the prudence and honest life of the pastor; then … he should prudently attend to increasing and decreasing penance or the length of time of the penance'.[65]

The *Liber penitentialis*, then, combines both the presumption of great judiciousness, not to mention of full literacy, and the iteration of both basic principles and minimum requirements. The only way to make sense of this kind of mixed messaging is to recognise that Bartholomew expected prelates to read the penitential for advice on hearing the confessions of their subordinates, whether religious or clerics—but also to pass on appropriate knowledge to any under their care who were themselves confessors of lay people.

Equipping Preachers

Another way in which writers could support the work of ministers to the laity was by equipping them with texts designed to aid in their work. This was particularly relevant where those ministers belonged to a religious house, and therefore had access to, and the ability to read, written material. The varied roles which the regular canons played in local religious life will be explored at length in chapter four. Here, I examine three preaching aids created by, and almost certainly for, regular canons: Peter of Cornwall's *Patheologus* and *Liber reuelationum* and Orm's *Orrmulum*. The *Liber reuelationum* and *Orrmulum* in particular resist neat genre classifications; they challenge historiographical assumptions about what preaching aids were supposed to look like and how they were used.

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[65] Ibid.

i. Peter of Cornwall's *Patheologus* and *Liber reuelationum*

Peter of Cornwall, prior of the regular canons of Holy Trinity Priory, London, authored two texts which can be associated with preaching: *Pantheologus*, an immense concordance of Biblical *distinctiones* completed in 1189, and *Liber reuelationum*, a collection of miracle and vision stories completed in around 1200. *Pantheologus* comprises four parts, each made up of thirteen books further divided into several hundred chapters, and totalling, by its editors' estimate, between 800,000 and 900,000 words. It is also thoroughly cross-referenced and indexed alphabetically.[66] The *Liber Reuelationum* represents a lesser ambition only by comparison: standing at approximately 517,000 words, it divides 1,107 chapters into two parts.[67] It lacks the advanced apparatus of the *Pantheologus*; the reader is supplied only with chapter lists at the beginning of each part, and Peter warns that the stories are not organised by saint, source, or topic.[68]

Peter explains his reasons for writing the *Pantheologus* and the *Liber Reuelationum* in his prologues to each, respectively. This is a helpful place to start, although it has perhaps unhelpfully dissuaded historians from looking for further explanations. We may begin with the *Pantheologus*. In his introduction, Peter recalls a sermon he heard Gilbert Foliot preach at a synod in London. Peter's description of Gilbert's sermon has been well known since it was highlighted by R.W. Hunt:[69]

> The whole sermon was varied by certain *distinctiones*, adorned with flowers of words and sentences and supported by a copious array of authorities. It ran backwards and forwards on its path from its starting-point to the same starting-point —like plots of fields ploughed with multiple flows of streams … For when, among other things, he spoke of Christ as a stone, he brought forward the stone which the

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[66] LR, pp. 9-11 and p. 9, n. 31. Easting and Sharpe translate the parts of the *Liber reuelationum* which they edit. I quote these translations unless otherwise noted.

[67] Ibid., p. 35.

[68] Ibid., p. 76.

[69] R.W. Hunt, 'English Learning in the Late Twelfth Century', *TRHS*, 19 (1936), pp. 19-42, pp. 33-4.

> builders rejected but which became the corner-stone, he brought forward the stone which Jacob anointed with oil and raised up as a marker, he brought forward the stone in [the book of] Daniel cut from the mountain without hands.[70]

Peter was therefore inspired to create a book that 'speaks and reasons concerning all the nouns most suitable for making a sermon and the more famous nouns that are found in the books of all theology'.[71] Moreover, he implies that he intends the work for a variety of readers, including for members of religious orders who preach:

> It will be desirable for the less skilled, but an aid to memory for the learned [*perfectis*]; it will be most useful for the active, but delightful for the contemplative. It is meant for those with strong memories and also for those whose memories slip, who do not prevail to keep the law daily, and indeed for the religious [*claustralibus*] who are accustomed to preach to the clergy or to the people, in that it handily assign those authorities of the divine page which are most necessary for composing a sermon, and instructs and creates an abundance of words and authorities.[72]

Peter's primary aim here is to advocate for the flexibility and general usefulness of the *Pantheologus*, to reassure the less and better educated, the active and contemplative, that such a concordance will be useful to them. By *actiui* and *contemplatiui* we need not assume that Peter means, respectively, secular clerics and monks. The active-contemplative dichotomy, personified by the biblical characters Mary and Martha, was an old and flexible schema which by the twelfth century could refer, depending on context, to the clergy and the laity, to hermits and cloistered religious, to Cistercians and members of other religious orders, or to those tasked with administrative and celebratory or meditative roles within a single religious house.[73] This means that by *actiui* Peter does not necessarily mean 'secular clerics', but may rather point forward to 'the religious who are accustomed to preach to the clergy or people'. This is striking, because Peter seems to assume that it is the religious who preach—or, crucially, those

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[70] LR, p. 6.

[71] Ibid., p. 7.

[72] Hunt, 'English Learning', p. 40.

[73] G. Constable, 'The Interpretation of Mary and Martha', in ibid., *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 1-141, at 44-74, especially 72.

religious 'whose concern in their sermons is to repeatedly distinguish words according to their senses and to prove what they say through the inclusion of various authorities'.[74] Unlike Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi* and sermon collections, which were meant to goad negligent prelates to preach, the *Pantheologus* facilitated preaching which the religious in London were already 'accustomed' to undertake. Peter says that his *conclaustrales* actually gave the *Pantheologus* its name because it was so useful to them; later, in a similar statement repeated in the second and third prologues, preceding Part Two and Part Four respectively, he refers instead to *socii nostri*.[75] The implication is that some religious whom Peter knew, likely those at Holy Trinity Priory, were preachers, and that they were already making use of the work while it was being compiled—or at least were commenting enthusiastically about its potential. In chapter four I argue that the canons of Holy Trinity ministered to lay people in the priory church and a few nearby chapels; they are likely to have preached to them as well.

But why does Peter not mention secular clerics as preachers in the prologues of the *Pantheologus*, even though he generally seems to desire as wide a readership as possible? It would be difficult to dismiss the omission as a simple oversight, since he is careful to specify *clerum vel populum* as the recipients of religious preaching. And Peter did think secular clerics would have use for the work, since he dedicated it to three of them. Part one is dedicated to Master Henry of Northampton, a canon of St Paul's, who was master of the schools in London and Peter's former teacher. Parts two and three are dedicated to Ralph de Haute-Rive, who had succeeded Henry of Northampton as master of the schools before his appointment as archdeacon of Colchester. And Peter dedicated part four to Godfrey de Lucy, the bishop of Winchester, formerly canon of St Paul's,

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[74] Hunt, 'English Learning', p. 40.

[75] Easting and Sharpe, p. 7, n. 21.

dean of St Martin-le-Grand in London, and apparently a student of someone who had also taught Peter.[76] These personal connections are important because they give a sense of the social and ecclesiastical circles in which Peter imagined himself and his work fitting. All three dedicatees are secular clerics of high standing, and the unifying associations between them are St Paul's Cathedral and the London schools, which gravitated toward St Paul's but also included teachers at St Mary-le-Bow, a church under the archbishop's control, and St Martin-le-Grand, a secular college.[77] William fitz Stephen, who prefaced his biography of Thomas Becket with a rose-tinted description of London in 1173x4, evokes a lively London intellectual scene:

> On feast days the masters come together to celebrate. The scholars dispute, some demonstratively, others dialectically; they spin arguments, they agreeably make use of perfect syllogisms. Some are trained in *disputatio* between opponents, some in order to show off, others for the sake of truth, which is the grace of perfection. Those imitating the blessed Sophist are judged according to their streams and floods of words; others deceive with false arguments. Other orators sometimes say anything with suitably rhetorical speech in order to persuade, taking trouble to follow the rules of the art, and to omit no possibilities.[78]

As a hagiographer, Fitz Stephen was not above rhetorical elaboration, but his emphasis on artful disputation and rhetorical fluency is instructive. In some ways it echoes Peter's praise of Gilbert Foliot's sermon and his stated aims for the *Pantheologus*—note the presence of 'streams' of words in both—but it is unclear whether Fitz Stephen knew anything of what the meetings of London's schools were really like, or whether he simply guessed based on an understanding of what scholars are supposed to do. In either case, it seems that in late twelfth-century London, being highly educated meant having the ability to string together a complex, rhetorical argument out loud.

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[76] Ibid., pp. 3-4.

[77] *EEA 15: London, 1076-1187*, ed. F. Neininger (Oxford, 1999), p. 31.

[78] *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, ed. J. C. Robertson, Rolls Ser., 67 (7 vols., London, 1875-85), iii, pp. 4-5.

It makes sense that Peter would associate a tool for the artful composition of sermons with members of London's elite academic circle. To conceive preaching in relation to the rules of classical rhetoric taught in the *trivium* was intuitive to contemporaries, as Alexander of Ashby's *De modo artificioso predicandi* demonstrates. If Peter of Cornwall's *conclaustrales* had already found the *Pantheologus* useful for preaching, and his secular connections might find it useful in their intellectual endeavours, there was no tension between the two. The *Pantheologus*, then, points toward two types of preaching in late-twelfth-century London: one of a primarily intellectual character, associated with the schools and secular clergy, and another, associated with the religious, which leaned toward public preaching to both lay and clerical audiences. Peter himself seems to have moved simultaneously in both circles.

The *Pantheologus* fulfilled a perceived need for a reference work that would enable the type of preaching Peter admired. There were, by Peter's time, precedents for the use of cross-references and alphabetical indices in scholastic compilations, particularly within the discipline of theology; *Pantheologus* fits into this tradition quite neatly.[79] By contrast, historians have characterised the *Liber reuelationum* as impractical and even backward.[80] It is an unwieldy collection of, apparently, as many trustworthy stories about visions and miracles as Peter could find, most excerpted from existing texts but including a few original compositions based on reports which Peter heard from various contacts. In the prologue to the work, he explains his reasons for composing it:

> Although, having rejected idols, nearly all the nations of men now believe that there is one God, yet, because there are some who, thinking that God does not exist,

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[79] R.H. Rouse and M.A. Rouse, '*Statim invenire*: Schools, Preachers, and New Attitudes to the Page', in R.L. Benson, G. Constable and C.D. Lanham (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford, 1982), pp. 191-219, at 205-12, 215-16.

[80] C.N.L. Brooke and G. Keir, *London, 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), p. 324; LR, p. 19; Hunt, 'English Learning', pp. 34-5.

> reckon that the world has always been as it is now and ruled by chance rather than by the providence of God, and because there are many who, considering only that which they see, believe neither that there are angels good or bad, nor that the soul of man lives after the death of the body, nor that there are other things spiritual and invisible, I, Peter, minister of the church of Holy Trinity, London … for the benefit of many have collected into this one volume revelations and spiritual visions which happened to them. … Anyone who takes pains to read through this book no less with the eyes of the heart than with those of the body, will not doubt that God, and angels, and the souls of men exist, and live after the death of the body.[81]

Instead of outlining precisely how different types of readers might utilise the *Liber reuelationum*, Peter writes of 'nearly all the nations of men' and the 'benefit of many'. No mention is made of preaching or composing sermons, nor does Peter give instructions for how to read the work, aside from his warning, mentioned above, that readers should not expect to find a consistent organisational scheme.[82] Robert Easting and Richard Sharpe, the *Liber reuelationum*'s modern editors, have suggested that a more specific explanation for the work was intended, but never written. The sole extant copy, London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51, lacks a dedication and appears to have remained at Holy Trinity Priory until the Dissolution; Easting and Sharpe suggest that for whatever reason the *Liber reuelationum* may not have 'reached the stage when it was ready to present to an honorand with a dedication'.[83] Yet it is clear that Peter did not intend to give the *Liber reuelationum* an elaborate apparatus like the one he supplied for *Pantheologus*—nor, for that matter, are similar apparatuses found in his other works.[84]

Peter wrote the *Pantheologus* to fulfil a particular reference function; he wrote the *Liber reuelationum* in reaction to a perception. That perception was that 'there are some' who think that God does not exist, and 'there are many' who do not believe in supernatural beings, the soul, or life after death—apparently not far afield, and distinct,

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[81] LR, p. 74.

[82] Ibid., p. 76.

[83] Ibid., pp. 14, 352.

[84] SHC DD/AH/66/17 (*De reparatione lapsus*) has only a chapter list. Windsor, Eton College Library, MS 130 (*Liber disputationum Petri contra Symonem iudeum*) has no chapter list or apparatus of any kind, but is a later copy.

at least in part, from the Jews.[85] He probably had lay people in mind: in his own account of his grandfather Ailsi's visions in the *Liber reuelationum* Peter suggests that Ailsi, although pious, 'began to ponder within himself concerning the nature of the next world' and that 'he knew nothing of it as a layman'.[86] The reporting of miracle stories, far from a backward genre, was an accepted method for combatting skepticism about the supernatural, a textual response to Peter's knowledge of the world around him. The canons of Holy Trinity Priory or other literate clerics or religious could have utilised these stories in their sermons to lay people as *exempla*. The idea that *exempla* were particularly useful for the instruction of the 'simple' was current in Peter's day.[87] We also should not rule out more informal types of teaching, even conversations between ministers and lay people as they went about their daily lives. Edmund of Abingdon (*c*. 1176-1240) wrote to the members of a religious community, possibly the canons of Merton Priory, that his *Speculum ecclesie* would assist them not only in debating with theologians but in conversations with lay people: 'For when you have a discussion [*habueris colloquium*] with the ignorant, you must offer the cup of sweetness liberally and kindly'.[88] It will be argued in chapter four that the canons of Holy Trinity particularly valued close relationships with the lay individuals who lived near the priory. In order to use the *Liber reuelationum* to change a skeptic's mind, a canon, it seems, would have read through it extensively (*perlegere studuerit*) himself, and would be convinced by not only the veracity but by the volume of supernatural events recorded. This is a different, but no less strategic, approach than the one taken in the *Pantheologus*, in which a preacher can turn directly to the appropriate distinction for a

[85] In *Liber disputationum*, the characters of Peter and Simon the Jew discuss a group of 'pagani' who are apparently distinct from Jews, and believe that Christ was a wise man who wrote books about magic, which he used to perform miracles: Windsor, Eton College MS 130, fol. 112vb.

[86] Ibid., p. 202.

[87] See below, p. 113.

[88] *Speculum religiosorum and Speculum ecclesie*, ed. H.P. Forshaw (London, 1973), p. 82.

given topic. In a way, it echoes contemporary ideas about the prelate's formation: in writing the *Liber reuelationum*, Peter was less concerned with giving ministers access to practical aids than with inspiring their convictions about the miraculous—which they, once so inspired, would surely communicate.

ii. Orm's *Orrmulum*

The *Orrmulum*, a collection of Middle English homilies written by Orm, and Augustinian canon, is now thought by scholars to be a cycle of readily-made homilies intended to be read aloud to lay audiences in local churches,[89] but this is not entirely accurate. We have already seen that texts of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries are not easily categorised as 'for lay ministry' or 'not for lay ministry': they employ concepts which applied equally to ministry to subordinate clergy or religious and to lay people, and assume complicated patterns of transmission. The *Orrmulum* is no exception.

Debates about the *Orrmulum*, primarily conducted in English philological and literary circles, have turned on the question of why Orm wrote in English and, crucially, why he invented and employed such an elaborate orthographical system. Many scholars now believe that Orm designed his spelling system specifically for the purpose of enabling Francophone preachers to read the *Orrmulum* aloud to English-speaking lay audiences with the correct pronunciation.[90] Manfred Markus argues that Orm's system locks in stress patterns that would have given a Francophone trouble, and Meg Worley points out that 'the French consonant system was changing in exactly those places in the

[89] M. Worley, 'Using the *Ormulum* to Redefine Vernacularity', in F. Somerset and N. Watson (eds.), *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Postmedieval Vernacularity* (University Park, PA, 2003), pp. 19-30.

[90] B. Strang, *A History of English* (London, 1970), p. 242.

word that Orm emphasizes by doubling the letters'.[91] These observations are critical to understanding the *Orrmulum*, but there are problems with envisioning the *Orrmulum* as simply a homily cycle to be read phonetically off the page. The most glaring is that social elites in late twelfth-century England, including clergy, were generally bilingual, with English as their native language.[92] Worley argues that the canons of Bourne Abbey, an Arrouasian house, were particularly likely to be French-born, but as I show in the introduction, it is no more likely that Orm belonged to Bourne Abbey than to any other nearby Augustinian house. And even if Orm's orthography was designed to help non-native English speakers preach effectively, that fact does not tell us who those preachers were supposed to be, to whom they were supposed to preach, or how, exactly, they were to employ the text of the *Orrmulum*.

The *Orrmulum* presents paraphrases of gospel pericopes, arranged to chronologically narrate the life of Christ, each followed by 'homilies' explaining their meaning and significance. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that Orm expected the *Orrmulum* to be read regularly in churches in the course of the mass. We we have already seen that Orm used his lectionary only as a starting point for dividing up the gospel texts, adding chapters on parts of the gospels which were probably not included in his *capitulare euangeliorum*.[93] Moreover, it is apparent to anyone who actually reads through the *Orrmulum* that the homilies would make very poor listening indeed if read aloud from start to finish. Take, for example, Orm's seemingly endless exposition of the numbers connected with the Greek letters in Jesus' name, IEΣOYΣ (I=10, E=8, Σ=200, O=70,

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[91] M. Markus, 'The Spelling Peculiarities in the *Ormulum* from an Interdisciplinary Point of View: A Reappraisal', in U. Boker, M. Markus and R. Schowerling, eds., *The Living Middle Ages: Studies in Mediaeval English Literatue and its Tradition* (Stuttgart, 1989), pp. 69-86; 'Using the *Ormulum*', p. 21.

[92] I. Short, 'Bilingualism in Anglo-Norman England', *Romance Philology*, 33 (1980), pp. 467-79; R.M. Wilson, 'English and French in England, 1100-1300', *History*, 28 (1943), pp. 37-60.

[93] Introduction, pp. 26-37.

Y=400, Σ=200, in total 888).[94] Unless both preacher and audience were comfortable with their Greek alphabets, much of the effect would have been lost. Orm then goes on to laboriously enumerate and comment on each of the Ten Commandments (represented by the number ten); eight virtues with eight contrasting sins; two commands (to love God and love others, represented by 200); seven petitions of the Lord's Prayer, seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, seven beatitudes (all represented by 70); four gospels, the four creatures seen by Ezekiel, the four wheels of the quadriga (all represented by 400); and two lives (religious and secular, represented by 200).[95] A large part of the beginning of the homily is missing, but in its entirety it would have filled some four to five thousand lines—which would take, by my reckoning, roughly three hours to read aloud. In many ways, this looks less like a homily than a treatise, organising basic Christian doctrines under schematic headings. This should not surprise us. We have already seen that most of Alexander of Ashby's instructions for prelates in *De artificioso modo predicandi* are found not in the text of the treatise proper, but in the five model sermons appended to it. Additionally, one of Alexander's other sermons is extremely long, and its main purpose seems to be to assemble a collection of Latin verses relating to each of the seven deadly sins.[96] Pierre Michaud-Quantin has edited a manual for confession, preserved in two French manuscripts written *c*. 1200, which cataloguers had assumed to be a sermon because it begins, like a sermon, with the recitation and exposition of a *thema*.[97] It is true that the *Orrmulum* in some ways reflects an old tradition of exegetical homilies, in which Robert of Cricklade's *Homiliae super Ezechielem* belong, and which were often read privately or excerpted in addition to being read aloud. Nils-Lennart Johannesson

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[94] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 4302-29.

[95] ibid., ll. 4384-6393.

[96] *AA I*, pp. 33-71, 340-53.

[97] P. Michaud-Quantin, 'Un manuel de confession archaïque dans le manuscrit Avranches 136', *Sacris Eruditi*, 17 (1966), pp. 5-54, at 5-6.

has suggested that the *Orrmulum* also exhibits some features of a gospel harmony.[98] What is important is not assigning the *Orrmulum* to a genre—genres are, of course, artificial constructions—but understanding Orm's assumptions about how his work would be used.

And it is clear that readers of the *Orrmulum* were not supposed to employ the homilies as complete, ready-made scripts for oral delivery. In his introduction, Orm emphasises that he has provided an abundance of material: 'After the gospel comes the meaning of the gospel, which one must tell to the people. And in addition to that you will find plenty more about that which Christ's holy people should believe and follow'.[99] The entire text of the *Orrmulum* is subdivided into paragraphs and larger units which Johannesson calls 'fits';[100] a preacher could have easily selected one or more sections from within a homily for use. Historians too often assume that model sermons were read directly from the page with little to no spontaneous revision, like an academic conference paper: Kenneth Sisam supposed that 'the apathy and ignorance of congregations were partly due to the way preachers mumbled and blundered in reading the sermon'.[101] But Mary Carruthers' work on medieval memory has shown that the process of sermon authorship was really one of recalling memorised material and mentally organising it, then explaining it extemporaneously.[102] Verse was considered easier to memorise than prose. Alexander of Ashby's *Liber festivalis* presents saints' lives in Latin verse, which, Alexander suggests, will benefit priests [*sacerdotes*], who can easily memorise the miracles 'so that they will be able to tell them to their

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[98] N.-L. Johannesson, '*Orrmulum*: Genre Membership and Text Organisation', in N.-L. Johannesson, G. Melchers and B. Björkman (eds.), *Of Butterflies and Birds, of Dialects and Genres: Essays in Honour of Philip Shaw* (Stockholm, 2013), pp. 77-89.

[99] *Orrmulum*, i, 'Dedication', ll. 33-40.

[100] Johannesson, 'Genre Membership', pp. 81-2.

[101] K. Sisam, *Studies in the History of Old English Literature* (1953), p. 194.

[102] M.J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 189-207.

parishioners when they have to announce the feasts of the saints to them in the church.[103] Priests could not, of course, recite Latin verses to lay people; Alexander must have imagined that a priest could look through the *Liber festiualis*; excerpt and memorise it, or at least get the gist of, a saint's life in Latin; and then explain it in English in the course of a sermon. The *Orrmulum* would presumably simplify that process: a preacher could select a passage, memorise and recite it in English. Manfred Markus' observation that Orm's 'redundant and repetitive' language would have helped drive home key points in listeners' minds works equally well for preachers memorising sections of the *Orrmulum*: the various 'filler' lines and phrases that Orm endlessly reuses have an almost meditative quality, and are difficult to forget.[104]

Who, then, was supposed to use the *Orrmulum* to preach, and in what context? Even though the text is in English, some literacy would have been required to use it; in fact one can imagine an unlettered priest who had learned through memory and recognition to 'read' aloud from a Latin missal, but who could not sight-read the *Orrmulum*.[105] Moreover, it appears that Orm did not mean for local priests to use the *Orrmulum* to preach, because in his homilies he directly addresses lay people about their priests. He encourages lay people to pray for their priests, even if they behave badly:

> And you should love your priest well, and obey and aid him, even though he might not be as good a man as he should be. And look that you don't criticise him even if he deserves it, for if the priest does wrong, he shall overcome with Christ's help; and if he does not overcome, it [his sin] drags him down to hell. And if the priest does wrong, you should pray inwardly that God will give him the will and strength to overcome his sins.[106]

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[103] *AA I*, p. 156.

[104] Markus, 'Spelling Peculiarities', p. 74.

[105] On the variable forms of 'reading' in the Middle Ages see M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 2013), pp. 192-8.

[106] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 6140-6153.

He also describes, again directly to a lay audience, the mutual exchange that should characterise their relationships with priests: 'Of all the goods that are added to your possessions in that year…you should bring one tenth, and entrust it to the priest on God's behalf. Then he will confess you, and administer the Eucharist to you, and instruct you, and pray for you day and night, and bury you.'[107] There are many other instances in the *Orrmulum* in which lay people are instructed regarding 'your priest'.[108] It would have been comical—and, if the priest was not 'as good a man as he should be', highly embarrassing—for a local priest to read these statements aloud to the lay people he served. Of course, a priest could modify the text to refer to himself in the first person, but that would disrupt the verse, something about which Orm was very particular.[109] A priest could also excerpt sections which did not refer to 'your priest'. Even so, the fact that Orm directs comments to lay people about their priests shows the assumptions under which he wrote the *Orrmulum*, the forum in which he imagined himself speaking. That forum clearly involved Orm directly facing lay people, with their local priests somewhere off to the side.

This means that Orm wrote for a local religious context in which some literate person preached to lay people, and that person was not the same priest who ministered to them in a local church: in other words, that person was not 'their' priest. The obvious explanation is that the regular canons of Orm's house, like the canons of Holy Trinity Priory, preached to lay people. And like the *Liber reuelationum*, the *Orrmulum* was intended to supply material which they could relate in their sermons, or perhaps in more informal exchanges. To return to Orm's peculiar orthography, it is possible that a small

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[107] Ibid., i, ll. 6122-31.

[108] Orm sometimes refers to his audience in the singular, *te*, *þin*, and sometimes the plural, *ȝe*, *ȝure*. This does not seem to align with any distinction in meaning or context, and sometimes Orm switches between the two within a section. *Ȝure preost*: *Ormulum*, i, ll. 934, 946, 948, 1724, 4210, 9008, 11694. *Þin preost*: i, ll. 6140, 6150, 6154.

[109] Ibid., i, ll. 59-64.

number of canons—perhaps Walter, to whom Orm dedicates the work—were indeed born in France, and needed help practicing English pronunciation. Or, Orm might have been somewhat of an eccentric linguistic purist after all, perhaps resisting phonetic changes in English brought about by the infusion of French. Regardless, the textual and contextual evidence is sufficient to reconstruct Orm's purposes without a full resolution to the linguistic questions his work raises. Orm does not call himself an abbot or prior, and so probably was not a prelate strictly speaking. But, as several commentators have observed, his personal voice in the *Orrmulum* is conspicuous, simultaneously didactic and self-reflective.[110] Throughout the *Orrmulum*, he continuously characterises knowledge of the gospels as essential for *sawle nede*, the soul's need. The *Orrmulum* was Orm's labour on behalf of lay people's *sawle nede*, much like the theoretical prelate's labour under the burden of pastoral care, to be eternally rewarded if his subordinates are saved and penalised if they perish.

> For the gospels' holy lore teaches Christian people all that is ever needed for them to follow in truth and in deed on earth. Therefore whoever learns it and follow it in deed, he will be worthy to be saved before God. And therefore I have translated it [the gospels] into English, because I eagerly desire that all English people should listen to it … . And if they will hear it and follow it with deed, then I, under Christ, will have helped them to win their salvation. And for my labour I will have a good reward from God at the end, if I, for the love of God and for heaven's reward, have translated it to English for them for their souls' need.[111]

Whether Orm intended to preach using the *Orrmulum* himself or whether he merely created for the use of other regular canon preachers, he assumes the function of prelacy by facilitating the prelate's characteristic duty, guiding subordinates toward salvation through instruction.

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[110] C. Cannon, *The Grounds of English Literature* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 82-110; S. Morrison, 'Orm's English Sources', *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, 221 (1984), pp. 54-64, at 54; Worley, 'Using the *Ormulum*'.

[111] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 121-33, 139-48.

Preaching to Clergy and Religious

The homilies of Robert of Cricklade (prior of St Frideswide's, Oxford, 1141 to 1174) and sermons of Thomas Agnellus (archdeacon of Wells, *c.* 1168 to *c*. 1195) at first look as if they have little to do with local religious life. Robert of Cricklade's homilies were meant to be read by or read aloud to regular canons, while probably all or at least the vast majority of Thomas Agnellus' sermons address clerical or religious audiences. And unlike the writings of Alexander of Ashby and Bartholomew of Exeter discussed above, these homilies and sermons do not contain practical instructions for specific ministries to the laity. Instead, they contextualise the clerical or religious vocation, showing clerics and religious how to think about their calling and exhorting them to fulfil the attendant responsibilities. Historians have hesitated to use texts like these as sources for the study of local lay religious life, applying them instead to more insular discussions of clerical reform or theology.[112] This is unnecessary: Robert of Cricklade's homilies and Thomas Agnellus' sermons are, in fact, outward-looking, an expression not of exclusively clerical or monastic concerns but of an urgent mission to create effective evangelisers and ministers to the laity. They tried to accomplish this not by providing instructions on how to minister to the laity, but by enjoining their listeners to be good priests. After all, a good priest would surely take the initiative to learn how to perform his duties correctly. The concept of prelacy—in which the competent instruction of subordinates is a moral responsibility—is here transferred onto the priesthood more generally. Thomas Agnellus and Robert of Cricklade comprehended local religious life through the binary categories of prelates and subjects, with the enlightened and virtuous ministering to the

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[112] Hunt, 'English Learning', pp. 31-3; B. Smalley, *The Becket Conflict and the Schools: A Study of Intellectuals in Politics* (Oxford, 1973); H.M. Thomas, *The Secular Clergy in England, 1066-1215* (Oxford, 2014), especially ch. 1.

ignorant and wayward. This construct stood in for a multitude of ministry relationships, including between priests and lay people.

i. Thomas Agnellus' sermons

Thomas Agnellus's sermons indicate that he preached to a variety of clerical and religious audiences. Two sermons address prelates,[113] while another contains admonitions for both prelates and lesser priests.[114] Three sermons appear to address both secular clergy and religious simultaneously;[115] in two of these Thomas contrasts the clerical and monastic lives at length, interestingly characterising the latter as superior, while the third criticises vice in both the secular clergy and the religious.[116] Three sermons speak to the members of religious houses or secular colleges.[117] One sermon explicitly refers to the clergy of Wells cathedral,[118] while several others address priests or clergy in more general terms.[119]

There is little evidence that Thomas preached directly to lay audiences. He frequently dwells on themes which would have been specifically relevant to clergy and inappropriate for delivery to lay people, including the privilege of performing the sacrament of the Eucharist and the dangers of clerical vice, particularly luxury and fornication.[120] Moreover, the sermons do not address themes which were uniquely relevant to lay audiences, such as marriage. If the lay residents of Wells attended sermons at St Andrew's church on at least some Sundays or feast days—as did the

[113] TA, fols. 1va-5va, 70vb-73va.
[114] Ibid., fols. 90rb-93vb.
[115] Ibid., fols. 13vb-18va, 29va-34rb, 100va-104ra.
[116] Ibid., fols. 15vb-16ra, 32rb-vb, 101va-b.
[117] Ibid., fols. 41vb-44va, 66rb-73va.
[118] Ibid., fol. 49rb.
[119] Ibid., fols. 5va-13vb, 53rb-5vb, 58vb-66rb.
[120] See especially ibid., fols. 3va-4va, 39rb-va, 53rb-55ra, 68vb, 91ra-b, 101va.

people of Exeter, Northampton, Oxford, and perhaps Ormland—then Thomas' sermon collection provides little evidence for the practice. Only one sermon is a plausible candidate for delivery to the laity: it relates and then expounds on a local miracle story, in which a young boy falls into a well and is rescued by a cleric with the help of St Andrew, the patron saint of the Wells collegiate church.[121] As discussed below, Alexander of Ashby's sermons attest to the use of both local references and miracle stories for the benefit of lay audiences. However, since there is no other evidence that Thomas delivered sermons to lay audiences, we should assume that all or almost all of his surviving sermons are directed at clergy or the religious.

As we have already seen, Thomas Agnellus' writings clearly expound the doctrine that prelates should teach by word and example. In one sermon[122] he offers an allegorical gloss on the Israelite priests' garments in the Old Testament—a staple of writings about prelacy since Gregory's *Regula Pastoralis*[123]—in order to describe the relationship of the high priest (*pontifex*) to the lesser priests (*minores sacerdotes*).

> But since *pontifex* means 'in the breast of the patriarchs', we understand that they [the high priests] should always be driven by zeal for the souls which are committed to their rule, so that they exercise the concern of a caring father, and prioritise their memory. Thus they should call back those who stray, reconcile those in error, strengthen in justice those who are effective [*proficientes*], and exhort those who are ineffective [*deficientes*], lest they give up due to overindulgence.[124]

Although Thomas continues to speak in terms of the Old Testament priesthood, he alludes to the responsibilities of contemporary prelates to shepherd the souls entrusted

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[121] Ibid., fols. 44va-50va.

[122] Ibid., fols. 78vb-86vb.

[123] M.C. Miller, *Clothing the Clergy: Virtue and Power in Medieval Europe, c. 800-1200* (Ithaca, 2014), pp. 53-60.

[124] 'Per hoc autem quod pontifex in pectore patriarcharum portat nomina datur intellegi quod animarum zelo semper affici debeant, que ipsorum commisse sunt regimini, ut patrum affectus sollicitudinem exerceant, quorum memoriam preferent. Quatinus reuocent deuios, reconcilient erroneos, proficientes in iusticia confirment, deficientes cohortentur, ne de uenia desperent … Habebat quoque summus pontifex quemadmodum et minores sacerdotes mitram bysinam ex lino opere texili factam aureamque in ea coronulam, et uictis iacinctinis mutua sibi circumuolutione connexis ne labi posset aptatam', TA, fol. 85ra-b, quote at 85rb.

to them, not only by preaching directly to them ('call back those who stray, reconcile those in error') but also, it appears, by guiding subordinate ministers, strengthening or exhorting them as required. The term *minores sacerdotes* mirrors Alexander of Ashby's usage in a sermon which commands prelates to teach their subordinates how to administer particular sacraments.[125] Thus although Thomas did not himself create textual aids for prelates to use in instructing subordinates, he seems to have assumed, like Alexander of Ashby and Bartholomew of Exeter, that they would carry out this function.

There is a tension in Thomas' sermons between prelacy as conferred by ecclesiastical office and prelacy in the broader sense of having authority over subordinates. To hold the office of a prelate, of course, conferred the burden of pastoral care automatically. In a sermon which addresses the responsibilities of both prelates and other priests, Thomas sets out the prelate's duty starkly:

> Indeed if the prelate will not announce to the wicked man his wickedness, that man will die wicked in his sin, and his blood, that is his soul, will be required of the prelate's hand. If when a sheep dies because of the shepherd's negligence or laziness he is condemned to restitution by earthly justice, how much more in the celestial assembly will they who have undertaken the burden of pastoral care have to render account for the herd committed to them![126]

He goes on to explicitly connect this burden to ecclesiastical leadership: 'If the prelates of the church understood this, they would not wish for leadership with such eager ambition'.[127] One wonders whether, in addition to criticising worldly greed among the clerical elite, Thomas is reflecting here on his own career, which appears to have been

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[125] See above, pp. 75-6.

[126] 'Siquidem si non annuntiauerit prelatus impio, impietatem suam impius in peccato suo morietur, et sanguis, id est anima, de manu prelati requiretur. Si iuditio forensi oue negligentia seu desidia pastoris pereunte condempnatur restitucione quanto magis in celesti consistorio in tribunali equitatis pro commisso sibi grege rationem reddituri sunt, qui cure pastoralis onus suscipiuntur', ibid., fol. 91ra.

[127] 'Si hec cogitarent ecclesiarum prelati, principatus tanta ambitionis sollicitudine non quererent', ibid., fol. 91ra.

propelled by both royal patronage and a familial connection to Bishop Reginald.[128] Perhaps he had once underestimated the responsibility he was undertaking in accepting the archdeaconry of Wells.

Thomas does seem to have considered himself bound to instruct others through preaching. His prologue to the sermon collection begins, predictably, with a declaration of his own unworthiness to teach: 'Rightly I should exclaim with the prophet, "Ah! Ah! Ah! Behold, Lord God: I, like a boy, do not know how to speak". If only I were a boy in purity'—the aside, perhaps, betraying that he approached self-deprecation lightheartedly. The premise underlying his protestations is a basic contrast between the foolish or unprepared and the wise and learned: 'The foolish and needy idiot should learn rather than teach; I urge cautious, prudent, and discrete men to spread the word of the Lord.'[129] Thomas insists that he is inexperienced and thus should be silent. Nevertheless, he finally admits, he must preach: 'I am held not to be silent about the good things which come from the Lord our pastor through obedience; I am held by the administration credited to me; I am bound by the talent of the *ratio* committed to me'.[130] Here he is clearly alluding to the responsibility of pastoral care, which prelates were said to administer and which bound them to render account (*reddere rationem*) to God for the souls of their subjects.[131] We do not know whether archdeacons routinely preached in the late twelfth century; regardless, Thomas clearly attributed to himself the prelate's responsibility to instruct subordinates, whether in his capacity as archdeacon or perhaps simply as a noted preacher.

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[128] See above, introduction.

[129] 'Fatuus et idiota indigens magis doceri quam docere; cautis uiris prudentibus et discretis uerbum domini erogare compellor', TA, fol. 1ra.

[130] 'Teneor tamen ne sileam a bonis ex domini pastoris nostri precipientis obedientia; teneor ex aministratione mihi credita; teneor ex talenti commissi rationei', ibid., fol. 1rb. Cf. Matt. 25.14-30.

[131] Gilbert of Hoyland, *Sermones in Canticum Salomonis*, PL 184:239; *Gesta Treverorum: Additamentum et Continuatio (1015-1132)*, ed. G.H. Pertz, MGH SS 8 (Hannover, 1848), p. 176; and see introduction, p. 11.

Thomas' sermons also allow room for a wider, more functional definition of prelacy, inclusive of a variety of religious teachers and leaders. Only one sermon, the first, is rubricated in MS Laud misc. 71: *Incipit sermo primus de prelatis*.[132] Since no other sermons are rubricated, it is not immediately clear whether the rubricator meant 'the first sermon, which is about prelates' or 'the first of the sermons about prelates', a question to which we will return below. In this sermon, Thomas expounds on the theme 'Lord, may your priests [*sacerdotes*] be clothed with justice'. He describes how God

> chose apostles, instituted preachers, and ordained ministers, in addition to the apostles. And he made some to be apostles and some prophets, others evangelists, others pastors and doctors, in the consumption of the body of Christ, saying: 'Go and teach all people' [Matt. 28.19].[133]

Here Thomas' impression of the earliest disciples is one of a multiplicity of roles: apostles, preachers, ministers, prophets, evangelists, pastors, doctors. Nevertheless he connects all of these roles not only to teaching and preaching—hallmarks of prelacy—but also to the defining privilege of the priesthood, the confection of Christ's body during the sacrament of the Eucharist. He then explicitly links his audience to these New Testament actors:

> To you, my lords and fathers, to you to whom this sermon is directed, to you the prophet speaks, to you the word of this exhortation is offered. For you are held by them [the apostles etc.] to put on their justice, to imitate their sanctity, to take their place; you have undertaken their office, so that you know you must imitate them, not only in the execution of the ministry but indeed in chastity and sanctity of life.[134]

It is plausible, then, that this sermon in particular was written for delivery to a gathering of elite churchmen: 'my lords and fathers', in particular, sounds both formal and

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[132] Ibid., fol. 1va.

[133] 'Apostolos elegit, predicatores instituit, ministros ordinauit, iuxta illud apostoli. Et ipse dedit quosdam quidem apostolos, quosdam autem prophetas, alios autem euuangelistas, alios uero pastores et doctores, in consumpmationem [*sic*] corporis Christi, dicens: "Ite docete omnes gentes", et cetera', ibid., fol. 1va-vb.

[134] 'Ad uos domini et patres mei, ad uos inqua sermo iste dirigitur, uobis propheta loquitur, uobis exortationis huius uerbum propinatur. Eorum namque tenemini induere iusticiam, imitari sanctitate, quorum uices geritis, quorum suscepistis officium, ut eis conformes scitis non solum ministerium executione, sed etiam uite castimonia et sanctitate', ibid., fols. 2vb-3ra.

deferential. However, it is interesting that Thomas does not use the word *prelatus* anywhere in this particular sermon, nor does he refer, as in the sermon discussed above, to the procurement of ecclesiastical offices. It seems that the rubricator—whether or not he wrote this heading at Thomas' instruction—chose the description *de prelatis* to summarise the contents of a sermon which dealt at length with the didactic and evangelistic functions of the priesthood. It is likely, in fact, that the rubric *de prelatis* refers to prelacy in the broader sense: essentially 'about prelacy', where prelacy is the position of being a spiritually responsible leader and teacher.

In fact, the dichotomy between prelates and subjects—between those who instruct and those who learn—runs so strongly through Thomas' sermons that it also shapes his conceptualisation of the relationships between local priests and lay people. Clerical writers of the eleventh and twelfth centuries had increasingly emphasised the contrast between the clergy and laity. The assertion of papal supremacy over Christian kings, of clerical independence from secular control, and the acute necessity of a celibate clergy all derived from, or at least depended on, the superiority of the priesthood. This superiority was epitomised by the priest's ability to perform the sacrament of the Eucharist. In the same sermon, Thomas reminds his audience that they are, in the words of 1 Peter, 'the chosen rank, the royal priesthood, the sacred race [2.9]' because 'to you has been conferred that most singular and excellent of ministries, that singularly excellent ministry, that sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord'.[135] In the following sermon he asserts that priests are, in a way, more dignified than angels, 'because priests consume the body of Christ'.[136] Early medieval writers had rarely

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[135] 'Vobis inquam qui estis genus electum, regale sacerdotium, gens sancta, populus adquisitionis, vobis quibus celitus collata est illa singularis excellentia ministerii, illud singulariter excellens ministerium, quod corporis et sanguinis dominici sacramentum, et ore uestro conficitis, et manibus contectatis', ibid., fol. 4ra. Cf. *RP*, i, p. 184.

[136] 'In hoc quodammodo angelis digniores, quasi sacerdotes corpus Christi conficiunt', ibid., fol. 6ra.

attributed the burden of pastoral care to local priests, instead characterising them as on-the-ground agents of the bishop's pastoral prerogative.[137] But from the early twelfth century or so, the elevation of the status of priesthood allowed ecclesiastical writers across Europe to increasingly associate local priests with the *cura pastoralis* or *cura animarum*. It was, therefore, not far-fetched for Thomas Agnellus to attribute the principal characteristics of prelacy to priests in general, adding priest-lay person to the category of prelate-subject relationships alongside abbot-monk or bishop-priest. Although Thomas distinguishes prelates from other *sacerdotes* in several sermons,[138] he sometimes collapses those categories into one, employing the language of prelacy to describe all *sacerdotes* collectively. In a sermon intended for delivery on Whitsunday he paraphrases Bede's description of Solomon's temple as an allegory for the distinction between the religious, priests, and lay people.[139] Thomas maps these groups onto three zones, the outer atrium, the inner atrium, and the temple itself. Those admitted to the temple, the religious, 'surpass others in the merits of virtue, and glitter with an abundance of the understanding of divine wisdom'; lay people, the 'elect', are kept to the outer atrium. *Sacerdotes*, 'those who excel in doctrine and manner of life, and supply teaching to others by word and deed', occupy the inner atrium.[140]

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[137] Bede, 'In Lucae evangelium expositio', in *Bedae Venerabilis opera, II: opera exegetica, 3*, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL 120 (Turnhout, 1960), pp. 5-425, at 214; *Concilium Rispacense, a. 798(?): Arnonis instructio pastoralis*, ed. A. Werminghoff, MGH Conc. 2, 1 (Hannoer, 1906), p. 198. Hrabanus Maurus implied that anyone attaining to the priesthood should exhibit the attributes of prelacy, including learning and discretion, but it is unclear to what extent he had local priests in mind: *De institutione clericorum*, PL 108:377-97.

[138] TA, fols. 68vb, 81vb.

[139] Bede, 'De templo libri', in *Bedae Venerabilis opera, II: opera exegetica 2a*, ed. D. Hurst, CCSL, 119A (Turnhout, 1969), pp. 143-234, at 192-6.

[140] 'Vbi notandum quod templum soli sacerdotes ingrediuntur, illi scilicet qui uirtutum meritis precellunt ceteris et plenitudine choruscant scientie diuine cognitionis. Atrium uero interius intrant qui altitudinem doctrine et conuersationis preminent et aliis uerbo et opere salutis ducatum prebent', TA, fol. 32ra.

But Thomas' extension of prelacy to local priests continues. In a sermon in which he castigates clerics for drinking and carousing he relays, in vivid terms, the standard warning that subjects will ignore a prelate's hypocritical preaching.

> How ignominious it is when a minister of the altar, insolently leaving the seat of pleasure, deprived of reason and bare of intellect, with a wobbling step and only just managing to stammer, is made a spectacle to commoners and a joke before the people. … How, therefore, will his preaching be heard, if his life is despised? … Now there are two books of the church, the sacred scriptures and the prelates of the church. Clerics read from the first, lay people from the second.[141]

Thomas describes this preacher as a 'minister of the altar', a subtle reminder that his elevated status, and therefore his accountability, derives in large part from his ability to perform the sacrament of the Eucharist—an ability that all priests share. It is not surprising that Thomas moves from the figure of the hypocritical preacher to describing how lay people must read from the lives of the 'prelates of the church'.[142] We have already seen how a prelate's 'subjects' might implicitly include the lay people to whom his subordinate religious or clergy ministered; below, I show that many prelates also preached directly to lay people, in a sense adopting them as subjects. Moreover, prelates were associated with literacy: 'The heart of the prelate should be the tablets of the covenant, and his memory a library of the books of the Lord', Thomas writes elsewhere.[143] What is remarkable is that Thomas connects this mandate—for 'prelates' to serve as books for the laity by living virtuously—to the ministries of local priests:

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[141] 'Quam ignominosum est cum minister altaris, contumeliose sede uoluptatis excessu, priuatus ratione, nudatus intellectu, gressu titubante et lingua uix balbuciente, plebe spectaculum & populi ludibricum efficitur. Quidem quanto eminentioris gradus prerogatiua sublimatus est, tanto amplioris contemptus obprobrio a subiectis contempnitur. Qualiter igitur predicans audietur si eius uita despicitur? Qualiter aliis proficiet ad docrinam, qui sordide uite exemplo aliis factus est in scandalium et ruinam? Due siquidem sunt ecclesie libri: sacra scilicet scriptura et ecclesie prelati. In primo legunt clerici, in secundo laici', ibid., fol. 54ra.

[142] This idea may adapt Gregory the Great's statement, frequently echoed by subsequent writers, that the illiterate laity learn or 'read' from images in churches: H. Gittos, 'The Audience for Old English Texts: Ælfric, Rhetoric and "the Edification of the Simple" ', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 43 (2014), pp. 231-66.

[143] 'Cor prelati tabule esse debet testamenti, memoria eius bibliotecha librorum domini … qui semper paratus sit rationem reddere', TA, fol. 79ra.

> Therefore lay people are able to read from the life and the example of clerics, but seldom do they find one whom they can or should choose. And this should be deplored with tearful sighs: that while the priest [*presbiter*] is glowing with drunkenness, submerged in indignity, his mind void of sense and his body of motion because of too much drink, frequently one of the flock committed to him—for which he will have to render account [*redditurus est rationem*]—is knocking earnestly because death is imminent, and demands what is owed by the priest [*sacerdos*], counsel of the coming salvation and the solace of confession or penance.[144]

In one sense, Thomas is not actually describing this shameful *presbiter* as a prelate: if a drunken priest fails to administer last rites, the issue is not really that his behaviour sets a poor example for the lay people who 'read' his life, but that his behaviour has prevented him from providing a specific ministry. Yet there is no rhetorical break to separate the 'prelates of the church' from this priest; more importantly, by claiming that the priest will have to 'render account' for the spiritual death of one of his flock, Thomas attributes to him the full burden of pastoral care: in other words, prelacy.

ii. Robert of Cricklade's *Homiliae super Ezechielem*

Thomas Agnellus' sermons demonstrate how clerics might apply the concept of prelacy to comprehend other ministry relationships, including those between local priests and lay people. With this idea in mind, we can turn to the more abstruse *Homiliae super Ezechielem* of Robert of Cricklade. Robert conspicuously modelled this collection after Gregory's *Homiliae in Ezechielem*, a series of twenty-two homilies expounding the first forty chapters of Ezekiel, echoing in many instances his earlier *Regula pastoralis*.[145] Robert, recalling Gregory's own complaint at the end of the final homily that he will cease writing because 'my soul tires of my life [Job 10.1]', begins his collection with

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[144] 'In uita ergo clericorum et exemplo possunt laici legere, sed raro inueniunt quid possint aut debeant eligere. Hoc quoque lacrimoso gemitu deplorandum est, quod dum presbiter uino estuans ebrietatis contumelia demergitur, et potu nimio animus sensu et corpus motu destituitur, frequenter aliquis de commisso sibi grege—pro quo redditurus est rationem—mortis imminentis pulsatur instantia, et debitum sibi a sacerdote postilat, inpendi salutis consilium ac confessionis seu penitentie solatium', ibid., fol. 54ra.

[145] Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in Hiezechihelem Prophetam*, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 142 (Turnhout, 1971); Leyser, *Power and Authority*, pp. 160-3.

chapter forty-one of Ezekiel, where Gregory leaves off, and writes forty-one homilies covering the remainder of the book.[146] In the prologue, Robert dedicates the collection to Reginald, prior of the Augustinian house at Gresley, Derbyshire, whom Robert says inspired him to write it.[147] Unlike Thomas Agnellus' sermons, Robert's homilies constitute a uniform work, not collected from disparate preaching occasions but written together as a whole. The *Homiliae super Ezechielem* is effectively an exegetical treatise organised into homily form. At the beginning of the second homily, Robert addresses a *reader* directly, alerting him that what follows may seem repetitive: 'I warn you, reader, not to worry if here we expound certain words first in one tract, then in another' because 'the prophet uses them in one way, then in another, sometimes once, sometimes many times'.[148] However, in one homily, Robert appears to address a gathered audience of religious directly: 'My brothers, many of you are youths, and indeed I was once a youth', and he continues to sympathise with the difficulty of resisting youthful desires.[149] Moreover, in several homilies Robert refers to a particular feast occurring on that day. It seems that he intended for at least some of the homilies to be read aloud in a religious house, perhaps at Matins or in the refectory; if so, his admonition to the reader would refer to the monk or canon tasked with reading the homily aloud. In any case, it appears that Robert intended his homilies to be either read by, or read aloud to, the religious—likely regular canons, over which both he and his dedicatee were priors.

Like Gregory, Robert finds in Ezekiel many allegorical connections to the theme of prelacy. Robert's 'prelates' are an indistinct group of spiritual leaders and teachers,

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[146] 'Quod et ipse [Gregorius] plangit in fine undecime omelie dicens, "O iam cogor linguam ab expositionis sermone retinere, quia tedet animam meam uite mee", RC, fol. 1ra; Gregory, *Homiliae in Hiezechihelem*, p. 397.

[147] RC, fol. 1ra.

[148] 'Premoneo te lector ut non conturberis si aliter in uno tractatu, quam in alio, uerba posita exponimus, que aliter et aliter ponit propheta et aliquando singulariter, aliquando pluraliter', ibid., fol. 6va.

[149] 'Fratres mei plures ex uobis iuuenes sunt, et ego quidem iuuenis fui', ibid., fol. 54rb.

tasked with teaching and correcting an equally indistinct group of subjects. Often he refers simply to 'preachers', who 'dig up' sin from 'the deep pit of the heart … when they cast out carnal longings and earthly desires with the hoe of preaching'.[150] Sometimes he appears to list several appellations haphazardly, as if to cover his bases. The eagle represents 'bishops and other doctors and prelates', who provoke their chicks, or 'subordinates', to fly from the nest; kings represent 'preachers and prelates and doctors, who both rule themselves well and strive to direct others toward the love of Christ'; the feathers of a dove (the church) signify 'preachers, doctors, and any of the elect', who 'lift up' the dove 'by word and example'.[151] In the latter analogy, 'any of the elect' almost certainly refers to lay people.[152] It is striking to see laymen, however pious, included alongside preachers and doctors. Whereas Thomas Agnellus' sermons draw out the tension between official and functional definitions of prelacy, Robert's homilies belong solely to the functional category. The line between prelate and subject is drawn solely according to the relationship between the two parties: who is instructing and uplifting whom?

Historians often work to identify whether a given text was intended for ministers to the laity or not, by searching for details specific to lay life or for evidence that links relevant manuscripts to a local church or priest.[153] Within that paradigm, Robert of Cricklade's homilies are frustratingly obfuscating. It makes sense that he would

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[150] Puteus profundum cordis significat, quem tunc predicatores fodiunt, quando concupiscentias carnales et terrena desideria ligone predicationis eitiunt', ibid., fol. 14ra.

[151] 'Ne hoc in quam contingat animali homini ab aquila qui desuper est, id est ab episcopis et ceteris doctoribus et prelatis', fol. 41va; 'Reges dicuntur predicatores et prelati et doctores qui seipsos bene regiunt et alios dirigere ad amorem Christi nituntur', fol. 64vb; 'Columba itaque hec sanctam atque catholicam ecclesiam significat. … Que sunt eius penne? Predicatores, doctores, electi quique, qui non solum eius catholicum propositum diuulgant, uerum etiam uerbo et exemplo eam subleuant', ibid., fol. 49ra.

[152] See pp. 7-8, n. 24.

[153] S. Irvine, 'The Compilation and Use of Manuscripts Containing Old English in the Twelfth Century', in M. Swan and E.M. Treharne (eds.), *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 41-61; C. Rider, 'Lay Religion and Pastoral Care in Thirteenth Century England: The Evidence of a Group of Short Confession Manuals', *JMH*, 36 (2010), pp. 327-40, at 331-2.

frequently refer to prelate-figures variously as preachers and doctors as well as prelates: St Frideswide's Priory was, at least within a decade of Robert's death, the venue for sermons attended by local lay people.[154] These sermons included several by Alexander Neckam, a master of theology and close associate, if not canon, of St Frideswide's priory; Robert was himself a theologian, and he, Alexander Neckam, or others associated with Oxford's budding schools may also have delivered academic sermons there.[155] Yet it is impossible to discern exactly which preachers, doctors or prelates Robert imagined when he wrote about the prelate-subject relationship in his homilies. Are his 'prelates' the preachers who exhorted lay audiences in the priory church? Or academics, conveying biblical doctrine to literate pupils? Or were they priors like himself, who governed and formed their religious subjects through oral preaching or through the provision of written homilies?

In fact, Robert's homilies reveal more in what they do not say than in what they do. It is possible that he wanted his homilies to be useful to many readers and therefore widely applicable to a variety of prelate-subject relationships. Equally, he may have felt it unimportant to draw out specific, practical applications from his exegesis, prioritising theology over real-world illustration. Either explanation is telling, and the two are not mutually exclusive. Robert's advice is widely applicable and his theology cogent only if a variety of prelate-subject relationships—within the diocesan hierarchy or a religious house, or between a clerical or religious minister and lay people—are all essentially similar. In Robert of Cricklade's homilies we see the idea of prelacy pushed to its extreme, so that it not only frames, but stands in for, any relationship in which one party spiritually guides and governs another.

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[154] Shortly after 1180: see below, p. 116.

[155] AN, fols. 74r-76v, 93r-97r; A.N.J. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester', PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 2016, pp. 17-23.

Public Preaching

The final way in which a prelate, official or functional, could shape the religious life of his locality was through public preaching, by which I mean preaching to audiences which included local lay people. In many places, the cathedral or most important religious house served as a regular venue for sermons at important feasts and holy days, attended not only by that church's clergy or religious but also by lay people and other local clergy or religious.[156] Analysis of the sermons of Bartholomew of Exeter, Alexander of Ashby and Alexander Neckam shows that all three writers delivered public sermons of this type.

i. Bartholomew of Exeter's sermons

One hundred and twenty-five of Bartholomew of Exeter's sermons survive, preserved in a manuscript which Bartholomew himself bequeathed to the Exeter Cathedral library.[157] Like Thomas Agnellus' sermons, these sermons were written separately for a variety of preaching occasions before being collected into one volume. They are arranged according to the liturgical year, with a few irregularities, from Advent to St Martin. They were likely gathered from a number of exemplars; this would explain the few instances where sermons appear out of calendrical order in the collection.[158] The collection includes some sermons clearly written for particular events, while others are templates that could be easily adapted for a variety of occasions. One sermon for Palm Sunday attributes symbolic meaning to the current month, March, implying that it was

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[156] J. Barrow, 'Churches, Education and Literacy in Towns 600-1300', in D.M. Palliser (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain, 1: 600-1540* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 127-52, at 133; B.M. Kienzle, 'The Twelfth-Century Monastic Sermon', in idem (ed.), *The Sermon*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental, 81-3 (3 vols., Turnhout, 2000), pp. 271-323, at 278-9; J. Wilcox, 'Ælfric in Dorset and the Landscape of Pastoral Care', in Tinti, *Pastoral Care*, pp. 52-62, at 58.

[157] See introduction, p. 38.

[158] See, for example, the apparent 'sets' of sermons which are similar in structure and register on fols. 4va-8vb, 15va-18ra.

written for delivery not just on any Palm Sunday, but on Palm Sunday in one of the eight years during Bartholomew's twenty-three-year episcopate when Palm Sunday fell in the month of March.[159] On the other hand, four sermons are generic outlines meant to be adaptable for the feast day of any martyr or confessor.[160]

The manuscript does not record the locations in which any of the sermons were given, but it is likely that most were meant for preaching within the diocese. We know that Bartholomew preached outside his diocese on at least one occasion, because he is said to have celebrated mass and delivered a sermon at the reopening of Canterbury Cathedral after Thomas Becket's death, by the invitation of the prior and convent.[161] That sermon is not preserved in Bartholomew's collection.[162] Instead, the sermons mark days which would have been particularly important for the religious life of the town of Exeter. Table 1 ranks each Sunday and feast day included in Bartholomew's collection by the number of sermons for that day. These numbers seem to correspond roughly to the importance of the day as a preaching event for the bishop. This could mean that the bishop was more likely to preach on these days, or that his sermons for these days were considered more worthy of preservation. Unsurprisingly, Christmas and Easter have the most sermons, nine and eight respectively. Days relating to St Peter, to whom Exeter Cathedral was dedicated, are particularly well represented: there are six sermons for the feast of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, which in fact completely ignore St Paul;[163] four sermons for the Chair of St Peter, and another for St Peter's Chains. Six sermons

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[159] BE, fols. 34vb-35ra.

[160] Ibid., fols. 85vb-87rb.

[161] Morey, p. 33.

[162] It is odd that Bartholomew did not include a record of such a prestigious occasion in a collection which was to presumably represent the legacy of his preaching, nor any sermon dedicated to Becket. Bartholomew's assiduous centrality during the height of the conflict may have continued in the form of a lukewarm attitude to Becket after his death.

[163] The rubricator correctly labels the first sermon 'In natali apostolorum Petre et Pauli', but thereafter abbreviates by mentioning Peter only: fols. 57vb, 58rb, 58vb, 59rb, 59vb.

Table 1. Number of Bartholomew of Exeter's Sermons per Sunday or Feast Day

Number of sermons	Sunday or Feast Day
9	Christmas
8	Easter
6	Whitsun, St Peter and St Paul, Dedication
4	Chair of St Peter, Palm Sunday, Assumption
3	Christmas Eve, Epiphany, Good Friday, St John the Baptist, St Michael
2	Advent, St Andrew, St John the Evangelist, Circumcision, Purification, Lent, First Sunday in Lent, Fourth Sunday in Lent, St Philip and St James, Ascension, Translation of St Benedict, St Lawrence, Beheading of St John, Birth of Mary, St Matthew, All Saints
1	St Nicholas, Conception of Mary, St Stephen Protomartyr, Innocents, St Vincent, Conversion of Paul, St Benedict, Annunciation, First Sunday after Easter, Fourth Sunday after Easter, Rogation, St Wandrill, St Margaret, St Mary Magdalene, St Peter's Chains, Exaltation of the Cross, St Leodegar, St Dionysus, St Martin

for a 'dedication', occurring between 8 September and 14 September, must mark the anniversary of the dedication of the cathedral in 1133.[164] Whitsun was a similarly important feast for Exeter, the occasion of public processions in the town and countryside at which offerings were made to the cathedral.[165] In a sermon for St Andrew, Bartholomew draws symbolic significance from the way the tides ascend and descend, go out and come in, as well as how the sea is 'stinking, stormy and deep'.[166] Such a representation would have been particularly resonant for the residents of Exeter;

[164] This 'dedication day', which cannot be any of St Peter's feast days, does not appear in the *legenda* of Bishop Grandisson: *Ordinale Exon. (Exeter Chapter ms. 3502 collated with Parker ms. 93)*, ed. J.N. Dalton (4 vols., London, 1909-1940), iii, possibly because by then the cathedral had been substantially rebuilt.

[165] *English Episcopal Acta XI*, pp 6-7, 78, 88. At p. 88 Barlow prints 'ex campanis' ('from the bells'), but this is difficult to make sense of; 'ex campan[i]is' is more likely.

[166] 'Prima quod fluctus maris ascendunt et descendunt, foras exeunt et in se redeunt … secunda quidem est quod mare fetens est, procellosum atque profundum', ibid., fol. 1va-b.

the city lay only ten miles from the sea and was a major redistribution centre for fish caught locally as well as along the southwest coast.[167]

The preponderance of sermons for St Peter, as well as the set of dedication sermons, strongly suggests that Bartholomew preached regularly at Exeter cathedral. Only about a quarter of Bartholomew's sermons demonstrably address a specific type of audience—either lay people, clerics, or religious—but almost all of the sermons addressing clerics can be identified with feasts which were relatively less important in Exeter. These sermons may have been delivered to the cathedral chapter. None of the Christmas, Easter, or Whitsun sermons can be shown to address clerics, suggesting that it was customary for lay people to attend mass, likely at the cathedral, on these days; sermons would have to appeal to a general audience of clerics and lay people.[168] The monks of St Nicholas were disallowed from sounding their hours on the nights of Christmas and Easter and at the feast of SS Peter and Paul;[169] this may have been because the cathedral's bells were used to summon lay people on these important preaching occasions.

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[167] H. Fox, *The Evolution of the Fishing Village: Landscape and Society along the South Devon Coast, 1086-1550* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 87-8, 95-9; M. Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 284-318.

[168] Note that Bartholomew's sermons frequently begin with an address to *fratres karissimi*, but both clerical and lay audiences were addressed as *fratres* in this period. For example, in a sermon for St Peter's Chair, Bartholomew begins: 'Audistis fratres karissimi, et sepius audistis, quia sollemnitas quam colitis cathedre Petri festiuitate nuncupatur. Si ueram causam queritis, causam percipite. Breuiter eam dixerim', and then narrates the story of Peter's accession (fol. 26rb). It is highly unlikely that Bartholomew would explain the feast in this way to clerics. Another sermon admonishes 'fratres mei' to 'nolite mechari post uxores, quia non uultis ut mechentur post uos uxores uestre' (fol. 34rb). Alexander Neckam also addressed lay audiences as 'fratres'. After explicitly stating his intention to say something 'comicus' for the benefit of lay people, he begins to narrate an arboreal illustration with 'viri fratres': AN, fol. 96v. A layman might also refer to monks as 'fratres mei', as Hascutus did in his charter granting the Isle of St Michael of Lamorna to Glastonbury Abbey in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century: SHC DD/WO/23/1.

[169] *EEA XI*, pp. 6-7.

ii. Alexander of Ashby's sermons

We have already examined some of Alexander of Ashby's sermons—the five sermons appended to *De artificioso modo predicandi*, and his two sermon collections—as exhortations to prelates to preach, and as evidence of Alexander's expectation for prelates to instruct subordinate ministers. Here, I discuss particular sermons which evince Alexander's own public preaching. These include sermons from *De artificioso modo predicandi*, Alexander's first sermon collection, and the twenty-one other sermons, attributed to Alexander but not included in a curated collection, which have been printed by Morenzoni as *sermones varii*.[170]

Alexander seems to have preached at St Andrew's Priory in Northampton. The priory had held a monopoly on all Northampton's churches since its foundation,[171] and there were no other religious houses within the city's defences, so it was probably the venue for most public sermons. As discussed above, Alexander was probably associated with Northampton's schools, which were apparently based at the priory. He also maintained a personal devotion to St Andrew, claiming in his *Liber festiualis* that he would begin with St Andrew's life because Andrew is 'the first of heaven',[172] and later making a personal appeal to the saint himself: 'Behold I speak of you: for me, my patron, speak. Behold, I am mindful of you: please be mindful of me'.[173] In fact, Alexander was more than ready to speak on his patron's behalf. Two of his sermons written for St Andrew's feast day are preserved. One of these, included in Alexander's first sermon collection, refers to St Andrew's priory directly:

> Indeed in this place [the priory] St Andrew is to be specially honoured, because this is one of his principal churches in England. ... This city is specially under the

[170] *AA I*, pp. 257-390.

[171] See chapter two, p. 148.

[172] *AA II*, p. 159.

[173] Ibid., p. 160.

> patronage of St Andrew, because all the churches established in it are allotted to this monastery, and all the inhabitants of the city are under St Andrew as parishioners.[174]

It is not clear from the text of the sermon whether those 'parishioners' were in attendance.[175] However, another sermon for St Andrew's feast, the first sermon appended to *De artificioso modo predicandi*, shows that Alexander preached publicly on that day to mixed lay and religious or clerical audiences. In an early thirteenth-century manuscript, the only complete copy of the work, the sermon is rubricated *ad eruditos simul et simplices*. After expounding a *divisio*—St Andrew's *oratio* and his *operatio*, each of which is subdivided into three categories—Alexander abruptly declares that 'listeners should easily agree with this preaching, because what he [St Andrew] taught with words he later confirmed with signs. I will recite one of these, which is deserving of his memory and veneration'.[176] Alexander then relates how St Andrew resurrected forty corpses that had washed ashore after a shipwreck.[177] In this he is following his own advice to 'sprinkle many *exempla* about the saints [in sermons] for the edification of the simple'; his *Liber festiualis* was meant in part to supply such *exempla*.[178] The two St Andrew sermons together suggest that Alexander customarily delivered a sermon, attended by lay people, at St Andrew's priory on its dedication day. A third sermon[179] may have been delivered at St Andrew's priory or at another church, perhaps the priory church of Canons Ashby, Alexander of Ashby's own house, which also functioned as the

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[174] *AA I*, pp. 203-4.

[175] On the implications of *parochiani* in this context see chapter two, pp. 147-9.

[176] *AA I*, p. 38.

[177] Ibid., pp. 38-9.

[178] Ibid., pp. 24-5.

[179] It should be noted that Morenzoni admits some doubt as to his attribution of this sermon to Alexander of Ashby. I retain the attribution, but do not rest any argument solely upon this sermon: *AA I*, pp. 115-16.

village church.[180] Written for Easter, it specifically addresses 'boys, girls, shepherds and servants, who cannot come to the church on other days because of service to their lords'.[181] It concludes with a warning about receiving the Eucharist without having confessed mortal sins, and a call for any who have not confessed to do so immediately: 'Behold here are the ashes, here is the cross, and we are ready to hear the confession of those who have not yet confessed'.[182] Since Alexander normally refers to himself in the singular and the sermon was clearly not intended for a formal setting, the use of the first person plural suggests delivery at a conventual church. A fourth sermon, for Whitsun, also seems intended for delivery by a member of a religious house to lay people.[183] The sermon addresses 'my beloved brothers, who are lay people', and offers simplified standards for lay behaviour and religious knowledge.[184] 'You are not able to understand our faith as clerics do', he admits, 'but it is sufficient for you if you adhere closely to the things which clerics rightly believe, and generally believe that whatever the holy Church asserts to be true is true'.[185] In a notable parallel to Bartholomew of Exeter's rhetorical style, he then strings together a series of questions and answers—seemingly anticipating his lay audience's qualms—which culminates in a simple assertion:

> But since God's commands are many, how are you able to know all of them? And if you don't know them, how are you able to obey them? Therefore go freely and frequently to the church, listen attentively to the word of preaching, and diligently learn the commandments of God. And if you cannot know all of his precepts, at least learn this precept: avoid evil, that is all mortal sin, and do good. Whoever keeps

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[180] BL, MS Egerton 3033, fol. 1r; Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northampton* (6 vols., London, 1981), p. 34; J.F. Hodgson, 'On the Difference of Plan Alleged to Exist between Churches of Austin Canons and Those of Monks; and the Frequency with which Such Churches Were Parochial', *Archaeological Journal*, 41 (1884), pp. 374-414; 42 (1885), pp. 96-119, 215-46, 331-69, 440-68, at 42:101.

[181] Ibid., p. 359.

[182] Ibid., p. 360.

[183] Ibid., pp. 375-80.

[184] Ibid., p. 375. For laymen as 'fratres mei' see p. 111, n. 168 above.

[185] Ibid., p. 375.

> these two precepts will not transgress any precept of God, but will keep all of them.[186]

Later in the sermon, Alexander explains that those who live in monasteries more fully and frequently enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit; however, lay people who cannot physically join the religious should join them in spirit by giving them gifts.[187] It seems clear that Alexander (or another religious preacher) was meant to deliver this sermon to lay people, likely at a religious house. In that case it appears that when Alexander advises lay people to 'go freely and frequently to the church [and] listen attentively to the word of preaching', he and his audience would have thought first of sermons delivered at conventual churches.

iii. Alexander Neckam's Sermons in Oxford

Alexander Neckam's academic career saw residences in Paris, Dunstable, St Albans, Oxford, and Cirencester; he was in Oxford from around 1190 to 1200.[188] Two of Alexander's sermons were intended for public delivery at St Frideswide's Priory, Oxford.[189] The first opens with an address to *ciues Oxonie uiri dulcissime*, and contains an extended appeal for lay people to pay tithes to the canons of St Frideswide: 'You are negligent in your tithes', he bluntly accuses.[190] In the second sermon, Alexander seems to address both laymen and the canons of St Frideswide simultaneously. 'But in order to accommodate the lay people joining us and give ourselves a break, we should change tack and use more lighthearted words', he declares, before using trees and flowers—which grow straight up from the ground if they are healthy—to illustrate spirituality in

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[186] Ibid., p. 376.

[187] Ibid., p. 379.

[188] See introduction, p. 45.

[189] AN, fols. 74r-76v, 93r-97r.

[190] 'In decimacionibus uestris nimis negligigentes [*sic*] estis', ibid., fol. 74r.

contrast to worldliness.[191] In this sermon Alexander also appeals to laymen for money, lamenting that St Frideswide's priory church, *iste locus*, 'is terrible and horrible because of the ruin of its walls', likely a reference to the fire which had damaged the church in 1190.[192] 'Why will you not at least give a cloak to the icon of the blessed virgin, when even your muddy cloaks are exceedingly sumptuous and delicate, of linen, or satin, or velvet?'[193]

Andrew Dunning's argument that Alexander Neckam probably became a regular canon of St Frideswide's Priory at some point while he was in Oxford is persuasive.[194] Even if he did not, he must have had a close relationship with the canons of St Frideswide, perhaps deriving from academic connections and not unlike the relationship between Alexander of Ashby and the Cluniac monks of St Andrew's Priory in Northampton. It is clear from Alexander Neckam's Oxford sermons that he, like Alexander of Ashby, preached to mixed lay and religious audiences, and that a substantial portion of the lay people who attended sermons also paid tithes to the priory. Further evidence for St Frideswide's as a site of public sermons is provided by the *Miracula St Frideswide*, written by Prior Philip shortly after 1180. One miracle occurs while a large crowd within the priory church listens to—and becomes distracted from—an apparently long-winded sermon.[195] Since Alexander Neckam was already a master of theology when he came to Oxford, it would have been natural for him to assume the function of prelacy by preaching publicly at the invitation of St Frideswide's canons.

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[191] 'Eterum ut laicis assistantibus condescendamus et morem ieramus, stilum mutabantes comico sermone utamur. Viri fratres, arbor directa in altum …', AN, fol. 96r-v.

[192] 'Doleo uiri fratres quod locus iste ecclesie sancte Frideswide terribilis est modo et horribilis propter ruinam murorum. Quare non cogitatis o laici?', AN, fol. 93v; H.E. Salter, *Medieval Oxford*, OHS, 100 (Oxford, 1936), pp. 37, 132. Rebuilding apparently took several years. In 1194 Pope Celestine III requested alms to restore St Frideswide's after a fire: *CSF*, i, pp. 41-42.

[193] 'Quare saltem peplum adeo non datis yconie beate uirginis, cum pepla uestra lutea ualde sumptuosa sint, delicata, bissea, uel bissina uel serica?', AN, fol. 93v.

[194] 'Neckam's Manuscripts', pp. 17-23.

[195] *Acta sanctorum Octobris VIII* (Brussels, 1858), p. 579.

Conclusions

As a function of prelacy, public preaching—as opposed to preaching to subordinate clergy or religious—was uniquely problematic. Lay people were sometimes compelled to attend certain churches on important feast days,[196] but in other cases attendance at masses and sermons was a matter of personal choice or practical feasibility. Alexander Neckam quipped that some people use the weather to make excuses for not visiting churches.[197] By conferring a responsibility for spiritually guiding subordinates, the idea of prelacy presupposed a personal relationship of some kind between prelate and subject, or at the very least clear definition of who one's subjects were. It was incongruous for the work of 'teaching by word and example' to depend on a subject's haphazard sermon attendance. In *De artificioso modo predicandi*, Alexander of Ashby advises that the preacher should tailor each sermon to the needs of his particular audience: 'What should be said to whom must be considered in advance, because some things should be said to clerics, others to lay people, others to the wise, others to the foolish, others to the worldly, others to the spiritual, and still other things when different groups must be preached to simultaneously'.[198] He then copies a sizeable portion of Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*, on how the preacher must be like a doctor administering precisely the correct medicine, or like a harpist, delicately striking just the right notes.[199] Bartholomew of Exeter offers similar advice in a sermon apparently intended for the heads of religious communities. 'Whoever delivers words of exhortation in the house of the Lord should consider and discern the qualities of the people to whom he speaks', he explains, before offering brief suggestions about how to preach according to four

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196 See chapter two, pp. 156-7, 161-2.

197 AN, fol. 13r.

198 *AA I*, p. 27.

199 Ibid., pp. 27-8; *RP*, ii, pp. 258-60.

categories: *conditio* (prelates and subjects), *scientia* (wise and foolish), *etas* (old and young), and *officium* (active and contemplative).[200] Both writers were drawing, yet again, from the Gregorian tradition, which Alexander of Ashby in particular emphasises by quoting directly from Gregory the Great and citing him by name. Book three of Gregory's *Regula pastoralis* contains instructions for preaching to thirty-six pairs of opposites, some of them distinguishing between broad social categories (men and women, rich and poor), others more clever than practicable (those who fear punishment and therefore live innocently, and those who are hardened in iniquity so that they cannot be corrected by punishment).[201] The effect is less to provide a reference for tips on dealing with particular vices than to impress upon the reader the vast discretion and sensitivity which pastoral care requires.[202]

Obstacles to fulfilling the requirements of prelacy were not unique to public preaching. The expectation that prelates should instruct subordinate ministers placed at least one degree of separation between the prelate and the souls for which he was ultimately responsible. Peter of Cornwall's worries about widespread unbelief and Orm's rhetorical concern for 'all English people' indicate that the authors of preaching aids might, however impractically, imagine their work benefitting preachers and listeners from far outside their localities. Even a prior addressing his canons or an archdeacon instructing the clergy of his church—not to mention of his archdeaconry—would surely struggle to know and respond to the intimate spiritual needs of each

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[200] 'Qui enim in domo domini uerbum exhortatonis facit qualitates personarum ad quas loquitur et de quibus domus domini ordinata et ornata est considerare et discernere debet', BE, fol. 74va-b.

[201] *RP*, ii, pp. 262-518.

[202] This idea still resonated in the twelfth century. In the early twelfth century, Honorius Augustodunensis wrote a 'general sermon' comprised mostly of separate addresses to eight groups: priests, judges, the rich, the poor, soldiers, merchants, farmers, and the married: *Speculum ecclesiae*, PL, 172:861-70. Alan of Lille, a rough contemporary of Alexander of Ashby, lays out in his *Summa de arte praedicatoria* the sort of content which preachers should address to soldiers, orators, princes and judges, monks, priests, the married, widows, virgins, and those who are spiritually asleep: *Summa de arte praedictoria*, PL, 210:185-98.

individual listener. How much more would preachers like Alexander of Ashby, Bartholomew of Exeter, and Alexander Neckam, who spoke to large, diverse, and unfixed audiences, struggle to exercise prelacy well? Our texts seem blind to the question. But the sheer variety of means by which prelacy might be exercised within a locality must have, paradoxically, allowed the burden of teaching by word and deed to be shared more widely, even delegated. The following chapters will investigate how the concept of prelacy interacted with this reality. Usually, a subject did not have just one prelate.

The texts studied in this thesis reflect both the simplicity of the idea of prelacy and the complexity and subtlety with which it was utilised. Writers conversed within a clearly organised world: the wise enlightening the simple, the virtuous inspiring the wayward, the ruler governing those below him like a shepherd his sheep. Yet they applied this model to a range of practical situations. Prelates, learned and diligent almost by definition, would gather knowledge from texts and communicate it to their subordinates. (They probably also gathered knowledge conversationally, in learned circles; Alexander of Ashby and Peter of Cornwall may have met in 1198x1203.[203]) They would preach to their subordinates, admonishing them to live virtuously and instructing them in sound doctrine, and so making those subordinates better—in fact, more prelate-like—ministers. And they would see to the office of preaching more generally, both by collecting suitable material and by preaching themselves. In all of these applications, the identities of prelates and subjects were malleable. Those who held high ecclesiastical offices were not the only people who acted the prelate's part; scholars and regular canons, at least, also delivered formal sermons, and even local

[203] Alexander was a papal judge-delegate for a case in which Peter, as prior of Holy Trinity, was a party: G. Dinkova-Bruun, 'Alexander of Ashby: New Biographical Evidence, *Mediaeval Studies*, 63 (2001), pp. 305-22, at 308.

priests were sometimes admonished to exhibit the attributes of prelacy. The category of subjects was even more fluid. It could be layered to include not only subordinates but also the lay people to whom they ministered; indeed some writers were strikingly uninterested in distinguishing between lay subjects and subordinate clerics or religious. In public sermons, preachers at least hoped to address their audiences' unique spiritual needs, imitating the prelate's responsibility to intimately know and personally guide each of his subjects.

Why did such a simple idea hold sway against the gritty details of local religious ministry? Prelacy described a relationship between a superior and an inferior, and this resonated in a religious culture that was fundamentally ordered by ministry relationships. It is easy for historians to assume that writers who rarely bothered to describe prelacy in terms of specific offices, or to precisely identify subjects, operated in a solely theoretical sphere. On the contrary, these writers reflected the reality of local religious life by prioritising function over identity and relationship over office. There were, of course, ecclesiastical titles, spiritual jurisdictions and parish boundaries; but the primary mechanism of local religious life was the ministry relationship, in which lay people received and solicited religious ministries from a variety of clerical, religious, lay, and even supernatural sources. The most essential of these ministry relationships—between priests and parishioners—is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Two: Parishioners

Local religious life consisted of many intersecting ministry relationships. The previous chapter showed that prelacy was a potent and flexible concept, drawn from centuries of intellectual tradition and yet constantly adapted to fit local realities. This chapter traces the role of that idea in the everyday workings of local religious life: in the relationships between lay people, local priests, local churches, cathedrals, religious houses. In one sense, the concept of prelacy derived from, or at least drew strength from, the relationship-based fabric of local religious life. Thinking about religious life in terms of prelates and subjects would have been natural for writers who lived in a world structured by ministry relationships, many of them hierarchical. But this also encouraged those who trafficked in the idea of prelacy to impose it onto local religious life. The idea particularly shaped the ways in which prelates and prelate-led institutions —convents and chapters—conceptualised, established, and enforced their ministry relationships with lay people. Writers began to think about the relationships between local priests and their parishioners through the lens of prelacy: the priest as the prelate, the parishioners his subjects.

This monumental shift has been hiding in plain sight. When the Fourth Lateran Council mandated that every adult should confess annually, it also instructed that any priest who would hear confessions be 'discerning and prudent, so that like a skilled doctor he may pour wine and oil over the wounds of the injured one. … Let him carefully inquire about the circumstances of both the sinner and the sin, so that he may prudently discern what sort of advice he ought to give and what remedy to apply'.[1] The *medicus animarum*—discerning, fully responsible for healing helpless sinners—was an

[1] *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. and trans. N.P. Tanner (2 vols., London, 1990), i, p. 245.

ancient trope, first applied to Christ and then to prelates, closely associated with pastoral care.[2] Now, it was mandated for local priests. The language of pastoral care was changing too: beginning in the eleventh century, writers across Europe increasingly used the phrases *cura pastoralis* and in particular *cura animarum* to denote not only the spiritual burden of prelacy, but also the rights and responsibilities associated with parish churches and the priesthood more generally. In the tenth century, to say 'he received the pastoral care' plainly meant that a bishop or monastic superior had been consecrated;[3] by the end of the twelfth, the same statement could also indicate that a priest had been confirmed to a local church.[4]

There were at least three reasons for this. First, and most obviously, local churches proliferated and therefore became more important in local religious life and ministry. In the tenth and eleventh centuries lordship had fractured and intensified locally, and this in turn brought about the establishment of many new proprietary churches independent of the minster *parochiae*.[5] Second, the Gregorian insistence on clerical superiority and the exceptionality of performing the mass drew *minores sacerdotes*, once assumed to be mere agents of their bishop's pastoral will, into 'the chosen rank, the royal priesthood,

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[2] Alcuin, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Duemmler, MGH Epp. 4 (Berlin, 1895), p. 57; Gottfried of Admont, *Homiliae dominicales*, PL 174:542; Origen, *Homélies sur les Psaumes 36 à 38*, ed. E. Prinzivalli, H. Crouzel and L. Brésard, SC, 411 (Paris, 1995), p. 260. Compare Joseph Goering's observation that c. 32 also asserted, after much debate in the twelfth century, that local priests 'exercised the same power to bind and loose sinners as was exercised by the Apostles and by the bishops who were their successors', a power formerly reserved for prelates: 'The Internal Forum and the Literature of Penance and Confession', in W. Hartmann and K. Pennington (eds.), *The History of Medieval Canon Law in the Classical Period, 1140-1234: From Gratian to the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX* (Washington, D.C., 2008), pp. 379-438, at 381-2.

[3] See introduction, p. 11.

[4] *Ecumenical Councils*, i, p. 190; Gerald of Wales, *Gemma ecclesiastica*, in *Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer, Rolls. ser. 21, 8 vols. (London, 1873), ii, 334; Gratian, *Decretum*, ed. E. Friedberg, Corpus Iuris Canonici, 1 (Leipzig, 1872), c. 29, C. 18, q. 2; *Collectaneum exemplorum et uisionum Claraeuallense e codice Trecensi 946*, ed. O. Legendre, CCCM 208 (Turnhout, 2005), p. 299; Gregory IX, *Epistolae*, ed. C. Rodenberg, MGH Epp. Saec. XIII, 1 (Berlin, 1883), p. 463; *The Letters of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) Concerning England and Wales: A Calendar with an Appendix of Texts*, ed. C.R. Cheney and M. Cheney (Oxford, 1967), pp. 52, 224; Peter the Chanter, *Summa quae dicitur verbum adbreuiatum: textus alter* 46, ed. Monique Boutry, CCCM, 196B (Turnhout, 2012), p. 240.

[5] J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), ch. 7.

the sacred race'.[6] Third—and what this chapter argues—the relationship-based structure of local religious life made it easy for those who would be prelates to conceptualise certain lay people as their parishioners, that is, their subjects. Of course there was a technical or legal idea of the parish, however imprecise in practice, just as a prelate was, technically, an elite office-holder. But more important to writers and document creators was the idea that lay people who received ministries from a church—its priests or monks or canons—might be claimed as its parishioners.

The imposition of prelacy onto the fabric of local religious life did not occur without friction. If this chapter is about the transference of an idea from one type of relationship (prelate-subject) onto another (priest-parishioner), it also brings out the inadequacies of that idea. There is almost no evidence that lay people thought of themselves as parishioners in this period.[7] Moreover, the rhetorical construction of prelacy was of an exclusive relationship between governor and governed. It appears to have been semantically impossible to acknowledge that a single person could be a parishioner of multiple parties at once; this meant that document creators had to tiptoe around the inconvenient reality that lay people received ministries from many different sources. And they were surprisingly willing to record parishioners, subjects, doing very un-subject-like things, such as demanding that more or different ministries be provided to them. Indeed many of our best documentary sources resulted from conflict or confusion: they represent attempts by patrons and priests to record and regulate a world of multidirectional ministry relationships. The idea of prelacy stuck because it could be used to describe and even enforce the relationships between priests and parishioners; at

[6] TA, fol. 4ra.

[7] For the single instance I have found of a lay person calling himself a 'parishioner', see Roger With's petition to the bishop of Bath, below, p. 136.

the same time, it could not account for the ability of lay people to obtain and shape a variety of ministries according to their wishes.

In this chapter I first establish that the seemingly technical word *parochia* was in fact variable in meaning, representing at times a geographical area, a legal unit, or a spiritual community; reference to a parish in one sense did not necessarily imply the other senses. Similarly, the word *parochiana*/*us* did not simply mean the resident of a parish, first because the very idea of a parish was not always consistent, and more importantly because it was possible to speak of parishioners even in situations where a parish in any sense was absent. Calling someone a 'parishioner' meant something. Religious houses claimed lay people as 'their parishioners' when they wanted to assert their alleged right to minister to them, especially to the exclusion of others: to claim responsibility for their pastoral care and the revenues thereof, to make them subjects. The writings of Alexander of Ashby point to the link between prelacy as exercised by preaching on behalf of a religious house and the claiming of lay people as parishioners. With this in mind, we can turn to descriptions of lay people as 'parishioners' of their local churches or priests. In some cases 'parishioners' are referred to essentially as monetary assets, but usually the word is used of lay people who have an interest in receiving ministries through their local church. Many of these cases involve lay people, called 'parishioners', actively advocating for religious ministries, often attempting to increase the frequency or range of ministries offered in their local chapel at the expense of a more distant mother church's rights. This was the opposite of the passivity which being the subject of a prelate was supposed to entail. Personal and community interests, not an overarching theory of parochial jurisdiction, guided the negotiations in which ecclesiastics, patrons and ordinary lay people aimed to shape the ministry relationships based in local churches. Finally, I argue that because the state of being a 'parishioner'

was subjective and relational, it was possible for a single person to be claimed as a parishioner by multiple parties, or not to be claimed as a parishioner at all. The conclusions of this study of a single word, 'parishioner', point to a radically new analytical model for the development of the English parish.

Parochia

There are two main historiographical approaches to the English parish. The first is institutional in focus: it sees the parish as the normative unit of pastoral care which developed gradually until the thirteenth century, when it attained its final medieval form.[8] That development has sometimes been flattened into an atemporal ideal, as by N.J.G. Pounds: 'The medieval idea', he wrote, 'was of a single church serving the spiritual needs of a discrete area and supported by the tithes and oblations of its parishioners'.[9] Parishes, the assumption runs, were the building blocks of medieval religious life. Scholars have traditionally considered any variation from this ideal to be irregular and therefore detrimental to parishioners, particularly when the patronage of religious houses was involved.[10] There is little evidence to support this assumption: it seems to be driven in part by an expectation of teleological progression toward a neat, regulated parish system, and in part by a too-credulous stance toward the Fourth Lateran Council's complaints.[11] More fruitful have been efforts to understand the piecemeal Anglo-Saxon origins of parishes, relying heavily on archaeological evidence. John Blair

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[8] G.W.O. Addleshaw, *Rectors, Vicars and Patrons in Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Century Canon Law* (London, 1956); C.R. Cheney, *From Becket to Langton: English Church Government 1170-1213* (Manchester, 1968), ch. 5; R.A.R. Hartridge, *A History of Vicarages in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1930); N.J.G. Pounds, *A History of the English Parish* (Cambridge, 2000).

[9] Pounds, *English Parish*, p. 42.

[10] Addleshaw, *Rectors, Vicars and Patrons*, p. 23; J.E. Burton, 'Monasteries and Parish Churches in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Yorkshire', *Northern History*, 23 (1987), pp. 39-50, at 48-50; Cheney, *Becket to Langton*, p. 123; B.R. Kemp, 'Monastic Possession of Parish Churches in England in the Twelfth Century', *JEH*, 31 (1980), pp. 133-60, at 149; E. Mason, 'The Role of the English Parishioner, 1100-1500', *JEH*, 27 (1976), pp. 17-29, at 21; Pounds, *English Parish*, p. 55.

[11] *Ecumenical Councils*, i, pp. 249-50.

and others have shown how, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the patrons of proliferating manorial and private churches carved up minster *parochie* and established their own, smaller parishes.[12] The minster church was unique to England, but parishes developed—with great variation in process and pace—across Europe.[13] The process was organic, not planned; yet it has become a historiographical truism that parishes in England was fully formed, or 'crystallised', by around 1200:[14] an innocent periodisation which nevertheless implies that there was always a coherent system in sight.

More recently, historians have become interested in the parish as a social or religious community. While some have argued that the initiative of lay 'worshipping communities', not lordly patronage, was the primary driving force behind the formation of parishes in the eleventh and twelfth centuries,[15] most place the emergence of parish-centric lay piety in the thirteenth century and beyond. In the late Middle Ages, lay people endowed lights, chantries and fabric improvements in parish churches; organised

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[12] Blair, *Church*, chs. 6-8.

[13] For comparative studies of the parish across Europe see N. Kruppa and L. Zygner (eds.), *Pfarrein im Mittelalter: Deutschland, Polen, Tschechien un Ungarn im Vergleich* (Göttingen, 2008) and Settimana internazionale di studio, *Le istituzioni ecclesiastiche della Societas Christiana dei secoli XI-XII: diocesi, pievi e parrocchie* (Milan, 1977). For summaries see J. Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World: Secular Clerics, Their Families and Careers in North-Western Europe, c. 800-c. 1200* (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 312-20 and S. Hamilton, *Church and People in the Medieval West, 900-1200* (Harlow, 2013), pp. 33-40.

[14] A selection of recent statements to this effect: D. Lepine, ' "And Alle Oure Paresshens": Secular Cathedrals and Parish Churches in Late Medieval England', in C. Burgess and E. Duffy (eds.), *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 14 (Donington, 2006), pp. 29-53; Pounds, *English Parish*, p. 3; M. Rubin, 'What Did the Eucharist Mean to Thirteenth-Century Villagers?', in P.R. Cross and S.D. Lloyd (eds.), *Thirteenth-Century England, Vol. 4: The Proceedings of the Newcastle upon Tyne Conference, 1991* (Woodbridge, 1992), pp. 47-55, at 48.

[15] C.N.L. Brooke and G. Keir, *London, 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (Berkeley, 1975), ch. 6; J. Campbell, 'The Church in Anglo-Saxon Towns', in idem, *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London, 1986), pp. 139-54; G. Rosser, 'The Care of Souls in English Towns before 1000', in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 267-84, at 274-5; J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 452-63.

parish guilds; and marched together in ritual processions.[16] The community-focussed approach to parishes has not escaped teleology either, as historians search for evidence to show that similar communities also existed in the twelfth century.[17]

We should not search for the late medieval parish, either the institutional entity or the lay community, in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. Neither should we assume that lay religious life was coterminous with—much less dependent on—the geographical boundaries of parishes. In order to strip away such assumptions it is often necessary to argue from silence. To do so is hazardous of course, but it is necessary if we are to avoid imposing anachronistic or too-neat expectations onto documents that do not support them. The words and ideas which people did *not* use to describe local realities are just as informative as those they did.

Document creators in late twelfth-century England used the word *parochia* to describe a range of different ideas and situations. It had at least three distinct senses when used in relation to local churches. The first was geographical. Tracing the development of parish boundaries poses significant methodological problems, since documentary evidence is heavily skewed toward churches whose parish boundaries were contentious, or needed written clarification because of some anomalous ambiguity. However, by focussing on incidental references in documents whose primary purpose is not to delimit parish boundaries but rather to record gifts and transactions, we can get a

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[16] C. Burgess, ' "By Quick and by Dead": Wills and Pious Provision in Late Medieval Bristol', *EHR*, 102 (1987), pp. 837-58; Burgess and Duffy, *Parish*; M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge, 1991); G. Rosser, 'Parochial Conformity and Voluntary Religion in Late-Medieval England', *TRHS*, ser. 6, 1 (1991), pp. 173-89; A.D. Brown, *Popular Piety in Late Medieval England: The Diocese of Salisbury 1250-1550* (Cambridge, 1995); V. Bainbridge, *Gilds in the Medieval Countryside: Social and Religious Change in Cambridgeshire c.1350-1558* (Woodbridge, 1997); D. Postles, 'Lamps, Lights and Layfolk: "Popular" Devotion before the Black Death', *JMH*, 25 (1999), pp. 97-114; K. Farnhill, *Guilds and the Parish Community in Late Medieval East Anglia, c. 1470-1550* (York, 2001); K.L. French, *The People of the Parish: Community Life in a Late Medieval English Diocese* (Philadelphia, 2001); E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c. 1580*, 2nd edn., (New Haven, 2005); G. Rosser, *The Art of Solidarity in the Middle Ages: Guilds in England, 1250-1550* (Oxford, 2015).

[17] Thomas, 'Lay Piety'; Harper-Bill, 'Searching'.

sense of the extent to which parish boundaries were commonly used as geographical reference points in a given locality and time. In urban areas with a high density of churches and no monopolistic mother church, such as London and Oxford, parishes appear as locational descriptors for gifts of land, buildings, or rents. For example, in 1189x1212, Thomas Blund gave St Paul's Cathedral thirty shillings from his land 'in the parish of St Mildred' Walbrook in London.[18] This implies that the geographical extent of the parish of St Mildred must have been familiar enough to all interested parties to make the designation work. Similar locational references to parishes multiply in London and Oxford documents from around 1210 onward, but they are rarer in earlier years.[19] This is true even when a church is used as a landmark, as when in 1184x98 Oseney Abbey (Oxon.) gave to Roger Fitz Stephen and his heirs 'one of our stalls which we built on the land that Richard Brito held of us … namely that stall which is closer to the church of St Martin'.[20]

In rural areas parishes were rarely used as locational descriptors before *c*. 1200. The reason is intuitive: there was usually only one church or chapel per settlement or village, so the separation between each church's area of influence was usually obvious, but not precise enough to be more useful than 'in the village of' or 'in the fields of', or simply 'in [place name]'.[21] This does not mean that rural churches lacked geographical parishes altogether, only that the precise boundaries of these parishes may have been indistinct.[22] Even descriptions of land lying outside towns did not utilise parishes as locational markers: in the early thirteenth century Walter de Randemy gave to Robert de

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[18] *CSP*, pp. 234-5.

[19] *CSP*; *CSF*; *CO*.

[20] *CO*, i, pp. 52-3. See also ibid., ii, pp. 80-2; *Westminster Abbey Charters, 1066-c.1214*, ed. E. Mason, J. Bray, and D.J. Murphy, London Record Society, 25 (London, 1988), pp. 221-2.

[21] Lincs. Arch., 2-ANC/1/1/1, 2, 14; LLRRO DE2242/5.

[22] For a similar argument regarding thirteenth-century Languedoc see G. Devailly, 'L'encadrement paroissial: rigueur et insuffisance', in M.-H. Vicaire (ed.), *La religion populaire en Languedoc du XIIIe à la moitié du XIV siècle*, Cahiers de Fanjeaux, 11 (Toulouse, 1976), pp. 387-417, at 389-91.

Cuodstane all his land 'de la Fotlande', which lay 'in between the chapel of St Thomas the Martyr and the village of Carhampton', in Somerset.[23] The silence is telling: either there were no commonly-known parish boundaries or they were so unimportant as to not come to mind. Rural religious houses appear to have been more likely to establish, and defend, parish boundaries, although they were also more likely to produce and preserve documents in the process.[24]

A second, related, use of the word *parochia* is attested in London charters of the early twelfth century: it was possible to refer to a church's rights to spiritual revenues as its parish. In 1128x34 Gilbert Universalis, bishop of London, ordered William the archdeacon and Haco the dean to return to Holy Trinity Priory the parish of St Botolph Aldgate, of which Derman, priest of the church of St Peter in the Bailey, had 'unjustly deprived' them.[25] In Gilbert's recounting of this dispute, 'parish' means 'the revenues generated by the church' of St Botolph; it is these revenues which Derman has purportedly taken. However, the ownership of the revenues in question depended on the extent of the geographical parish of St Botolph. The dispute turned on the land of East Smithfield, which lay outside the easternmost city wall between the Tower and Aldgate and was apparently claimed by both St Botolph's and by St Peter's. Derman's successor Ailward would also fall foul of the priory in 1157 when he buried the body of Godlune, the wife of Eilricus, a *rusticus* of East Smithfield, in the cemetery of St Peter; that conflict was resolved by referring to the earlier dispute with Derman the priest.[26] So

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[23] 'Que quidem terra iacet inter capellam sancti Thome martirum et villam de Karentona', SHC DD/L/P17/1/2.

[24] In 1163x9 Thomas Stabard gave notification that he would commit 'ad plenarie prestacionem decime feni de omnibus pratis meis vbicumque infra limites dicte parochie de Est Dep' iacentibus' to the priory of East Deeping (Lincs.). He did this under considerable duress, confessing that 'propter meam contumaciam propterque offensam sepius multiplicatam, per dominum Lincolnie episcopum ac eius vicarium et eius officialem dilucide iudicialiter eram conuictus … ac manifeste condempnatus et per preceptum regale ad carcerem adiudicatus', BL, MS Harley 3658, fol. 6v.

[25] *EEA 15: London, 1076-1187*, ed. F. Neininger (Oxford, 1999), p. 28; *CHT*, p. 191.

[26] Ibid., p. 190. The term *rusticus* is also used by Peter of Cornwall to describe a lay person living somewhere 'in Anglia' who witnesses his sinful priest's soul being seized by the devil: LR, p. 290.

Holy Trinity Priory was defending its 'parish' from deprivation both in the sense of geographical incursion and, more importantly, the depletion of its revenues. It is surely with similar implications that Henry I confirmed to Westminster Abbey 'half the stone chapel of St Magnus the Martyr with the whole parish' and 'the wooden chapel of St Margaret Eastcheap with the parish, lands, and houses pertaining to it'.[27]

Parochia could also refer to the parish community collectively.[28] In around 1148 St Paul's Cathedral agreed with Edward the priest that Edward would hold the church of St Augustine by St Paul, London, of the cathedral during his lifetime for an annual pension of twenty shillings 'in order to build the same church' for the first six years; thereafter the pension would be reduced to one mark. Clearly there was an existing structure of some kind for Edward to worship in while the new church was being built. The charter records that 'the whole parish' witnessed the agreement, and a later visitation shows that Edward stayed on as priest.[29] Christopher Brooke and Gilian Keir have pointed to this agreement as evidence for how London's parishes may have formed, as 'worshipping communities' of neighbours collectively funded or advocated for the funding of churches.[30] In this and similar references to 'the whole parish' it seems clear that every adult who lived within the boundaries of the parish was not literally in attendance at the witnessing of the charter. The inclusion of the 'whole parish' in the witness list of a charter does seem to indicate that lay people took an interest in the matter at hand—or that the executors of the charter anticipated they might. In 1147x51, Stephen de Leye founded Canons Ashby Priory in Northamptonshire by granting the church of Ashby to be used by the canons. The

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[27] *Westminster Abbey Charters*, p. 49.

[28] In addition to the examples cited here see Blair, *Church*, pp. 507 n. 5.

[29] H.C.M. Lyte et al., *Ninth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, I: Report and Appendix* (London, 1883), p. 63a-b; Brooke and Keir, *London*, pp. 132-3; Visitations, p. 300. The church is also known as St Augustine in Watling Street.

[30] Brooke and Keir, *London*, pp. 132-3.

original grant makes no mention of the lay people who already worshipped in the church of Ashby, but when Stephen subsequently gave the canons half a hide of land adjacent to the church, he was at pains to ensure that his grant would not be contested by the 'parish':

> Also he [Stephen de Leye] offered this gift on the altar before the parish by means of a knife. And thereupon the whole parish gathered together in witness. And lest there be a disagreement on account of this gift, he ordered that this charter to be composed in order to convince those who would detract from it. And he sealed it with his seal.[31]

It seems possible that a conflict arose after the granting of the church which Stephen had not foreseen, and that he wanted to preclude any further disputes. What is clear is that lay communities were conceptualised and described as 'parishes' specifically when they took an interest in the affairs of a local church.

By contrast, lay communities were not described as 'parishes' when their worship was not already focussed on the church in question. This is made clear in a handful of cases from Exeter diocese in the mid-twelfth century, in which lay lords make gifts to religious houses in exchange for the promise that those houses will minister to their tenants. In 1141x55, Baldwin De Redvers granted land to Plympton Priory (Dev.) in exchange for the promise that the prior of Plympton should 'without delay find a priest who could sing in the chapel of the borough and castle', and he also granted a messuage adjacent the chapel in which the chaplain could live. Baldwin also promised that the burgesses of Plympton, 'agreeing with me', would each give three pence yearly to support the effort. It appears that this chapel was either newly built or newly converted to public use, and a later charter clarifies that the people of Plympton were bound to

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31 'Item hanc elemosinam super altare coram parochia per cultellam optulit. Et inde totam parochiam in testimonium conuocauit. Et ne pro hac elemosina fieret dissensio, ipse hanc cartam componere iussit ad eos conuincendum qui hanc minuere vellent. Et sigillo suo signauit', BL, MS Egerton 3033, fol. 1r.

attend the priory church on Sundays and feast days.[32] Therefore, they are depicted assenting in Baldwin's charter not as a parish, but as a 'castle and borough' and as 'burgesses'. Of course the words 'borough' and 'burgess' specifically connote civic status, but the point stands: if a parish community had existed in relation to the chapel, Baldwin might have instead ordered the parish to pay a fixed annual amount.

Similar arrangements were especially important in Cornwall, where difficult terrain and dispersed hamlets threatened to isolate communities from religious services.[33] In 1162 Roger de Mannevilla gave to the regular canons of Launceston Priory (Corn.) a 'small part' of the land of Hornacott nearby, 'so that the prior could serve Roger's chapel and his men of Hornacott as of his parish'; the deed records that 'Roger's hundred of Hornacott also consented', and 'the whole hundred of Hornacott' is included in the witness list.[34] It appears that the lay people of Hornacott had not formed a collective parish identity around Roger's chapel of Hornacott, and for this reason Roger describes them as 'his men' and 'his hundred', but hopes that they will come to be served by the prior of Launceston 'as of his parish'. The chapel may have been a private one, intended for Roger and his family and not suited to serve the larger lay community; he may even have expected that the canons would use the land he granted them to construct a new chapel. They had done this in another nearby village, Laneast, in response to a similar grant by Roger Hayrun: before 1159x81, Roger granted the

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[32] *Charters of the Redvers Family and the Earldom of Devon, 1090-1217*, ed. R. Bearman, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new ser., 37 (Exeter, 1994), p. 123. Incidentally, this implies either that the lay people of Plympton wanted to attend masses on weekdays, or that Baldwin thought they did; and it further suggests that they could not or did not want to do so at the priory church.

N. Orme, *Cornwall and the Cross: Christianity 500-1560* (London, 2007), pp. 15-16; P. Herring et al, 'Later Medieval Cornwall', *Cornish Archaeology*, 50 (2011), pp. 287-314.

[34] P.L. Hull, *The Cartulary of Launceston Priory (Lambeth Palace MS 719): A Calendar*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new ser., 30 (1987), p. 32.

canons land in Laneast on which they constructed a chapel 'for the service of the said land of Laneast'.[35]

In the eyes of ecclesiastical elites, parish communities were also subject to vertical relationships: the individuals who comprised the parish were not only people, but souls subject to pastoral care. In his *Liber reuelationum*, compiled in *c*. 1200, Peter of Cornwall relates the story of Martin, a London priest. He notes at the outset that Martin 'appeared sensible and wise among his companions, and for many years he looked after [*custodiebat*] the parish of the chapel of All Hallows upon the Cellar', or All Hallows the Less.[36] It is possible to read 'parish' here as referring to the church's revenues, but in fact the story that follows suggests that it is primarily the parish community which Martin looked after. Peter recounts how Martin, eager to get to sleep, fails to respond to a woman's nighttime request that he come to see her urgently. As a result of Martin's sacerdotal negligence, the woman hangs herself, and Martin turns to disgraceful living, fathering children with his concubine; the appearance of a flock of ravens at his death signals his soul's demise.

Peter's account of the incident emphasises Martin's spiritual fall, beginning with seeming respectability and ending with flagrant sin. The turning point, Martin's dismissal of the woman's request, would have seemed especially grave to Peter in light of the emphasis which the canons of Holy Trinity Priory placed on maintaining close pastoral relationships with lay people.[37] The rubric to the entry—quite possibly written

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[35] Ibid., pp. 5-7, 77.

[36] LR, pp. 288-91. Easting and Sharpe translate 'custodiebat' as 'was in charge of', but a translation which gives a stronger pastoral connotation seems warranted.

[37] See chapter four, pp. 229-37.

by Peter himself[38]—says that Martin 'negligently governed the souls who were subject to him'.[39] Therefore, it makes sense to read Peter's introduction to Martin—in which he says Martin 'appeared sensible and wise' and 'looked after the parish of the chapel of All Hallows'—as setting up the ways in which Martin seemed admirable but was about to be exposed as a sinner. Of course Martin also administered the church's revenues and carried out the responsibilities of an incumbent priest, but 'parish' must mean more than revenues here. Peter's point is that Martin appeared to care for the *parochia*, the parish community, but in reality did not.

Moreover, Peter's account of Martin's demise underscores the complexity that a seemingly technical word like *parochia* could conceal. Peter describes Martin's failure in overtly pastoral terms, employing the language of governance and rule characteristic of Gregory's *Regula pastoralis* and referring to Martin's parishioners as 'the souls subject to him'—his subjects.[40] Martin's 'parish', then, does not only represent the collective identity of the people who worship at, and are interested in, his church. It also represents, in Peter's eyes, the collective identity of the souls he guards (*custodire*). An excerpt from the *Regula pastoralis*, which warns prelates not to become distracted by secular business, makes clear the resonance Peter is trying to achieve:

> No exhortation uplifts the minds of his subordinates, no rebuke castigates their guilt, because while the office of justice is exercised by a protector of souls, the shepherd's care [*cura pastoris*] is diverted from looking after the flock [*custodia gregis*]. And the subjects cannot apprehend the light of truth ….[41]

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[38] Another rubric on fol. 32va reads: 'De admirabili uisione Edmundi monachi de Enesham, qua uidit infinitas penas malorum et gloriam bonorum. [Paraph.] Hanc uisionem ego Petrus in hoc libro cancellaui, putans non posse esse ueram. Sed postea per ueridicos testes et qui rem cognouerunt, probaui eam esse uerissimam'. Fols. 33r-54r have large red and black Xs through them, some erased: London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 51.

[39] LR, pp. 288-9. I have revised Easting's and Sharpe's translation of 'rexit' from 'directed' to 'governed' to reflect the pastoral connotation of 'animas sibi subiectas'.

[40] Gregory writes throughout the *Regula pastoralis* of the 'regimen animarum' and also uses the verb *regere* to describe pastoral care: *RP*, i, pp. 146, 154, 180, 202-18.

[41] Ibid., i, p. 220.

The parish, then, was a multilayered concept: a geographical area, a legal bundle of rights and revenues, a community with interests and agency or—in the eyes of elite churchmen—a community of souls subject to pastoral care. None of these senses excluded any other, of course. Yet the various senses of the word *parochia* must also have been separable: we should not assume that a cohesive worshipping community existed wherever a geographical parish had been demarcated,[42] or wherever a patron laid claim to particular financial rights; nor should we assume that any group of people called a *parochia* all lived within clear and agreed geographical boundaries. Finally, it was surely possible for worshipping communities—men and women collectively supporting a local church, their religious experiences shaped in part by social bonds—to exist without anyone calling them a *parochia*.

It is also important to chase up Peter of Cornwall's hint that, whatever parish communities thought of themselves, clerical observers often considered them to be groups of individuals who were subject to pastoral care. The prelate-subject model could be applied to priests and their parishioners. This is clearest when we look specifically at the word *parochiana/us*, 'parishioner'. References to parishioners are common in documents of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries; as will become clear below, disputes about tithes, offerings and other prerogatives of churches were usually resolved by specifying what certain parishioners should do, or whose parishioners certain people were. The central argument of this chapter is that in England in the second half of the twelfth century the word 'parishioner' had a meaning parallel to that of 'subject' in the prelate-subject relationship: to call someone a parishioner was to claim pastoral authority over her or him. Where historians have previously seen only

[42] The relationship between parish boundaries and the arrangement of ministry relationships is discussed at length in chapter three.

a technical and objective definition—a parishioner is someone who lives within, and therefore belongs to, a parish—I am arguing that the status of 'parishioner' was relational and subjective.

Parochiana/us

In order to make this argument, it is first necessary to discuss the development of the term 'parishioner'. This thesis is less concerned with tracing change over time than with understanding a particular historical moment on its own terms; but it is important to shake off the sense of coherence and predetermination which often pervades discussions of the 'parish system'. It was not inevitable that various local customs of deciding who should attend which church based on lordship, preference, proximity, community coherence or commonly recognised boundaries should have come to be described and conceptualised in terms of parishes. Nor was it inevitable that the people who attended a local church should be described as its parishioners. The parish system was not a destiny toward which local religious life inclined: it was an adaptation of familiar concepts in an attempt to make sense of varied local practices.

As John Blair has shown, the application of 'parochial' terminology to local churches was novel or almost novel in post-Conquest England,[43] but there were strong precedents in analogous uses of the term to refer to a subject of pastoral care. In the early twelfth century *parochiana/us* frequently referred to the resident or subject of a diocese (*parochia*).[44] It was plainly in this sense that Roger With, in a petition to Robert, bishop of Bath (1136-66), referred to himself as 'his', that is, the bishop's, *parochianus*.[45] Minster churches also had territorial *parochie* and the lay people served

[43] Blair, *Church*, pp. 427-32.

[44] Barrow, *Clergy*, p. 310.

[45] LA II, fol. 339v; HMC, i, 470. For Roger's date see HMC, i, 39.

by them were called *parochiani* at least as early as Domesday Book.[46] Thus the adoption of the word *parochia* for the territories or rights or communities of local churches would have been an intuitive choice. The identification of people who received ministries in local churches as *parochiani* would have been similarly intuitive. In other words, if a scribe in the early twelfth century was looking for a word to describe certain lay people who seemed to be subjects of a local church, he could sensibly choose the word *parochiani*, even if he did not already think of that church as governing a *parochia*. By the second half of the twelfth century, document creators regularly described lay people as 'parishioners' in order to indicate their subjection to the ministers of a particular church.

We can see the development of the term in a decision issued by Bishop Alexander of Lincoln (1123x48) regarding a dispute along the border between Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire. In 1129 x *c*. 1133 the bishop instructed Robert, archdeacon of Northampton, to resolve a dispute between Thorney Abbey and Herbert, priest of the chapel of Wansford.[47] The village of Wansford straddled the River Nene, with the chapel lying on the north side of the bridge; the dispute turned on whether the lay people living south of the bridge should cross the river to attend the chapel of Wansford, or walk a short distance south to Thorney Abbey's church of Stibbington. The bishop ordered that 'the parishioners of Wansford [should] go to the church of Stibbington, as it was adjudicated in the presence of you and Archdeacon Henry', and forbade Herbert the priest 'to receive them or their offerings any more'.[48] The bishop's use of the word 'parishioners' deserves close attention. Here 'the parishioners of Wansford' clearly does not mean 'those people within the parish of Wansford, who are held to attend the church

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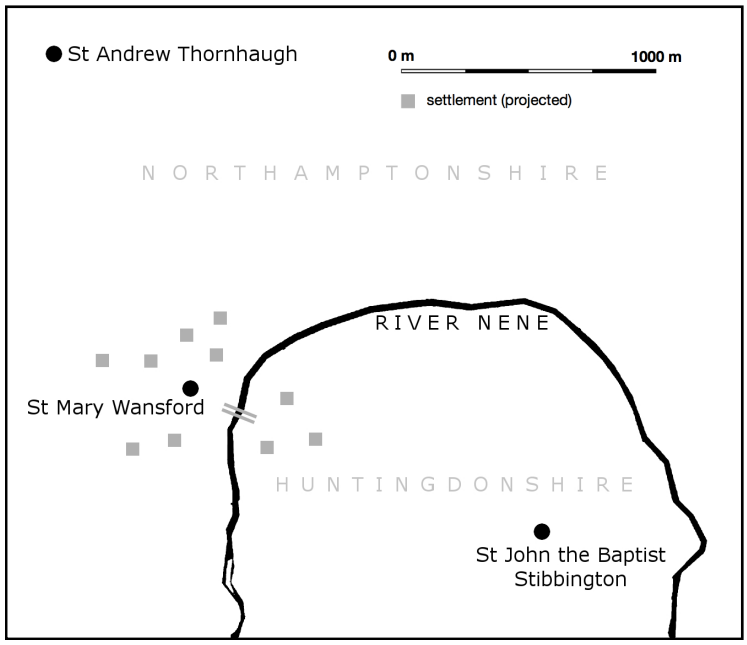
[46] Blair, *Church*, p. 428.

[47] *EEA I: Lincoln, 1067-1185*, ed. D.M. Smith (London, 1980), p. 41.

[48] Ibid.

of Wansford'—otherwise the ruling would be illogical. Instead, 'the parishioners of Wansford' means the lay people who live in Wansford, who need to worship somewhere; it would have been clear contextually that only those living south of the river were in question. Why call them 'parishioners', then? This documents does not fit within the pattern of religious houses claiming lay people as 'their' parishioners discussed below, although Stibbington had Thorney Abbey as its patron. It is possible that the bishop meant *parochiani* in the diocesan sense, that is, in relation to himself, although he was not an important actor in the dispute. Alternatively, *parochiana/us* may have referred to a lay person who received ministries in any church, or who had an interest in doing so.

Figure 10. Churches of Wansford (Northants.) and Stibbington (Hunts.)



By 1148x66, when the arrangement between Wansford and Stibbington was revised, the word 'parishioner' had already shifted in meaning—or at least the new bishop's scribes were taking a different approach. In a new agreement, Geoffrey St Medard, patron of the church of Thornaugh, of which Wansford was a dependent chapel, renounced his claim 'that the men who dwell on the south side of the bridge of Wansford should go as parishioners to the church which is on the north side of the same bridge, both the living and the bodies of the dead'.[49] The lay people whose church

[49] Ibid., pp. 167-8.

allegiance was in question are now described neutrally as ‘men’, whereas ‘parishioners’ are assumed to be people who attend and are buried at a particular church. The creators of this document had begun to use the word ‘parishioner’ to connote strong association with, if not subjection to, a particular church.

Many of the earliest claims to pastoral authority over parishes and parishioners were made by churches which had once been Anglo-Saxon minsters, and which remained important mother churches in their localities. The language used to describe these churches, their legal rights or boundaries or communities, and the lay people to whom they ministered was identical to that used to describe churches which had not been minsters: *matrix ecclesia*, *parochia*, *parochiana/us*. These were flexible and functional words, not technical designations, in much the same way that *prelatus* could mean not only a man who held a high ecclesiastical office, but also any man who took on the function of prelacy by instructing and spiritually governing subjects. Contemporaries, then, generally did not think it necessary to distinguish between former minsters and newer or less preeminent foundations. Nevertheless, in many cases former minster churches appear to have claimed lay people as their parishioners more assiduously and from an earlier date than other local churches and religious houses. For example, in an 1108x23 agreement between the bishop of Exeter and Richard de la Mare we can see the creation of a new worshipping community within the parish of the church of Bampton (Oxon.), a former minster. At the time of the agreement Richard had already built a chapel ‘in the parish of the church of Bampton’, which belonged to the bishop’s estates. The bishop conceded ‘that Richard may have the aforesaid chapel dedicated in such a manner that the chapel should be perennially subject to his mother church of Bampton; and the men of Richard’s land should hear services in such a way

that none of the other parishioners of Bampton should be received there'.[50] Although neither 'Richard's land' nor the 'men' who worship at the new chapel yet in it constitute a *parochia*, the document attests to the established minster *parochia* of the church of Bampton, as well as the status of at least some of it residents as *parochiani*.

Parishioners of Religious Houses and Cathedrals

By the second half of the twelfth century, and in many cases earlier, the word *parochiana/us* could no longer be used neutrally to refer to a person's general interest in getting spiritual ministries from one church or another. The word connoted attachment. Here we must remind ourselves that 'parishioner' was a clerical—that is to say literate—concept, not a normative category shared by all members of society. From that elite perspective, then, a lay parishioner of a church was subject to the pastoral care of the incumbent(s) of that church, and that relationship was supposed to take priority over relationships based in other churches. In reality, it was not necessary for the 'parishioner' to be ministered to exclusively by the representatives of her church or even, in some cases, to pay tithes to it. Nor was there any universally required set of ministries which parishioners were supposed to receive. What mattered was the strength of the relationship between the church and its ministers on the one hand and the parishioners on the other. The English vernacular had prefigured this: most Anglo-Saxon words used for the relationships between lay people and priests derived 'from the vocabulary of lordship and attachment', according to Blair. For example, in some texts the lay people served by a local priest are his *hyrimen* or subjects.[51]

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[50] *EEA XI: Exeter, 1046-1184*, ed. F. Barlow (Oxford, 1996), p. 25.

[51] Blair, *Church*, p. 429.

Both conventual churches and local churches had parishioners. It is relatively easy to see how a priest might act the part of the prelate, governing his parishioners as subjects: we have already seen hints of this kind of thinking scattered throughout the writings of Alexander of Ashby, Peter of Cornwall and Thomas Agnellus. It is more difficult, at first, to imagine the corporate religious house or cathedral as a prelate. Yet when monks or canons wanted to assert their right to minister to certain lay people, they consistently called those people 'our parishioners', emphasising the exclusivity of the relationship. They made these claims in connection with their provision of ministries to their parishioners, particularly public sermons.

An agreement made between Oxford's two houses of regular canons illustrates this nicely. In the 1170s or 1180s,[52] Master Nicholas, vice-archdeacon of Oxford, presided over a dispute between the canons of St Frideswide's Priory and the canons of Oseney Abbey 'regarding certain men residing in the land of the canons of Oseney next to the church of St Clement, whom the canons of St Frideswide say are their parishioners by right'.[53] Henry I had given St Clement's, a suburban chapel lying east of the city, to St Frideswide's when he re-founded the priory in 1122. Oseney's claim is more opaque,[54] but it appears they had lands and tenants near the church, either by an otherwise unknown gift or because they had developed the area themselves, as they had

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[52] The date of this charter has been the source of some confusion. Wigram's *c*. 1129 is impossible; Salter's *c*. 1185 is plausible, but it is unclear how he arrived at that date. Master Nicholas, vice-archdeacon of Oxford, was active in *c*. 1175x83 and was no longer vice-archdeacon by 1192x96: *CO*, ii, p. 188; *CSF*, pp. 453; B. Kempe, *Twelfth-Century Archidiaconal and Vice-Archidiaconal Acta*, Canterbury and York Society, 92 (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 187-8, 190.

[53] *CO*, ii, p. 188.

[54] The *Victoria County History* claims that Oseney received these lands by virtue of Robert d'Oilly's foundation charter of 1129, and that they belonged to St George's in the Castle, but there is nothing in Robert's charter to support this, and Oseney did not receive St George's until 1149: M.D. Lobel (ed.), *A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 5, Bullingdon Hundred* (London, 1957), p. 264; *CO*, i, pp. 1-2; ii, pp. 24-7.

done in Oxford's western suburb around the church of St Thomas.[55] The resulting agreement was elaborate:

> All the tithes which the aforesaid men are held to give … they will give to the canons of Oseney, except the tithes of those things which grow in their gardens, which the canons of St Frideswide will have. And the canons of St Frideswide will administer [*ministrabunt*] the divine services to the aforesaid men in the church of St Clement as their parishioners, and will receive all offerings from them just as from their other parishioners, except the aforesaid tithes which pertain to the canons of Oseney. And if more buildings should be constructed in that land by the canons of Oseney and others become inhabitants, they will be subject to the aforesaid laws and to others. … And if the canons of Oseney will at any time have the right of burying the dead who die there, the church of St Clement will accept any mortuary [*legatum*] that was assigned to it. And the chaplain of the same church will bring the corpse to the church in whose churchyard the canons of Oseney wish it to be buried. And if the chaplain of St Clement will sing a mass for the dead person, either in the church of St Clement or in that church to which the corpse will be brought, he will have all the offerings given to him.[56]

A few things are noteworthy here. The willingness to detach the receipt of tithes from the provision of religious services and related offerings—with St Frideswide's taking the responsibility of ministering in the church, the current chaplain the proceeds from any pre-arranged funeral masses, and Oseney most of the tithes—is striking. It is also clear that the chapel has no coherent parish in either the geographical or legal sense. The tenants in question are described as 'certain men' who live 'next to' (*iuxta*) the church; that is, the creators of the document are not comfortable claiming that they live in a parish of St Clement, which would have implied a level of clarity which was clearly lacking on the ground. This language is similar to that used in the 1148x66 agreement regarding the chapel of Wansford above. Yet St Frideswide's Priory was successful in claiming that the people in question should be treated as 'their parishioners', which in this case meant specifically that the canons would provide for the performance of the divine service in the chapel and receive all related offerings. The language is ambiguous

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[55] J. Munby, 'The Archaeology and History of Oxford's West Suburb', *Oxoniensia*, 71 (2006), pp. 343-6, at 343.

[56] *CO*, ii, pp. 188-9. See also *CSF*, which gives an alternate, less likely reading regarding Oseney's right of sepulture: 'si forte … aliquam liberam habuerunt sepulturam', i, pp. 453-4.

as to whether the canons themselves would sometimes perform services at St Clement's, or whether they would 'minister' vicariously through the chaplain who is also mentioned; the priory did have papal permission to serve its churches with canons.[57]

This charter is important because it disambiguates what religious houses really meant when they claimed certain lay people as 'their parishioners'. It was not simply that the parish of St Clement belonged to St Frideswide's priory, since there was no parish of St Clement. Nor did the 'men living … next to the Church of St Clement' immediately become parishioners of St Clement's and its chaplain, and therefore of the priory by extension—at least at the time of this agreement. Nor did they become parishioners of Oseney Abbey because they paid tithes to Oseney. Instead, the people who lived near St Clement's were confirmed as parishioners of St Frideswide's because the priory was responsible for ministering to them. We can also imagine these people attending the public sermons which Alexander Neckam and others delivered at the priory on Sundays and feast days. The canons of St Frideswide's priory claimed the lay people who lived near the chapel as their parishioners because they also claimed, and presumably fulfilled, the right of ministering to them. When preachers like Alexander Neckam performed the characteristic ministry of prelacy—preaching—those in attendance performed, in the eyes of elites, the role of his subjects. To be a parishioner of a religious house was to be under the authority of its pastoral care.

Preaching and burial were also closely connected to Exeter Cathedral's claim that the people of Exeter were its parishioners. The cathedral, once a minster church, had maintained the exclusive right to burial in Exeter, and seems to have thoroughly

[57] *CSF*, i, p. 27. See chapter four, p. 228.

controlled the city's many local churches.[58] The cathedral's dean and chapter acted to claim the lay people of Exeter as 'their parishioners' against the influence of the city's religious houses. In 1143 the cathedral gave to the French Cluniac priory of St Martin-des-Champs the chapel of St James for the foundation of a daughter priory within the city, on the condition that the priory 'will receive none of their [the cathedral's] parishioners, either to bury them or to make them monks' without the cathedral chapter's consent.[59] A similar grant was made at the founding of Polsloe priory, a house of Benedictine nuns located just outside the city, in 1159. The cathedral granted that the nuns could have a cemetery in which to bury their own nuns, guests and priests, but should neither bury nor make into nuns 'any of the parishioners of the church of Exeter'.[60]

The lay people of Exeter were not the cathedral's 'parishioners' only in the sense that they lived within its ancient *parochia*. The bishop, chapter and other cathedral clergy ministered to them, ensuring that the city's religious life remained oriented toward the cathedral. Chapter one showed that when Bartholomew of Exeter (1161-84) was bishop he regularly preached to mixed lay and clerical audiences on the most important feast days, including Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, the feast of SS Peter and Paul, and the cathedral's dedication day. He also actively provided for the maintenance of the cathedral's choral vicars and for lights in the cathedral, asserting that 'by the lights and by the commune, the service of the church of Exeter is principally fulfilled',[61]

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[58] N. Orme, *The Churches of Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2014), especially pp. 19-21; M.J. Franklin, 'The Cathedral as Parish Church: The Case of Southern England', in D. Abulafia, M.J. Franklin and M. Rubin (eds.), *Church and City, 1000-1500: Essays in Honour of Christopher Brooke* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 173-98, at 191-2.

[59] 'De parochianis eorum uel ad monachandum uel ad sepeliendum preter eorum consensum nullum recipiet', Ex. Cath. D&C 2074.

[60] 'Alium autem neminem ad sepeliendum omnino recipient de parrochianis Exoniensis ecclesie, nec sine canonicorum assensum aliquam de parrochianis eorum sanam uel egram monachabunt', Ex. Cath. D&C 1374.

[61] 'Quia per hec duo scilicet per luminaria et per communam principaliter adimpletur seruitium ecclesie Exoniensis, et sustentatur hii qui in ea assidue ministrant', Ex. Cath. D&C 802.

and in his time there were public processions to the cathedral at Whitsuntide, and probably also at Palm Sunday and the Feast of Ascension.[62] In preaching and in providing for other ministries centred on the cathedral, Bartholomew made the lay people of Exeter into his 'parishioners' not only in the diocesan sense, but also in relation to the cathedral church and chapter.

Both St Frideswide's Priory and Exeter Cathedral had once been minster churches, but the tendency for religious houses and cathedrals to refer to the lay people to whom they ministered as 'their parishioners' was not exclusive to former minsters. Similar language was used by religious houses founded in the twelfth century. In 1189x93 the regular canons of Oseney Abbey, which was founded in 1129, 'constructed a chapel … in front of the entrance to their courtyard on their own estate, especially so that in it they might celebrate the divine service for their servants and guests, or indeed, if it is convenient for them, for their parishioners who dwell in that neighbourhood [*confinium*]'.[63] The canons of Oseney had instigated the reclamation and settlement of this suburban area outside Oxford's western gate,[64] and it is clear from the language of the bishop's confirmation—the vicinity of the chapel is called, equivocally, a *confinium*—that nothing called a 'parish' had yet developed. Yet the people who live in the *confinium* are assumed to be the abbey's parishioners, not only because the canons will minister to them, either themselves or vicariously, in the newly constructed chapel, but because they had probably worshipped at either the abbey church or the nearby collegiate church of St George in the Castle, a possession of the abbey since 1149, prior to the chapel's completion.[65]

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[62] *EEA XI*, pp. 6-7, 88.

[63] *CO*, ii, pp. 434-5.

[64] Munby, 'Oxford's West Suburb'.

[65] *CO*, iv, pp. 24-7.

So far we have seen a correlation between the provision of ministries, including preaching, and the claiming of lay people as parishioners. The writings of Alexander of Ashby make the role of the religious house as prelate more explicit. Alexander refers briefly to 'parishioners' in his *Liber festiualis*, a 'little book of the miracles of the saints' in Latin verse which he sent, following on the heels of *De artificioso modo predicandi*, to an unnamed abbot who had apparently neglected the office of preaching.[66] In *De artificioso modo predicandi*, Alexander had suggested that the *Liber festiualis* would be useful 'because … in holy sermons you should insert some stories [*exempla*] of the saints for the edification of the simple'.[67] In the introduction to the *Liber festivalis* he promises the book will be useful not only to his friend, but to many others: schoolboys 'who are to be religiously educated' might use the book to improve their Latin proficiency, but 'also, through these verses priests [*sacerdotes*] can memorise the miracles of the saints more easily, if indeed they take care to study them beforehand, so that they might describe them to their parishioners when they must announce the feasts of the saints to them in the church'.[68] By 'parishioners' Alexander must have primarily meant the lay people who attend local churches. Alexander probably imagined priests relating (*intimare*) stories of the saints to their parishioners on such occasions: he is careful, it seems, not to imply that these priests actually preach formal sermons. His likely expectation that at least some of these priests would be members of religious orders—hence the relevance of this information to an abbot—is discussed in chapter four.

However, Alexander also expected that prelates like himself would preach on feast days—after all, his primary stated purpose in sending the *Liber festiualis* was to

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[66] *AA II*.

[67] *AA I*, pp. 24-5.

[68] *AA II*, p. 156.

help an abbot compose sermons 'for the edification of the simple'. Alexander probably had this in mind when thinking about how the *Liber festiualis* would be used; by choosing the word *sacerdos* rather than *presbiter* for 'priest' and describing the venue for relating stories of the saints simply as *in ecclesia*, he leaves open the possibility that prelates might use the *Liber festiualis* to preach to 'their parishioners' in conventual churches. We can see Alexander thinking in precisely this way in one of his sermons for St Andrew's feast day, in which he characterises his own audience as parishioners. As demonstrated in chapter one, Alexander himself preached to mixed religious and lay audiences at the Cluniac priory of St Andrew in Northampton at least on St Andrew's day. In one such sermon he writes:

> Indeed in this place [the priory] St Andrew is to be specially honoured, because this is one of his principal churches in England. This is his brilliant castle: this sacred monastery. This is his illustrious army: the venerable congregation of monks, beautiful and adorned as a daughter of the heavenly Jerusalem, terrible as an ordered battle-line of guards which strongly defends itself and this city from the fiery darts of the devil. This city is specially under the patronage of St Andrew, because all the churches established in it are allotted to this monastery, and all the inhabitants of the city are under St Andrew as parishioners.[69]

It is tempting to chalk up Alexander's comment that 'all the inhabitants of the city are under St Andrew' as a flattering nod toward the priory's local preeminence, and particularly its monopoly of control over the city's churches. When Simon de St Liz founded the priory in the late eleventh century, he had granted to the monks 'the church in which they will live and all the other churches of the same vill', reiterating this in two subsequent charters.[70] The monks of St Andrew valued this gift enormously: in the priory's late thirteenth-century cartulary, the relevant clause is underlined in all three of Simon's charters and copied into the margin in a contemporary hand beside the first.[71]

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[69] *AA I*, pp. 203-4.

[70] 'Et ecclesiam in qua habitabunt et omnes alias eiusdem ville ecclesias cum appendiciis suis', BL, MS Cotton Vesp. E XVII, fols. 2v-3v.

[71] Ibid., fols. 1rv, 2v, 3r.

In the monks' eyes, the gift meant that the lay people of Northampton were 'their' parishioners, even if the city's smaller churches had geographical parishes or parish communities of their own. In 1201 Innocent III replied to an appeal by the monks for protection against perceived infringement on their right to the city's churches. Innocent's letter recounts the monks' complaint that 'certain people of the parishes of those churches [of Northampton] do not hesitate to found chapels, erect altars, and receive their [the monks'] parishioners to divine offices and to burial'.[72] The monks, via Innocent, draw a subtle, yet pointed contrast with their choice of words. By not calling those who are setting up chapels their parishioners—referring to them curtly as *quidam*, even though they belong to the city's parishes—the monks distance themselves from those who would dare to provide for their own ministries outside of St Andrew's patronage. And by calling the people who attend the new chapels 'their parishioners', they emphasise their rightful claim to minister to those people.

To return to Alexander's sermon: the literal meaning of his words does, of course, nod to the priory's legal right over the city's churches. But for Alexander preaching was the epitome of a prelate's exercise of pastoral care, as evinced by the reliance of his own preaching treatise, *De artificioso modo predicandi*, on Gregory's *Regula pastoralis*. He would have considered preaching to the lay people of Northampton an extension of his function as a prelate despite the inherent anonymity of the ministry. Did that make them *his* parishioners? Here we run up against one of the inherent contradictions between the concept of prelacy as expressed by writers and the realities of the localities in which they lived, the worlds which they were ultimately trying to shape and describe. Several parties might claim prelacy over the same lay person, each claiming that person as their

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[72] *Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England (1198-1216)*, ed. C.R. Cheney and W.H. Semple (London, 1953), p. 25.

parishioner. Yet to claim a person as a subject or parishioner was to claim the prerogative of ministering to them, to the detriment of others' claims; this is why disputes over tithes and offerings almost always turned on whose parishioners certain lay people were. As we will see below, document creators were scrupulous about never describing the same individual or group as parishioners of two different parties in the same document, no matter how strongly the situation on the ground suggested otherwise. Here, Alexander of Ashby's own exercise of prelacy through preaching is potentially at odds with the monks' claim over the lay people of Northampton. His diplomatic solution is to defer to St Andrew, who adopts the monks' parishioners as his own—with the monks his earthly representatives, his garrison—and on whose behalf Alexander of Ashby speaks. This was a plausible solution for two reasons. First, it was not uncommon for saints to be perceived as ministering to their own parishioners, as Peter of Cornwall's account of Ailsi, discussed in chapter three, vividly demonstrates. Second, by preaching regularly at the priory Alexander seems to have internalised his role of St Andrew's mouthpiece; in his *Liber festiualis* Alexander prays to the saint for intercession, exclaiming, 'Behold I speak of you: for me, my patron, speak'.[73] Appealing to another prelate-figure—the saint—was an artful way to acknowledge both the priory's and Alexander's own role in the religious life of the city. The lay people of Northampton were St Andrew's parishioners because prelates like Alexander of Ashby preached to them, at the saint's church and on his behalf.

Parishioners of Local Churches

In documents produced by religious houses and cathedrals lay people often appear passive, waiting to be claimed by one house or another. They were not actually passive,

[73] *AA II*, p. 160.

of course, and might try to take the provision of spiritual ministries into their own hands, as the people of Northampton did by founding chapels independent of the monks of St Andrew. When we turn to the relationships between lay people and the priests of local churches a rather different picture emerges from that offered by the documentary sources. We have already seen that communities which took an active interest in the provision of ministries in their local churches were sometimes described as 'parishes'. The people described as 'parishioners' of local churches and chapels were clearly the recipients of ministries offered in those churches, and were supposed to be the passive subjects of their priests' pastoral care. Yet there is good evidence that the 'parishioners' of local churches successfully advocated for modifications to the ministries provided for them.

To be sure, some documents assigned lay people as parishioners to one church or another perfunctorily, without mention of their preferences. At the beginning of the thirteenth century William of Blois, bishop of Lincoln, gave notification of the settlement of a case between the Benedictine nuns of Godstow (Oxon.) and the regular canons of Norton (Ches.) regarding the churches of Easington and Pyrton in Oxfordshire.[74] The churches sat about two miles apart, and the canons had claimed that Easington 'belonged by right to their church of Pyrton'; this claim was rejected and the nuns kept Easington, the canons Pyrton. The nuns promised 'that by parochial right they will not receive the parishioners of the church of Pyrton in the aforesaid church of Easington for the divine service'.[75] Although the nature of the agreement implies that lay people otherwise might have visited whichever church they wished, the document's language emphasises the ministers' prerogative: the nuns and canons, and by extension

[74] *EEA IV: Lincoln, 1186-1210*, ed. D.M. Smith (London, 1986), pp. 159-61.
[75] Ibid., p. 160.

the priests who serve their churches, are the ones who direct local religious life by deciding whom to receive, and whom to turn away. Other documents refer to lay people only in pecuniary terms. In 1205x6 Henry, bishop of Exeter, assigned the church of Woodbury (Dev.) for the collective maintenance of the cathedral vicars, specifying 'that the aforesaid church of Woodbury, with its ministers and parishioners, should be quit and free from all archidiaconal customs and exactions'.[76] It is clear that the parishioners of Woodbury are mentioned only in reference to the expectation that all of their tithes and offerings should go to the vicars, not to the archdeacon.

But even negotiations over a church's revenues could acknowledge the need to provide spiritually for the church's parishioners. In his 1177x84 confirmation of an agreement between Richard, Earl of Devon, and the monks of St James' Priory, Exeter, Bartholomew of Exeter effectively assigns half of the church of Tiverton (Dev.) to the monks and half to Richard, but asserts that the latter half

> is reserved for the ministry of the same church in perpetuity; therefore two clerics, having been chosen and presented by Earl Richard … should be ordained and constituted in it. They, having been continuously assigned to the perpetual ministry of the church and the spiritual needs of the parishioners, should complete and take upon themselves the burden of all episcopal customs.[77]

In fact, parishioners did have significant agency over the service of their local churches. When St Paul's cathedral conducted a visitation of its London churches in *c*. 1183 parishioners were involved, as at St Mary Aldermanbury, where the visitation was conducted before 'two parishioners … and the clerics of the same parish'; at St Benet Gracechurch, where the visitation was conducted before the chaplain, 'with Fulk, Laurence and other parishioners present there'.[78] It seems likely that many of the other laymen reported by name in the same record were also parishioners. We are not told

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[76] *EEA XI*, p. 179.

[77] Ibid., pp. 82-3.

[78] Visitations, pp. 283-300.

what role the parishioners had in the visitation process, but their presence suggests that they had, or were expected to have, some level of investment in the provision and service of the church. It is also clear that in several localities parishioners advocated for changes to be made in the service of their local churches. In 1203x6 William de Blois, bishop of Lincoln, confirmed an agreement between the monks of Wallingford (Berks.) and 'the parishioners of Stokenchurch', then in Oxfordshire.[79] The deed is badly damaged, but relates to a cemetery at Stokenchurch. Later evidence points to Stokenchurch being a chapel of Aston Rowant, a church just across the border in Oxfordshire held by Wallingford Priory.[80] It is plausible, then, that the agreement had to do with the parishioners of Stokenchurch creating or desiring to keep a cemetery there, and Aston Rowant's priest protesting.

A useful parallel is provided by a much earlier series of events surrounding the chapel of Welton, a nearby chapel of the former secular college of Daventry (Northants.), in which a Cluniac priory had been established in *c*. 1108.[81] An 1135 memorandum in the priory's cartulary records that one William de Novomercato and his father had unjustly seized the chapel, but that William now returned it, 'truly declaring himself to be guilty by displaying the key of the same chapel'.[82] The status of William de Novomercato is unclear, but what is important is that the monks reacted strongly to a perceived infringement on their rights.[83] The priory may have been responding to William's inheriting the chapel from his father upon his death. A few years later, the

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[79] *EEA IV*, pp. 185-86.

[80] P.H. Ditchfield and W. Page (ed.), *A History of the County of Berkshire: Volume 2* (London, 1907).

[81] *CD*, pp. xvii-xviii.

[82] Ibid., p. 161.

[83] He was later remembered by the monks as lord of Welton and donor of the church: *CD*, p. 216. Michael Franklin has suggested that he may have been a canon of the secular college who was allowed to retain his prebend, or simply a layman: M.J. Franklin, 'The Secular College as a Focus for Anglo-Norman Piety: St. Augustine's, Daventry', in *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200*, ed. J. Blair (Oxford, 1988), pp. 97-104, at 101-3.

priory's rights in the chapel were again negotiated, this time publicly. In 1141x43 Richard, bishop of St Asaph, who was on visitation in the diocese of Lincoln on behalf of Bishop Alexander, reported to Alexander that 'the priest and two parishioners of the vill' had asked him to dedicate the chapel of Welton. Bishop Richard performed the dedication, then wrote to Bishop Alexander requesting confirmation of his action 'so that bodies should be brought for burial to the mother church of Daventry as they were before, unless they should remain at Welton by the monks' permission'.[84] It seems the priest and parishioners of Welton had already created a cemetery for their church; the bishop was willing to countenance this but also agreed to help the monks safeguard their right over the church. Richard assures Alexander that before he performed the dedication, William—the current priest of Welton, not William de Novomercato—recognised that he held the chapel of the monks of Daventry as his lords, and 'that he wished his chapel to be a member of their church'; William handed the key to the chapel to the prior, and it was returned to him by the prior and bishop to hold for his lifetime. Then William recognised that in the year in which King Henry died, he had heard and seen that William de Novomercato had returned the chapel, which he and his father 'had unjustly and violently stolen', and had begged forgiveness.[85] Fulk Trussel, the nephew of William de Novomercato, similarly testified.

The careful record of these proceedings—with the chapel key again playing a prominent role—points to considerable anxiety on the monks' part about their control of Welton. One suspects, based on the public assurances which the monks exacted, that William de Novomercato had not given the chapel up willingly, and had local support for his position. The passing of churches down through families was common well into

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[84] *CD*, p. 162.

[85] A 'William the chaplain' does indeed appear in the witness list of the 1135 memorandum, but he is oddly listed under 'de laicis': ibid., p. 161.

the thirteenth century,[86] and must have been approved of by some local communities. The monks of Daventry were clearly suspicious that the newly dedicated cemetery would likewise impinge on their revenues—the people of Welton would hardly dedicate a cemetery and not use it—but they were unable to prevent the dedication, again probably because of effective advocacy by the parishioners of Welton. William remained priest of the chapel until 1175x82, when the archdeacon of Northampton resolved a dispute between him and the monks.[87] William resigned in exchange for an annual stipend, but he may still have been called 'the priest of Welton' after his retirement: in 1191x8 a 'William, priest of Welton' witnesses a Daventry charter. He would have been at least in his mid seventies.[88]

Even when the status of a cemetery was not in question, lay communities advocated for religious ministries to be delivered closer to their homes by continuously resident clergy. A cartulary of Exeter Cathedral records of a number of gifts and disputes surrounding the church of Colyton (Dev.) and its chapels in the early years of the thirteenth century. King Stephen had given the manor, hundred and church of Colyton to the cathedral in restitution for damage inflicted during a siege.[89] Witness lists show that the church had at least three chaplains at a time, and held chapels in Colyton

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[86] Chapter three, p. 191, n. 60.

[87] *CD*, p. 161. In this charter William is called 'their [the monks'] chaplain of Welton', and in witnessing another charter of 1142x70 he is called 'priest of Welton': ibid., p. 173. Michael Franklin has suggested that variations in William's title are indicative of re-negotiations of his tenure over time, but this reads too much into words which were applied loosely and inconsistently: see, for example, the discussion of London's clergy below. Franklin, 'St Augustine's, Daventry', pp. 101-2.

[88] *Cartulary of the Mediaeval Archives of Christ Church*, ed. N. Denholm-Young, Oxford Historical Society, 92 (Oxford, 1931), p. 99. At that point 'Ralph the chaplain' had taken over William's position: *CD*, p. 54.

[89] Ex. Cath. MS 3672, p. 34. Page, rather than folio, numbers are given to follow the numbering of the manuscript.

(St Calixtus[90]) and the nearby settlements of Shute, Monketon and Farwood Barton.[91] It may have sent its own chaplains out to serve these chapels. Around 1200 Ailmar, a layman of Shute, gave two acres of land to the church of Colyton 'for my tithes and other offerings of which I gave less than I should have'.[92] Ailmar specified one of these acres which he described as 'under *Luueshiete*'—presumably a place in or near Shute—as 'for the dwelling of the chaplain of Shute residing there'.[93] The naming of six 'parishioners of the same chapel' as witnesses to the gift implies that Ailmar had some support from the community which worshipped at the chapel.

However, the establishment of a dwelling for the chaplain was a controversial matter. It seems that previously a chaplain had travelled from Colyton to Shute to minister in the chapel, but that this service was irregular. Ailmar's gift had represented an attempt by the parishioners to allow their chaplain to reside in Shute and serve the church daily, throughout the year; they may have worried about having a priest on call for emergency baptisms or last rites, or they may simply have wanted to attend masses daily or know that prayers were being said near their homes. The rector of Colyton, Master Michael of Buckton, resisted this, and in the end the dispute went to Bishop Henry of Exeter (1194-1214), who approved the following conclusion:

> Since Ailmar of Shute and the rest of the parishioners of the chapel of Shute … asked us for continuous service of their aforesaid chapel, this was agreed between Master Michael then perpetual vicar of the same church and the same parishioners: that a chaplain, remaining and lodging at Colyton or elsewhere where the rector of the church of Culinton' would wish, shall regularly and fully serve in that chapel of

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[90] By *c*. 1200 there was a fair of St Calixtus in Colyton. It seems that the chapel was endowed with and closely connected to the fair. Around the same time there was a controversy regarding, among other assets, 'soldagium cimiterii sancti Kalixti', and not much later W of Dunstanvill gave to the chapel of St Calixtus 'totum suum cimiterium et eius soldagium ad nundinas': Ibid., pp. 36-7. Maryanne Kowaleski observes that the Colyton fair, attested in 1292 and *c*. 1340, 'was usually known as the St Calixtus fair because it ended on that feast day': M. Kowaleski, *Local Markets and Regional Trade in Medieval Exeter* (Cambridge 1995), p. 368 n. 5.

[91] Ex. Cath. MS 3672, pp. 34-53.

[92] 'Pro oblatis decimis meis et aliis que minus feci quam debui', ibid., p. 44.

[93] 'Vnam acram terre que est sub Luueshiete ad inhabitandum capellano de Shete ibi residenti et aliam acram terre proximam predicte', ibid., p. 44.

> Shute every day—except on the feast of St Andrew, on which day the chaplain should not go to the chapel, because on that day the parishioners of the aforesaid chapel are held to go to the aforesaid church—so that it should not be necessary for the chaplain to go to the chapel except during the day. But if urgent necessity and rational cause delay the chaplain, so that he is less able to go [to the chapel], he will be immune from complaints by the parishioners. And if a storm or other cogent cause should detain him at the chapel, so that he cannot return to Colyton without danger or serious inconvenience, the aforesaid parishioners will provide suitably and honourably for him to remain. Regarding this, Ailmar on behalf of himself and his heirs and the rest of the parishioners of the same chapel similarly, with communal assent and public attestation, offered and with a solemn vow in front of the church bound themselves to pay God and their church of St Mary of Colyton 10s annually to the mother church at Colyton in two instalments … in order to alleviate the great trouble and expense to the ministers of the mother church.[94]

As at Welton, this agreement points to an underlying tug-of-war between a mother church's representatives and its chapel's parishioners. There could only be one reason why the vicar of Colyton would allow a chaplain to say daily masses in Shute but prevent him from actually residing there: he feared that a chapel with a resident chaplain might become increasingly independent of the mother church. In other words, there was something about a priest living in a community that tended to align him with the interests of that community, rather than with the man who had hired him. This must have been what the monks of Daventry feared when William the priest, alongside his parishioners, asked the bishop to dedicate their cemetery. Making the chaplain walk back and forth between Colyton and Shute each day was an attempt to remind everyone involved of their obligations to the mother church.

With the controversies over the chapels of Welton and Shute in mind, it is possible to read between the lines of other agreements to see parishioners at work on behalf of their local churches.[95] In 1197x1205 Savaric, bishop of Bath, made an agreement with Robert FitzUrse, patron of the chapel of Williton (Som.). The chapel was dependent on

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[94] *EEA XII: Exeter, 1186-1257*, ed. F. Barlow (Oxford, 1996), p. 176.

[95] See the comparable cases noted by J. Blair, 'Introduction: From Minster to Parish Church', in ibid. (ed.), *Minsters and Parish Churches: The Local Church in Transition, 950-1200* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 1-19, at 8-9, and Hamilton, *Church and People*, pp. 44-51.

the nearby church of St Decumans, a prebend of the collegiate church of St Andrew in Wells. Savaric conceded that the canon who held the prebend would provide Robert and his heirs with a chaplain, who would reside in the vill of Williton and celebrate the office daily throughout the year. In return, Robert would cede his right of patronage in the chapel to St Decumans, the 'mother church'; in a separate charter he also gave the church twenty acres of land, two and a half acres of meadow and an additional acre 'in order to build a manse there for the chaplain who will celebrate the divine service in the chapel of Williton'.[96] Savaric also ordered that

> in order that … no injury should be caused to the mother church of St Decumans by the parishioners, who are men of the aforesaid Robert and of the brothers of the Knights Templar of Jerusalem, we wish that the same parishioners return to the church of St Decumans, where the bodies of their predecessors are buried, at the major festivals of the year, and do not neglect to visit it with their offerings which they are held to make.[97]

Reading between the lines, it appears that Robert had recently built a chapel at Williton which was more convenient for his tenants there to attend than the church of St Decumans. Savaric clearly expected that if a resident chaplain were established at Williton the parishioners of Williton would worship there regularly; he alludes to the burial of Williton residents at St Decumans in order to highlight the mother church's continued supremacy. It is likely that Robert was acting at least in part at the behest of his tenants, who, like the parishioners of Shute, desired a continuously resident priest in their village.

The negotiations over the chapels of Welton, Shute and Williton together illustrate a few important points. First, no consistent theory of parochial jurisdiction over subordinate chapels is being applied. Universally the preferred language is of mother

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[96] 'Dedi et concessi prefate ecclesie Sancti Decumani vnam acram terre que vacatur acra ad capud de Lapole ad faciendam ubi mansionem capellani qui diuina celebrabit in capellam de Wilenton' ', LA I, fol. 39v; HMC, i, p. 45.

[97] *EEA X: Bath and Wells, 1061-1205*, ed. F.M. Ramsey (Oxford, 1995), p. 197.

churches, not parish churches. And the rights claimed by mother churches over their chapels vary significantly: for Daventry over Welton, the right to bury parishioners at will; for Colyton over Shute, only the mandate for parishioners to visit the mother church on its dedication day, and prohibition of the chaplain's residency in Shute; for St Decumans over Williton, the right to bury parishioners and for parishioners to attend the mother church on major feasts. The recurring themes were clearly burial[98] and important feast days, but practice varied widely. It is striking, given the effort by the patrons and priests of mother churches to shore up their rights, that the records often refer to lay people as parishioners of their chapels, not of the mother churches. There is a sense that the proximity of a chapel to local life, the availability of its priests for daily contact, is what allows the ministry relationships formed around it to take precedence over the claims of the mother church.

Even more remarkable is the frankness of documents in describing parishioners as active agents in negotiating the nature of the ministries provided to them. This would have been counterintuitive to the analogy between parishioners and subjects, but document creators on the whole appear not to have concealed it. There presumably were administrative and legal incentives for trying to represent the facts on the ground as faithfully as they could. Ecclesiastical authorities, like anyone else, had to apply the concepts and definitions at their disposal to whatever situations they came across. Occasionally we can see into the process, as when, in 1154x66, the bishop of Lincoln conducted an enquiry into the church of Kingsthorpe, outside Northampton, to find out 'whether it is a baptismal church of its own right'. He reported that 'we have understood, through the many reports of clerics and lay people, that the church with its

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[98] C.f. LA II, fols. 453v-454r, a 1198x1200 resolution of a dispute over tithes between a 'mater ecclesia' and chapel, which cursorily adds: 'salvo preterea aniquo parochiali iuri matricis ecclesie super sepulturis et cetera'.

appurtenances belongs to the church of St Peter of Northampton', noting as further evidence that 'we have also heard some of the parishioners say that they bring their infants to the aforesaid church of St Peter to be baptised, and that they bury the bodies of their dead there'.[99] It is difficult to read through to what the informants themselves told the bishop, but the 'reports' cited seem to attest to a general acknowledgement of the church's superiority over the chapel as well as to observations about where people usually go to obtain certain ministries. These reports were interpreted as affirming the church's status as a *baptismalis ecclesia*, an unusual term which seems to attempt to clarify the highly flexible term *matrix ecclesia*. The point is that local practice preceded, and to an extent informed, the technical designation; but that designation, once applied, did not mean that the church of St Peter and the chapel of Kingsthorpe thereafter neatly conformed to a uniform parochial system. A hint of the more fluid reality peeks through the bishop's findings: 'some of the parishioners' say that they bring their infants to be baptised at St Peter's, but we are not told whether they are parishioners of St Peter's or of Kingsthorpe. Thus the status of a church or chapel, parochial or otherwise, was neither intrinsically fixed nor ordained by some universal organising principle. It was the product of local customs, including occasional interventions from powerful parties, like monasteries, which was then labelled by elites with whatever language seemed most accurate or convenient. Neither the concepts nor the realities they attempted to describe were rigid, or systematic, or neat. Chapter one showed that writers subtly modified the tropological language of prelacy to express their localised perspectives to elite readers. At the level of relationships between lay communities and their local churches, the classic prelate-subject relationship had to be bent almost out of recognition.

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[99] F.M. Stenton, 'Acta episcoporum', *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, 3 (1929), pp. 1-14, at 5.

Parishioners of Several and None

The notion of a 'parishioner' was a construct, a claim made about the status of a person or group based on the actual or desired primacy of a particular ministry relationship. It neither completely dictated nor perfectly described the actions of lay people, who belied the parishioner-as-subject role by advocating for changes in the way ministries were provided to them. It remains to play out two implications of this which are all but concealed in the documents. First, it must have been possible for two or more parties each to claim, simultaneously, that the same person was their parishioner. Second, it must have been possible for a lay person not to be claimed as anyone's parishioner.

We have already been introduced to the first of these possibilities through Alexander of Ashby's conundrum when preaching at the priory of St Andrew, on St Andrew's feast day, to the lay people of Northampton. To review: by preaching, Alexander was exercising prelacy over his audience, guiding them toward salvation through his teaching; but the monks of St Andrew also claimed the lay people of Northampton as their parishioners by virtue of their monopoly over the city's churches. Alexander sidestepped the issue by declaring that the people of Northampton were parishioners of St Andrew himself, who was both the patron saint of the monastery and the object of Alexander's personal devotion. This type of potential conflict must have been very common, arising not only when 'guest preachers' were invited to speak at churches not their own, but whenever bishops preached visitation sermons at monasteries, since monastic superiors had the pastoral care of the monks or canons of

that house.[100] But this was not the only way in which prelacies could overlap. Any cathedral or religious house which asserted that the lay people who worshipped at a church under its control were its parishioners potentially did so with disregard for the pastoral claims of that church's incumbent. Whose parishioners the relevant lay people were depended on whom you asked: the local priest, or the chapter or convent. For all the flexibility of the term 'parishioner' to cover a range of relationships and actions, it appears to have been semantically impossible to describe any person as a parishioner of multiple parties simultaneously.

A concrete example will make this clear. In the late twelfth century, Richard of Leake, lord of Staunton Harold in Leicestershire, made an agreement with the regular canons of the nearby Breedon Priory and the priory's mother house, St Oswald's Nostell (Yorks.). In exchange for tithes and land, the canons of Breedon agreed to provide a chaplain to serve the chapel of Staunton Harold; the chapel was dependent on the 'mother church' of Breedon, which was also the priory church. The priory agreed that the chaplain would

> celebrate the divine office at our expense throughout the whole year, except on the day of St Hardulph, on which day the men of Staunton Harold will go as is customary to the church of St Hardulph of Breedon, as to their mother church. But the men of Staunton will receive the sacrament of baptism in the chapel at Staunton Harold, and they will have their marriages there and their purifications and confessions, and the communion of the body of the Lord and all ecclesiastical rights except burial. For all the men of the aforesaid vill will be buried at the mother church of Breedon as parishioners of that church. And the consecrated bread, as is customary, and all their tithes and oblations and revenues and their other rights will be paid to their mother church of Breedon, except the paschal wax, which is given to

[100] Bartholomew of Exeter preached at Canterbury Cathedral at the invitation of the prior and convent: see chapter one, p. 109. Two of his extant sermons address religious audiences on the feast of St Benedict's Translation, and so were likely visitation sermons: BE, fols. 61va-3ra. Alexander Neckam preached at St Frideswide's Priory in Oxford at some point prior to (probably) entering the same priory: see chapter one, pp. 115-16.

the chapel of Staunton Harold in order to make an Easter candle for service for the whole week.[101]

The degree of detail with which the ministries offered to the people of Staunton Harold through the chapel are enumerated is unusual, and arresting. Parallels can be drawn between this agreement and the agreements discussed above between Roger de Mannevilla and Roger Hayrun and Launceston Priory: a lord asks a house of regular canons to serve (themselves or vicariously) an existing chapel, or to build a new chapel, for the use of his tenants. Similarly, comparison with the negotiations over the service of the chapels of Welton, Shute and Williton suggests that Roger may have acted at least in part at the request of his tenants. In any case we would expect the rule that lay people are usually called parishioners of the chapel at which they worship, not of the mother church, to apply: it is clear that the religious life of Staunton Harold will primarily revolve around the chapel, with daily offices, baptisms, marriages, purifications, confessions, and paschal celebrations occurring there. Yet instead of 'parishioners of Staunton Harold' we repeatedly find 'men of Staunton Harold'. This is because the priory, anxious to maintain its rights of burial and dedication-day offerings, has insisted that the people of Staunton Harold be designated 'as parishioners of' the church of Breedon, and this precludes them being parishioners of the chapel. In the language of the charter, the priory's claim to prelacy trumps the strong ministry relationships which the chapel was intended to facilitate. In reality, the eventual chaplain of Staunton Harold may have thought of the tenants of the manor as his parishioners, and the tenants

[101] '… Capellanum manentem apud Stantonam ad seruiendum capelle Stantone et ad celebrandum ibidem diuinum officium sumptibus nostris per totum annum excepto die Sancti Hardulfi, in quo die homines de Stantona uenient ex consuetudine ad ecclesiam beati Hardulfi sicut ad matricem ecclesiam suam de Bredona. Homines uero de Stantona sacramentum baptismatis percipient in capella apud Stantonam, et sponsalia sua ibi habebunt, et purificationes, et confessiones, et dominici corporis communionem et omnia iura ecclesiastica excepta sepultura. Omnes enim homines de predicta uilla sepulturam accipient apud matricem ecclesiam de Bredona sicut parochiani illius ecclesie. Et panem benedictum more solito matrici ecclesie de Bredona et omnes decimationes suas et oblationes et obuentiones et cetera iura sua matrici ecclesie sue de Bredona persoluent, excepta paschali cera que dabitur capelle de Stantona ad faciendum cereum de pascha propter seruicium per totam ebdomadam', LLRRO 26D53/488.

probably aligned their religious lives principally with the chapel, if the intended ministries were indeed offered. Since being a parishioner was a subjective claim made about someone, any semantic conflicts arising from its implied exclusivity could be avoided by ignoring other perspectives. Conflicts which involved more concrete assets, like tithes and offerings, could not be sidestepped so easily. When two parties both thought that their prelacy over certain parishioners entitled them to perform burials for those parishioners, negotiation was required, inevitably with one party's prelacy being asserted over the other's. This goes some way to explaining why religious houses appear to have such mercantile, rather than pastoral, motives in records of parochial disputes.

Theoretically, it was also possible for a lay person not to be claimed as anyone's parishioner. We can imagine this happening in areas like the eastern parts of Ormland, in which church building had to keep pace with land reclamation and new settlement—although the evidence suggests that lay communities were proactive about procuring local ministries before too long.[102] Guy of Southwick, in a treatise *De uirtute confessionis* written in 1190x98, argued that lay people should confess only to their own priests, except 'those who are not assigned by certain right [*certo titulo*] to the care of any priest, and to those who, because they are staying in courts or in the schools or on a journey, are not able to have access to their priests'.[103] There is also evidence that the transient poor were not thought of as parishioners; the canons of St Frideswide's Priory in Oxford appear to have been in the habit of burying such people.[104] More provocatively: it is possible that in some localities, the priests or religious houses which

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[102] See chapter three, pp. 173-4.

[103] D.A. Wilmart, 'Un opuscule sur la confession composé par Guy de Southwick vers la fin du XIIe siècle', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 7 (1935), pp. 337-52, p. 349.

[104] See chapter four, p. 259.

ministered to lay people nevertheless did not think of their ministries in prelate-subject terms; that is, did not think of the recipients of their ministries as parishioners. We might associate this with localities in which lay people tended to receive ministries from many different sources. London was one such place, as the next chapter suggests. Or we might imagine a locality in which people received ministries only from one church, yet were not considered parishioners. Such places, if they existed in the twelfth century, would be invisible to the historical record: documents were usually meant to establish who was a parishioner of whom, and presumably would make parishioners where there previously were none.

It is possible to catch a fleeting reflection of this kind of thinking in a decision issued in 1181x5 by papal judges delegate—Alexander of Ashby, incidentally, among them—in a dispute between Abingdon Abbey (Oxon.) and W, cleric of Seacourt, a chapel near Oxford.[105] The elaborate agreement settled three separate but interrelated disputes at once, the details of which are not important here. The part of the conflict relevant for our purposes turned on the nature of the relationship between the church of Cumnor (Oxon.), of which the monks of Abingdon were patrons, and the chapel of Seacourt.

> And [the case was] regarding the men of Seacourt, whom the aforesaid abbot and monks wanted to make parishioners of the church of Cumnor [*quos in parochianos ecclesie petebant*], which pertains to their right, saying that without invitation the predecessors of W the cleric took away their tithes and offerings and other proceeds and all parochial right, except the funerary right of the mother church of Cumnor.[106]

The description is unusual in that it includes a sense of temporality, most obviously in the monks' insinuation that previously the church of Cumnor enjoyed the profits of ministry to the people of Seacourt, before W's predecessors began to receive them at

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[105] *Two Cartularies of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. C.F. Slade and G. Lambrick, OHS, new ser., 32-33 (2 vols., Oxford, 1990-2), ii, pp. 112-6.

[106] Ibid., ii, p. 113.

Seacourt. (It is quite possible that the people of Seacourt had more of a hand in this transition toward their local chapel than the document admits.) More subtly, there is a grammatical hint at a potential change in the status of the people of Seacourt. Usually, documents which record the claims of religious houses over lay people either assert that those people will be ministered to *ut parochiani* (as by St Frideswide's Priory in St Clement's church, or by Breedon Priory in Staunton Harold chapel), or assumes that they are already parishioners (as in the charters of Exeter Cathedral and of Oseney Abbey regarding the chapel of St Thomas). Here the grammar is different: the monks wanted the people of Seacourt to be *in parochianos*. In medieval Britain the *in*-plus-accusative construction was used to describe someone's entry into a particular office or state—the creation of an archdeacon, for example.[107] Thus the document records the monks' desire to make the people of Seacourt into parishioners, to impose that status upon them. This is especially interesting since Cumnor had probably been an Anglo-Saxon minster:[108] yet it seems either that its incumbents had not established strong enough ministry relationships with the people of Seacourt to claim them as its parishioners, or that in recent years old relationships had lapsed. Actually in the final agreement the abbey remitted this part of its claim, in exchange, it seems, for victories on other counts. But the willingness of the document creators to imply that men might *become* parishioners—not just be transferred from being parishioners of one party to parishioners of another—suggests that the concept of someone not being a parishioner at all was plausible in the late twelfth century.

Conclusions

[107] See *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* (London, 1975-2013), online edn., http://clt.brepolis.net/dmlbs/Default.aspx, 'in', 2b, 2c.

[108] J. Blair, 'The Early Church at Cumnor', *Oxoniensia 54* (1989), pp. 57-70, at 57.

At the heart of the arguments presented in this chapter lies the complicated relationship between the lived experience of religion, the ideas that both structured and grew out of that experience, and the texts which reflected, in some measure, both experiences and ideas. In moving from the world of texts written by and for prelates into the world of local churches, priests and lay people, this chapter has primarily focussed on the ways in which elite ideas about prelacy and subjection interacted with local religious life. I say 'interacted' because there is a constant risk of treating elite ideas as a detached commentary which merely overlaid, with greater or less accuracy, the underlying reality. It *did* matter that document creators described lay worshippers as *parochiani* of certain churches, not only because that word and its connotations caused ecclesiastical and lay authorities to restrict the actions of ordinary people, but also because elite ideas are shaped from below. Prelacy worked as an idea because it reflected the relationship-based structure of local religious life. At the same time, it seems likely that local religious life was based on relationships in part because the idea of prelacy had held sway for so long; most prelates were, after all, influential and involved members of their local communities.

This chapter also raises questions regarding the ideas about local religious life espoused by non-elite groups. It remains unclear how far local priests understood or bought into the concept of prelacy—even though they were increasingly thought of by elites as fulfilling the prelate's role. We are also unable to read directly the conceptual frameworks through which lay people viewed their own religious experiences and ministry relationships. The English word *parishen*, 'parishioner', is attested by the early thirteenth century,[109] but even if lay people called themselves 'parishioners' in the late

[109] *Middle English Dictionary*, ed. H. Kurath and S.M. Kuhn (Ann Arbor, 1952-2001), online edn., https://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med, 'parishen (n.(1).)'.

twelfth century we do not know what the word meant to them. We can, however, make informed guesses about lay conceptualisations of local religious life by paying close attention to what lay people actually did. The tendency of many lay communities to worship at churches whose parishioners they were not supposed to be, and to advocate for more consistent or localised provision of ministries, tells us something about the ways in which lay people thought. Convenience, proximity and choice were important; religious ministry was not something to be passively received, but actively sought out. The next two chapters elaborate these ideas.

Prelacy was a tool not only for understanding ministry relationships, but for ordering them. Using the language of parochial right, cathedrals and religious houses claimed the primary pastoral responsibility for lay communities, defending 'their' parishioners from the incursions of others who might offer similar ministries. These claims were often closely connected to preaching. The cathedral or religious house buttressed its spiritual authority over its parishioners by performing, via a preacher, the prelate's duty to instruct his subordinates by word and example. In relation to religious houses and cathedrals, the analogy between parishioners and subjects—as perceived by document creators, usually the houses and cathedrals themselves—was strong. On the other hand, in documents relating to disputes about local churches, 'parishioners' often appear not as subjects, but as interested advocates. The word still connoted a close ministry relationship with the incumbent of the relevant church, but the assumption of passivity was less common. Parishioners were most likely to appear in documents when their opinion mattered, or when they were effecting change. This was a significant departure from the old prelate-subject construction of pastoral care, and it is possible to suggest a few reasons for the willingness of document creators to record it. Although contemporary writers like Thomas Agnellus, Alexander of Ashby and Peter of Cornwall

used the conceptual vocabulary of prelacy to describe the relationships between local priests and their parishioners, prelacy was still—unsurprisingly—most strongly associated with elite churchmen. Bishops like Bartholomew of Exeter, priors like Alexander of Ashby, and accomplished scholars like Alexander Neckam could be found exercising prelacy in and on behalf of cathedrals and religious houses, so it makes sense that the idea of parishioner-as-subject remained strongest with those institutions. It is equally possible that lay people were either more able or more motivated to influence the provision of spiritual ministries in their local churches than in more powerful, and usually more distant, institutions. The pattern of advocacy on behalf of local chapels suggests that lay people highly valued spiritual ministries offered close to their own homes, and we will see this trend continued in the following chapters.

A new understanding of the parish in this period is needed. The parishes of late twelfth-century England have been characterised as a disorderly system gradually being cleaned up and brought toward a regular ideal. The sources belie this. We see an entanglement of parishes, associations which are not parishes, religious houses, mother churches and chapels. There were some widely-accepted norms—usually, mother churches monopolised burial and worship on important feast days—but practice varied widely. Negotiations were based on ministry relationships, real or alleged, and aimed not to bring uniformity to an overarching system, but to serve the interests of whatever parties were negotiating. Moreover, the need to sort out the payment of tithes was not a driving force for clarification. The correlation between tithing and the receipt of ministries was contingent on other factors, which will be teased out in the next chapter. All this becomes visible when we resist the temptation to read the words *parochia* and *parochiana/us* as technical terms with full, fixed meanings. Sometimes it made sense to call a monastery's subject a parishioner, regardless of whether they lived within a

recognised geographical parish. These were familiar words which people reached for to describe local practices as they emerged; their connotations at any historical moment were not only variable, but limited.

We should imagine local religious life as a network of intersecting ministry relationships, not a grid of uniform parishes. This meant that any parishioner-priest relationship was unlikely to be exclusive; that is, any lay person probably received ministries from a number of different sources in addition to the local priest. Moreover, an overlap of ministry relationships did not necessarily engender conflict. Few, if any, ministers actually expected the exclusive allegiance of any lay person. The next two chapters argue for significant variation in the nature and organisation of ministry relationships, both among and within localities. Chapter three reveals how the geographical and jurisdictional arrangement of local churches shaped the relationships between priests and lay people, while chapter four explores the wide range of ministers to the laity who were *not* local priests.

Chapter Three: Local Variation

In this chapter I frequently refer to the 'arrangement of ministry relationships' in local churches, and it is worth explaining the phrase, because it describes something which historians have often taken for granted. Most scholarly writing on central and late medieval England assumes that the arrangement of ministry relationships was straightforward and uniform: if you lived in a local church's parish, you were its parishioner, and therefore your primary ministry relationship was with the priest of that church. The previous chapter began to dismantle this assumption by showing that a lay person could be claimed as a church's parishioner even if she did not clearly live in its parish, and that calling someone a parishioner was an assertion of prelacy rather than a description of objective status. This chapter builds on those conclusions, turning its attention to the variety of arrangements of ministry relationships that our sources reveal. It describes lay people maintaining relatively exclusive ministry relationships with priests, and soliciting ministries from many different priests—ministry relationships which cross parish boundaries and exist in their absence. It argues that the arrangement of ministry relationships between lay people and local priests in any given locality was shaped by the number and locations of local churches; by landscape and settlement; and by bonds of lordship, family and association. Moreover, since the idea of prelacy over one's parishioners and the relationship-based structure of local religious life were causally interrelated—since each reflected and perpetuated the other—not only the practical arrangement of ministry relationships, but the ways in which clerics and lay people thought about those ministry relationships varied among localities. In some localities, local priests ministered to lay communities with relative exclusivity; this encouraged clerical observers to reach for models of pastoral care and prelacy to

describe and order ministry relationships. Lay people perceived more exclusive ministry relationships as reciprocal, with laity and priest ministering to one another. This meant that not only the arrangement of ministry relationships, but the interpersonal dynamics of those relationships, were locally contingent. One way to trace these variations is by examining what role the payment of tithes played in the religious life of a given locality. Parish boundaries, of course, were a way of regulating who should pay tithes and offerings to which church; but we have already established that clear parish boundaries did not always accompany the establishment of ministry relationships. Some lay people thought of tithing as an act of devotion or part of their contribution to a reciprocal ministry relationship, while others paid their tithes according to parish boundaries, yet maintained ministry relationships with priests to whom they did not tithe.

The bulk of this chapter is a detailed comparison of two vastly different localities, Ormland and London. In Ormland, relationships between local priests and lay people were relatively exclusive, stable, pastoral, and even reciprocal. Lay people knew exactly who their priests were. They paid tithes; in exchange they expected to receive certain spiritual ministries, to hold their priests to account in the delivery of those ministries, and even to minister to their priests by praying for them. Local priests, for their part, were tasked with instructing lay people in the manner of prelates: that is, priests were supposed to teach lay people by word and example. By contrast, in London, relationships between local priests and lay people were relatively detached. Priests saw the performance of masses and prayers, rather than sacramental ministry to or spiritual guidance of lay people, as their primary function; lay people relied on the priests of churches outside their geographical parishes for at least burial, and probably other ministries as well. A single lay person in London might maintain ministry relationships with several priests, including priests outside her parish, simultaneously. What is

perhaps most surprising about the contrast between Ormland and London was that parish boundaries developed earlier, and were clearer and more important, in London than in Ormland. In light of this fact, the only plausible way to account for the variation between these localities is by recognising that ministry relationships were not always linked to the payment of tithes. Rather, the arrangement of ministry relationships in a locality determined how participants in those relationships thought about tithing.

I conclude the chapter with two further comparisons, describing aspects of ministry relationships in the town of Exeter and in the vicinity of Launceston (Corn.). Exeter presents the case of an urban area, which, because of the dominance of its cathedral, lacked parishes altogether; charitable donations made by prominent citizens suggest that some lay people maintained ministry relationships with many of the city's chaplains collectively. In Cornwall, Peter of Cornwall's narration of a tithe dispute in which his grandfather was implicated points to the prioritisation of lord-tenant bonds and devotion to local saints over parish boundaries in the formation of ministry relationships.

I have chosen to focus particularly on London and Ormland for this chapter in part because the sources for these two localities lend themselves to qualitative description of the relationships between local priests and lay people, but also because they are different enough, and different in the right ways, to produce a stark contrast from which to argue. I do not wish to make London representative of all urban localities, nor Ormland representative of all rural localities; the differences between the two places were more complex than a simple urban-rural dichotomy. London, with Westminster and Lambeth Palace, was the political, economic and religious centre of the realm. It had a population several times greater than England's next largest towns, and was yhe only English urban area comparable to the continent's mid-sized cities in both trade and

population. Londoners also nurtured a civic identity, forming oath-bound communes for political action during the reigns of Stephen and Richard I and establishing a powerful mayoralty at the end of the century.[1] Ormland is my own invention of course, and therefore had no conscious identity at all; but it represents a linguistic and religious locality at the intersection of five or six counties and two dioceses, sparsely populated, with no large or even middling urban centres. The two localities did share some similarities in relation to the origins, patronage and service of local churches, and these will be discussed below. First, though, I establish the contrast.

Ministry Relationships in Ormland

Chapter one showed that Orm probably wrote the *Orrmulum* for regular canons to use when preaching to lay audiences. At several points in the text he explains to an imagined lay audience how to relate to 'your priest'.[2] That phrase deserves notice: in Ormland, having a priest nearby would not have been something which everyone took for granted. New settlements were established in the region in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as landowners cleared forests in southwestern Lincolnshire, eastern Leicestershire, and Rutland, and drained the fens of southeastern Lincolnshire and northern Cambridgeshire. Each new settlement also required a new church or chapel; Dorothy Owen has found that in southwestern Lincolnshire, manorial chapels were still being established in the late twelfth century.[3] Orm's assumption that each person has a priest to identify as her own suggests that settlers of newly reclaimed land either attended churches in neighbouring villages or quickly arranged for priests or chaplains

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[1] D. Keene, 'Text, Visualisation and Politics: London, 1150-1250', *TRHS*, 6th ser., 18 (2008), pp. 69-99; C.N.L. Brooke and G. Keir, *London, 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), pp. 33-39, 45-47.

[2] See chapter one above, p. 32 and n. 123.

[3] D.M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (2nd edn., Lincoln, 1990), pp. 7-12.

to serve them. They often cooperated with their lords to build and endow new chapels.[4] In 1109x20, the chapel of East Carlton (Northants.), formerly dependent on Cottingham church, was made an independent 'mother church with its cemetery'. This was done 'at the request of the lords of East Carlton' and provided the church with a glebe, including donations of two and a half bovates in total from three named individuals, and fifteen acres plus land for the priest's house given by the 'villeins of the village'.[5] The relative novelty of many manorial churches must have meant that some lay people had to hurry to establish links with local priests, links which were nevertheless strong enough to be characterised possessively: 'your priest'. Such relationships would be determined not through the preservation of ancient rights and customs, but by personal preference and practical expediency.

For Orm, the relationship between a lay person and his or her priest was mutually dependent, even transactional. Addressing lay people directly, he describes an exchange of tithes for five specific ministries: 'Of all the goods that are added to your possessions in that year … you should bring one tenth, and entrust it to the priest on God's behalf. In exchange he will confess you, and administer the Eucharist to you, and teach you, and pray for you day and night, and bury you.'[6] Orm implies that the priest-parishioner relationship is first established by the parishioner's payment of tithes, then completed by the priest's performance of spiritual ministries. The *Life* of Gilbert of Sempringham, written at Sempringham in *c*. 1202, takes a different view of the relationship between tithes and ministries, portraying the payment of tithes as a moral choice made by parishioners as a result of their priest's ministry to them. It describes how, in the early years of the twelfth century, Gilbert's father Jocelin presented him to the parsonages of

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[4] Owen, *Church*, p. 6.

[5] *EEA 1: Lincoln, 1067-1185*, ed. D.M. Smith (London, 1980), p. 7.

[6] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 6122-31.

two churches on Jocelin's demesne, at Sempringham and Terrington.[7] At the time Gilbert was not an ordained priest and so was assisted by a chaplain, but he nevertheless lived in the village of Sempringham and apparently assumed the pastoral care of local lay people: the *Life* records how he 'imparted such instruction to those who heard him that to a large extent even seculars observed the rule of monastic life'.[8] They stopped rioting and drinking, and, crucially, 'they learnt to perform works of mercy and to pay church dues scrupulously'. When one parishioner failed to pay his tithes, Gilbert 'forced the peasant to throw all of his corn out of the store and measure it out before him handful by handful'; Gilbert then piled the amount that should have been tithed 'in the middle of the village street' and burnt it, 'to show his utter hatred of such a crime and to inspire fear within others'.[9] The text is depicting Gilbert as a zealous spiritual leader, not, as it seems to modern eyes, a vindictive and mercenary parson. The issue is not that Gilbert has been deprived of revenues due to his church, but that by avoiding payment, the layman was defying a moral imperative. Interestingly, Orm, who is directly addressing a lay audience, accords more agency to lay people, characterising the priest's duty as a list of services owed to them as a result of their tithing. He may have alighted on the model of reciprocal exchange as a way to characterise what he thought was the local lay perception of ministry relationships as accurately as possible. But the *Life*, focussing on the prelate-figure Gilbert of Sempringham, emphasises Gilbert's preaching and moral authority over his parishioners; only by his efforts is their behaviour reformed. This is an important example of how lay and elite clerical perspectives on local religious life might have interacted—with the caveat, of course, that what seems

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[7] *The Book of St Gilbert*, ed. and trans. R. Foreville and G. Keir (Oxford, 1987), p. 16. See also B. Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham and the Gilbertine Order, c. 1130-c.1300* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 7-14.

[8] *Book of St Gilbert*, pp. 18-9.

[9] Ibid., pp. 20-1.

like the lay perspective is filtered through Orm. One model is an exchange-based relationship, in which the lay person in a sense purchases religious services by paying tithes; the lay person is the initiator. The other is a prelacy-based model, in which an authority figure establishes ministry relationships as part of his spiritual governance over subordinates, requiring them to pay tithes as a virtuous expression of their subjection to him. Although these two interpretations are at odds, they both ultimately turn on ministry relationships. Moreover, both Orm and the author of Gilbert's *Life* portray the payment of tithes as an important aspect of those ministry relationships.

Orm's enumeration of five ministries which the local clergy provide for lay people in exchange for tithes—confession, the Eurcharist, instruction, prayer, and burial—was something of a formula in his mind: the same five ministries appear again later in the *Orrmulum*, albeit in a different order.[10] Orm's use of such a list does not, of course, mean that each lay person received those five ministries only from his or her own priest. Most obviously, the *Orrmulum* itself is evidence that lay people would listen to the sermons of those who were not 'their' priests, especially regular canons. This would have supplemented, but not replaced, more frequent, and likely informal, instruction by local priests.

In other words, Orm does seem to have imagined that local priests held the pastoral care of their parishioners, even though those parishioners probably obtained ministries from others sources as well. In one instance Orm uses the verb *lernen*, meaning to teach, to describe what lay people should expect their priest to do for them.[11] More frequently he uses *spellen*, a verb which also meant to speak, tell or describe; outside the *Orrmulum* it rarely described preaching before the fifteenth

[10] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 15248-59.
[11] Ibid., i, l. 6129.

century.[12] Yet it is clear that Orm at least sometimes used *spellen* to describe the delivery of formal sermons: when he explains to his readers that they should excerpt passages from the *Orrmulum*, he says that preachers must 'spellenn to þe follc' the meaning of the gospels. In another instance he says that the clergy 'is set above you to care for [*yemen*] you and teach [*lernen*] you, to tell [*spellen*] you about Christianity'. The verb *yemen* had a range of meaning similar to Latin *curare*, connoting not only diligent attention and care but governance.[13] Moreover, the differentiation of *lernen* from *spellen* suggests that the latter denotes formal preaching as opposed to informal teaching. The combination of something approximating a *cura* with teaching and preaching smacks of prelacy. Orm is implying that although he and other religious preachers exercise prelacy by delivering sermons to lay people, each lay person is also under the pastoral care of his or her local priest. During an exposition of the allegorical meaning of the garments worn by Old Testament priests, he again turns to Gregorian themes to describe the local priest's duty:

> The sound of the bells signifies the sound that you should hear when the priest preaches [*telleþþ spell*] before God's altar; and if he does not preach [*spellen*] to you the wisdom of the Gospels, truly he is guilty and falls into God's wrath and punishment… . Now see that your priest gladly preaches to you every Sunday and teaches you a little about how you should live and believe in Christ, and how you should love God and love man and abide by God's laws. And you should gladly turn to his wisdom, and hold it and follow it as best you can.[14]

The analogy between preaching and the bells on the high priest's garment was a commonplace of writings about prelacy; Alexander of Ashby used it to chastise the recipient of *De artificioso modo predicandi*.[15]

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[12] *MED*, 'spellen (v.(1))', 3.

[13] *MED*, 'yę̄men (v.)'.

[14] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 922-9, 934-45.

[15] See chapter one, p. 71.

Hearing confession was another ministry which was both closely connected to prelacy[16] and not exclusively performed by one's local priest in this period. In late twelfth-century England it was not taken for granted that lay people should confess only to their own priest. While at least one writer insisted that the priest's pastoral care, particularly his power to bind and loose souls, meant that he alone should hear the confessions of those people subject to him,[17] others maintained that confession could be made to any well-qualified priest. William de Montibus, head of the school at Lincoln Cathedral until his death in 1213, stated in a popular didactic poem that 'it is advantageous if you confess to many priests'.[18] Alexander of Ashby seems to have used an Easter sermon to invite lay people to confess to himself or other regular canons.[19] Alexander Neckam warned against 'dividing' one's confession, 'so that you reveal some sins to one priest and some to another', but encouraged confessing to multiple priests so long as each confession was complete.[20] For Orm, confession was a measure of last resort in dire circumstances, not a regular appointment to be kept. While explaining each of the ten commandments, Orm pauses at the ninth commandment, against adultery, to urge sinners to confess:

> For both [man and woman] are seriously guilty, if it pleases both of you, and both are thus separated from God, and destroy yourselves. But if you wish to overcome this in any way, and if you understand that it is not easy to overcome heavy sin, then you should shun to fall into it. And whoever rejects it and ceases to follow it, and inwardly repents of ever doing it, and goes under a priest's judgement to overcome it with confession, and commits to labour bodily for his sin, will be cleansed by the

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[16] See chapter two, p. 204.

[17] D.A. Wilmart, 'Un opuscule sur la confession composé par Guy de Southwick vers la fin du XIIe siècle', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 7 (1935), pp. 337-52, at 348.

[18] J. Goering, *William de Montibus (c. 1140-1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care* (Toronto, 1992), p. 121.

[19] *AA I*, pp. 359-61.

[20] 'Nec confessionem uestram diuiditis ut quedam peccata reueletis uni sacerdoti, quedam alii. Reuera plures adire sacerdotes salubre [*sic*] est ut pluribus confitens magis erubescat et salubriter confundatur; sed cuilibet sacerdoti omnia detegat', AN, fol. 19v.

> priest of all his uncleanness, so that he can overcome all sin with God's help, and worship God with a holy life, and win God's mercy.[21]

Here, interestingly, there is no mention of 'your' priest. It therefore is likely that, while Orm clearly saw the hearing of confessions as an important responsibility of local priests toward their parishioners, lay people were free to confess to other priests or religious if the need arose 'to overcome heavy sin'.

It is clear, then, that Orm did not imagine that lay people would receive spiritual ministries exclusively from 'their' priests. However, the prominence of the priest-parishioner relationship in the *Orrmulum*, and the degree of intimacy assumed between the two parties, is striking. Although Orm sometimes implies that local priests have pastoral care over their parishioners, he also recognises that that pastoral relationship is not entirely one-sided. He assumes that lay people have the ability to monitor and enforce the provision of particular ministries by their priests: in his comments on preaching quoted above, he instructs his audience to 'see that your priest' preaches every Sunday. Orm also acknowledges that lay people may notice their priests sinning, but encourages each person to 'pray inwardly that God will give him [the priest] the will and strength to overcome his sins'.[22] His assertion that lay people should pray for their priests is interesting, since Orm and contemporaries like Peter of Cornwall considered praying for parishioners to be one of a local priest's primary duties.[23]

In what manner was a lay person supposed to pray on another's behalf? Orm may have expected that lay people would draw on their memory of the Lord's Prayer. In the *Orrmulum*, Orm uses a numerology of the Greek letters of Jesus' name to frame lists of basic Christian knowledge, including the seven petitions of *þe Paterr Nossterr*.[24]

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[21] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 4494-517.

[22] Ibid., i, ll. 6150-3.

[23] Ibid., i, ll. 6128-31; ii, ll. 15248-59; LR, pp. 264, 266.

[24] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 4384-6393.

Instructions that lay people should know or be taught the Lord's Prayer were repeated in the writings of Ælfric and Wulfstan,[25] and many of Orm's lists are comparable to—but not derivative of—similar lists in Ælfric's homilies.[26] We can therefore assume that Orm compiled these lists with lay education in mind: a religious preacher could memorise the explanation of the Lord's Prayer in English and incorporate it into sermons or teach it to lay people informally.

Historians think of memorisation of the Lord's Prayer as a minimum standard of religious competency, chosen for lay people to learn because of its simplicity. But in the Middle Ages memorisation was not as strongly associated with trivial or superficial learning as it is now, and the prayer was also widely taught because it was considered to be spiritually significant, even powerful. The Lord's Prayer was an important element of religious life in Ormland. Orm emphasises that 'Christ himself set the Pater Noster for us' and says that Christians use the prayer to ask 'for the Lord Christ's help with every need that we ever have for our lives and souls'.[27] Within the Gilbertine order, founded by St Gilbert of Sempringham in southern Lincolnshire in the twelfth century, lay brothers were not allowed to be literate, and were disallowed from learning anything besides the Pater Noster, Creed, and *Miserere*.[28] More positively, the prayer occupied a prominent place in the hagiography of St Waltheof, whose cult was promoted by the

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[25] In Ælfric's pastoral letter to Wulfsige III, in Wulfstan's Canons of Edgar, and in the laws of Cnut drafted by Wulfstan: *Councils and Synods*, ed. D. Whitelock, M. Brett and C.N.L. Brooke (2 vols., Oxford, 1981), i, pp. 208-9, 322, 468.

[26] Ælfric of Eynsham, *The Homilies of the Anglo-Saxon Church: The First Part, Containing the* Sermones catholici, *or Homilies of Ælfric*, ed. B. Thorpe (2 vols., London, 1844-6), i, pp. 262-72, 326-7, 360-1. Orm's division and ordering of the Ten Commandments differs both from Ælfric and from the contemporary and nearby Alexander of Ashby: A.J. Kleist, 'The Division of the Ten Commandments in Anglo-Saxon England', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 103 (2002), pp. 227-40; *AA I*, pp. 281-9. See also Stephen Morrison's argument that Orm had heard or read Wulfstan's homily on Luke 3:1-14, but that 'the nature of the reminiscence' shows he either did not have direct access to the text or did not want to follow it too closely, preferring Latin sources instead: S. Morrison, 'A Reminiscence of Wulfstan in the Twelfth Century', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 96 (1995), pp. 229-34, at 232.

[27] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 5350-59.

[28] Golding, *Gilbert of Sempringham*, p. 181.

monks of Crowland Abbey in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[29] Orderic Vitalis recorded the story of Waltheof's martyrdom, based on the oral testimony of the prior, during an eight-week stay at Crowland in 1114x23, and left a copy of it at Crowland, where it was likely used in the compilation of Waltheof's *Life* in the thirteenth century.[30] As the story goes, Waltheof had been imprisoned at Winchester on charges of conspiracy against the king, during which time he daily chanted 'a hundred and fifty psalms of David which he had learned in childhood'. Eventually, Waltheof was lead onto a hill for execution, accompanied by a mourning crowd; but when the time came to execute him, he asked the executioner for a short delay, 'at least until I have said the Lord's Prayer on your behalf and mine'. Standing with arms outstretched, Waltheof recited the prayer—'Our father who is in heaven'—but when he reached 'and lead us not into temptation', he began to weep so heavily that he could not finish. Growing impatient, the executioner cut off Waltheof's head, which miraculously, though severed, finished the prayer: 'But deliver us from evil, amen'.[31] The story's insistence on the significance of the complete recitation of the Lord's Prayer is striking. Waltheof is supposed to have known one hundred and fifty psalms by heart, yet before his death he is shown reciting the Lord's Prayer, perhaps because in doing so he engaged the onlooking crowds who would have recognised it, and perhaps because the prayer was singularly efficacious. If Waltheof could recite the Lord's Prayer on behalf of his executioner—with miraculous results—then perhaps the prayer would also be appropriate for a parishioner to recite on behalf of his or her errant priest. This was an

[29] C.S. Watkins, 'The Cult of Earl Waltheof at Crowland', *Hagiographica*, 3 (1996), pp. 95-111.

[30] Watkins, 'Cult of Earl Waltheof', pp. 96-8, 109-10.

[31] Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. M. Chibnall (7 vols., Oxford, 1968-80), ii, pp. 320-3. The translation is the editor's.

appreciable way in which lay people and priests could in fact minister to each other, and it must have reinforced the relationships between them.

Ministry Relationships in London

Ministry relationships between local priests and lay people in London differed significantly in nature and arrangement from those in Ormland. In contrast to Orm's picture of a single priest offering five key ministries, albeit not entirely exclusively, there is strong evidence to suggest that the primary function of most of the clergy who served in London's churches was liturgical: by which I mean that they performed the mass, the daily office and other psalms and prayers, particularly on behalf of lay patrons. This is in contrast to the five ministries, in addition to pastoral solicitude more generally, which Orm expected local priests to provide for their parishioners.

London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 420 contains the statutes of a fraternity of London clerics established in the twelfth century. The statutes, copied down in or soon after 1223,[32] are prefaced by an explanation of the group's origins:

> In the time of Gilbert, bishop of London of happy memory,[33] it frequently happened that when the poor priests and clerics of London, having celebrated the divine offices in parish churches for many circles of years, at last stumbled to the end of their days, no clerics or parishioners bothered to attend their funerals. That this was

[32] The manuscript, which belonged to St Mary's Priory, Southwark contains, in order, the fraternity's statutes; a copy of a charter issued by Humphrey, priory of St Mary's, establishing confraternity between the fraternity and the canons of St Mary's; a prayer to be read for initiation into the fraternity; and materials copied in the mid-twelfth century, including a collection of Marian sermons. The statutes, charter and possibly the prayer are copied in the same hand, although the scribe makes a crude effort to simulate a documentary hand and a high-grade textualis. This means these items were written down in or soon after 1223, when Humphrey was elected prior; the hand cannot be much later than that. The establishment of an association with St Mary's would have been an apt occasion for formalising the origins and practices of the clerical fraternity in writing. The fraternity's particular dedication to the Virgin Mary, the use of monastic language in the statutes ('priorem et fratres', fol. 3r), and the fact that the quire containing the statutes was added onto a manuscript containing sermons for Mary further suggest the priory's influence at this stage of the fraternity's formation.

[33] It is not clear to which bishop Gilbert the statutes refer: Gilbert Universalis (1127-34) or Gilbert Foliot (1163-87). Meersseman and Pacini, who printed the statutes in 1977, suggest Gilbert Universalis on the grounds that Foliot would have been specified; Powicke and Cheney guess Foliot. There is no strong case either way. G.G. Meersseman and G.P. Pacini, *Ordo fraternitatis: confraternite e pieta' dei laici nel medioevo* (Rome, 1977), pp. 169-70; *Councils and Synods, with Other Documents Relating to the English Church: II, A.D. 1205-1313*, ed. F. M. Powicke and C. R. Cheney (2 vols., Oxford, 1964), i, p. 327, n. 4.

> indeed shameful and unsuitable to the priests and to their successors cannot be doubted. So certain wise men from among them, acting with consideration and forethought, convened, and declared through the communication of counsel that in order to remedy this injustice, one of them should be made prior among them, and at his declaration the others should convene for the funerals of priests or clerics, and indeed for the proper ceremonies for other deceased brothers. … And in order that this should be well and firmly observed in the future, they set up the fraternity in this way for the praise and honour of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the blessed always-virgin Mary, saving in all things the ecclesiastical right and the reverence and canonical obedience due to prelates.[34]

The statutes that follow describe how the 'prior and brothers' of the fraternity meet weekly to celebrate mass in honour of Mary and to chant psalms for deceased members; how they attend funerals of brothers; how the almoner collects offerings from fraternity members and distributes them to the poor on behalf of the deceased; penalties for absence from required gatherings or for misbehaviour; and arrangements for the provision, in rotation, of banquets for members. What is striking, though, is the fraternity's characterisation of the impetus for its creation. The virtue of London's clergy—the reason why they deserve to have respectable funerals—is that they have 'celebrated the divine offices in parish churches for many circles of years', not that they have pastored lay people. Even more interesting is the implication of relational distance between priests and parishioners: 'no clerics or parishioners bothered to attend their funerals', a level of detachment seen as 'shameful and unsuitable'. Of course this is all rhetorical, but there are strong undertones of forging a new community to counter a pervasive sense of disconnectedness. That community, crucially, included both priests and lay brothers and sisters; it may have facilitated the formation of new, extra-parochial ministry relationships. But the collective memory of the fraternity members was that, until the fraternity's creation, each priest had been celebrating the divine office

[34] Printed in Meersseman and Pacini, *Ordo fraternitatis*, pp. 169-78.

in his own church, seemingly without the interest of his parishioners. This is a stark contrast to Ormland's reciprocal priest-parishioner relationships.

There may be a hint of disapproval of this situation in Peter of Cornwall's account of the demise of Martin, priest of All Hallows the Less, discussed in chapter two.[35] To review, Martin is just getting into bed one evening around the hour of compline, when he is visited by a servant boy. The boy requests that Martin come quickly; the boy's mistress wants to speak with Martin about 'some business'. Martin guesses she might be drunk, and sends the boy away, saying that he will speak with her 'tomorrow after mass and matins'. When the woman hears the priest's answer, she hangs herself, and Martin spirals into sin and infamy. We have already seen that Peter summarises Martin's fault by stating that he 'negligently governed the souls who were subject to him', his parishioners. But Peter illustrates the priest's negligence by narrating his prioritisation not only of a good night's sleep, but of his duty to say the mass and matins, over the woman's spiritual wellbeing. Martin appears ignorant of, and disinterested in, her distress. Peter of Cornwall knew and wrote in the language of prelacy, and, as his name suggests, he hailed from a rural county. When he arrived in London the indifference of religious life in the city may have surprised him.

It was not inevitable that a widespread emphasis on liturgical duties should result in a sense of disassociation between priests and the lay people they served. The endowment and performance of masses and prayers created bonds of association; it was an essential feature of all manner of guilds and fraternities, including those that operated

[35] LR, pp. 288-91.

in London, Exeter, and Thorney Abbey in Ormland.[36] The clerical fraternity discussed above admitted lay people as sisters and brothers if they offered donations and paid for psalms and masses to be sung on behalf of deceased members.[37] The value which lay people and clergy alike perceived in the local performance of masses and prayers will be discussed in chapter four, and we have already seen how the expectation that lay people and their priests would pray on each other's behalf strengthened lay-priest relationships in Ormland. This makes the case of London puzzling.

The medieval city of London was bounded by its Roman walls, which enclosed an area slightly smaller than the present-day Square Mile. Brooke and Kier list 104 local churches within or just outside that area;[38] a handful more served the suburbs. The churches were densely concentrated in the south and west of the city, where Anglo-Saxon settlement had focussed, but even in the relatively spacious north and eastern corners one would never be more than about three-sixteenths of a mile from a church.[39] Whereas Orm expected that each lay person would receive five ministries primarily from their own priest, in London lay people may have received ministries from priests in a variety of different local churches. In *c*. 1183 representatives of St Paul's cathedral visited twenty churches in London.[40] Of these, three churches, St Benet on Thames, St Peter Broad Street, and St Michael Queenhithe, did not have chalices. The provision of books was also limited: seven of twenty churches possessed all four of the most

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[36] D. Keene, 'English Urban Guilds, *c*. 900-1300: The Purposes and Politics of Association', in I. Gadd and P. Wallis (eds.), *Guilds and Association in Europe, 900-1900* (London, 2006), pp. 3-26, at 9, 14-15; N. Orme, 'The Kalendar Brethren of the City of Exeter', *Devonshire Association Report and Transactions*, 109 (1977), pp. 153-69; L. Rollason, 'Historical Introduction', in idem (ed.), *The Thorney Liber Vitae: Edition, Facsimile and Study* (Martlesham, 2015), pp. 1-19. On guilds and fraternities in medieval England in general see G. Rosser, *The Art of Solidarity in the Middle Ages: Guilds in England, 1250-1550* (Oxford, 2015).

[37] Meersseman and Pacini, *Ordo fraternitatis*, p. 174.

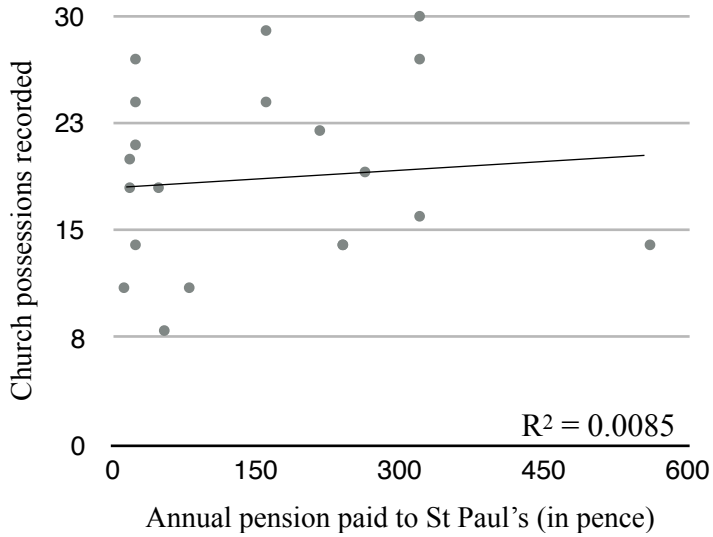
[38] Brooke and Keir, *London*, p. 123.

[39] Estimated using ibid., pp. 124-5.

[40] Visitations, pp. 283-300.

commonly recorded books—antiphonaries, missals, grauduals and breviaries—while ten churches had only one or two. Vestments and *pallae*, interestingly, were the only items recorded among the possessions of every church surveyed.[41] Sparrow Simpson, who edited the record of the visitation, was perplexed by the apparent poverty of the churches surveyed; Brooke and Keir, relying on later *Taxatio* data, also express disquiet at the meagre valuations of London churches: 'How did the City clergy live?'.[42] But if we assume that the pensions exacted from each church by the cathedral roughly corresponded to that church's income, then poverty does not provide a sufficient explanation for the apparent dearth of essential supplies shown in the visitation. Figure 11 shows that there was virtually no correlation between a church's pension and its number of recorded assets.[43] As Sparrow Simpson suggests, some of the clergy serving these churches may have had their own books or liturgical equipment, or the necessary objects might have been shared among churches. These explanations look more plausible if we entertain the idea that not all churches offered an identical set of ministries, and that lay people were free to receive ministries from multiple churches. Hypothetically, a lay person

Figure 11. Pensions and Possessions of Churches Visited by St Paul's Cathedral



[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid., p. 287; Brooke and Keir, *London*, pp. 126-7.

[43] $R^2 = 0.0085$, or 0.0034 if the outlier St Giles Cripplegate is included. (That church paid an extremely high pension of 15 marks per annum—perhaps indicative of a large number of charitable donations.) This was calculated by comparing each church's pension, converted into pence, to the total number of items (books, vestments and ornaments) recorded in each church's possession.

might attend mass at one church, pay the priest of another church to sing psalms for a deceased relative's obit, and confess to the priest of yet another church—all within easy walking distance of her home. This must have been necessary at least with reference to burial: only ten of the twenty churches visited by St Paul's in *c*. 1183 were recorded to have their own cemeteries. It seems likely, for example, that people who lived near the church of St Peter the Little, which did not have a cemetery, would simply carry their dead thirty or so metres down the street to St Benet on Thames, which did. Remarkably, there is little evidence from this period of conflicts between local churches over burial rights, suggesting that the sharing of cemeteries between churches was not aberrant.[44]

We need not assume that priests protested every time their parishioners sought the ministries of other priests. Londoners were accustomed to cooperative association. In addition to the clerical fraternity connected with St Mary's, there was in the late twelfth century a fraternity associated with St Paul's and another with the Knights Templar;[45] two trade guilds, of bakers and weavers, received royal recognition in the second half of the twelfth century, and in 1179 a royal enquiry identified nineteen unlicensed guilds in operation.[46] The sharing of ministries between churches seems even more plausible when we recognise that it was not uncommon for an individual to hold two, or perhaps more, churches simultaneously. Around the middle of the century it appears that first

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[44] An exception which may prove the rule is the dispute between Holy Trinity Priory and Ailward, priest of St Peter in the Bailey, in 1157. It should be noted that this was a conflict over suburban parishes, which may have been fundamentally different in this regard from intramural ones. It was alleged that Ailward had taken the body of Godlune, a resident of East Smithfield, for burial, even though Witthulfus the priest of St Botolph had performed the last rites. Upon appeal the archdeacon allowed the burial in St Peter's cemetery to go ahead. I have not found evidence before perhaps the early 1230s for a cemetery at St Botolph Aldgate: *CHT*, p. 203, and for the date c.f. the witnesses Augustine Mercer and Roger Duke at pp. 64, 120, 122, 165, 206-7. Therefore this dispute can be interpreted in two ways: either 1) Witthulfus had intended to bury Godlune's body in St Botolph's cemetery, and the priory stepped in to defend the rights of its church; or 2) St Botolph Aldgate did not yet have a cemetery in 1157, and body was to be buried at the priory (just on the other side of the gate) before Ailward claimed it. The latter option would explain why it was the priory, not Witthulfus, who protested. Interestingly, administering last rites seems to have been a way to claim the right to bury the body after death.

[45] *Registrum Statutorum et Consuetudinum Ecclesiae Cathedralis Sancti Pauli Londinensis*, ed. W. Sparrow Simpson (London, 1873), pp. 63-5; *EEA 15: London, 1076-1187*, ed. F. Neininger (Oxford, 1999), pp. 94, 126.

[46] Keene, 'English Urban Guilds', pp. 9, 14-15.

Daniel the priest and then his son Ismael held both the churches of St Thomas the Apostle and St Edmund.[47] Additionally, the St Paul's visitation records that Cristin the parson held both St Martin Orgar and St Botolph Billingsgate. In both churches Cristin was assisted by one or more chaplains, and Daniel and Ismael may have had similar help; but the holder of multiple churches would presumably not have cared which of his churches lay people visited. Indeed, he might prefer for them to receive ministries in both. And this was entirely plausible: Ismael would have walked about 600 metres to go from one of his churches to the other, Cristin half that. If we assume that similar patterns recurred among the many London churches for which we have less documentation, then London begins to look less like a patchwork of parishes—each equipped with a single priest, stridently defending his exclusive right to minister to each parishioner—and more like a tangled web of overlapping ministry relationships, regularly crossing parish boundaries.

We can reasonably speculate, therefore, that many of London's clergy did devote their time primarily to liturgical performance, functioning more like vendors of religious services than prelates bearing the pastoral care of lay people. There were enough churches and clerics in the city that lay people could receive the ministries they wanted by looking outside the boundaries of their parish: not every priest had to hear confessions, or preach, or perform funerals, or give spiritual counsel. If lay people regularly received ministries in several different local churches or from several different local clergy, then each lay person would maintain multiple ministry relationships, and each relationship would be weaker, or less important, or less permanent. Singing masses or psalms on someone's behalf in itself did not constitute pastoral care; prelates had to

[47] H.C.M. Lyte et al., *Ninth Report of the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, I: Report and Appendix* (London, 1883), pp. 62b-63a, 64b-65a; *CSP*, pp. 193-4.

know and govern their subjects. In Ormland, the reciprocal relationship in which local priests offered their parishioners a number of ministries in exchange for tithes and prayers provided a level of stability and intimacy sufficient for Orm to describe it using the language of pastoral care. In London, Peter of Cornwall condemned Martin the priest for failure to exercise pastoral care over the souls that constituted his parish. I am not asserting that London's clergy were inadequate, or that lay people who lived in London were spiritually unsatisfied. But religious life in the city was differently, perhaps uniquely, arranged, and it functioned in a way that probably distressed those Latinate clergy and religious, like Peter of Cornwall, who perceived the structure of religious life through the lens of prelacy. They would have looked with dismay on priests who did not maintain close ministry relationships with the souls under their care, and so could not effectively guide and instruct them.

Tithes and Ministries

What accounts for the stark difference between Ormland and London in the structure of religious life and ministry? Before proceeding we should address some factors which do *not* account for the difference. It might be tempting to suggest that priest-parishioner relationships in Ormland conformed more closely to what historians often assume to have constituted 'good pastoral care'—the competent provision of a defined set of ministries by a single priest.[48] Historians have imagined that 'pastoral care' was gradually being brought into line with this model through the intervention of reformed bishops over the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and have marked Lincoln diocese as precocious, propelled by Hugh of Avalon (1186-1200), Hugh of Wells (1209-35), and

[48] H. Birkett, 'The Pastoral Application of the Lateran IV Reforms in the Northern Province, 1215-1348', *Northern History*, 43 (2006), pp. 199-219; J.H. Denton, 'The Competence of the Parish Clergy in Thirteenth-Century England', in C.M. Barron and J. Stratford (eds.), *The Church and Learning in Later Medieval Society: Essays in Honour of R.B. Dobson* (Donington, 2002), pp. 273-85.

Robert Grosseteste (1235-53).[49] But it is unlikely that the reforming tendencies of some later Lincoln bishops had much to do with Orm's vision of priest-parishioner relationships. Ormland was a little-populated area of a vast diocese, and bishops of Lincoln seem to have been relatively inactive in regulating local churches there. For example, in the first half of the thirteenth century it was still possible for a lay patron of a church to grant to another layman the right to have a chapel, without the involvement of the bishop. A charter of Peter of C[…], probably 'of Cranwell', gave to Ralph son of Simon de Orlingbury[50] and his heirs the right to have a chapel and to have services celebrated for the living and the dead, saving the right of the mother church of Cranwell (Lincs.). The charter is damaged, but it appears that Peter, as lay patron of the chapel, was giving his blessing to an earlier agreement between one Elias the parson and Ralph son of Simon.[51]

Another direction in which we might look for an explanation is toward the processes by which local churches were established and developed in London and in Ormland respectively. It is certainly true that ancient customs, church dues or parish boundaries could define ministry relationships within a locality, as could the influence of lay or ecclesiastical patrons. But on this front London and Ormland were actually rather similar.

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[49] D.H. Farmer, *Saint Hugh of Lincoln* (London, 1985); D.M. Smith, 'Hugh's Administration of the Diocese of Lincoln', in H. Mayr-Harting (ed.), *St Hugh of Lincoln* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 19-47; *EEA IV: Lincoln, 1186-1200*, ed. D.M. Smith (London, 1986), introduction; R.W. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, 2nd edn., (Oxford, 1992); D.A.P. Callus, *Robert Grosseteste, Scholar and Bishop: Essays in Commemoration of the Seventh Century of His Death* (Oxford, 1955); *The Acta of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln, 1209-1235*, ed. D.M. Smith, Lincoln Record Society, 88 (Woodbridge, 2000), introduction; J.R. Ginther, 'Robert Grosseteste's Theology of Pastoral Care', in R.J. Stansbury (ed.), *A Companion to Pastoral Care in the Late Middle Ages (1200-1500)* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 95-122; P.M. Hoskin, 'Robert Grosseteste and the Simple Benefice: A Novel Solution to the Complexities of Lay Presentation', *JMH*, 40 (2014), pp. 24-43.

[50] Orlingbury, Northamptonshire. Simon de Orlingbury appears in 1174 and Ralph father of Robert de Orlingbury in 1276: L.F. Salzman (ed.), *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 4* (London, 1937), p. 2.

[51] Lincs. Arch. D&C/Dii/50/2/1. The witness list includes '[…] persona de Cranelle' as the first witness as well as 'Helyas capellanus'.

We have already seen that the creation of new settlements in Ormland meant that many churches were established in the eleventh century and even throughout the twelfth. Some of these churches were founded at the request or with the help of lay communities, but the role of manorial lords was also significant. Elite families did not only establish and present to churches: they also served them, passing them down through the generations.[52] The unusually well-documented church of Whaplode provides an instructive case study.[53] In 1148x61 Emecina of Gedney, the widow of Walter de Cantelu, granted the churches of Whaplode and Holbeach to Crowland Abbey.[54] Architectural evidence suggests that the church of Whaplode had been rebuilt in the 1140s, incorporating stone fragments from an existing Saxon church.[55] Figure 12 shows how successive generations of Emecina's descendants shared both the service and the *ius patronatus* of the church.[56] Fulk and Geoffrey, Emecina's grandsons, are never described as clerics and yet were instituted jointly as vicars (*canonice instruisse in perpetuum vicariam*), with 'Hugh the chaplain' designated to minister on their behalf.[57] Three generations later, in 1295, Robert de Hackbeth claimed in a lawsuit against the abbot of Crowland that he still held the advowson 'as a feudal right', reciting its descent from Robert d'Oyri to Richard d'Oyri to Richard's sister Isabella, Robert de Hackbeth's mother.[58] Robert's suit was unsuccessful, but the attempt demonstrates that the family continued to value its patronage and service of the church long after it had

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[52] Similar patterns have been observed elsewhere in England: J. Barrow, *The Clergy in the Medieval World: Secular Clerics, Their Families and Careers in North-Western Europe, c. 800-c. 1200*, pp. 337-9; S. Wood, *The Proprietary Church in the Medieval West* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 678-80; B.R. Kemp, 'Hereditary Benefices in the Medieval English Church: A Herefordshire Example', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 43 (1970), pp. 1-15.

[53] See K. Major, *The D'Oyrys of South Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and Holderness 1130-1275* (Lincoln, 1984).

[54] *EEA I*, p. 68.

[55] 'Church of St Mary', *Historic England Heritage List*, 30 June 1966, online, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1359295, accessed 22 May 2017.

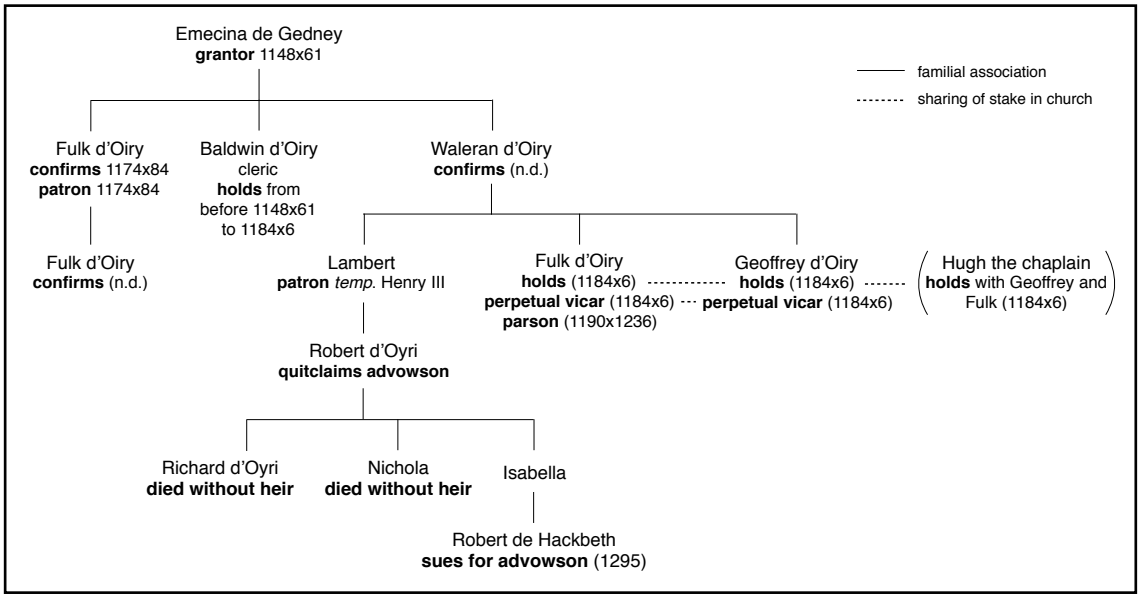
[56] Crowland Cartulary, fols. 76r-78v; some of these charters are printed in Major, *D'Oyrys*, pp. 46-49.

[57] Ibid., fols 76v-77r.

[58] Ibid., fols. 78r-v.

formally relinquished its rights in it to the abbey. Service of the church was an old family tradition: Baldwin d'Oyri, Emecina's son, had been serving the church even before his mother granted it to Crowland Abbey.[59] We cannot know whether this tradition was detrimental to the lay people who worshipped at the church. The entanglement of lordship, church patronage and church service must have at least contributed to a sense of continuity, as families of tenants both rented from and received ministries from the same families of manorial lords; it may also have constrained lay people from seeking ministries elsewhere. The importance of lord-tenant relationships among the church's parishioners is suggested by a stipulation in an 1184 agreement between Baldwin d'Oyri and 'G', the incumbent of the neighbouring church of Holbeach.[60] In addition to describing the boundaries which determine where the people who live between the two churches should pay their tithes, the agreement stipulates that 'the tithes of the lands of four parishioners who have their homes between the aforesaid boundaries and the church of Holbeach, which they had in the time of this agreement

Figure 12. Patronage and Service of Whaplode Church (Lincs.)



[59] Ibid., fol. 76r; see also fol. 76v.

[60] Ibid., fol. 82r-v; see *EEA I*, p. 187.

[1123x48]' belong to Whaplode; the four parishioners are named.[61] They must have represented four families who held land of the d'Oyri family, or who had customarily worshipped at the church of Whaplode despite their proximity to Holbeach—or, most likely, both.

London similarly experienced a wave of proprietary church building in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Brooke and Keir, observing the 'profusion' of 'tiny churches' established in London after the Norman conquest, point to the initiative of neighbourhood communities and even individual households.[62] Gervase Rosser reads the same phenomenon more widely, citing excavations such as that of St Mary's Tanner Street, Winchester, which was at first accessible only from a private house, but was then modified to allow public access.[63] John Blair has demurred, suggesting instead that spurts of urban church building evince an extension of rural seigneurial influence into cities.[64] Perhaps these two options—community initiative versus seigneurial patronage—cannot be cleanly differentiated. The efforts to build and provide services for chapels presented in the last chapter suggests that both lords and tenants could be involved in church building and service, sometimes with one taking the lead, sometimes working together. There were advantages to be gained on both sides. The chapel evidence presented in chapter two shows that lay communities often valued having access to religious services nearer to their homes; in the next chapter we will see that this was true for elite benefactors as well. London may also have witnessed a parallel to the

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[61] 'Excepto eo quod … decimas terrarum quatuor parochianorum domicilia sua infra sepedictas metas et ecclesiam de Holbech habencium, quas tempore huius conuencionis tenuerunt, scilicet G de Grenemare et Goran Pytman et Thori et Gode Vidue … cuius prouentus ad iam dictam ecclesiam de Quappelad' pertinebit', ibid., fol. 82v.

[62] Brooke and Keir, *London*, ch. 6, quote at p. 126.

[63] G. Rosser, 'The Care of Souls in English Towns before 1000', in J. Blair and R. Sharpe (eds.), *Pastoral Care before the Parish* (Leicester, 1992), pp. 267-84, at 274-5; see also C.N.L. Brooke, 'The Central Middle Ages: 800-1270', in *The City of London from Prehistoric Times to* c.*1520*, ed. M.D. Lobel (Oxford, 1989), pp. 30-41, at 36.

[64] J. Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford, 2005), pp. 403-7.

phenomenon seen in East Anglia, where relatively high population density and fragmented lordship often resulted in multiple churches per village, and where many churches were built by 'local prosperous peasant families'.[65] In many cases there must have been little distinction between private chapels and public places of worship.

Ormland in the late twelfth century conforms relatively closely to what some imagine to have been the 'ideal' parish system: one priest per parish, providing for all his parishioners' spiritual needs.[66] London looks chaotic and distant from that ideal. Yet the development of geographical parish boundaries in London was far more advanced than in Ormland. In Ormland the only mention I have found before 1200 of a geographical *parochia* of a local church comes in an 1199 letter of Innocent III.[67] There is also a 1204x27 gift to Deeping Priory (Lincs.) of a messuage 'in the vill of Deeping along the bank within the parish of Maxey'.[68] By contrast, geographical parishes are attested in twelfth-century London charters for at least twenty-five churches.[69] This implies that in London, many parish boundaries were stable, well-known and precise enough to be of use in describing the locations of properties with the city; in Ormland, parish boundaries were ambiguous, unimportant or nonexistent, so it was easier for document creators to describe locations in relation to other geographical features, like villages and fields. Thus David, priest of Edenham (Lincs.), gave four acres of land 'in the fields of Edenham' to nearby Vaudey Abbey in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century; in the first half of the thirteenth century William son of Robert of Edenham

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[65] R. Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (London, 1997), p. 167.

[66] N. Orme, *The Churches of Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2014), p. 29; N.J.G. Pounds, *A History of the English Parish* (Cambridge, 2000), p. 41;

[67] Crowland Cartulary, fols. 94r-v.

[68] BL, MS Harley 3658, fol. 29v.

[69] *CHT*, pp. 14, 77, 120, 127, 131, 151, 190-1, 204, 209, 220; *CSP*, pp. 82-3, 87, 90, 114, 132, 207-8; Mason, pp. 247, 148, 213, 217, 220, 224, 227, 235.

gave a toft and croft ‘in the vill of Edenham’ to Vaudey.[70] This is exactly the opposite of what we would expect if we assumed that the establishment of clear parish boundaries should correlate with increasing conformity to the one-priest-one-parish ‘ideal’. The only way to make sense of this contrast is to recognise that tithing, and therefore parish boundaries, had no fundamental connection to ministry relationships. Parish boundaries were a way to determine who should pay tithes where. It makes sense that geographical parish boundaries would develop earlier, and be relied upon more frequently, in London than in Ormland. The density of both settlement and churches within the city’s walls meant that it was not obvious to which church each household should tithe; lines had to be drawn for clarity’s sake, and regularly verified as residents came and went. In rural Ormland, it was usually obvious which village you lived in or near, and therefore obvious which village priest should receive your tithes and minister to you.

The role which tithing played, or did not play, in the establishment and maintenance of ministry relationships in either locality was an accident of geography. In Ormland lay people paid tithes to the local church of their villages, and they also received most of their ministries from the priest of that church, because any other options were at least a mile or two away. That meant that tithing and ministry relationships were usually correlated, and so people like Orm naturally thought of them as causally linked: you pay tithes to your priest, and in exchange he ministers to you. In London, people paid tithes to the church of the parish in which they lived, but they probably received many ministries outside that church. Tithing, therefore, was not fundamental to the development of ministry relationships. Moreover, these circumstances contributed to the development of distinct local conceptualisations of clerical-lay relations. In Ormland, relative exclusivity encouraged clerical observers to

[70] Lincs. Arch. 2-ANC/1/1/1, 11.

apply the model of prelacy to priest-parishioner relationships, holding priests to teach the people they claimed as parishioners by word and example. In London, the local clergy perceived themselves as ministers of altars more than pastors of souls.

Further Comparisons

The particular flavour of religious life in London may have been unique among late twelfth-century English localities. No other urban area in England boasted such a geographical density of churches, although some towns, such as York and Winchester, had more churches per capita. Exeter, a middling town, provides an interesting comparison. There were at least twenty-three local chapels, as well as a handful of private oratories, within the town walls in *c*. 1200. These churches were all under the cathedral's patronage, and did not have their own cemeteries.[71] All tithes would eventually be rendered to the cathedral, and all burials would be in the cathedral cemetery, unless one of the town's religious houses received special permission to bury someone.[72] This meant that, despite the high density of chapels, there was no reason to establish clear parish boundaries: an early fourteenth-century chronicle written at the cathedral records that in 1222 'the parishes of the city of Exeter were demarcated [*limitate*]', implying that previously they had been unclear or nonexistent.[73] Evidently by the second decade of the thirteenth century there was an expectation, which had not held sway a few decades earlier, that local churches should have parishes. Exeter's chapels are poorly documented for the twelfth century—perhaps as a result of the cathedral's dominance over them, precluding record-producing conflicts over their

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[71] N. Orme, *The Churches of Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2014), pp. 5-6, 18-30.

[72] *Papsturkunden in England*, ed. W. Holtzmann (3 vols., Berlin, 1930-1952), i, p. 297. An episcopal confirmation of 1177x84 refers to the 'cimiterium Exoniensis': *EEA XI: Exeter, 1046-1184*, ed. F. Barlow (Oxford, 1996), p. 87.

[73] Quoted in ibid., p. 28.

control—so it is impossible to say with certainty what effect the absence of geographical parishes had on religious life in Exeter. On the one hand, if parish boundaries were not determinative of ministry relationships, then we would expect a level of flexibility and openness leaning toward the London model, since chapels were tightly packed within the town. Nicholas Orme plausibly suggests that 'you worshipped at your neighbouring church, the church of your guild, or that of your landlord'; indeed you may have worshipped at all three.[74] The principle difference might be that unlike in London, Exeter had an undisputed focal point for religious life in the form of the cathedral. If the cathedral's ultimate claim to the tithes of the town's inhabitants rendered parish boundaries unnecessary during the twelfth century, then surely everyone, including lay people, understood this. Indeed it is not unreasonable to think that some people may have brought their tithes to the cathedral directly. In this case, the act of tithing may have become an important aspect of ministry relationships between the townspeople and cathedral.

A number of gifts made to Exeter's chaplains collectively illustrates how ministry relationships between lay people and local priests might operate in an urban environment devoid of parish boundaries. These gifts have not received much attention from historians,[75] so I will set out what can be discerned about their date and nature here. The fifteenth-century cartulary of St John's hospital, Exeter, includes a transcript of two lists of obits, which I will call List A and List B, from 'the old missal of St Martin, where a rental of the same church is written'. It appears that the compiler of the hospital cartulary copied the lists because they mention some properties in the city in

[74] Ibid.

[75] The names and obits are printed in D. Lepine and N. Orme, *Death and Memory in Medieval Exeter*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new ser., 46 (Exeter, 2003), p. 262, but with errors and omissions.

Table 2. Obit Lists in the Old Missal of St Martin's Church, Exeter

List A: Penny Donations to Chaplains

Donor	Obit
1. Robert son of Gilda, archdeacon of Totnes [*c*. 1170-86] [with additional gift of 12d by Philip, brother of the archdeacon of Exeter, in 1225]	St Marcellus, Pope (16 Jan.)
2. Peter de Palerna	St Blasius, Martyr (3 Feb.)
3. Richard son of Nicholas	St Peter's Chair (22 Feb.)
4. [none]	15 days after Easter (6 Apr.-10 May)
5. Roger Lambert	St Pancras (12 May)
6. Sampson Rof, [*prepositus* before 1208]	Morrow of St Blasius (4 Feb.)
7. Walter Turbert [mayor 1218-21] and John Turbert [seneschal 1226-8], chaplains of the city of Exeter	Morrow of St Stephen's birth (4 Aug.)
8. William Durling [*prepositus* 1189, mayor *passim* 1207-22]	Morrow of St Laurence (11 Aug.)
9. Thomas Lud	St Faith (6 Oct.)
10. Maria, wife of Thomas Lud	Morrow of St Simon apostle (29 Oct.)
11. Lady Alice Bauby	?IV Kalends December (?28 Nov.)
12. [none]	Octave of St Martin (19 Nov.)
13. Nicholas Gervase [*prepositus* 1214-15, seneschal 1226-8]	St Giles (1 Sep.)
14. [none]	15 days after Easter (6 Apr.-10 May)

List B: Other Donations

Donor	Obit
1. Elias of Rudford	St Faith (6 Oct.)
2. Christina, wife of Alexander Fisher	Morrow of St Martin (12 Nov.)
3. Walter Chaplain, rector of All Souls'	Morrow of St Hilary (14 Jan.)
4. Dyonisia Blund	Morrow of Translation of St Thomas Martyr (8 July)
5. Nicholas Treydener	Monday after Easter (23 Mar.-26 Apr.)
6. Adam de Collecote	Morrow of St Barnabas (11 June)
7. John Parson	SS Peter and Paul (29 June)
8. Roger Bauby	Morrow of St James (25 July)
9. Vivian, rector of St Edmund's	Translation of St Thomas Martyr (7 July)
10. Alexander Fisher	St Peter's Chains (1 Aug.)
11. John Zoreberen	Morrow of St Stephen's Birth (4 Aug.)
12. William Long	Vigil of St Laurence (10 Aug.)
13. Gilbert Blund [mayor 1225-6]	4 days after St Peter's Chains (5 Aug.)
14. Robert Tesse	Assumption of the Virgin (15 Aug.)
15. Rosa Pykout	Feast of St Michael (29 Sep.)

which the hospital had an interest.[76] Yet these lists were not haphazard notes: it is clear that they represent a least an organised collection of money from clergy and lay people in exchange for commemoration, and at most a fraternity, administered through St Martin's chapel. The donors or members were drawn from among the elite, but not noble, members of local society, including an archdeacon, two chaplains and two rectors; two *prepositi*, one seneschal and three mayors of the city; and five women, four of them wives or widows of other donors. There were evidently two options for donors,

[76] The first entry in the first list is copied on fol. 35v as part of an entry in the hospital's rental; both lists are then copied, apparently in full, on fol. 36r.

each represented by one of the lists. The first was to give between twenty-four and thirty-two pence annually to as many chaplains of the city's churches, one penny for each chaplain. List A records fourteen such donations. The second option was to simply grant between one and four shillings annually; fifteen of these gifts are recorded in List B, with a sixteenth as an additional grant for one of the obits in List A. The two lists are copied contiguously, without distinction, but is is possible to infer from the arrangement of the obits that in their original form the two lists were kept separately and were being added to over time, with some entries added out of order, presumably due to space constraints on the page. Identification of some of the donors in the lists allows the scheme or fraternity to be roughly dated (see Table 2).[77] A separate charter, datable to 1214x15, survives. In anticipation of his death, Peter de Palerna promised twenty-eight pence for twenty-eight chaplains to be paid at the feast of St Blasius.[78] Other gifts, if they were made in the same manner, should similarly be dated toward the end of the lifetime of their donors. Therefore, payments were being collected under this scheme at least from the 1180s to the 1220s.

The penny donations to the city's chaplains offer a remarkable demonstration of one way in which ministry relationships might be facilitated in an urban environment. Peter de Palerna's charter suggests that Peter made his gift 'so that my anniversary and that of my wife and the memory of my ancestors and descendants might be marked' by the chaplains who received the pennies. The granting of pennies to the city's clergy was a way to fortify the ministry relationships, and social relationships, which had shaped the fraternity members' religious experiences during life—and which were expected to continue after their deaths. Assuming that the gifts were faithfully collected and

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[77] R.C. Easterling, 'List of Civic Officials of Exeter in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, *c*. 1100-1300', *Devonshire Association Transactions*, 70 (1938), pp. 455-94.

[78] The witness list includes William Durling 'tunc maior' and Roger son of Henry and Nicholas Gervase 'tunc prepositi'; c.f. Easterling, 'List'.

distributed, most of the city's chaplains would have received fifteen pence annually from the guild by perhaps the end of the 1220s: not an insignificant amount. The donors, for their part, would have masses or prayers performed in their honour in most of the churches across the city, simultaneously. It must have been an arresting thought.

Moreover, associations could facilitate such ministry relationships. Actors in the formation of local religious life were not solitary; here we see clerical and lay individuals building relationships with a community, or at least a collective body, of clergy. The granting of pennies to the city's clergy as a collective is probably reflective of a more general promiscuity—for lack of a better word—in ministry relationships in Exeter. Some lay people at least did not feel loyal to one particular priest, but viewed the city's many chaplains as equally accessible. This was true both before 1222, when all the residents of Exeter ultimately paid their tithes to the cathedral regardless of where in the city they lived, as well as after, when tithes were presumably directed to specific churches according to the newly-created parish boundaries: penny grants were still being made in or after 1228. The people of Exeter established other channels for reciprocity in ministry relationships between people and their priests. We have already seen how in Ormland relationships between lay people and their local priests were conceived of as an exchange, with lay people offering not only tithes but intercessory prayer in expectation of teaching, sacraments, and intercessory prayer by their priests. In Exeter a degree of reciprocity—money for commemoration—was also maintained, but it was mediated through an association, and it facilitated many ministry relationships, not one.

Moving from the town of Exeter out into the diocese, we can observe the role of tithing and ministry relationships in rural area in which, unlike in Ormland, the parochial rights of former minster churches played a significant role in local religious

life. In his *Liber reuelationum* Peter of Cornwall records the miraculous experiences of his grandfather Ailsi and father Jordan, who lived near Launceston in Cornwall. These stories constitute an oral family history: Peter recorded the account, referring to himself in the third person, 'insofar as he could remember it after a lapse of so many years gone by since his father Jordan had related it to him in his boyhood. This same vision was told in past years by the foresaid man Ailsi to his son Jordan'.[79] Ailsi lived near Launceston Priory, a pre-Conquest college that had been re-founded with canons from Holy Trinity Priory, of which Peter would later become prior, in the 1120s.[80] The series of events which Ailsi described to his son Jordan of Trecarrel, Peter's father, occurred during the reign of Henry I and spanned that transition. They turn on the special relationship between Ailsi and St Stephen, the patron saint of Launceston Priory. Peter of Cornwall's line in retelling the stories is that the simple virtue and devotion of Ailsi, a layman, were rewarded by the saint with enlightening visions and various kinds of miraculous aid. So Peter introduces his grandfather: 'There lived in Cornwall a man named Ailsi, simple and upright and godfearing, who kept himself from evil. He strove his whole life to please God and St Stephen by the performance of good works.'[81]

When we first meet Ailsi we are told that he holds his land of the canons of St Stephen, and that he is acting as the 'custodian of the money' for the construction of a new tower for St Stephen's church, which also involves overseeing 'not only the work itself but also its workmen and servants'.[82] Peter of Cornwall intuits that Ailsi's holding his land of the canons of St Stephen is important enough to highlight at the beginning of his account, even though the canons themselves are no more than side actors, and

[79] LR, p. 187. For Peter of Cornwall's family in Cornwall see F. Rose-Troup, *Exeter Vignettes* (Manchester, 1942), pp. 9-18 and Easting and Sharpe, pp. 146-53.

[80] P.L. Hull, *The Cartulary of Launceston Priory (Lambeth Palace MS 719): A Calendar*, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new ser., 30 (1987), p. xiv.

[81] LR, p. 187.

[82] Ibid., p. 187.

unflattering ones, in the story that unfolds. We have seen that certainly in Ormland, and probably also in London, lay manorial lordship could form the basis of ministry relationships between tenants and proprietary local churches. Here we see ecclesiastical lordship exerting much the same effect. It is likely that Ailsi felt a special connection to St Stephen because his family had been tenants of the priory for a long time. This does not, however, delegitimise the special devotion which Peter tells us Ailsi nurtured toward the saint. Ailsi's relationship with St Stephen, demonstrated through visions in which St Stephen helps Ailsi solve problems which arise in the construction of the church tower, personally inspects the building works, and heals an injury to Ailsi's eye, is the unifying narrative thread running through much of Peter's account of his grandfather's holiness.[83] The canons of St Stephen, moreover, are portrayed as ungrateful for Ailsi's service, threatening to throw him into a lime-kiln if the flames from the kiln endangered their houses.[84] Whatever the historical origins of Ailsi's piety, Peter of Cornwall's memory of his grandfather is as a follower of St Stephen first; and second, as a result, as a tenant of St Stephen's canons.

In fact, Ailsi's relationship with St Stephen not dissimilar to the kind of relationship that Orm expected priests to have with their parishioners. Chapter four will discuss the ministries which lay people received from saints in more detail; here it is only necessary to observe that devotion to a saint could facilitate a lay person's strong association with a church in the same way that a relatively exclusive ministry relationship with a local priest could. Reciprocity is an important theme in both models. Orm urges lay people to pray for their priests; Ailsi serves St Stephen by contributing to the fabric of his church. '[To you] I have committed myself and my whole soul and all

[83] Ibid., pp. 187-99.

[84] Ibid., p. 189.

that I possess', he tells the saint. St Stephen's favour toward Ailsi is characterised as being granted 'in return for the merit and humility in helping him'.[85] Moreover, Peter tells us that Ailsi taught his sons to similarly serve St Stephen: Bernard, the eldest, considered himself the saint's 'bondsman' (*seruum natiuum*), and he and Nicholas, Ailsi's second son, together gave various gifts to the church. Jordan, Ailsi's third son and Peter of Cornwall's father, 'loved and maintained and protected St Stephen's church' in the tradition of his father, pleading the canons' cases in the county courts and in their own court.[86]

Moreover, Ailsi paid tithes to St Stephen, and probably considered this a further expression of devotion to the saint. Peter of Cornwall tells us that 'Ailsi did this [paid tithes to St Stephen] more out of the love and affection he had for St Stephen than in accordance with the strict rule of justice'. This is important because the land which Ailsi cultivated, and which he held of the canons, lay in the parish of St Patern (which Peter calls St Paer); yet Ailsi paid tithes from his land to St Stephen via the chapel of St Mary Magdalene, which lay within the castle town where Ailsi lived.[87] The priest of St Patern complained repeatedly of the deprivation, until St Stephen appeared to Ailsi in a dream and told him that 'St Paer and I are good companions and friends', and so Ailsi should pay St Paer the tithes he was owed; thus the dispute was settled for a time.[88] But 'later on', the canons of St Stephen claimed the tithes of the same land, which Jordan, Ailsi's son, now held. The dispute was brought to Reginald, earl of Cornwall, who sent for

[85] Ibid., p. 195.

[86] Ibid, p. 199.

[87] This might suggest that Ailsi paid tithes to St Mary Magdalene's because that was the church closest to his home. But Peter of Cornwall emphasises that Ailsi held the land that he cultivated of St Stephen's Priory, suggesting that this, not the location of Ailsi's residence, was probably the source of the conflict.

[88] Ibid., p. 193.

Jordan; Jordan recounted the story about his father's vision of St Stephen, and the saint's judgement was upheld.[89]

The key factors in the conflict are first that Ailsi was a tenant of, and strongly associated himself with, St Stephen and St Stephen's priory, and, simultaneously, that the land Ailsi cultivated lay within the parish of St Patern.[90] Easting and Sharpe suggest that the conflict arose as a result of a population shift from the old town of Launceston, near the priory, to a new town which grew up around a castle of Robert, count of Mortain, less than a mile away. Ailsi may have moved from the old to the new town and begun to cultivate land which lay within the boundaries of St Patern's parish, yet was also still the property of the canons of St Stephen.[91] That is possible, but it is equally possible that Ailsi had always held the same land of St Stephen's, and that the priest of St Patern only began to complain as the idea of paying tithes based on geographical parish boundaries, rather than lord-tenant relationships or other associative bonds, took hold. What is important is that when the conflict with the priest of St Patern did arise, and Ailsi was constrained to pay his tithes elsewhere, the essential nature of his relationship with St Stephen did not change. Lordship and personal devotion to a saint, not tithing, determined which church Ailsi thought of as his own. Where the payment of tithes coincided with Ailsi's church affiliation, he thought of tithing as an act of devotion. When Ailsi was forced to send his tithes elsewhere, the tithing was for him no longer an act of devotion, but rather an acquiescence to an accepted principle about the financial prerogatives of local churches.

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[89] Ibid. pp. 193-5.

[90] C.f. the roughly contemporary agreement regarding the tithes of Whaplode and Holbeach (Lincs.), which is at pains to emphasise the opposite rule, namely that the location of a person's home, not fields, determines church affiliation: Crowland Abbey Cartulary, fol. 82r-v; *EEA I*, p. 187.

[91] Ibid., pp. 149-55.

It is difficult to say with certainty how representative Ailsi's experiences were of ministry relationships in Cornwall more generally; documentation is sparse, and the point of relaying vision narratives is that they do not happen to everyone. But we can make a few conjectures. Cornwall was sparsely populated, like Ormland, but in Cornwall a higher proportion of local churches had been built before the eleventh century than in Ormland or London, with many established at pre-ninth-century holy sites.[92] Many families would have had longstanding ministry relationships with local churches, and may have maintained special devotions to a local saints across generations. These relationships sometimes coincided with, but were not dependent on, the payment of tithes. The enforcement of the boundaries of the parish of St Patern in the early twelfth century may have been exceptional in the region, a necessary clarification amid shifting settlement and castle-building. Or, many geographical parishes of local churches in Cornwall may have become clearer and more important earlier in the century than in Ormland, perhaps as a result of the relative antiquity of churches and the survival of minster *parochie*. What the conflict over Ailsi's tithing demonstrates is that although tithing was sometimes seen as an act of devotion—a contribution to a ministry relationship with the priest or indeed the saint of a local church—ultimately it was separable, in the minds of lay people, from the identification of one's own church.

Conclusions

Neither the payment of tithes nor geographical parish boundaries—where they existed and were important—prefigured the arrangement of ministry relationships in a locality.

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[92] N. Orme, 'From the Beginnings to 1050', in idem (ed.), *Unity and Variety: A History of the Church in Devon and Cornwall* (Exeter, 1991), pp. 1-22; Blair, *Church*, p. 374.

To be clear, I am not arguing that any lay person in England could solicit ministries from any local priest without raising protestations. The multitude of recorded agreements between the representatives of mother churches and chapels make it clear that lay people in many localities were constantly being told where they could and could not worship. Instead, my argument is that the commonly accepted rules or norms governing the establishment of ministry relationships varied significantly among localities. In Ormland, the frequent coincidence of tithing with ministry relationships encouraged both clerics and lay people to think about the two actions as linked, with tithes effectively representing payment for spiritual services. In London, people might distinguish between tithes as a sort of income tax for the general support of the church, and discretionary offerings and remunerations as a way of obtaining specific ministries, like the performance of masses or the burial of a family member, from any number of priests regardless of parochial residence. There were as many possible permutations as localities. Lay people in the town of Exeter solicited ministries from the city's chaplains as a collective body, making charitable donations to the chaplains while directing their tithes to the cathedral. In Cornwall, tithing might be seen as an act of devotion—but old traditions of association with local saints and churches shaped ministry relationships more powerfully than parish boundaries.

The extent of possible variation in the nature of lay religious experience is an important argument in itself. Instead of attempting to track a gradual, nation-wide imposition of parochial order, this chapter highlights particularly local conditions and preoccupations. Both religious practices and ideas about those practices varied among localities. There was no uniform conception of what tithing meant or who should deliver sacraments to lay people. Such ideas developed alongside and reinforced local customs, and were observed and articulated by document creators and writers. This

raises questions about the ways in which clerical assumptions about tithing and the arrangement of ministry relationships influenced the views of lay people, and vice versa, within the same locality. Chapter two elaborated the dissonance between the elite concept of a 'parishioner' as a subject of prelacy embodied by a religious house or local church, and the reality that lay people exerted significant agency over the provision of religious services, particularly in local chapels. It seems plausible that such dissonance was more pronounced in localities where tithing and ministry relationships were strongly linked, since the relative exclusivity of priest-parishioner relationships would facilitate a more pastoral conception of ministry among local commentators. Elite clerical observers in such localities were inclined to assume that parishioners were a passive flock, guided primarily by their shepherd, the local priest, toward salvation; lay people, meanwhile, thought that they simply paid their priest (by tithing) to minister to them, and that they could expect him to uphold his end of the bargain. In the *Orrmulum* we see both perspectives in tension. Orm sometimes articulates the transactional model, entering into the mindset of a lay audience; at other times he falls back into the familiar language of prelacy when describing the local priest's responsibilities. In localities where the ministry of local priests was seen as less pastoral—where lay people recieved ministries from a variety of priests—ecclesiastical observers were more aware that their ideal of pastoral care was not reflected in reality. London's local priests in their fraternity statutes and Peter of Cornwall in his *Liber reuelationum* appear to mourn the lack of exclusive, pastoral priest-parishioner relationships in London. This, then, is another subtle variation in the idea of prelacy which was so ubiquitous among elite observers. The extent to which those observers saw prelacy reflected in ministry relationships between local priests and lay people varied among localities.

The ways in which lay people conceived of tithing and ministry relationships were not only observable by elite writers, but to some extent were influential to their thinking. We cannot know how lay people articulated the customs of religious communities, what words or metaphors they used. We can, however, work backward from their own actions and from the attempts, however imperfect, of writers to represent their perspectives. Lay people expected their ministry relationships with priests to be reciprocal, whether or not they were relatively exclusive. They offered their ministers tithes or one-off payments, or perhaps prayers or, like Ailsi, practical service; in exchange they expected to receive spiritual ministries. If Orm is to be believed, they sometimes felt entitled to monitor the quality and regularity of the ministries they received. Moreover, the case studies examined in this chapter have shown that the ways in which lay people engaged with ministry relationships were facilitated and restricted by a range of local factors, including lordship, geography, family, social status, and associative bonds. This is a very different picture from the lay individual being led toward salvation by her priest alone.

Local religious life was shaped not by the distribution of ministries to passive recipients, but by constant, myriad negotiations in which lay people solicited ministries from a variety of providers and were either redirected or obliged; in which providers offered ministries which lay people either accepted or rejected; and in which lay people worked, with more or less success, to improve the quality of the services offered to them. This has significant implications for how we evaluate ministries delivered in local churches in relation to other facets of lay religious life in late twelfth-century England. This thesis has focussed so far on relationships between prelates and subjects in the abstract, and between local (secular) priests and lay people. But if relationships, not parishes, organised local religious life, then what was to keep a lay person from

prioritising the ministries of monks, canons, hermits, saints, or other lay people over those offered in her local church? Chapter four explores the wide range of ministers to the laity who were *not* local priests.

Chapter Four: Other Ministers

To portray local religious life as solely or even principally consisting of ministry relationships between lay people and secular priests, based in local churches, would be a gross distortion. Of course local churches were, by the late twelfth century, ubiquitous in England. But despite the increasing insistence with which elite ecclesiastical observers applied the idea of prelacy—with its implication of exclusivity—to local priests, no one realistically expected that local churches would be the only sources of spiritual ministry for most lay people. Even in Ormland, where ministry relationships between lay people and their priests were seen as relatively exclusive and pastoral, it was still expected that lay people would listen to sermons delivered by men who were not their local priests: that is the reason why the *Orrmulum* exists. It is a commonplace in the historiography of central and late medieval England to use 'parishioners' as a synonym for 'lay people'. Since the parish community and parish church were so integral to lay religious life in the late Middle Ages, historians have often assumed that as parish boundaries were drawn in the twelfth century the contours of a distinctively 'parochial' lay piety were similarly established—with any apathy on the laity's part chalked up to the shortcomings of parish priests, and thus a harbinger of imminent reform. But in late twelfth-century England lay people were not only parishioners of local churches: in fact, in their minds, they may not have been parishioners at all. Instead they were participants in many ministry relationships, interacting with a wide and locally variable array of ministers.

This chapter explores the range of ministries offered to lay people by entities other than secular priests in local churches. It is not intended to be exhaustive: one important omission, for example, might be the medicinal and magical services provided

by lay people, many of them women, within their own communities.[1] Instead, I focus on four categories which make clear and frequent appearances in the sources for the localities studied in this thesis. The first category is the religious. Chapter two mentioned some of the ministries which religious houses might provide for the people they claimed as their parishioners, but here the historiographical question of ministry by the religious is dealt with more fully, as is the question of the religious, specifically regular canons, serving local churches. The chapter then turns to the murkier, but no less significant, evidence for special or holy places of various kinds as sites of ministry, and for the ministries of holy men and women, including anchorites. Following are discussions, in turn, of two groups which are not conventionally thought of as ministers, but which nevertheless appear in that role in the sources: saints and laymen. The chapter ranges from ministries which received official papal sanction (regular canons serving local churches) to ministries which existed completely outside—though not free from the influence of—the ecclesiastical hierarchy (a layman interpreting his visions of a saint to his neighbours). Therefore, it should be stressed that the category constructed here of 'other ministers' is one of convenience only. The ministers discussed in this chapter were not 'other' in the sense of being socially excluded, nor were they necessarily considered aberrant.

Following this line of thinking, this chapter makes two arguments. The first is simply about prevalence. Not all of the types of 'other ministers' described here are evinced for every locality, but many of them can be found in many localities. Moreover, the participation of these ministers in local religious life was in no way unusual. It was widely expected, and integral to the religious experiences of many, if not most, lay people. Additionally, the types of 'other ministers' operating in a locality and the

[1] See in the first instance C. Rider, *Magic and Religion in Medieval England* (London, 2012).

ministries they offered varied greatly: this, too, was not considered irregular. The second argument is that in virtually every case important connections can be observed between the more formal ecclesiastical institutions—local churches served by secular priests, cathedrals and religious houses—and the activities of other ministers. The ministries of these two (artificial) groups are, in the final view, impossible to separate: religious serve local churches; holy sites transform into chapels; canons promote saints' cults; laymen procure endowments for chaplains to minister to their communities. Lay people engaged in a variety of ministry relationships, but these relationships were also complicated by the interdependence of ministers on one another. The previous chapter argued that the arrangement of ministry relationships in local churches—what has misleadingly been called 'the parish system'—was not uniform, but rather contingent on various local factors. Recognising the participation of 'other ministers' in local religious life further disrupts the illusion of a standardised distribution of religious services being gradually imposed in late twelfth-century England. Instead of an 'official' apparatus of local churches being occasionally disrupted by, or patched up by, alternative ministers, this chapter sees locally distinct landscapes of ministry relationships. Its view of those relationships is defined not by the ministries which elite churchmen believed to be most important for lay religious practice, but by the interests and activities of lay people themselves.

The Religious

The extent to which, and manner in which, religious communities engaged in ministry to the laity in post-Conquest England has been a longstanding subject of debate.[2] Much of the discussion has turned on an intuitive, and therefore persistent, premise. By the late eleventh and twelfth centuries, many monks and most canons were ordained priests; at the same time, lay men and women gifted the tithes and advowsons of many churches to religious houses. This lead some scholars to believe, almost *a priori*, that monks and canons frequently, or at least regularly, served in the churches which their houses controlled.[3] The conclusion is particularly tempting with reference to the regular canons, a disparate category which some have mistakenly characterised as a unified 'Augustinian Order' established for the purpose of ministry to the laity.[4] In fact, regular canons emerged gradually from a series of reforms of communities of secular clergy in France and Italy down to the eleventh century, only becoming firmly associated with the so-called Rule of St Augustine in the twelfth century.[5] There was no overarching 'Augustinian' organisation, and therefore no unified mission or directives, until the

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[2] The debate with reference to Anglo-Norman England should be seen in the context of a debate, especially in French scholarship, regarding the ministry to the laity by monks and canons in western Europe more broadly. See especially P. Montaubin, 'Les chanoines réguliers et le service pastoral (XIe-XIIIe siècles)', in M. Parisse (ed.), *Chanoines réguliers: émergence et expansion (XIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Saint-Etienne, 2009), pp. 119-57; J. Châtillon, 'La vie des communautés de chanoines réguliers de la fin du XIe siècle au début du XIIIe siècle', in idem (ed.), *Le Mouvement canonial au Moyen Âge. Reforme de l'Église, spiritualité et culture* (Turnhout, 1992), pp. 73-97; U. Berlière, 'L'exercise du ministère paroissal par les moines dans le haut Moyen-Age', *Revue Bénédictine*, 39 (1927), pp. 227-50; idem, 'L'exercise due ministère paroissal par les moines, du XIIe au XVIIIe siècle', *Revue Bénédictine*, 39 (1927), pp. 340-64.

[3] W.H. Frere, 'The Early History of Canons Regular as Illustrated by the Foundation of Barnwell Priory', in *Fasciculus Ioanni Willis Clark Dicatus* (Cambridge, 1909), pp. 186-216; A.H. Thompson, *History and Architectural Description of the Priory of St Mary, Bolton-in-Wharfedale* (Leeds, 1928), pp. 27-36, at 16-17; D.J.A. Matthew, *The Norman Monasteries and Their English Possessions* (Oxford, 1962), pp. 59-61.

[4] A. Murray, 'Confession before 1215', *TRHS*, 6th ser., 3 (1993), pp. 51-81, at 78-80; C.N.L. Brooke and G. Keir, *London, 800-1216: The Shaping of a City* (London, 1975), pp. 32, 322-3; D. Postles, 'The Austin Canons in English Towns, c. 1100-1350', *Historical Research*, 66 (1993), pp. 1-20, at 4; J. Wogan-Browne, 'Time to Read: Pastoral Care, Vernacular Access and the Case of Angier of St Frideswide', in C. Gunn and C. Innes-Parker (eds.), *Texts and Traditions of Medieval Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett* (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 62-77, at 77.

[5] Y. Veyrenche, '*Quia vos estis qui sanctorum patrum vitam probabilem renovatis…*: Naissance des chanoines réguliers, jusqu'à Urbain II', in Parisse, *Chanoines réguliers*, pp. 29-69.

Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 mandated a general chapter, although the Praemonstratensian and Arrouasian canons held general chapters on the continent in the twelfth century.[6]

This line of argument lost credence, however, in the face of an alternative explanation for the rapid transfer of churches to religious houses in the century after the Conquest. Contemporary developments in canon law strongly encouraged lay people to donate their churches to religious houses: in the tenth century it became permissible for monks to receive tithes, and from the eleventh the same became increasingly unacceptable for laymen.[7] Additionally, Marjorie Chibnall emphasised the need to carefully delineate what charters do and do not reveal about ministry to the laity by monks. Monks might serve an altar in a local church; serve a private altar; or take on the full responsibility of ministry to the community; or again, and probably most frequently, they might receive a church's tithes and pay a secular priest to minister in it on their behalf.[8] Deciding which option a charter represents is easier said than done, since document creators often made no effort to distinguish between vicarious service and service by the religious themselves. The record of a dispute brought before William Brewer, bishop of Exeter, in 1224x33 claims to regard 'the church of St Michael de Rupe of Brentor, which is to be served annually by the monks of Tavistock' Abbey, in Devon. But the text of the agreement states that the abbot and convent of Tavistock 'will serve the aforesaid church through two secular priests and one cleric, who should daily celebrate the divine service in that church, reside there continuously, and administer the

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[6] *Chapters of the Augustinian Canons*, ed. H.E. Salter, Canterbury and York Society, 29 (London, 1922); F. Cygler, 'Les chanoines réguliers et le chapitre général (XIIe-début XIIIe siècle)', in Parisse, *Chanoines réguliers*, pp. 265-95.

[7] G. Constable, *Monastic Tithes: From Their Origins to the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge 1964); B. Kemp, 'Monastic Possession of Parish Churches in England in the Twelfth Century', *JEH*, 31 (1980), pp. 133-60; G.W.O. Addleshaw, *Rectors, Vicars and Patrons in Twelfth and Early Thirteenth Century Canon Law*, St. Anthony's Hall Publications, 9 (London, 1956), p. 6.

[8] M. Chibnall, 'Monks and Pastoral Work: A Problem in Anglo-Norman History', *JEH*, 18 (1967), pp. 165-72, at 166.

divine service to the parishioners'.[9] It appears impossible, therefore, to extrapolate any realistic estimate of the frequency with which the religious served in local churches from the charter evidence.

The result of these historiographical developments is that the question of ministry to the laity by the religious has reached an impasse. Other categories of evidence are suggestive, but inconclusive. It cannot be assumed that the many religious houses, especially Augustinian priories, established in local churches ministered directly to lay worshippers; in the late Middle Ages religious houses in this situation often employed secular priests and maintained separate monastic and parochial altars.[10] Christopher Brooke has pointed to repeated condemnations of parochial service by monks in twelfth-century conciliar decrees, standing alongside other legislation that seems to assume that such service normally occurs; but these may be more reflective of circumstances on the continent.[11] Janet Burton has observed that the *Bridlington Dialogue*, a tract written around 1150 at the priory of regular canons at Bridlington (Yorks.), makes allowances for canons who need to 'spend a long time or a short one in any of the places that are united to the aforesaid church [his house] as limbs subject to a head', or to 'serve God in the church of some saint', or who are 'duly elected to the

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[9] 'Cum Walteris Giffard' moueret nobis questionem super ecclesia de Rupe sancti Michaelis de Brantatorr', per monachos de Tauistoch' annuatim deseruenda, in presentia domini W Exoniensis episcopi lis mota tandem in hunc modum quieuit, videlicet quod ego I abbas et conuentus et successores nostri debemus deseruire dicte ecclesie per duos sacerdotes seculares et vnum clericum qui cotidie celebrent diuina in eadem ecclesiam, continuam facere residentiam, et parochianis diuina ministrare', DHC W/1258/M/D/79/2.

[10] M.J. Franklin, 'The Cathedral as Parish Church: The Case of Southern England', in D. Abulafia, M.J. Franklin and M. Rubin (eds.), *Church and City, 1000-1500: Essays in Honour of Christopher Brooke* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 173-98; M. Heale, 'Monastic-Parochial Churches in Late Medieval England', in C. Burgess and E. Duffy (ed.), *The Parish in Late Medieval England*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 14 (Donington, 2006), pp. 54-77.

[11] C.N.L. Brooke, 'The Missionary at Home: The Church in the Towns, 1000-1250', *Churches and Churchmen in Medieval Europe* (London, 1999), pp. 69-90, at 87-88.

government of some church'.[12] It is possible that these allowances have in mind canons being sent out to serve as the primary ministers in local churches, but they equally might refer to temporary residence in a grange, cell, or other holy site of the kind discussed below. Burton has also argued that several English bishops championed the foundation of houses of regular canons during the reign of Henry I in hopes that the canons would minister in local churches, pointing to Holy Trinity Priory in London; Taunton Priory in Somerset; Launceston Priory in Cornwall; Plympton Priory in Devon, St Frideswide's Priory in Oxford; and Bridlington, Hexham and Nostell Priories in Yorkshire.[13] This is somewhat different, however, from proving that canons from any of these houses actually ministered in their churches once the foundations were made, a distinction which Burton is careful to maintain.

Two new strategies are necessary to push work on this question forward. First, historians interested in the religious orders should move away from the language of the 'pastoral care' of lay people, which, in the modern historiography, simultaneously conflates a number of distinct ministries and obfuscates which ministries in particular are under investigation. Instead, we should ask simpler and more specific questions: in what ways did the religious minister to lay people, and where did they do so? Moreover, asking these questions requires us to abandon the prevailing historiographical fixation on the local church and secular priest as centrepieces of lay religious experience. Local religious life was far more than the sum of so many parochial units. The ability to discuss ministries discretely—setting aside, where necessary, the question of whether

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[12] *The Bridlington Dialogue: An Exposition of the Rule of St Augustine for the Life of the Clergy*, ed. R.P. Lawson (London, 1960), pp. 32-3; J. Burton, 'The Regular Canons and Diocesan Reform in Northern England', in idem and K. Stöber (eds.), *The Regular Canons in the Medieval British Isles* (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 41-57, at 56.

[13] J.E. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 47; idem, 'Regular Canons'; idem, 'Monasteries and Parish Churches in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Yorkshire', *Northern History*, 23 (1987), pp. 39-50.

the religious took on the pastoral care of lay people in local churches—will allow for the incorporation of recent work on preaching, hospitals, and relationships between religious houses and their lay benefactors.[14] Second, the question of ministry by the religious must be approached on a local, and even house-specific, level. This is particularly true for those 'orders' which were not centrally organised in the high Middle Ages, including most regular canons and Benedictine monks. Instead of searching for unifying identities, we should ask what specific priorities and circumstances drove particular houses to engage in particular ministries at particular times.[15] I will now explore the implications of these two strategies for late twelfth-century England in turn.

Within the localities studied for this thesis, preaching appears to have been a relatively common ministry by the religious, and particularly by regular canons, to lay people. The regular venue for public preaching by the religious was the conventual church, particularly on important feast days. We have already seen that Alexander of Ashby preached to lay people on St Andrew's feast and Whitsun, and probably also on Easter—or at the very least, he wrote sermons for delivery by a religious preacher to lay

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[14] Preaching: C. Muessig (ed.), *Medieval Monastic Preaching* (Leiden, 1998); B.M. Kienzle, 'The Twelfth-Century Monastic Sermon', in B.M. Kienzle, 'The Twelfth-Century Monastic Sermon', in idem (ed.), *The Sermon*, Typologie des sources du Moyen Âge occidental, 81-3 (3 vols., Turnhout, 2000), pp. 271-323, at 278-9. Hospitals: N. Orme and M. Webster, *The English Hospital, 1070-1570* (New Haven, 1995), ch. 1; M. Satchell, 'The Emergence of Leper-Houses in Medieval England, 1100-1250', University of Oxford D.Phil thesis, 1998; S.C. Watson, 'The Origins of the English Hospital', *TRHS*, 6th ser., 16 (2006), pp. 75-94; D.X. Carpenter, 'Harehope Hospital and the Arrival of the Order of St Lazarus in England', *Northern History*, 54 (2017), pp. 3-14. Relationships with lay benefactors: D. Postles, 'Monastic Burials of Non-Patronal Lay Benefactors', *JEH*, 47 (1996), pp. 620-37; E. Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England, 1066-1135* (Boydell, 1998); K. Stöber, 'Bequests and Burials: Changing Attitudes of the Laity as Patrons of English and Welsh Monasteries', pp. 131-46, and J.G. Clark, 'Monastic Confraternity in Medieval England: The Evidence from the St Albans Abbey *Libere Benefactorum*', pp. 315-31, both in E.M. Jamroziak and J.E. Burton (eds.), *Religious and Laity in Western Europe, 1000-1400: Interaction, Negotiation and Power* (Turnhout, 2006); A.D. Fizzard, *Plympton Priory: A House of Augustinian Canons in South-Western England in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, 2008); A. Abram, 'Identity and Remembrance: Interaction between Augustinian Houses and Their Benefactors in an English Context', in A. Müller and K. Stöber (eds.), *Self-Representation of Medieval Religious Communities: The British Isles in Context* (Berlin, 2009), pp. 233-44; B. Thompson, 'Monasteries and Their Patrons at Foundation and Dissolution', *TRHS*, 6th ser., 4 (1994), pp. 103-25.

[15] For a similar argument made in reference to regular canons on the continent see Montaubin, 'Chanoines réguliers'.

people on those occasions. The prologue to Peter of Cornwall's *Pantheologus* references 'the religious who are accustomed to preach to the clergy or to the people'.[16] Orm wrote the *Orrmulum* for the use of preachers to the laity who were not local priests, most likely his fellow canons. Alexander Neckam may have already joined St Frideswide's priory as a regular canon when he delivered his public sermons in Oxford; at the very least he was closely connected with the canons, and solicited offerings on their behalf.[17] The disproportionate representation of regular canons among the authors of sermons, preaching aids and other Latin works produced in late twelfth-century England has been noted before, and is difficult to explain.[18] There is almost no evidence that these men knew each other personally, and they do not emphasise their identity as regular canons in their writings: Orm only mentions the Rule of St Augustine in the context of his brotherhood with Walter, a fellow canon to whom the *Orrmulum* is dedicated, and one of Alexander of Ashby's sermons explains at length how the Augustinian and Benedictine rules are essentially similar, differing only in trivia.[19] Peter of Cornwall's prologue to the *Pantheologus* refers to *claustrales*, not *canonici*.[20] If there was a movement toward public preaching among regular canons in late twelfth-century England, it was not driven by a self-conscious Augustinian identity. For an explanation we might look instead to the simultaneous flourishing of schools in several cities which had houses of regular canons (Exeter, London, Northampton, Oxford),[21] and to the relative flexibility of the Augustinian rule compared to the Benedictine rule,[22] which

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[16] R.W. Hunt, 'English Learning in the Late Twelfth Century', *TRHS*, 19 (1936), pp. 19-42, p. 40.

[17] See chapter one, pp. 88-94, 115-16.

[18] Hunt, 'English Learning', p. 34.

[19] *Ormulum*, i, Dedication, ll. 1-10; *AA I*, p. 285.

[20] LR, p. 7, n. 21.

[21] N. Orme, *English Schools in the Middle Ages* (London, 1973), pp. 168-73; for Northampton see chapter one, pp. 73-4.

[22] Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders*, p. 45. For texts of the two Rules see J.C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England* (London, 1950), pp. 273-9; *La règle de Saint Benoît*, ed. A. de Vogüé and J. Neufville, SC, 181-6 (7 vols., Paris, 1971-7).

theoretically would have allowed canons more time for study and preparation for preaching.

There is also evidence which suggests that monks may have preached to lay people in this period as well. The patent rolls of King John record a 1208x9 grant of royal protection to 'our monks of St Andrew of Northampton and their messengers sent to preach on behalf of the construction of their church of [omitted]', and asks that the offerings the monks request be given to them.[23] The expressly mercenary purpose of this preaching mission need not preclude its being considered a ministry to lay people, at least from the monks' perspective. It was, as Alexander Neckam explained to his lay audiences, morally right and spiritually beneficial to entrust one's wealth to the *pauperes Christi*,[24] particularly if that wealth contributed to the fabric of 'sacred place in which the faithful gather, in which Mass is celebrated, in which the body and blood of the Lord are consumed'.[25] More to the point, John's grant does not specify whether the *nuncios* were to be monks of the priory, or other representatives—but there is contemporary evidence for travelling religious ministers in the area. A chapel license issued by Luffied Priory (Northants.) to Robert de Aumari enumerates various protections for the parochial rights of the church of Thornborough (Northants.), including that offerings given to 'any chaplain or religious travelling that way or staying there' who celebrates at the chapel should be handed over to the mother church.[26] This clause is separate from specifications regarding service by the family's own chaplain,

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[23] *Rotuli litterarum patentium in Turri Londinensi asservati*, ed. Sir T.D. Hardy (London, 1835), p. 90.

[24] Oxford, Bodleian Library, AN, fol. 74r.

[25] 'Terribilis autem est locus iste. Reuera terribilis: quia terribilis est malignus spritibus, et terrorem eis incuciens quia loca sancta ad que fideles conuenit, in quibus misse celebrantur, in quibus corpus et sanguis domini coniciuntur…', AN, fol. 93v. C.f. Gen. 28.17.

[26] *Luffield Priory Charters*, ed. G.R. Elvey, Northamptonshire Record Society, 22, 26 (2 vols., Northampton, 1968-75), i, p. 46.

and it implies that an itinerant chaplain or religious man might expect a lay audience even if he ministered in a church not his own.

Ministry to the poor, sick, and travellers through the support of hospitals or through direct almsgiving was also commonly undertaken by the religious. The second half of the twelfth century saw a wave of hospital building across England, often in connection with religious foundations,[27] and the localities studied in this thesis were no exception: Northampton, Oxford, London and Exeter diocese all had at least one hospital served or administered by a religious house. Below it will be shown that one monk from St Andrew's Priory, Northampton, was maintained at the hospital of St David at Kingsthorpe, a suburb of Northampton, in the early thirteenth century. Around the same time, the Abbey of St James, a house of regular canons just outside Northampton, accepted a gift of three and a half virgates of land with the grantor's stipulation that the rents from the land be used 'for the maintenance of the infirm' at the priory, 'and in no way to be used for any purpose other than for the care of the infirm in perpetuity'.[28] This grant might refer to the maintenance of canons in the abbey's infirmary, but for that we would expect slightly different language, *ad infirmarium* or similar. It is entirely possible that the canons were caring for other sick people at the priory. We may compare the language of an 1189x1221 gift by Henry, abbot of Abingdon Abbey near Oxford, to the abbey's almonry of various tithes 'to be paid for the maintenance of paupers in perpetuity'.[29] This gift followed a request to Pope Alexander III, granted in 1177, for permission to assign the revenues of the church of Longworth (Oxon.) and the chapel of St Nicholas in Abingdon for the reception of the

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[27] Watson, 'Origins'; Orme and Webster, *English Hospital*.

[28] 'Ita quidem quod redditus et exute predicte terre atturnentur ad sustentationem infirmorum apud sanctum Iacobum, et nullo modo ad alius opus quam ad opus informorum in perpetuum', NRO, Andrew (Harlestone) A/10.

[29] *Two Cartularies of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. C.F. Slade and G. Lambrick, OHS new ser., 32-3 (2 vols., Oxford, 1990-2), i, pp. 221-2.

poor.[30] In London, the priory of St Bartholomew in Smithfield, the city's northwestern suburb, maintained a hospital with the same dedication from the reign of Henry I to the end of the century.[31] When Queen Matilda established the Hospital of St Katherine near the Tower of London in around 1148, she gave the canons of Holy Trinity Priory custody and the right to select the hospital's masters.[32] And Southwark Priory, a house of regular canons on the south bank of the Thames, received an indulgence for alms to build a hospital of St Thomas Becket in 1173x80; tradition holds that the hospital was founded by Becket himself, and subsequently named after him.[33]

Turning to Exeter diocese: when Reginald, earl of Cornwall, wanted to set up an endowment to build a house for 'the lepers of Launceston' in 1175, he entrusted the money to Bishop Bartholomew. The bishop transferred the funds to Baldwin, his close friend and abbot of Forde (Dorset), who endowed the house from the abbey's possessions in the presence of various citizens of Exeter. According to Nicholas Orme, the eventual hospital 'operated under the protection and supervision of the priory' of Launceston (Corn.).[34] Within the town of Exeter, the Benedictine monks of St Nicholas' Priory, a cell of Battle Abbey, maintained a hospital which in 1170 was re-founded and dedicated to St Alexius. The earlier existence of this hospital, and its connection with St Nicholas' Priory, have previously gone unnoticed by historians,[35] so it is worth setting out the evidence here. In 1154x8 Bernardus and Paganus, with their wives and families, quitclaimed land which had been given to St Nicholas priory. The deed records that

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[30] Ibid., i, p. 15.

[31] W. Page (ed.), *A History of the County of London: Volume 1, London within the Bars, Westminster and Southwark* (London, 1909); *CSB*, pp. 1-4.

[32] *CHT*, p. 192.

[33] *EEA, 15: London 1076-1187*, ed. F. Neininger (Oxford, 1999), p. 122; Page, *County of London*, pp. 538-42.

[34] N. Orme, 'The Origins of the Lepers of Launceston', *Journal of the Royal Institute of Cornwall* (2003), pp. 109-12, at 110-111.

[35] Ibid., p. 67; Orme and Webster, *English Hospital*, p. 232.

these men and their families were made brethren and sisters of St Nicholas', and that they swore never to claim the land in question and to defend 'the hospital' against the claims of others.[36] The re-foundation date of 1170 comes from a *memorandum* in a fifteenth-century cartulary of St John's hospital, which absorbed the hospital of St Alexius in 1238x9,[37] claiming that 'around the year 1170 … William son of Ralph, founder of the hospital of St Alexius behind the monastery of St Nicholas in Exeter, obtained the land where the hospital is located from abbot Walter of St Martin of Battle and his convent'.[38] This grant was followed by a charter of Odo, abbot of Battle, issued in 1175x84.[39] It appears, therefore, that the monks of St Nicholas had set up a hospital in or near their priory before by the 1150s; the abbot of Battle, perhaps desiring the prestige of a formal foundation and the support of a lay patron, granted land behind the priory to William for what was essentially a continuation of the monks' activities. Moreover, the 'new' hospital of St Alexius remained connected to the priory to the extent that it was referred to as 'the hospital of St Nicholas' several decades after its re-foundation. A charter of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century records a gift to the 'hospital of St Nicholas of Exeter' of 'three messuages in the vicinity of the hospital', and specifies that 'this gift has been made by the will of the prior of St Nicholas and of the whole chapter as capital lords' of the lands given.[40] Probably from 1170 onwards, then, the hospital of St Nicholas or St Alexius was its own institutional entity, able to

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[36] K.M. Clarke, 'Records of St Nicholas' Priory, Exeter', *Devonshire Association Report and Transactions*, 44 (1912), pp. 192-205, at 195.

[37] S.C. Watson, 'The Sources for English Hospitals 1100 to 1400', in M. Scheutz *et al.* (eds.), *Quellen zur europäischen Spitalgeschichte in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Vienna, 2010), pp. 65-103, at 81.

[38] G. Oliver, *Historic Collections Relating to the Monasteries in Devon* (Exeter, 1841), p. 93; DHC ECA 53A, fol. 58r.

[39] DHC, ECA 53A, fol. 58r.

[40] 'Ego…concessi hospitali sancti Nicholai Exonie … tria mesuagia que sunt in uico hospitalis … et de istis terris reddet domus hospitalis sancti Nicholai annuatim duos solidos, et mihi et heredibus meis annuatim unam librum kumini ad Natale. … Et heredes mei, qui hanc liberam kumini de hospitali recipient, debent dare releuamen priori sancti Nicholai ut capitali domino, quod si non fecerint hospitale reddet predicta libram kumini priori sancti Nicholai donec releuamen soluatur. Hec donatio facta fuit per uoluntatem prioris sancti Nicholai et totius capituli sicut capitalis domini', DHC, ED/SN/15.

receive gifts directly; but it was still strongly associated with the priory and probably subject at the very least to the priory's, or rather Battle Abbey's, lordship over the land on which the hospital stood and the surrounding neighbourhood.[41] That the monks of St Nicholas continued to be interested in charitable work after 1170, either through the hospital or through other means, is attested by a papal privilege of 1184, confirming, among other possessions, the church of Tiverton 'for the use of the monks and the sustenance of the poor'.[42]

The case of the hospital of St Nicholas/St Alexius highlights the way in which some religious houses might establish hospitals or other charitable ventures of their own initiative, in addition to administering hospitals established by lay or episcopal founders. It is difficult to say exactly what kind of ministry relationships religious work in hospitals facilitated. Although houses regularly relied on lay brothers and sisters to fulfil the day-to-day care of sick or poor residents,[43] it is probably no coincidence that those hospitals connected to religious houses were usually situated nearby. The religious may have ministered spiritually to those who stayed in their hospitals, but it seems likely that they also involved themselves, to some extent, in ministry to lay people's material needs. Many of Bartholomew of Exeter's sermons assert that practical works of charity and hospitality toward the sick, the poor and travellers are beneficial for the remission of sins and the cultivation of virtue; much of this advice would have applied equally to lay, clerical and religious listeners. In a sermon for Lent, for example, Bartholomew provides a three-step plan for fasting while simultaneously practicing generosity: one should first be content with what one has, then decrease the amount of

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[41] See Watson, *Sources*, p. 80.

[42] *Papsturkunden in England*, ed. W. Holtzmann (3 vols., Berlin, 1930-52), iii, pp. 419-22.

[43] Watson, *Sources*, p. 75.

food one eats, then use the remaining food to feed the poor.[44] In an Easter sermon, he recites an *exemplum* in which a man and his entire household 'zealously served in hospitality' and entertained travellers daily. Divine approval for their efforts was evidenced when a traveller miraculously disappeared, having been taken up to heaven.[45]

Finally, as alluded to in chapter one, it is likely that both Alexander of Ashby's *De artificioso modo predicandi* and Bartholomew of Exeter's *Liber penitentialis* envision abbots and priors instructing their subordinate religious in how to administer sacraments to lay people. In the fifth sermon appended to *De artificioso modo predicandi*, Alexander offers practical instructions for three sacraments which *minores sacerdotes*, 'lesser priests', often perform incorrectly for their parishioners: baptism, the Eucharist, and extreme unction.[46] The sermon instructs prelates to relay this advice to their subordinates. Alexander does not specify whether, when he writes of prelates and lesser priests, he is thinking about bishops and their diocesan clergy, or abbots and priors and their subordinate religious. Like other writers of this period, he uses *sacerdos* broadly to refer to any man in holy orders, not just secular, local priests; in this context he is more interested in the functional, that is to say sacramental, responsibilities of all men in holy orders than in the religious-secular distinction.[47] But it would be odd if Alexander, who addressed *De artificioso modo predicandi* to an abbot and regular canon, also included a lengthy, practical set of instructions which were completely irrelevant to his recipient. In the treatise itself he emphasises the Gregorian idea of preaching appropriately to one's audience.[48] Alexander seems to have assumed that some regular canons would serve in local churches, and that their prelates would instruct them as to the proper

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[44] BE, fol. 27vb.

[45] 'Quidam paterfamilias cum tota domo sua hospitalitati studiose seruiebat', ibid., fol. 41vb.

[46] *AA I*, pp. 65-8.

[47] For example, in the same sermon, he refers to prelates repeatedly as *sacerdotes*: ibid., pp. 62, 64,

[48] Ibid., pp. 29-31.

administration of sacraments to their parishioners. Similarly, Bartholomew of Exeter appears to have pitched his *Liber penitentialis* for prelates, including heads of religious houses, since he writes about sins which pertain solely to the religious life; yet the treatise also offers instructions for hearing lay confessions.[49] Bartholomew expects that prelates will read the *Liber penitentialis* and use the relevant sections to teach their subordinates how to minister to lay people. Like Alexander of Ashby, he seems to leave open the possibility that some religious prelates will instruct their subordinates in how to hear lay confessions.

In order to move beyond these suggestions, we need to begin to look at the evidence for service in local churches by specific houses of regular canons. Monks were barred from 'public visitations of the sick, from anointings and even from hearing confessions' by the First Lateran Council of 1123,[50] and I have not found evidence of monks being installed in local churches, with full pastoral care of parishioners, in the period covered by this thesis—although some monks did minister to lay people in 'special' local churches, as discussed below. Many houses of regular canons in late twelfth-century England obtained papal or episcopal charters guaranteeing their right to install canons in their local churches.[51] Representative is the clause in the general confirmation given to Leicester Abbey by Pope Eugenius III in 1148x9: 'Also we decree that in your parish churches which you hold you may choose priests from among your brothers, to whom, if they are suitable, bishops may commit the care of souls, so that they might render account to the bishop's care for the people in the manner of priests'.[52] These permissions are difficult to interpret. On the one hand, there is very

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[49] Morey, pp. 176, 194-6.

[50] *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, ed. and trans. N.P. Tanner (2 vols., London, 1990), i, p. 193.

[51] J.C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England* (London, 1950), pp. 228-39; H. Colvin, *The White Canons in England* (Oxford, 1951), pp. 22-3.

[52] *Papsturkunden*, iii, p. 52.

little positive evidence that houses which received permission to serve their churches with canons actually did so; on the other, it intuitively seems unlikely that houses would ask for permissions which they never intended to use. Certainly distance and personnel limitations would preclude most houses from sending canons to all but a small number of churches on a long-term basis.[53] However, the permissions received by some houses, in conjunction with other evidence, do represent demonstrable efforts by regular canons to serve their local churches. This is the case for Taunton Priory (Som.), St Frideswide's Priory (Oxon.), and Holy Trinity Priory (London). Examination of these cases reveals that regular canons served their own local churches under specific, and often temporary, local circumstances.

The clearest case is that of St Frideswide's Priory. In 1145x53 pope Eugenius III wrote the following to the prior, Robert of Cricklade, and brothers:

> We have heard, and we cannot bear to repeat it without sorrow, that in your area [*partibus vestris*] many of the priests, who should present an example of continence, are everywhere taking unlawful concubines. Therefore … we permit your canons to serve in your parish churches, saving the right of the bishop in whose diocese they lie and of the archdeacons.[54]

Presumably the canons of St Frideswide had written to Eugenius with the disquieting news, suggesting themselves as possible alternatives to immoral secular clerics. It is impossible to say whether they availed themselves of the permission once it was received. What should be noticed, however, is the assumption that a specific pretext is required to justify the canons' service of local churches; or to put it another way, that specific circumstances might spur canons to take on the work normally reserved for secular priests.

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[53] J.E. Burton, 'Monasteries and Parish Churches in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century Yorkshire', *Northern History*, 23 (1987), pp. 39-50, at 44; T. Colk, 'Twelfth-Century East Anglian Canons: A Monastic Life?', in C. Harper-Bill (ed.), *Medieval East Anglia* (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 209-24, at 213.

[54] *CSF*, i, 27.

The special circumstances which lay behind the permissions granted to Taunton Priory and Holy Trinity Priory are more ambiguous, but in both cases the canons appear to have taken an interest in serving churches in their immediate vicinity. In 1174x91 the prior of Taunton issued a charter to Reginald, bishop of Bath, to the effect

> that all our churches and chapels should respond to him [the bishop], his successors and his officials in all episcopal customs, in the manner of other churches lying within the diocese of Bath, except the chapels of St James and St George of the Fountain, and St Margaret of the Infirm, and St Peter of the Castle, the immunity of which the aforesaid bishop gave to our clerics. Furthermore we have conceded that the church of Ash Priors should respond as a mother church in the chapter of Spakest', and the church of Withiel Florey as a mother church in the chapter of Dunster.[55] And we wish that our canons who will minister in our churches and chapels should respond to the bishop and his officials just as other clerics in the diocese of Bath.[56]

This appears to have been a compromise solution to a dispute over the liability of some or all of the priory's churches to pay episcopal dues and to submit to the jurisdictions of rural deans. The bishop's authority over institutions may also have been at stake. The choice of St James, St George of the Fountain (at Wilton, a suburb of Taunton), St Margaret of the Infirm, and St Peter of the Castle as immune is noteworthy, since all of these churches were located in or near Taunton. Did immunity from episcopal customs allow the priory to serve these four churches with its own canons? The charter refers to 'our canons who will minister [*ministrabunt*] in our churches'. The future indicative tense—where the rest of the agreement is in the present subjunctive—is tantalising: it

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[55] 'Capitula de Spakest' and 'capitula de Dunestor' appear to refer to the chapters of rural deaneries. 'Spakest' is difficult to identify. In 1291 the church of Ash Priors belonged to the rural deanery of Taunton: *Taxatio ecclesiastica angliæ et waliæ auctoritate P. Nicholai IV*. (London, 1802), p. 199.

[56] 'Stephanus prior canonici Tantonie salutem. Nouerit uniuersitas uestra nos concessisse domino et patri nostro Rainaldo dei gratia Bathonie episcopo quod omnes ecclesie et capelle nostre respondeant ipsi et successoribus et officialibus suis in omnibus consuetudinibus episcopalibus more aliarum ecclesiarum episcopatum Bath' consistencium, exceptis capellis Sancti Iacobi et Sancti Georgij de fonte et Sancte Margarete infirmorum et Sancti Petri de castello, quarum inmunitatem nobis prefatus clericis episcopus indulsit. Concessimur preterea quod ecclesia de Aissa in capitulo de Spakest' et ecclesia de Wiyele in capitulo de Dunestor tanquam matrices ecclesie respondeant. Volumus et ut canonici nostri qui in ecclesiis nostris et capellis ministrabunt ipsi domino episcopo et officialibus suis sicut alii clerici episcopatus Bathonie respondeant', LA I, ff. 35v-36r; c.f. LA II, fol. 342r; HMC, i, p. 38.

suggests certainty, but also precludes any firm conclusion that the canons were already ministering in their churches.

The proposition that the canons of Taunton Priory at least intended to minister in their churches in and around Taunton seems more probable in comparison with the case of Holy Trinity Priory in London, since the evidence for both cases points to a specific interest in serving those churches which lay nearest to the respective priories. In 1160x76 Pope Alexander III assented to Holy Trinity Priory's 'petitions' and granted 'that you may institute three or four of your canons in your parochial churches without any objection' provided that one of the canons was presented to the bishop and charged with the care of souls.[57] This general allowance on its own would not tell us very much, but in 1201 the canons received a more specific reiteration of this right from Pope Innocent III. In a general confirmation charter, he granted that

> The aforesaid parochial church of St Botolph and chapel of St Katherine and St Michael should be rightly served by two of the canons, who are removable at the will of the prior of the monastery as he sees fit, and who will administer the sacraments and ecclesiastical rites to the parishioners of the aforesaid church and chapel, with the consideration … that the union, annexation, and incorporation of the aforesaid church and chapel by the aforesaid canons would render them useless on account of their poverty if portions of a vicarage were assigned in them.[58]

Remarkably, Innocent is not merely agreeing that the canons have the right to serve particular churches if they wish, but ordering that those churches 'should be served' by two canons. In order to understand the particular circumstances that lay behind this injunction, a detailed look at the churches and parishes in the vicinity of the priory is required.

First, it is necessary to clarify Innocent's reference to 'the chapel of St Katherine and St Michael'. This appears to be an error for 'the chapel*s* of St Katherine and of St

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[57] *Papsturkunden*, iii, pp. 586-7.

[58] *The Letters of Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) Concerning England and Wales: A Calendar with an Appendix of Texts*, ed. C.R. Cheney and M.G. Cheney (Oxford, 1967), p. 224.

Michael'. By 1291 St Katherine's and St Michael's were two separate chapels, the former in the southwest corner of the priory's cemetery near the 'public entrance', and the latter just on the opposite side of Leadenhall Street.[59] St Michael's had its own cemetery by 1314.[60] There was a recognised 'parish of St Michael' during Peter of Cornwall's priorate (1197-1221), but the 'parish of St Katherine' first appears in the time of Peter's successor as prior, Richard (1222-50).[61] There is no evidence for a chapel of St Katherine before 1201, but a chapel or at least an altar of St Michael is suggested by the appearance of John, 'our' chaplain of St Michael, in the witness lists of three charters datable to 1170x97 in the priory's cartulary.[62] It is possible that the chapel of St Michael was in the twelfth century a secondary altar within the chapel or church of St Katherine, which was moved to a separate building across the street in the thirteenth century; if that was the case then a single parish of St Katherine may sometimes have been called by its secondary dedication to St Michael, as appears to have occurred with another London church, St Mary Magdalene Fish Street, which had a secondary dedication to St Wandrille.[63] But the simpler answer—that a scribal error replaced *capellarum* with *capelle*—seems more likely. It is not known at what point St Katherine's and St Michael's were established, nor when or how they came into the priory's possession. More straightforwardly, 'the church of St Botoloph' in Innocent's charter refers to St Botoloph Aldgate, granted to Holy Trinity Priory in 1125 by a mysterious *cnihtengild* which King Edgar had endowed with land outside the city's

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[59] J. Schofield and R. Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory, Aldgate, City of London: An Archaeological Reconstruction and History* (London, 2005), pp. 71, 135-7.

[60] *CHT*, p. 229.

[61] Ibid., pp. 7, 9.

[62] Ibid., pp. 94, 136, 219.

[63] *CSP*, p. 174.

eastern wall in the late tenth century.[64] That church was situated just outside Aldgate and the city wall, opposite the priory.

There are two discernible reasons why the canons of Holy Trinity would have wanted to serve the churches in the immediate vicinity of the priory—assuming, as seems reasonable, that they petitioned the pope specifically for this privilege when they requested a general confirmation. First, Innocent's charter makes it clear that St Botolph's, St Katherine's and St Michael's did not generate sufficient revenue, at least in the canons' eyes, to justify the support of secular priests to minister in them. In Innocent's words serving these churches with secular vicars would render them 'useless', although it is not clear whether he means useless to the priests, the canons or local lay people. If we take a purely mercenary view of the canons' motives, we might suggest that they exaggerated the churches' poverty as an excuse to forego paying vicars, thereby wringing every penny out of their spiritualities. Closer inspection suggests a more nuanced rationale. Innocent's mention of *unio, incorporatio et annexio* is somewhat cryptic, but appears to suggest the canons could make the three (or two) churches into a single financial unit, a vicarage, paying two or more secular priests portions of an annual salary to minister in them. This might be interpreted as implying that the canons had previously received only an annual pension from the priests incumbent in the churches, and now wanted to receive the tithes paid to the churches directly. But it is difficult to imagine that St Michael's and particularly St Katherine's, which presumably began as a cemetery chapel, could have secured that degree of financial independence from the priory; similarly the priory was in possession of the entire 'portsoken' in which St Botolph Aldgate lay, and therefore are unlikely to have

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[64] *CHT*, p. 168; Brooke and Keir, *London, 800-1216*, p. 98; D. Keene, 'English Urban Guilds, c. 900-1300: The Purposes and Politics of Association', in I.A. Gadd and P. Walls (eds.), *Guilds and Association in Europe, 900-1900* (London, 2006), pp. 3-26, pp. 3-26, at 8.

foregone direct control of its tithes. More likely is that the canons were already serving these churches, at least occasionally, and presented the churches' poverty as retrospective justification for their decision, arguing that the alternative would be financially untenable. In other words, the churches were already 'annexed', to use the technical language of modern scholars; the canons only needed to justify their decision not to hire vicars.

The first reason why the canons of Holy Trinity Priory were motivated to minister to lay people in the churches immediately adjacent to the priory was therefore practical, and specifically financial. The second reason was that involvement in ministering to their lay neighbours was a conscious priority for the canons. Here we should recall Peter of Cornwall's unease, discussed in chapters two and three, at what he perceived as the abdication of pastoral responsibility by a contemporary London priest. For Peter of Cornwall, the apparent disregard of the priest for a local lay woman's plight contrasted with the moral and practical benefits of cultivating the goodwill of neighbours. In the *Liber Reuelationum*, Peter relates a tale told to him by the Cistercian abbot of Savigny about an unnamed monastery in Flanders. It is impossible to know how much of Peter's 'original' entries in the *Liber Reuelationum* should be attributed to his informants, and how much was elaborated or glossed by him. But since Peter actively wrote these stories down—'The abbot of Savigny said that *what I tell here* occurred'[65]—it is reasonable to assume that at least the minor details and moral or interpretive frameworks might be Peter's own; more importantly, by the very act of writing he signals his approval of the content provided by his sources. In this tale, rubricated 'a warning to undertake hospitality', a new abbot reduces by half the amount of hospitality his predecessor was accustomed to give out because the abbey is greatly in debt. At the

[65] LR, p. 316, emphasis added.

year's end, however, the monks find that their debt has in fact doubled. This induces the abbot to eliminate hospitality altogether, which causes the debt to double once again; further spending cuts and personnel reductions plunge the abbey into severe poverty, until its fortunes are finally reversed after the intervention of an angelic visitor in the form of a young man. What is important, though, is the porter's explanation to the young man of the abbey's former glory: 'In the time of the other abbot … that house was said to abound in all goods, and that abbot maintained hospitality with all cheerfulness and abundance … and all the neighbourhood [*vicinam*] loved that house, and freely conferred many goods on it'.[66] The abbey's wealth is not attributed to influential donors, but to those who live nearby and benefit directly from its generosity. Perhaps Peter imagined his own priory enjoying similar favour.

Moreover, this inclination appears to have had a long life in the priory's institutional memory. In 1425 Thomas Axbridge recorded that the priory was 'oppressed with poverty' in the early days after its establishment in 1108.[67] At that time, 'many men and women of the city' were accustomed to process around the priory (for what occasion we are not told), circling first the cloister and then the refectory. One day, as the procession passed the refectory, the people saw tablecloths laid on the tables but no bread:

> 'This setting is beautiful', they said, 'but where where will the bread come from?' To which the response was that often the brothers lacked food at mealtimes and endured many hardships in trying to secure necessities. Then the women, stirred by piety, decided among themselves that each would faithfully offer one loaf of bread on the altar of Christ every Sunday, and that they would persuade other women bakers to do the same. Thereafter so many loaves were brought each Sunday that the brothers and their guests had enough and more for the entire week.[68]

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[66] Ibid., p. 318.

[67] *CHT*, p. 228.

[68] Ibid., p. 228.

The chronicle goes on to describe how Norman, the first prior, received £20 in rents within the city of London by the generosity of the faithful citizens.[69] Of course Axbridge's account tells us more about the canons' understanding of their priory's history in the fifteenth century than it does about events in the twelfth, but it is nevertheless significant that Axbridge identified the priory's early success with the favour and generosity of the local lay community: first in humble offerings of bread, and ultimately in more substantial gifts of land and rents.

The effect of the canons' commitment to ministry to the lay people of their neighbourhood meant that ministry relationships in Aldgate looked quite different from the rest of London. The last chapter showed that the high geographical density of churches in London led to the early development of geographical parish boundaries. But in the Aldgate neighbourhood Holy Trinity Priory was dominant, and tithes were paid directly to the priory. That probably made the structure of ministry relationships in Aldgate resemble that in Exeter, where the cathedral's dominance meant that local churches within the city did not develop clear geographical parishes in the twelfth century. Indeed the area around Holy Trinity Priory, St Botolph's, St Katherine's and St Michael's probably functioned like a single parish. The 'parish of St Michael' mentioned in a 1197x21 document in Holy Trinity Priory's cartulary may simply be an alternate name for the 'parish of Holy Trinity' also recorded for the same period.[70] The 1291 *Taxatio* treated St Katherine's and St Michael's as a single parish,[71] as did the 1384 exemplification for the royal tenth;[72] and when in 1425 Thomas Axbridge, a canon of Holy Trinity, organised the priory's cartulary by parish, he wrote 'the parishes of

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[69] Ibid., p. 229.

[70] Ibid., pp. 5-6.

[71] *Taxatio*, p. 19.

[72] *CHT*, p. 211.

Holy Trinity, St Michael, Mary Magdalene and St Katherine' as a single heading.[73] There is no evidence before the fifteenth century of a parish, church or altar of Mary Magdalene, although Axbridge records that the priory was established in 1108 'within Aldgate in London … in the place where a certain man named Syredus had commenced to found a church in honour of St Cross and St Mary Magdalene', and 'Eilwin son of Syredus' witnessed the *cnihtengild*'s grant to the priory in 1125.[74] Perhaps, then, some ministry relationships based at Syredus' church and associated with Mary Magdalene continued to operate within the new priory church. In the eighteenth century, the antiquarian John Strype recorded a parish altar to Mary Magdalene 'on the south part of the church'—that is, possibly in the south aisle, with direct access through the churchyard from Leadenhall Street, or in the south transept chapel, which dates to the eleventh or twelfth century.[75] Some lay people from the Aldgate neighbourhood therefore may have worshipped in the priory church itself. Lay people living near the priory may also have buried their dead in the priory's cemetery; no cemetery for St Botolph's is recorded until perhaps the 1230s, with cemeteries of St Katherine's and St Michael's appearing later.[76] Indeed, the location of St Katherine's inside the priory's cemetery suggests that it began as a cemetery chapel, perhaps as a site for intercessory prayer on behalf of the dead. For a parallel case we might look to the Benedictine priory at Cowick, a suburb of Exeter. A lay community worshipped in the nave of the priory until 1173x91, when the monks built a separate chapel of St Thomas to be served by a chaplain. A lay cemetery and cemetery chapel of St Michael had also been established

[73] Ibid., p. 5.

[74] Ibid., pp. 168, 224.

[75] Schofield and Lea, *Holy Trinity Priory*, pp. 55-6, 90-1.

[76] *CHT*, p. 203, dated using occurrences of Roger Duke in the same volume (see index, p. 251).

outside the priory gate by 1261.[77] In both cases, the dual use of a conventual church by monks or canons and lay people spurs the construction of a separate chapel and cemetery chapel for lay use; although at Holy Trinity Priory at least, this did not remove lay worshippers from the priory church entirely, at least in the fifteenth century.

Additionally, it appears that Peter of Cornwall had religious associates who were preaching to lay audiences, and this likely included some canons of Holy Trinity Priory. Peter advertises the *Pantheologus*, a compendium of *distinctiones* for sermon composition, as useful 'for the religious [*claustralibus*] who are accustomed to preach to the clergy or to the people', among others, and says that his 'fellow religious' (*conclaustrales*) gave the work its name because it was so useful to them.[78] If lay people already visited the priory at least to bury the dead and to hear Mass, then it seems likely that the canons would have preached to them in the priory church as well, particularly on the more important feast days. The canons may also have offered more informal religious advice to lay people, perhaps relating the miracle and vision stories which Peter of Cornwall collected in his *Liber reuelationum.* At the same time, though, Innocent's charter refers to 'the parishioners of the aforesaid church and chapel'—that is, of the church of St Botolph and the chapel(s) of St Katherine and St Michael—implying that at least some people living in the vicinity of the priory maintained, or were supposed to maintain, ministry relationships primarily with those churches rather than with the priory itself. According to Innocent III's charter, the sacraments—probably baptism, annual confession and the Eucharist—were to be administered to lay people by the canons in their local churches. We therefore get an overall picture of the canons involving themselves in a variety of ministries to the lay people who lived near

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[77] G. Yeo, *The Monks of Cowick* (Exeter, 1987), pp. 9-10; N. Orme, *The Churches of Medieval Exeter* (Exeter, 2014), pp. 91, 144.

[78] Hunt, 'English Learning', p. 40.

the priory, both at the priory church itself and through some of the local churches which the priory controlled.

In assessing the extent and nature of ministry to the laity by the religious in this period, the only consistent rule is of variety. Two specific ministries—public preaching, and administration of or service in hospitals—were widely practiced, the former primarily (but probably not exclusively) by regular canons, the latter by both monks and canons. Altar service in private or semi-private chapels constituted a third ministry frequently undertaken by the religious on behalf of lay people, and this will be dealt with in the next section. The service of local churches—accepting the pastoral care of parishioners in the fullest sense—was neither routine nor implausible. Instead, it was undertaken by some houses of regular canons in response to particular circumstances, such as the perceived moral rectitude of local priests or the geographical proximity of certain churches; or, as an outworking of an institutional ethos; or both. This makes generalisation difficult: it is impossible to know, for example, whether the preoccupation with cultivating goodwill among lay neighbours which prevailed at Holy Trinity Priory was shared by other houses, such as Taunton, which may have also placed canons in local churches. While we should be cautious about projecting motivations beyond those few houses where we can identify them, we should also acknowledge that the ministry activities of many religious houses will remain concealed. The historian should never assume that a religious house engaged in ministry to the laity simply because of the order to which it belonged, or the number of churches granted to it; equally we should not be surprised at evidence of extensive ministry to the laity by the members of some religious houses.

Special Places, Holy People

Historians interested in ministry to the laity by the religious usually focus exclusively on local churches, established religious houses, and hospitals; but these were not the only venues in which lay people received ministries. The religious landscape of late twelfth-century England was also littered with other places where religious ministry occurred, such as the sites of wells and springs; monastic cells and granges; private chapels, that is chapels not dependent on mother churches; and anchoritic dwellings, whether in homes or in cells attached to local churches. Many of these places functioned as venues in which monks could minister to lay people. Others were inhabited by secular priests or lay people, who might similarly offer religious ministries. Arrangements at these sites were often transient. Martin Heale, focussing on later medieval England, has observed the difficulty, or inappropriateness, of drawing technical distinctions between small priories, cells, granges and hermitages.[79] This holds true for the late twelfth century as well: in this period we should recognise the potential for overlap between holy wells, anchoritic dwellings, chapels, monastic cells and some dependent priories, any of which might be described simply as *loci*, holy places, or with more specific terms (*hermitagium*, *capella*, *cella*, *prioratus*). The occupation and use of most holy places probably changed over time, and may have been differently described by different document creators. It is therefore impossible to clearly separate an 'official' system of mother churches, chapels and monasteries from an additional or alternative landscape of hermitages and holy sites.

An account of miracles which occurred at St Frideswide's Priory (Oxon.) in 1180, written by Philip, prior of the same house, reports that a woman named Brichtiva travelled to St Frideswide's shrine from the area around Northampton. She was advised

[79] M. Heale, *The Dependent Priories of Medieval English Monasteries* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 4-8.

by bystanders 'to go to the font which the blessed virgin [St Frideswide] had obtained from the Lord during her lifetime, which is a mile from the city' of Oxford.[80] This must be a reference to Binsey, just northwest of the city. Robert of Cricklade in his *Life* of St Frideswide wrote that when Frideswide came to the possession (*predium*) of Binsey, she built an oratory and buildings at a particular place (*locus*) there called Thornbury, 'lonely and most suitable for devotion', and 'obtained by her prayers a well which remains to this day, and performs healing works for many who drink from it'.[81] John Blair has observed that Binsey was considered a holy place in the early twelfth century: a foundation narrative of Godstow Abbey, a Benedictine nunnery just north of Binsey, claims that in the time of Henry I one Edith of Winchester lived a holy life at Binsey before establishing the abbey at Godstow. He argues that the 'four hides near Oxford' which Domesday Book records for the canons represent Binsey as an ancient possession which was extra-hundredal, whose inhabitants paid churchscot, and which persistently attracted the ambiguous terms *predium* and *locus*: it seems to have been a '*special* place', and was possibly used by the canons as a monastic cell. There was certainly a chapel at Binsey by 1203x6.[82] Philip's report of the miracle at Binsey suggests that local people still recognised the well there as a holy site in the late twelfth century.

It is possible to draw parallels to a number of *loci* recorded in and around Northampton—incidentally, the area from which Brichtiva, the woman who was healed at Binsey, travelled. In 1200, the monks of St Andrew's Priory, Northampton, agreed to allow Peter son of Adam and his son Henry to establish a hospital dedicated to the Holy Trinity in connection with the existing chapel of St David in Kingsthorpe, a suburb of

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[80] *Acta sanctorum Octobris VIII* (Brussels, 1858), p. 579.

[81] J. Blair, 'Thornbury, Binsey: A Probably Defensive Enclosure Associated with Saint Frideswide', in idem (ed.), *St Frideswide's Monastery at Oxford: Archaeological and Architectural Studies* (Gloucester, 1990), pp. 3-20, at 4. See also idem, 'Saint Frideswide Reconsidered', *Oxoniensia*, 52 (1987), pp. 71-127. The translation is the author's.

[82] Blair, 'Thornbury', pp. 4-5.

the town, which Henry held in connection with his ministry in St Peter's church. Zealous to protect their monopoly over Northampton's churches, the monks set out precise conditions for the foundation: under no circumstances should the hospital morph into a religious house of any kind; no parishioner of St Andrew's should be buried at the hospital unless he made a verified request to that effect before his death, and in so doing joined the brethren of the hospital in the secular habit for the remainder of his life; only two bells were allowed, one for the chapel of Holy Trinity and one for the chapel of St David. The hospital was to be overseen by a master (*procurator*), chaplain, cleric or layman, and to be served by two chaplains and six *conversi*.[83] Moreover, visitors to the hospital were to be ministered to: the agreement requires that the hospital have three rows of beds 'in which paupers and pilgrims and especially invalids should lie, so that they can hear the mass more easily and offer prayers more devotedly'.[84]

However, the arrangements for the hospital were even more complex than the original agreement indicated. In that agreement, the monks conceded a hospital 'in our place [*loco*], in which the chapel of St David is situated'.[85] That *locus* was already a sort of cell or chapel in which one monk of the priory lived. A letter of Innocent III, dated to 2 June 1201 and copied in a fifteenth-century hand, is written on a partial folio inserted into the priory's fifteenth-century cartulary.[86] The letter is not calendared by Cheney and Cheney, but it appears to be genuine.[87] It instructs two delegates to investigate a complaint by the prior and monks of St Andrew's

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[83] Watson, 'Sources', pp. 73-77.

[84] Ibid., p. 74.

[85] Ibid., p. 74.

[86] BL, MS Cotton Vesp. E XVII, fol. 34r.

[87] Cheney and Cheney, *Letters*. The letter matches the wording of two letters printed by Cheney and Cheney, one from 1199 (no. 91, pp. 17, 201-2) and one from 1202 (no. 441A, pp. 72, 232). However, it is not possible to conclusively verify the authenticity of the letter because the papal register for Innocent III's fourth year is entirely lost.

> that, although they gave to P[eter] son of Adam a certain place [*locum*] in their parish of Kingsthorpe for the construction of a hospital in order to receive the poor, which they possessed for many years prior with one of their monks residing there, so that one of their monks should provide for the same hospital in perpetuity both spiritually and temporally, the heir of the aforesaid Peter, trying to remove their monk from the administration of the hospital, presumes to molest them regarding this matter and contrary to justice.[88]

Another document copied in the cartulary verifies the existence of such an arrangement. It is barely legible, but appears to be a revision of the original foundation agreement issued no later than 1206: it refers to the prohibition against the foundation of a religious house 'according to the first agreement'.[89] But it also includes additions to the hospital's personnel:

> And we concede that the aforesaid brothers may choose, from our house and from no other, one monk of good manner of living and repute … who will minister spiritually in the same place with the brothers living there. And the aforesaid brothers may choose another cleric or layman … who will attend to business outside that place with the advice of the monk living there.[90]

It appears that either the chapel of St David or another nearby place of worship was customarily inhabited by a monk of St Andrew's Priory, who was also ordained and could therefore celebrate masses. It is unclear why the role of this monk was not dealt with in the first charter for the hospital; perhaps his continued presence was taken for granted until conflict arose, and a remedy was attempted by allowing the brethren of the hospital to choose which monk would take up the post. One wonders in vain what role the monk played, before and perhaps still after the foundation of the hospital, in ministering to the lay people of Kingsthorpe.

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[88] '…Querelam quod, cum quendam locum in parochia sua de Torpe quem, multorum retro annis ibi quodam suo monacho residente pacifice, possederunt, P filio Ade ad construendum hospitale ad pauperes recipiendes ibidem concesserunt, ita quod aliquis monachorum suorum eidem hospitale perpetuo tam in spiritualibus quam in temporalibus prouidere, heres predicti petri, monachum suum ab aministracione ipsius hospitalis amouere contendens, eos super hoc contra iusticiam molestare presumit', MS Cotton Vesp. E XVII, fol. 34r.

[89] Ibid., fol. 33v. Among the witnesses are Walkelin, abbot of St James' priory, who died in 1206.

[90] 'Concessimus etiam quod predicti fratris eligent de domo nostro et non aliunde vnum monachum bone conuersacionis oppinionis … qui in eodem loco fratribus ibidem manientibus spiritualia ministrabit. Et predicti fratres alium eligent clericum vel laicum … qui exteriora illius loci negocia per concilium ipsius monachi ibidem manentis procurabit', ibid., fol. 33v.

At least one other religious house in Northamptonshire maintained *loci* at which monks ministered. An 1174 confirmation of Alexander III for Luffield Priory refers to five possessions as *loci*: the *locus* where the priory church is situated, the *locus* of St Mary, the *locus* of St Mary of Flechamstead (Warws.), the *locus* of St Mary of Charley (Leics.), and the *locus* of Bradwell (Bucks.).[91] The *locus* at Flechamstead had been a hermitage in Flechamstead Wood 'which Gerald the monk made'; it was granted to the priory in 1149x54.[92] The *locus* of St Mary of Charley was probably related to the gift made in 1119x28 by the priory's founder, Robert the second earl of Leicester, 'of the other land of Charley, for the building of as much as I suitably investigate by the council of my friends'.[93] Bradwell was referred to as both a cell and a priory in documents of 1180x84, and had a prior, Nigel, by that time.[94] Nothing more is known of the '*locus* of St Mary'. In the early thirteenth century, Richard Gubynn of Northampton gave a messuage to Daventry Priory and to an unspecified chapel of St Mary, which could have existed at any of the three *loci* associated with St Mary.[95] (The priory church itself was also dedicated to St Mary.) Moreover, the same 1174 papal confirmation lists a chapel of St Thomas Becket, which is mentioned in a contemporary grant by Robert de Ayrel of 'a certain *locus* in my wood of Lillingston, in which a chapel of St Thomas, archbishop and martyr of Christ, has been built'.[96] A *locus*, therefore, could be anything from the site of a hermitage to the site of a priory, but in general it was a place, associated with a saint, in which at least one holy person or priest, likely a monk, ministered.

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[91] *Luffield Priory Charters*, pp. 20-21.

[92] Ibid., p. 18.

[93] Ibid., p. 15.

[94] Ibid., pp. 44-5, 374.

[95] *Cartulary of the Medieval Archives of Christ Church*, ed. N. Denholm-Young, OHS, 92 (1931), p. 98.

[96] Ibid., pp. 72-3.

The high concentration of recorded *loci* near Northampton and Oxford is unique among the localities studied in this thesis, but similar establishments can be identified in Exeter diocese as well. In the second half of the twelfth century a monk named William 'by agreement with [his] nephew Thomas de Helint' gave land to the chapel of St Mary Magdalene of 'Neelvill', in the manor of Ilsington, in Devon. The tenants of the land were to pay 15s annually 'to the same chapel and to the monks serving God there'.[97] This 'chapel' and monastic residence is otherwise undocumented, and it is very strange that no mother church is mentioned. Plympton Priory (Devon) held the church of St Michael in Ilsington, but there is nothing about a chapel or other site dedicated to St Mary Magdalene in charters of the Redvers family, patrons of Plympton.[98] Alternatively the chapel may have been a cell of Barnstaple Priory (Devon), which was dedicated to St Mary Magdalene and for which no cartulary survives; this would parallel several of the *loci* of Daventry Priory, which shared the priory's dedication and at least one of which was referred to as a chapel. In the twelfth century benefactors sometimes made gifts to dependent priories conditional on their entry into those priories.[99] Yet it is curious, again, that the gift is made directly to the chapel, without reference to a mother house or monastic superior. It is also not beyond imagination that a holy site on the edge of Dartmoor, independent of any existing monastic foundation, attracted the spontaneous and ultimately temporary establishment of a chapel and a dwelling place for men who took up the monastic life. It may even have been a temporary site,

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[97] 'Sciant omnes tam presenti quam futuri quod ego Willelmus monachus annuence Thoma de Helint nepote meo do et concedo capelle Sancte Marie Magdalene de Neeluill in perpetuam elemosinam per salute anime mee in manerio Estintonie duos ferdinos et dimidiam … libere et quiete reddendo eidem capelle et monachis ibidem deo seruientibus annuatim xv solidos sterlingorum', CRO AR/1/828.

[98] *Charters of the Redvers Family and the Earldom of Devon, 1090-1217*, ed. R. Bearman, Devon and Cornwall Record Society, new ser., 37 (Exeter, 1994).

[99] Heale, *Dependent Priories*, p. 116.

occupied only in the summer months when people accompanied their flocks on the moor.[100]

We have no way of knowing what activities these monks of St Mary Magdalene engaged in, but it is possible that they ministered to the lay people of the manor in some way. This is the kind of circumstance under which the Lateran Council's injunction against the administration of sacraments by monks to lay people may have been disregarded. The primary function of monastic cells, private chapels and other *loci*, however, was probably intercessory. Just as lay communities often advocated for religious ministries to be offered in nearby chapels, the patrons of monastic houses sometimes favoured cells established nearer to their own residences over their mother houses. For example, the church of St Mary de Valle in Cardinham (Corn.) was developed as a cell of Tywardreath Priory (Corn.) in the second half of the twelfth century with the support of, and for the service of, successive generations of the lords of Cardhinham. Robert (I) had given gifts to Tywardreath in the 1150s and 1160s,[101] but in the second half of the twelfth century his son Robert (II) began to make gifts of his land and mills in the manor directly to the church of St Mary de Valle, including 'anything from my wood of Cardinham that will be necessary for the monks, either for buildings and partitions of their dormitories or for their fire'.[102] This implies that the church was being converted into a permanent dwelling for the first time. In return, the prior of Tywardreath promised that when Robert died, a mass would be celebrated in the convent for his soul.[103] But by the time of Robert's son Robert (III), around 1200, the ministry of interceding for the family had been transferred to the monks at St Mary de

[100] H. Fox, *Dartmoor's Alluring Uplands: Transhumance and Pastoral Management in the Middle Ages*, ed. M. Tompkins and C. Dyer (Exeter, 2012), especially chs. 4-5.

[101] CRO ART/1/4, 57.

[102] 'Dedi etiam de bosco meo de Cardinan' quicquid monachis necessarium fuerit tam ad edificationes et ad partitiones domorum suarum quam ad ignem eorum', CRO ART/1/7; CRO ART/1/8.

[103] CRO ART/1/57.

Valle. On the death of his wife Isabelle, Robert III gave money to sustain a second monk 'along with the other monk who was already accustomed to dwell there', and the prior of Tywaradreath pledged an additional fifteen shillings to support the monks of the cell.[104] It is clear that the family considered it a spiritual, and perhaps prestigious, boon to have even a few monks living and praying on their own manor. It is entirely possible that the monks of St Mary de Valle also served as confessors for the family, or counselled them on spiritual or other matters.

Anchorites proliferated in post-Conquest England,[105] and it is possible to read through gaps in the evidence to establish that they were important ministers to the laity. Often our sources characterise the anchorite's vocation as a purely personal quest for religious purity—particularly in the case of female anchorites.[106] The *Vita* of St Gilbert of Sempringham records that in 1131 there were young women in Sempringham (Lincs.) who had 'received the seed of God's word' from Gilbert's teaching and wished 'to overcome the temptations of their sex and of the world'. Seven of these women, living in a cloister which Gilbert built on the northern side of the village church, became the founding female community of Sempringham Priory in *c*. 1149.[107] In the intervening eighteen years they would have constituted an informal, quasi-anchoritic, quasi-religious community. Other sources, by their nature, only alert us to the existence of an anchorite: in the early 1230s Annora, a *reclusa* in the church of Iffley, near Oxford, received a pension of 100s per year and gifts of firewood from the king.[108]

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[104] 'Vnde unus monachus honorifice sustenetur apud vallem sancte Marie cum altero monacho qui prius ibi esse solebat', CRO ART/1/59; CRO ART/1/60.

[105] For the most recent treatment see T. License, *Hermits and Recluses in English Society, 950-1200* (Oxford, 2011), pp. 4-10 and ch. 3.

[106] For a fuller view see: S.E. Elkins, *Holy Women of Twelfth-Century England* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1988), ch. 2; C.J. Holdsworth, 'Christina of Markyate', in D. Baker (ed.), *Mediaeval Women: Dedicated and Presented to Rosalind M. T. Hill on the Occasion of Her Seventieth Birthday* (1978), pp. 185-204; S. Fanous and H. Leyser (eds.), *Christina of Markyate: A Twelfth-Century Holy Woman* (Abingdon, 2005).

[107] *The Book of St Gilbert*, ed. R. Foreville and G. Keir (Oxford, 1987), pp. 30-35.

[108] W. Page (ed.), *A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 2* (London, 1907), p. 9.

Occasionally, we get a closer glimpse. Anchorites were often monks or lay people who decided to undertake an ascetic life,[109] and are therefore usually studied as existing outside the mainstream of religious ministry in local churches. Yet a remarkable document from Exeter diocese depicts a secular priest abandoning his ministry in a local church in favour of an anchoritic life. In 1189x1204, papal judges delegate resolved a dispute between Tavistock Abbey (Devon) and one William the cleric 'regarding the vicarage of the church of North Petherwin [Corn.] and four acres of land in the same village'. (Incidentally, this was the church of St Patern or St Paer referred to in Peter of Cornwall's account of Ailsi's life.) It was agreed

> that the aforesaid abbot and convent of Tavistock have conceded to the said William the cleric monkhood in his home according to his wish. And for as long as he wishes to remain and to be enclosed in the monastic habit, they have conceded half a mark of silver to be paid to him by the abbot each year at the feast of St Giles.[110] And because by God's inspiration he wished to be a monk, the abbot, whoever he is at the time, will make him a monk at his own expense, and they have conceded to him one acre of land to hold of them in the manor of Werrington which is called 'Wigchote', rendering 4s annually to the abbot of Tavistock at the feast of St Rumon for all service … . Also they have conceded to him that they will give that acre of land to whomever he wishes for that service … . But the aforesaid William the cleric has quitclaimed in perpetuity all the right which he had claimed in that vicarage and in those four acres of Pidrewine to the abbot and monks of Tavistock.[111]

It is tantalising to try to imagine the nature of the conflict that must have inspired this agreement. William had apparently been the vicar of the church of North Petherwin; since he is called 'the cleric', not 'the priest', we can assume that he was in minor orders, but not ordained, and that he employed a chaplain to perform the sacraments on

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[109] License, *Hermits and Recluses*, pp. 91-8.

[110] The choice of this feast may have been influenced by the dedication of the nearby chapel of St Giles-in-the-Heath (Devon), portions of which in 1194x1206 were claimed both by the monks of Tavistock and by the canons of St Stephen's Launceston 'antiquitus': DHC W/1258/M/D/84, fols. 9v-10r.

[111] 'Quod memoratus abbas et conuentus Tauistoch' concesserunt dicto Willelmo clerico monachatum in domo sua, cum uoluerit, dum autem insclusari habitu morari uoluerit. Concesserunt ei dimidiam marcam argenti singulis annis ad festum sancti Egidii per manum abbatis percipiendam. Cum autem deo inspirante monachus esse uoluerit, abbas, quicumque pro tempore extiterit, ex propriis sumptibus eum monachabit. Concesserunt etiam ei i acram terre tenendam de illis in manerio de Wrurton' que dicitur Wigchote, reddendo inde annuatim quattuor solidos abbati de Tauist' ad festum sancti Rvmoni pro omni seruicio … . Preterea concesserunt ei dare illam acram terre cui uoluerit per idem seruicium … . Memoratus uero Willelmus clericus totum ius que clamauerat in vicaria illa et in illis quattuor acris de Pidrewine abbati et monachis de Tauist' quietum in perpetuum clamauerunt', DHC W/1258/M/D/80/3.

his behalf. William evidently desired to become a recluse, but at the same time something was unsatisfactory to the monks of Tavistock about the management of their vicarage. A reasonable conclusion might be that William had already begun to assume an anchoritic lifestyle, enclosing himself in his house or perhaps in the church. Doing so might have caused him to abdicate some of his former duties, including tithe collection, and to stop transferring revenues from the church to Tavistock Abbey, sparking conflict with the monks. The agreement ensured that a rather more predictable vicar could minister in the church and enjoy its endowment, and gave William a pension and an acre for his own sustentation as well as the ability to delegate management of the land to someone else. This implies that the monks saw value in William's decision to undertake a more severe, and therefore more holy, life, but were unwilling to accept an anchorite in exchange for a vicar. It is clear that William's inclusion would henceforth prevent him from ministering to the lay people of North Petherwin in the way that a local priest might, and therefore that his residence as an anchorite would pose no threat to the subsequent vicar's pastoral prerogative. In other words, the monks of Tavistock held that an anchorite could supplement, but not replace, a vicar's supervision of a local church.

Did lay people see the anchorite's ministry in the same way—as desirable but not essential, supplementary but not sufficient in itself? Tom License has argued that recluses must have been perceived as beneficial to society because significant financial investments were required to maintain them. He connects the proliferation of recluses in eleventh- and twelfth-century England to the value of the anchoritic life as 'a solution to the problem of sin': and not only the anchorite's own sin, but that of people on the outside. Anchorites heard confessions and interceded in prayer on behalf of elite

laypeople, peasants and religious.[112] These were, of course, ministries which local priests could also provide, and several historians have suggested that lay people may have turned to anchorites when they felt their local priests were inadequate.[113] This is possible in theory, but the sources suggest other explanations. The case of William the cleric-turned-anchorite, for example, suggests not an inadequate vicar being replaced by a holy man, but rather a vicar seeking a holier or more fulfilling vocation. If the lay people of North Petherwin supported William's movement into the anchoritic life, it was because they were improving on an existing minister rather than replacing him with an alternative. At the same time, some holy sites, such as Binsey and perhaps 'Neelvill' in Ilsington, were transformed into ordinary-seeming cells or chapels. Again, this was probably not because the former site was inadequate, but rather because ministries performed in a cell or chapel might be enhanced by the site's spiritual or magical legacy. Still other holy sites, particularly monastic cells, might be valued by lay people simply because they increased the provision of intercessory prayer in a locality. We must avoid two assumptions: first, that the ministries which church leaders tried to provide universally—annual confession, weekly preaching—were the same ministries which lay people most wanted; and second that the ordained men whom church leaders designated as pastors and ministers were the same ministers with whom lay people most wanted to establish ministry relationships. For example, lay people almost certainly did not confess solely to priests: Guy of Southwick, writing in at Southwick Priory (Hamps.) in 1190x8, felt compelled to specify that 'it is not sufficient to confess to God, or angels, or apostles, or other saints, or before an altar and relics'.[114] Holy places were

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[112] License, *Hermits*, chs. 4-6; quote at p. 131.

[113] Ibid., pp. 151-2.

[114] D.A. Wilmart, 'Un opuscule sur la confession composé par Guy de Southwick vers la fin du XIIe siècle', Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale, 7 (1935), pp. 337-53, at 348.

not makeshift solutions for an inadequate 'parish system'; rather they allowed lay people to participate in ministry relationships which even the most virtuous and best-educated priest of a local church could not offer them. These 'other' ministry relationships were crucial components of local religious life.

Saints

In the minds of most late twelfth-century English people, local landscapes were populated not only with priests, religious, and holy women and men, but with supernatural beings.[115] The profusion of miracles recorded across twelfth-century England, most notably at Thomas Becket's shrine at Canterbury, suggest that saints occupied an important place in the religious experiences of many lay people. It is more difficult to establish whether lay people thought of saints as purveyors of spiritual services—that is, as ministers. In theory, saints would have provided different sorts of ministries than priests: they could not baptise infants or say mass, but they could cure physical ailments and appear in visions. But clergy and religious also upheld saints as representatives of their own ministries; or indeed, as when Alexander of Ashby claimed to speak on St Andrew's behalf, characterised themselves as representatives of saints. It is often difficult to discern whether lay people who visited saints' shrines and experienced miracles thought they were establishing ministry relationships with saints themselves, or with the clergy or religious who claimed association with those saints, or with both. Experiences and perceptions must have varied enormously. The typical formula for charters of gifts to religious houses—with the donation being made simultaneously to God, the house's patron saint, and the religious of the house—seems

[115] Although some people, it seems, did not believe in spiritual beings: see chapter one, pp. 85-86; see also J. Arnold, *Belief and Unbelief in Medieval Europe* (London, 2005), pp. 225-8.

deliberately comprehensive, and our reliance on clerical accounts of lay interactions with saints further compounds the problem. My approach is to trust the 'staging' in the sources, to use a theatrical metaphor: to focus on the relationship between the principal actors in a narrative, while observing the role played by secondary or even off-stage characters. Interpreting miracle and vision narratives in this way reveals a range of permutations of ministry relationships involving lay people, religious or clergy, and saints. For example, in Peter of Cornwall's narrative of Ailsi's visionary experiences described in chapter three, Ailsi and St Stephen communicate frequently and intimately, and St Stephen aids and heals Ailsi without intervention by any earthly intermediary. The canons of St Stephen's priory, by contrast, play a merely contextual role; in fact, they only interact with Ailsi as antagonists, causing problems which St Stephen himself intervenes to solve. Clearly Peter of Cornwall wanted to portray Ailsi as having formed a ministry relationship with the saint himself.

For a contrast to Ailsi's relationship with St Stephen, we may look to Thomas Agnellus' use of a miracle story involving St Andrew in a sermon for St Andrew's feast day. Thomas begins by explaining that God causes miracles 'in order to rouse the withered minds of men out of the state of numb idleness'. These men are more impressed by miracles, or what Thomas calls 'evidence of novelty', than by the more quotidian works of divine virtue. In reality, he argues, it is a miracle that 'the sky is adorned with stars, that the renewed earth is clothed with the newness of grass'; men do not notice that, when the grass becomes worn down and they burn it, they are setting a

miracle ablaze.[116] This is the frame for Thomas Agnellus' narration of a miracle which occurred in Wells during the episcopate of Reginald, bishop of Bath (1174-91): the miracle is a glaring demonstration of divine goodness for those who fail to appreciate subtler signs. Analogously, Thomas interprets an interaction between a canon of St Andrew's church and some residents of Wells as a miracle brought about by St Andrew, using the saint to intensify a scene in which the chief actors are really a cleric and a crowd of lay people.

The story goes as follows. Bishop Reginald was building a larger collegiate church of St Andrew to accommodate an increase in the number of canons. A pious man went away to haul stone for the project, leaving his family in Wells and committing them to the protection of St Andrew. While the man was gone, his son, a young boy, fell into a deep well. When the boy was discovered, a panicked crowd gathered, and eventually someone found a thin, decayed rope. None of the onlookers were willing to be lowered down on such a tenuous line, even though by now the boy was close to drowning. All seemed lost when 'a certain cleric, having heard the clamorous noise of the commotion, arrived'. Without hesitation he prayed to St Andrew for safety, tied the rope around himself, was lowered down and rescued the boy, unharmed but for a few cuts and bruises. We are not told who the cleric was, and it does not matter. What matters is that the crowd is portrayed as chaotic, ill-equipped, timid; the cleric is decisive, brave, selfless, and most importantly, trusts completely in St Andrew's protection. Yet neither the protection of St Andrew nor the sacrificial virtue of clerics is

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[116] 'Ad excitandas hominum mentes torpentis desidie situ marcidas, de potentie sue sinu bonitas diuina uirtutum nouitates emittit, ut insolita mirabilium indicia moueant, quos cotidiana et assueta miracula excitare non preualent. Homo namque cui nouitas est semper amica assueta fastidit insueta miratur, et artius menti inprimitur, et efficatius mentis intrat archanum, aliquod nouitatis indicium quam fabrice mundane miranda constructio, quam aliorum diuine uirtutis operum consideratio. Cumque sit res plena miraculi, quodcumque cernitur quod celum syderibus ornatur, quod terra graminum rediuiua nouitate uestitur et similia, quia usu cotidiano uilescunt, homo non attendit quem aliquod nouitatis insigne deuotius accendit', TA, fol. 44v.

the ultimate message of Thomas' sermon: he goes on to analogise from the well—a particularly local symbol, of course[117]—to describe how God saves people from drowning in their sin. This makes his portrayal of the miracle all the more striking, since he is less likely to have intentionally shaped his narrative to foreground either St Andrew or the cleric. The saint himself plays a secondary role in the story; he is prayed to, and his favour is revealed by the outcome of events, but he does not personally speak or act. The cleric, on the other hand, embodies salvation for the boy and the lay onlookers, who are cast as ignorant and helpless. Certainly some people in Wells may have believed that St Andrew ministered to them directly, but in this story the saint functions as a mere prop to the ministry role of the cleric, added by Thomas Agnellus as a miraculous frame for the boy's rescue. It is not clear whether Thomas intended this sermon to be delivered to lay audiences, but if the story represents a clerical mode of thinking about saints, it suggests that preachers and other earthly ministers might refer to saints in order to validate or bolster their own ministries to lay people.

In contrast to the relatively stunted role of St Andrew in Thomas Agnellus' sermon, other late twelfth-century texts suggest that lay people did experience ministry relationships directly with saints. Yet even these texts almost always assign some role, however peripheral, to clerics or religious. Of course some lay people must have engaged with saints or other unearthly beings without any direct ecclesiastical involvement; the nature of the sources means that such relationships are virtually hidden from the modern historian's sight. Perhaps more fruitfully, it is possible to discern a variety of ways in which earthly ministers might promote, observe, and manage

[117] The town, or site of the future town, had been called 'Well' or 'Wells' since the eighth century, and wells were depicted in the eleventh-century Lanalet Pontifical and on local seals from the thirteenth century: W. Rodwell, *Wells Cathedral: Excavations and Structural Studies*, 1978-93 (2 vols., London, 2001), i, pp. 112, 375.

ministry relationships between lay people and saints. The miracles of St Frideswide mentioned above provide an instructive case study.

It seems clear that the canons of St Frideswide's priory were responsible at the very least for initially stirring interest in the saint's potential as a healer. On February 12, 1180, Prior Philip had the bones of St Frideswide translated to a newly constructed shrine within the priory church, perhaps inspired by the *Life* of St Frideswide written by his predecessor as prior, Robert of Cricklade.[118] The translation coincided with a royal council at Woodstock (Oxon.), which brought a number of important men to the area. The archbishop of Canterbury performed the ceremony, with the bishops of Winchester, Ely and Norwich in attendance. Simon Yarrow has shown that Philip modelled the saint's translation and his record of the 110 miracles which followed on the cult of St Thomas Becket at Canterbury.[119] Moreover, the translation was clearly orchestrated to attract attention: it was carried out by the archbishop not only in the presence of several important witnesses, but 'with a plentiful multitude of clergy and people standing nearby and rejoicing together'.[120] Whether or not Philip exaggerated the size of the crowd, 'a plentiful multitude' at least describes his own intention for the ceremony. In Philip's mind the presence of the archbishop alone should have been enough to cause a stir: in the same text he records that when the archbishop later returned to Oxford 'to celebrate the rites of mass in order to increase the honour of the blessed virgin, he adorned himself in the episcopal vestments' and 'the people ran together to hear the mass of such a father, and to be fortified by his blessing'.[121]

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[118] Blair, 'Saint Frideswide Reconsidered'. For a summary of the hagiography of St Frideswide through the twelfth century see S. Yarrow, *Saints and Their Communities: Miracle Stories in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 169-76.

[119] Yarrow, *Saints*, pp. 177-8.

[120] *Acta sanctorum*, p. 569.

[121] Ibid., p. 578.

Nevertheless, the ways in which lay people subsequently responded to the saint's reputation extended beyond the canons' control. Philip was no doubt pleased when pilgrims flocked to the priory from the surrounding region, but the canons also had to confront the sometimes chaotic scenes that ensued. The regulation of traffic in and out of the priory and church was a matter of particular significance for the canons of St Frideswide's Priory. The priory was situated against the town's southern wall, encompassing a section of the road which ran along the inside of the wall, and in 1122 Henry I had given the canons permission to 'enclose or block all the gates of the whole priory'.[122] That the canons valued this privacy is attested by Pope Adrian IV's instructions in 1154x59 that the bishop of Lincoln should not hold synods or ordinations at the priory so that 'the quiet of the religious men' should be preserved.[123] More than a century later, one of the reasons given for the removal of the priory's parochial function was the need to open church doors for visiting sick parishioners at night.[124] If the preservation of monastic peace was a high priority for the canons, then the inundation of pilgrims in 1180 would have represented a major disturbance. As Henry Mayr-Harting has pointed out, many of the miracles recorded by Prior Philip occur during Mass or other recitations, or before the 'milling crowds' which seem to be ubiquitous in the church.[125] In addition to caring for the many supplicants who remained at the shrine overnight, the canons on one occasion were disturbed while singing vespers by the clamour that accompanied a miracle, on another almost expelled a crazed youth who

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[122] Ibid., p. 236 and *CSF*, i, p. 514.

[123] *CSF*, i, pp. 29-30.

[124] J. Blair, 'St. Frideswide's Monastery: Problems and Possibilities', in Blair, *St Frideswide's Monastery*, pp. 238-9, at 256.

[125] H. Mayr-Harting, 'Functions of a Twelfth-Century Shrine: The Miracles of St. Frideswide', in idem and R.I. Moore (eds.), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis* (London and Ronceverte, 1985), pp. 203-5.

was shouting profanities during mass, and on another had blood spattered on their white garments while they were processing past the shrine.[126]

There is a sense of tension in the miracle stories between a desire to allow and celebrate the healing of, as Philip himself put it, 'the rich and the poor, the small with the great … the meek and poor of both sexes',[127] and a concern for the safeguarding of the church as a holy place. On the one hand, Philip is remarkably tolerant of supplicants of possibly dubious moral standing, such as an apparently unmarried woman who had fallen ill after giving birth and a priest's concubine (she had been corrupted by him but was eventually spurned).[128] Philip does record the contrition and humility with which such people approached the shrine, but this is also true of many of the more respectable characters. On the other hand, two back-to-back stories point to fears that the crowds flocking to the shrine would bring their sins with them. In the first story, a young woman 'aflame with passion' and her male companion have joined a group of pilgrims to the shrine as a pretence for evading 'the law of the home'. When the opportunity arises, as they near the church, 'the intention is accomplished by a seductive act',[129] and the woman is immediately stricken with fear. She tries to enter the basilica but is blocked by an immense crowd going in and out; eventually she comes to grips with her guilt, finds a priest, confesses, and is then admitted to the church to repay St Frideswide for her sins with a gift.[130] The next story describes how a pickpocket takes advantage of the restlessness of a crowd during a long sermon at the church and steals a boy's purse; when he runs to escape, he becomes confused and hits his head on a wall. Later, after the boy discovers his loss, the pickpocket is found near the church doors, in such a

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[126] *Acta sanctorum*, pp. 572-3, 578.

[127] Ibid., p. 588.

[128] Ibid., pp. 576, 586.

[129] Ibid., pp. 578-9.

[130] Ibid., pp. 578-9.

stupor from his head wound that he returns the purse without resistance.[131] Both stories show how the promotion or cultivation of a popular pilgrimage site could temporarily alter the character of a sacred space and therefore of the ministries performed in it. The canons of St Frideswide's were not simply offering their saint as an additional minister to the infirm: they were accommodating the many, messy ways in which lay people might seek supernatural intervention in their own lives, or indeed take advantage of the more corporeal opportunities afforded by a pilgrimage site.

The miracles at St Frideswide's shrine also raise important questions about the geographical scale of the ministry relationships which lay people established with saints. Specifically, lay people appear to have established relationships with saints over greater physical distances than they did with earthly ministers. We have already observed that lay people tended to prioritise proximate ministry relationships over more distant ones: they often advocated for increased ministries in nearby chapels at the expense of mother churches. Ailsi's devotion to St Stephen, as well as his position as the canons' tenant and building project manager, seems to have overriden this tendency: in Peter of Cornwall's account, Ailsi shows little interest in the more local chapel of St Mary Magdalene or church of St Paer. And it appears that some lay people were willing to look farther afield for the ministries of saints. Although nine of the 110 miracles recorded in Prior Philip's account involve residents of Oxford as supplicants—or in the case of one Jew, as a casualty—the vast majority of recorded miracles benefitted people who had travelled from outside the city, usually from places no more than about forty miles away.[132]

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[131] Ibid., p. 579.

[132] Yarrow, *Saints*, p. 178.

What then did St Frideswide's priory represent to the lay residents of Oxford—and what did they think of the commotion at the shrine? Philip consistently records crowds of people witnessing and rejoicing at miracles, but in this case it is hard to distinguish literary trope from observation. Around ten years later, when Alexander Neckam pleaded with the wealthy laymen of Oxford for donations to St Frideswide's shrine, he did not invoke the translation or subsequent miracles as proof of the priory's deservedness. The surviving text of the sermon only once mentions St Frideswide by name, when Alexander asks for donations 'to St Frideswide'; he also obliquely refers to 'the icon of the blessed virgin'.[133] Instead, Alexander upholds the shrine's function as one of many local gathering places for Christians as the reason why lay people should donate. He works up to his appeal by comparing the presence of God in ancient Israel's synagogue to God's presence in Heaven, in the church triumphant and in the church militant. His description of the synagogue emphasises the role of the worshipping faithful: 'The synagogue was converted to faith through many people, and illuminated with rays of faith, and [Jacob] said: "Truly the Lord is in this place", the sacred church, constructed by the people'.[134] In other words, the *sancta ecclesia* is imbued with divine presence because of the vigilance and contributions of the people. Alexander then describes the physical disarray of St Frideswide's priory church—probably the result of the 1190 fire recorded in an Abingdon Abbey chronicle—and admonishes his lay audience to give as the ancient Israelites did for the building of the temple. He criticises their greed: 'Why do you not give even your cloak to the icon of the blessed virgin, even though your mud-stained cloaks are exceedingly sumptuous, delicate, of linen, or

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[133] 'Quare ... non datis yconie beate uirginis?', AN, fol. 93v; 'Dona sancte Frideswide conferatis', ibid., fol. 94v.

[134] 'Sed iacob, id est populus antiquus, euigilauit a sompno in tempore gratie, iam quod sinagoga in multis personis conuersa ad fidem, illuminata radiis fidei, ait: vere dominus est in loco isto, scilicet in sancta ecclesia constructa de gentibus', AN, fol. 93v. See Gen. 28.16.

satin, or velvet?'[135] But then he returns the merits of the church. 'But terrible is this place. Truly terrible: because it is terrible for evil spirits, and they are struck with fear because this is a sacred place in which the faithful gather, in which Mass is celebrated, in which the body and blood of the Lord are consumed'.[136] It is important to notice that Alexander is enumerating the three functions of the church which he expects his affluent lay audience to value most highly: it is a gathering place, a place to hear Mass, and a place to receive the Eucharist. The church's role as a *locus* of communal religion is what endows it with spiritual significance and hence merit among the laity. Again, it is remarkable that St Frideswide herself does not figure prominently in Neckam's appeal. Perhaps the shrine had not witnessed any more miracles in the ten years since Philip wrote his account; lay people might not have been interested in a saint whose healing power lay dormant, so to speak. Or perhaps many locals had perceived the pilgrims to St Frideswide's shrine as a nuisance. The ministry of St Frideswide's flashy miracles appears to have been shortlived. If we assume that Alexander Neckam was a reasonably adept fundraiser, then his sermon suggests that the lay people of Oxford were in the long run more interested in St Frideswide's Priory as a local church and site for quotidian ministries than as a shrine at which miracles occurred.

This is not to say that the ministries provided by saints like St Frideswide were insignificant. For many who travelled to Oxford and experienced healing, the social and spiritual, if not physical, implications must have been enormous. These people received a ministry which they did not believe they could get elsewhere: Philip not only records the failures of doctors to cure supplicants' ailments,[137] but in several cases writes of

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[135] 'Quare saltem peplum adeo non datis yconie beate uirginis, cum pepla uestra lutea ualde sumptuosa sint, delicata, bissea, uel bissina uel serica?', ibid., fol. 93v.

[136] 'Terribilis autem est locus iste. Reuera terribilis: quia terribilis est malignus spritibus, et terrorem eis incuciens quia loca sancta ad que fideles conuenit, in quibus misse celebrantur, in quibus corpus et sanguis domini coniciuntur', ibid., fol. 93v. See Gen. 28.17.

[137] *Acta sanctorum*, pp. 569, 571, 574, 577, 579-80, 582-3, 585-9. See also Yarrow, *Saints*, pp. 180-1.

people who travelled to Oxford only after they had prayed to St Thomas Becket or visited his shrine at Canterbury.[138] One wonders how many of the people cured in Oxford subsequently maintained a personal devotion to St Frideswide: Philip records that several supplicants later returned to the shrine, some frequently, to give thanks.[139]

Lay people who sought healing from saints were also able to relate their miraculous experiences to the ministries they received in their local churches. Philip records that Peter, a young man who had injured his leg when he fell from a horse, came to St Frideswide's shrine and prayed there while the canons were singing matins. When the office came to a prayer that he recognised—he had heard it said by a priest—he put his foot down on the ground and was healed.[140] Whether Peter knew a little Latin or had merely heard the prayer enough times to recognise it, his healing was triggered by his response to a previous experience of the liturgy. In another case, a miraculous cure at St Frideswide's shrine reinforced an established, local ministry relationship with the canons. Philip tells us of the supplication of Leviva, a poor woman who came often to Oxford to provide for 'numerous offspring' and who had already buried five children in the cemetery at St Frideswide's Priory.[141] He does not explain the woman's background, reporting only that in addition to visiting Oxford, she would also go to Shifford, about ten miles west, to beg. Leviva's transient lifestyle probably complicated the question of which church would bury her children, and she would have struggled to pay burial fees.[142] The canons of St Frideswide seem to have made a habit of burying the poor. When in the late twelfth century Hugh of Elsfield gave the chapel of Elsfield, lying just

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[138] *Acta sanctorum*, pp. 570, 575, 585, 586-7.

[139] Ibid., pp. 563-4, 570, 573, 582-3, 586.

[140] Ibid., p. 580.

[141] Ibid., p. 574.

[142] In late medieval Hereford, the cathedral's monopoly of burial rights did not customarily govern burials of the very poor or mendicant: I. Forrest, 'The Politics of Burial in Late Medieval Hereford', *EHR*, 125 (Oct. 2010), pp. 1110-38, at 1118-9, 1122.

northeast of Oxford, to the canons, the canons promised to provide a chaplain and conceded 'that the bodies of the paupers who die in the vill of Elsfield should be buried in the cemetery of the chapel of Elsfield, and the bodies of others from the same parish who wish to be buried there'.[143] The specificity of this provision implies that there was an existing practice of bringing the bodies of the poor to St Frideswide's Priory for burial which Hugh was trying to preclude. For Leviva, appealing to St Frideswide for healing would have been natural, since the canons of St Frideswide had repeatedly ministered to her by burying her children.

Saints, then, offered a flexible range of ministries. Lay people, unrestricted by the medieval clerical—and modern historiographical—assumption that the real business of religion was mediated through priests, constructed religious experiences from interactions with supernatural as well as earthly beings. Ministry relationships between saints and laypeople could be longstanding, fortified by local tradition and economic ties, or they could arise with the emergence of an active pilgrimage site. In the latter case the saint's ministry may have been particularly valued by those who travelled to seek cures which they could not obtain in their own localities, and who may have brought their devotion to the saint back to their homes, integrating it with more quotidian religious practices. Local people tended to appreciate the role of local churches as sites for everyday sorts of religious ministry and communal worship, and miracles could reinforce existing local ties. Although clerics and religious often had some role in promoting saints as ministers—and although they sometimes referred to saints merely as representations or validations of their own ministries—lay individuals and communities also shaped their own relationships with saints, experiencing visions and miracles in the presence of tonsured onlookers.

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[143] *CSF*, ii, p. 70.

Lay People

There is also evidence for people who were neither saints, nor religious, nor anchorites acting as interlocutors between lay communities and the divine. Late twelfth-century writers occasionally hinted that laymen could perform the function of prelacy by instructing other lay people.[144] Returning for a final time to Peter of Cornwall's description of Ailsi, we can see such a lay interlocutor in action. That Peter describes Ailsi as a 'good and holy man' esteemed by his community is to be expected.[145] What is more striking is the way in which Ailsi is reported to have functioned as St Stephen's spokesman to the local lay community, and in doing so, to have acquired his own veneer of saintliness:

> This man of God, Ailsi, was so familiar with St Stephen, with whom certainly he often spoke face to face as friend to friend, that the saint became well known to him through frequent and familiar sight and conversation, and Ailsi used to describe his figure for others' benefit. And so it came to pass that, even as he himself was a good and holy man, and was said by everyone to be a saint by reason of his frequent visions of St Stephen, so he also had sons whom he nourished and educated in the fear of the Lord.[146]

Peter mentions that Ailsi's saintliness was widely respected, and that after St Stephen healed his eye 'Ailsi's neighbours … proclaimed the man so healed to be a saint … and acknowledged him to be truly St Stephen's friend'.[147] Ailsi's personal relationship with St Stephen was intimate and individual, but it also depended on, and shaped, his standing within his local community. Ailsi's responsibility of managing the construction of St Stephen's tower suggests that he was a man of relatively high standing in local society, and the miracle in which St Stephen alerts Ailsi to the dishonesty of one quarry worker shows that in that position he wielded some economic power over other lay

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[144] See chapter one, p. 286 and n. 19.

[145] LR, p. 187.

[146] Ibid., p. 195.

[147] Ibid., pp. 193, 195.

people.[148] Although Ailsi's personal loyalty was to St Stephen, he also mediated between the canons and local workers. Additionally, Ailsi's descriptions of St Stephen's visual appearance must have allowed other lay people to feel more connected with their local saint, and may have endowed Ailsi with the credibility to offer moral or spiritual advice to his neighbours.

Some lay women must also have undertaken similar roles of spiritual counselling within their communities. Although the sources studied in this thesis are not forthcoming on this subject, there are hints. Robert of Cricklade's *Life* of St Frideswide, likely inspired by contemporary or remembered functions of the *locus* at Binsey, records that while St Frideswide lived there she counselled the residents of Oxford:

> Because she had become well known to the citizens, they came to her as to a nurse and mother, and she admonished them with devotion, exhaling sighs which, since her heart was pious, she did not fabricate; but on each day of her sickness to whatever fellow soul, as if against the law of nature, she disseminated the word of salvation to all.[149]

This is hagiography of course; Robert of Cricklade is trying to represent St Frideswide as an exceptionally pious woman. He strongly genders St Frideswide's ministry, describing her relationship to Oxford's citizens is 'as a nurse and mother', and uncomfortably admitting that she taught them 'as if against the law of nature'. One wonders if Robert thought about St Frideswide when writing in his *Homiliae super Ezechielem* that *quilibet electi* could teach others by word and example: when Alexander of Ashby made a similar point it was unambiguously masculine, *quilibet homines*.[150] The holy site at Binsey seems to have been particularly associated with women, having hosted not only St Frideswide but Edith of Winchester.[151] It is entirely

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[148] Ibid., pp. 187, 189.

[149] Blair, 'Saint Frideswide Reconsidered', p. 114.

[150] See chapter one, p. 66.

[151] See p. 238 above.

possible that religious or lay women ministered at Binsey in the late twelfth century. At the very least, the idea of Oxford's residents going out to Binsey to seek spiritual advice from *someone* must have had a ring of plausibility to Robert.

The representatives of lay communities who occasionally appear in documents may also have acted as religious leaders. Chapter two discussed the efforts by Ailmar and other parishioners of the chapel of Shute (Dev.) to secure a continuously resident chaplain for their village. Ailmar was apparently a small landowner; first he gave two acres to support a chaplain's residence, then, when the rector of the mother church resisted, he represented 'the rest of the parishioners' in agreeing before the bishop of Exeter that a chaplain should travel to Shute daily throughout the year. A prominent man who at least claimed to speak on his community's behalf, Ailmar may have functioned as a local religious leader, taking it upon himself to ensure the satisfactory provision of ministries. Others made charitable gifts and endowed chaplains to minister in their communities. The thirteenth-century chronicler Roger de Wendover record details of such a man in the context of Bartholomew of Exeter's visitation of an unnamed 'village of the countryside'.[152] We are told that the bishop was sleeping in a house near the village's cemetery. He awoke during the night to say Matins, and heard the voices of children wailing: 'Alas for us! Alas for us! Who will give alms and pray for us now, or celebrate masses for us?'[153] Bartholomew's chamberlain, who had gone to search for a light in the village, eventually returned and reported that a man of the village who used to keep a priest in his house to say masses and prayers for the dead has just died. The man had been 'a father to orphans and a consolation to the wretched, one who spent his

[152] Roger de Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, Rolls Series, 84 (3 vols., London, 1886-9), i, pp. 18-20.

[153] Roger de Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, i, p. 18.

income on the poor and practiced hospitality while he lived'.[154] The words which Roger de Wendover pens in the children's voices are striking: they attribute comfort and the performance of masses not to the chaplain, but to the pious layman. Here it should be noted again that although the sources described in this thesis do not describe lay women in such leadership roles, women must have also functioned as religious leaders in their communities. Like hermits, anchorites and religious, lay religious leaders usually would not displace the ministries of local priests, but would rather supplement and even facilitate them.

Conclusions

This chapter has tried to flesh out our historical imagination of the world of interrelated ministries which lay people navigated in late twelfth-century England. It has argued that this world cannot be neatly divided into official and unofficial systems, and that contingency and local variation were not problematic, but rather normal. It has also argued that local religious life comprised many facets, that is, many ministries to which lay people had access.

This raises the question of lay agency and, specifically, of choice. Chapter three showed that in some localities, notably London, it was widely accepted, although not always approved of, that lay people would often receive ministries from several different local churches. This would have allowed at least some people and communities greater, though by no means complete, flexibility in shaping their own religious lives. To some extent, the participation of other ministers in local religious life might similarly result in a greater degree of lay agency or flexibility than we would expect if lay people only had recourse to the ministries offered in local churches. A lay

[154] Ibid., p. 19.

person might feel rather indifferent about the religious instruction offered by her local priest, but derive great comfort from the spiritual advice offered by the residents of a nearby monastic cell. But there are many caveats to this picture: lay religious experience was surely not, in the vast majority of cases, a proverbial buffet of ministries. Despite the evidence for effective advocacy by lay people for the increased provision of local ministries, particularly in chapels, most communities were at the mercy of ecclesiastical and wealthy lay patrons for the provision of ministries in their localities. Often, they could not choose the individuals who offered ministries; Orm's suggestion that lay people pray for sinful priests to amend their ways was probably unlikely to achieve the desired result.[155] Many ministries had to be paid for, and access was often mediated by the clergy or religious. Thorney Abbey in northern Cambridgeshire famously—we do not know if effectively—barred women from living within a nine-mile radius.[156] Social bonds and frictions within lay communities must also have shaped the religious experiences of individuals.

Another important restriction on the ability of lay people to craft their own religious experiences was the enforcement of prelacy in some ministry relationships. The idea of prelacy required that the prelate exclusively hold the pastoral care of his subjects, that is, that he be solely responsible for their spiritual fates. In practice this was often manifest in attempts by local priests and their patrons to bar the people they called their parishioners from receiving certain ministries elsewhere: whether from other local priests, or from different sorts of ministers entirely. Certain ministries—burial, baptism, the performance of mass on important occasions—were frequently restricted, while others—confession, teaching, counsel—were left alone. But it is also important to ask

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[155] *Ormulum*, i, ll. 6140-6153.

[156] L. Rollason, 'Historical Introduction', in idem (ed.), *The Thorney Liber Vitae: Edition, Facsimile and Study* (Martlesham, 2015), pp. 1-19, at 2.

what role the idea of prelacy played in lay relationships with 'other' ministers. Our sources are not usually explicit, but some inferences can be made. It is clear from the language of papal and episcopal charters that regular canons who served local churches were granted the pastoral care or *cura animarum* of lay people, that is, the right to claim them as parishioners just as a secular priest might. The idea of prelacy in its more flexible or functional definition—the prelate as one who takes responsibility for subjects by teaching them through word and example—must have also played a role in preaching by the religious, and perhaps also in more informal religious instruction by the religious, anchorites, or other lay people. The claimed and enforced authority of some ministers over the souls of the lay people to whom they ministered must have shaped lay religious experiences. Some ministers would have been, or would have seemed, more powerful than others; this might have enhanced the ministries they provided, or rendered them oppressive.

Yet other ministries accessed and valued by lay people, such as intercessory prayer or the support of hospitals, cannot have been interpreted by anyone involved as functions of prelacy. The elite ecclesiastical concepts of prelacy and pastoral care were not only inconsistently enforced, but inconsistently applied to local religious life. Recognising this should impress upon historians the profound limitations of thinking about local religious life only in terms of pastoral care, or of thinking about lay people only as parishioners. Pastoral relationships in local churches were crucial to religious life—but they were only one of many crucial components.

Conclusion

Religious life in late twelfth-century England was local; it was relationship-based; it was shaped by ideas and practices which were distinct, yet causally related; it had many participants. Before reflecting on what this means, I want to begin, somewhat counterintuitively, by sketching the picture suggested by historians up to now, in order to provide a sense of the distance this thesis has covered.

The prevailing image of religious life in late twelfth-century England looks something like this. A realm of elite ideas and texts floats above the landscape, passing among the schools and universities of western Europe; writers respond almost exclusively to intellectual, social and political influences, to the constraints and traditions of genre, and to their own academic inclinations. In the second half of the twelfth century, ideas in this elevated sphere are increasingly developed with an eye to the real world—not in response to it, so much as in an effort to systematically change it. These ideas are applied, gradually, with varying success, onto the murky variegations of local practice. The process of pastoral reform is facilitated by a concurrent process of parish formation. In this process, new local churches, or former chapels of minster churches, carve out their own parochial jurisdictions. Order is imposed as canon law develops and bishops, rather than religious houses and lay patrons, increasingly take the lead in regulating the rights of local churches and the institution of priests. Whether by design or by coincidence, the parish becomes the organisational unit by which the agenda of pastoral reform is implemented. By 1200 England is covered in a grid of self-contained, relatively uniform parishes, with the remaining irregularities being gradually smoothed out through the application of a now-sophisticated canon law. By 1300, but as a result of a process beginning by 1200, the parish will also be the complete and

virtually exclusive venue for lay religious life. Various other outlets for lay religious expression are present in 1200—the religious as ministers, hospitals, hermits, saints—but these are external to the pastoral ecclesiastical hierarchy; supplementary, or perhaps temporary stand-ins where the parochial clergy proved inadequate. They will be increasingly replaced by parish-focussed devotion. Through pastoral reform and the development of the parish system, the church gradually creates a more cohesive clerical-lay society, Christianising the lay flock. This is a model of two worlds, an elite above a popular, with the former gradually pulling the latter into itself, and thereby assimilating it.

In contrast: this thesis has argued that religious life was local to the extent that even clerical writers, who responded to intellectual milieus and rhetorical tropes which spanned centuries and nations, subtly reflected local preoccupations and assumptions in their compositions. The paradox of grand and ubiquitous ideas like prelacy—the prelate guiding, instructing, and ultimately responsible for the soul of the subject—was that they were pervasive and forceful enough to be recognisable in a myriad of variations and contexts, yet flexible enough to be moulded into models, however imperfect, of local practice. Moreover, prelacy was a particularly potent idea because it mirrored the relationship-based structure of local religious life. It was not that the idea had been formulated in an attempt to represent practice, nor that the idea had shaped practice into conformity. The two developed together, though often inharmoniously. The principal manifestation of this interaction between idea and practice in late twelfth-century England was the claiming of certain lay people as the parishioners—that is, the subjects—of religious houses and of local churches, whose members or incumbents acted the part of the prelate. To call someone your parishioner was, theoretically, to claim pastoral responsibility for them, and therefore the right to minister to them with some degree of

exclusivity, reaping the material and spiritual rewards. This meant in practice that many lay people were parishioners of multiple prelate-figures, that many were no one's parishioners, and that many were called parishioners, as a claim about their passive subjection to pastoral authority, when in reality they actively and effectively shaped the religious ministries which were offered to them. There is no evidence that lay people thought of themselves as passive subjects.

Local practices shaped local ideas. The arrangement of ministry relationships between priests and lay people in a locality—whether lay communities worshipped at a single church exclusively, or solicited ministries from multiple sources—was a result not only of individual and collective choices, but of geography, lordship, and custom. These practices influenced the ways in which lay and clerical participants in a local religious culture thought about their own ministry relationships. In places where local priests ministered to lay communities with relative exclusivity, clerical observers were perhaps more likely to put forward models of pastoral care and prelacy—while lay people, for their part, saw reciprocity, with laity and priest ministering to one another. Clerics fretted about localities where ministry relationships were less exclusive—less 'pastoral' in their view—and there were myriad other possible variations: ministry relationships might be predominated by a cathedral, spread among local priests fraternally, personified in multi-generational devotion to a saint. In each iteration, the very conception of the clerical-lay relationship took on a different form. And this was only one facet of local religious life. Integrated with and inseparable from the landscape of local churches served by secular priests were other ministers to the laity, some quasi-monastic or quasi-clerical, some supernatural, some lay. The lay individual in late twelfth-century England may have been called a parishioner by some, but she was also the devotee of a saint, the admirer of an anchorite, the mentee of an older woman. In a

way, if ministry relationships as experienced by lay people, not the prescriptions of clerics, are the components of local religious life, then it is difficult to decide where religious life ends and where social life begins: this is perhaps a good thing. This thesis has only scratched the surface of lay socio-religious experience.

It remains to outline the implications of these findings for future research. The most immediate questions raised concern the nature of local religious life in thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century England. This period has been upheld simultaneously as an exceptional, golden age of pastoral reform, and as a natural and necessary response to the inadequacies of the church's relationship with lay people in the twelfth century. This thesis calls both of these paradigms into question, by arguing simultaneously for a longer view of pastoral care and for a recognition of the distinctiveness of the late twelfth century. The reliance of not only twelfth-century but thirteenth-century writers on the ideas and tropes of Gregory the Great's *Regula pastoralis* makes it clear that pastoral care was not a thirteenth-century invention.[1] In late twelfth-century England, pastoral care or the care of souls was still the solemn and eschatologically urgent burden that it had been for six centuries, and would continue to be in the thirteenth century. At the same time, this thesis has identified strategies and priorities of pastoral care which were distinctive to the late twelfth century. Much of historians' disappointment with pastoral care in this period has resulted from searching for clear antecedents to the thirteenth century. This thesis has shown that Robert of Cricklade's broad-stroke admonitions to *predicatores* are equally as relevant to pastoral care as Thomas of Chobham's precise instruction that the priest hearing confessions should not startle

[1] Select examples: Albertus Magnus, *Opera omnia*, ed. A. Borgnet, J. Quétif and E. Borgnet (38 vols., Paris, 1890-99), xxviii, p. 593; Bonaventure, *Opera omnia S. Bonaventurae*, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae (4 vols., Quaracchi, 1889), iii, p. 707; Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi ordinis citerciensis Dialogus miraculorum*, ed. J. Strange (2 vols., Ridgewood, NJ, 1966), ii, p. 1292; John of Ford, *Ioannis de Forda Super extremam partem Cantici canticorum sermones CXX*, CCCM, 17, 18 (2 vols., Turnhout, 1970), i, p. 456; Thomas Aquinas, *S. Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia, 1: In Quatuor Libros Sententiarum* p. 577 (IV, ds. 24 qu. 3 ar. 3).

penitents by abruptly demanding, *Dic tua peccata*:[2] it is just that the former focusses on the moral formation of the priest through the preaching of his prelate, while the latter tries to relay detailed advice. Pastoral care was an abiding idea, but at the same time it was flexible. This thesis has also identified particularly 'late-twelfth-century' characteristics in the application of prelacy in local churches, and in the provision of ministries by religious, hermits and anchorites, saints, and lay people.

If the idea of pastoral care remained constant across the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it is logical to ask why there was, apparently, such a profound transformation in pastoral strategies in the first half of the thirteenth century. After about 1220, a veritable explosion in the production of confessor's manuals, preaching treatises, and *exempla* collections was accompanied by a raft of episcopal synodal legislation on preaching and the administration of the sacraments by parish priests, as well as the intensification of episcopal visitations and examinations of candidates for holy orders and institution in parish churches. There are two approaches which future research might take. The first would be to re-examine the thirteenth-century evidence in light of what this thesis has shown about twelfth-century pastoral strategies. I suspect that too much ink has been spilled trying to explain how confessor's manuals and other instructional treatises written in the thirteenth century could have been of any use to the vast majority of minimally educated and not particularly wealthy parish priests. Even the humblest of these treatises often included very basic instructions about the administration of sacraments or the examination of lay religious knowledge alongside advice on hearing the confessions of monks and clerics; patterns of manuscript survival, however imperfect an indicator, suggest that they regularly ended up in the libraries of

[2] Thomas of Chobham, *Thomae de Chobham summa confessorum*, ed. F. Broomfield, Analecta Mediaevalia Namurcensia, 25 (Louvain, 1968), p. 265.

religious houses and cathedrals.[3] Perhaps the easiest explanation is that, just as in the late twelfth century, these texts were often written with prelates as their primary audience, in the expectation that those prelates would communicate the relevant information to subordinate priests.[4] Discounting or misunderstanding the late twelfth-century sources has blinded historians to this possibility. Similarly, a re-examination of the documentary evidence for parishes and parishioners in the thirteenth century may reveal a system that preserves the relationship-based structure of twelfth-century religious life in many respects. Research by historians of pre-Reformation England into the diversification of social and religious experience within and across parish boundaries offers a clear link.[5]

Secondly, if the difference between the thirteenth century and the twelfth is one of methods and emphases rather than a fundamental awakening of the church toward the pastoral care of lay people, then it is necessary to view the changes in the ecclesiastical approach to clerical ministry in a broader cultural context. Running parallel to the proliferation of instructional manuals for ministry to the laity in England was the emergence of new instructional texts for estate stewards, manorial officials, and semi-

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[3] See, for example, C. Rider, 'Lay Religion and Pastoral Care in Thirteenth Century England: The Evidence of a Group of Short Confession Manuals', *JMH*, 26 (2010), pp. 327-40, at 332.

[4] For the argument that late twelfth- and early thirteenth-century texts were intended for elite clerical audiences, not local priests, see J. Goering, *William de Montibus (c. 1140-1213): The Schools and the Literature of Pastoral Care* (Toronto, 1992), pp. 65, 99; B. Golding, 'Gerald of Wales, the *Gemma ecclesiastica* and Pastoral Care', in C. Gunn and C. Innes-Parker (eds.), *Texts and Traditions of Medieval Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett* (York, 2009), pp. 47-61; but neither Goering nor Golding suggests that prelates could use texts to instruct subordinate priests.

[5] G. Rosser, 'Parochial Conformity and Voluntary Religion in Late-Medieval England', *TRHS*, ser. 6, 1 (1991), pp. 173-89; M. Rubin, 'Small Groups: Identity and Solidarity in the Late Middle Ages', in J. Kermode (ed.), *Enterprise and Individuals in Fifteenth-Century England* (Dover, NH, 1991), pp. 132-50.

professional lawyers.[6] In both the secular and ecclesiastical spheres these texts ranged from comprehensive and analytical to utilitarian and formulaic, and appeared in both Latin and French. Robert Grosseteste, bishop of Lincoln and widely considered to be the great pastoral reformer of thirteenth-century England, also wrote a treatise on estate management. Administrative and judicial systems, too, increasingly relied on writing and the institutionalised monitoring of personnel in both the secular and ecclesiastical spheres. Records of manorial and consistory courts appear almost simultaneously at the end of the thirteenth century. Bishops heard complaints from parishioners about their priests while visiting their dioceses, while stewards and lords asked tenants about the conduct of reeves at manorial courts.[7] In other words, where prelates and lords had once expected morality and loyalty from their subordinates, they now expected specific, written accountability.[8] This suggests that broader changes in the way in which English society ordered itself, and particularly in the development of institutions, were the driving force behind whatever changes in pastoral strategy we see between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: not, as has often been assumed, a new awakening of the church to the pastoral care of lay people. The disciplinary separation of ecclesiastical from secular history has impeded the recognition of these analogous developments, as have

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[6] E. King, 'Estate Management and the Reform Movement', in W.M. Ormrod (ed.), *England in the Thirteenth Century*, Harlaxton Medieval Studies, 1 (Stamford, 1991), pp. 1-14; R.E. Archer, ' "How Ladies … Who Live on Their Manors Ought to Manage Their Households and Estates": Women as Landholders and Administrators in the Later Middle Ages', in P.J.P. Goldberg (ed.), *Women in Medieval English Society c. 1200-1500* (Stroud, 1997), pp. 149-81; R. Evans, 'Whose Was the Manorial Court?' in idem (ed.), *Lordship and Learning: Studies in Memory of Trevor Aston* (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. 155-68; W. Rothwell, 'Husbonderie and Manaungerie in Later Medieval England: A Tale of Two Walters', in R. Ingham (ed.), *The Anglo-Norman Language and Its Contexts* (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 44-51; Walter of Bibbesworth, *Le tretiz of Walter of Bibbesworth*, ed. and trans. A. Dalby (Totnes, 2012); J. Birrell, 'Manorial Custumals Reconsidered', *Past & Present*, 224 (2014), pp. 3-37.

[7] P.D.A. Harvey, *Manorial Records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, Circa 1200-1359*, Oxfordshire Record Society, 50 (London, 1976); I. Forrest, 'The Transformation of Visitation in Thirteenth-Century England', *Past & Present*, 2013 (221), pp. 3-38.

[8] J. Sabapathy, *Officers and Accountability in Medieval England 1700-1300* (Oxford, 2014), ch. 2; T. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government* (Princeton, 2009), pp. 324-8.

anachronistic assumptions about the twelfth century, defining pastoral care in general according to what was actually a distinctively thirteenth-century way of doing things.

So far my suggestions for further research have focussed on the ideas and strategies of the elite clerical class. But one of the principal contributions of this thesis has been to elucidate the relationships among clergy, laity, and other religious actors, and to point toward the integration the study of pastoral care with that of lay religious experience. By recognising that pastoral care was a historically contingent, if durable, idea, adhered to only by the minority of medieval society, this thesis dismantles the traditional field of 'pastoral care' as conceived as an objective classification of religious activities. At the same time, it insists that elite clerical ideas like pastoral care played a vital role in the formation of local religious life. This means that the boundaries of inquiry need to be redrawn. As alluded to above, a model of local religious life which defines 'religion' according to lay perceptions and experiences, so far as they can be known, immediately runs up against that old anthropological quandary of defining exactly what religion is.[9] I cannot propose a tidy solution, but I would suggest that historians should indulge in stretching the boundaries of the study of religion, more rigorously integrating the field with social history. We should not assume that parish boundaries marked self-contained and inclusive communities, but rather seek the formation of social bonds through ministry relationships outside and within parishes. The manor, the traditional unit of social analysis, was similarly crossed and divided by ministry relationships. I should make clear, however, that I am not advocating for the complete reduction of religious experience to social relationships. There is still something distinctive about a *religious* ministry: it is provided by one party to another in view of a third party, God or whatever conception of divinity the participants have. Ministry relationships with saints are a special case, for they are not social relationships

[9] E. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (London, 1915); M. Banton (ed.), *Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Religion* (London, 2004).

so much as personal experiences, constructed in relation to other people, material spaces and objects, and religious beliefs.

Moreover, the role of religious authority in ministry relationships is crucial. Interpersonal relationships are inevitably affected when one party to the relationship claims preeminence and authority over the other, whether or not the other party buys into that claim. Although lay people knew they were not passive sheep, surely they also knew that prelates claimed pastoral authority over their souls, and this would have shaped and perhaps even defined their ministry relationships. The missing link here is the extent to which the local priest himself was aware of and bought into the idea that he had been entrusted with the pastoral care of his parishioners. We should also ask whether any of the 'other ministers' studied in this thesis claimed pastoral care over those to whom they ministered, and whether lay people thought of the ministries they offered as somehow distinct from those offered by clerics. This is not simply a question of how far lay people understood the theological concepts of pastoral care, or sacraments, or holy orders. Even this would not be the same as self-identifying as a parishioner and the subject of that priest's pastoral care. Lay people may have identified more strongly as devotees of saints, or followers of holy women or men, or indeed not in reference to religious relationships at all.

Yet another question thrown up by this thesis regards the relationship between horizontal communities, such as parish guilds and families, and the vertical—at least from the clerical perspective—relationships between lay people and those who claimed prelacy over them. The rhetoric of pastoral care had always tended to isolate the individual subject in relation to the prelate; this was the point of admonitions that prelates should intimately know each subject's spiritual needs in order to skilfully address them, which in the thirteenth century were increasingly associated with

confession.[10] But the sense that one gets from documents which depict communities advocating for the provision of ministries in chapels, for instance, is of the local priest as subject to the will of the community.[11] Thomas Agnellus bemoaned priests who shied away from condemning the sins of their neighbours.[12] Orm's homilies expect that lay people will evaluate their priests' morality and performance of ministries.[13] Did lay people think of priests as their spiritual shepherds or as contractors, paid to provide services at the will of the community? Or, thinking along another line: what were the practical antecedents of all the anxieties which writers expressed about lay people becoming disillusioned when prelates and priests taught only 'by word' and not 'by example'?[14] How did lay individuals and communities, not to mention local priests, reconcile the dissonance between the ideal of the prelate's authority and the reality that he was in some ways answerable to his neighbours? These questions need to be addressed not only in light of to the development of religious instructional treatises and the issuance of episcopal statutes, but in relation to the success of the mendicant friars, the development of heresy, and ultimately, dare I say it, the Reformation.

The world which I am describing is not one of distinctive popular and literate religions, nor one of a harmonious, clerical-lay Christian piety. Instead, this thesis emphasises the dissonance between clerical and lay perspectives, while at the same time insisting that those perspectives only mattered insofar as they were worked out in the highly localised context of ministry relationships. Lay religious experience and clerical ministry must be studied together, not because they constituted the separate ingredients for religious life, but because they were inextricable: they were causally related and in

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[10] A. Murray, 'Counselling in Medieval Confession', in P. Biller and A.J. Minnis (eds.), *Handling Sin: Confession in the Middle Ages* (York, 1998), pp. 63-77.

[11] See chapter two.

[12] TA, fol. 12ra-b.

[13] See chapter three.

[14] See chapter one.

constant dialogue. The result is not tidy. Religion as dictated by the sum of many overlapping ministry relationships, each shaped by the respective assumptions and priorities of participants as well as by practical constraints, is admittedly an unwieldy model from which to approach analysis on a larger scale. Locality, of whatever size, must be a defining theme in studies of the relationship-based structure of religious life, at least until more is known. Indeed it may be that historical work on religion in the central and late Middle Ages needs to see a wave of local studies akin to those which contributed so much to debates about feudal society in the second half of the twentieth century.[15] The intricacies of hierarchical and associative bonds are often only visible up close—especially where teleological assumptions of uniformity and structure have long prevailed. This does not mean blinding ourselves to contemporary currents of canon law and academic thought. Broad developments in clerical writings about ministry to the laity, some of which have already been admirably charted by intellectual historians, need to be rigorously related to the times and places in which they originated. We also need to think critically about the definition of localities for the purposes of such studies: one can imagine defining a religious locality not as the purview of a particular text, but according to the extent of the network of ministry relationships which a particular lay community maintained. It is hoped that this thesis will inspire such investigations.

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[15] G. Duby, *La société aux XIe et XIIe siècles dans la région mâconnaise* (1953); J.-F. Lemarignier, 'Political and Monastic Structures in France at the End of the Twelfth and the Beginning of the Eleventh Century', trans. F. Cheyette, in idem (ed.), *Lordship and Community in Medieval Europe: Selected Readings* (Huntingdon, NY, 1968), pp. 100-27; P. Bonnaissie, *La Catalogne du milieu du Xe àla fin du XIe siècle: croissance et mutations d'une sociètè* (2 vols., Toulouse, 1975-76); G. Bois, *The Crisis of Feudalism: Economy and Society in Eastern Normandy c.1300-1550*, trans. anon. (Cambridge, 1984); D. Barthélemy, *La sociéte dans le comté de Vendôme de l'an mil au XIVe siècle* (Paris, 1993); R.E. Barton, *Lordship in the County of Maine, c.890-1160* (Woodbridge, 2004).

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